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We are All Americans, Pure and Simple: Theodore Roosevelt and the Myth of Americanism

By Leroy G. Dorsey

The University of Alabama Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, We are All Americans, Pure and Simple: Theodore Roosevelt and the Myth of Americanism, Leroy G. Dorsey, This is the 26th president's discourse on issues of race, ethnicity, and American identity. The turn of the 20th century represented one of the most chaotic periods in the nation's history, as immigrants, Native Americans, and African Americans struggled with their roles as Americans while white America feared their encroachments on national identity. This book examines Theodore Roosevelt's public rhetoric - speeches, essays, and narrative histories - as he attempted to craft one people out of many. Leroy G. Dorsey observes that Roosevelt's solution to the problem appeared straightforward: everyone could become "Americans, pure and simple" if they embraced his notion of "Americanism." Roosevelt grounded his idea of Americanism in myth, particularly the frontier myth - a heroic combination of individual strength and character. When nonwhites and immigrants demonstrated these traits, they would become true Americans, earning an exalted status that they had heretofore been denied. Dorsey's analysis illuminates how Roosevelt's rhetoric achieved a number of delicate, if problematic, balancing acts. Roosevelt gave his audiences the opportunity to accept a national identity...



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