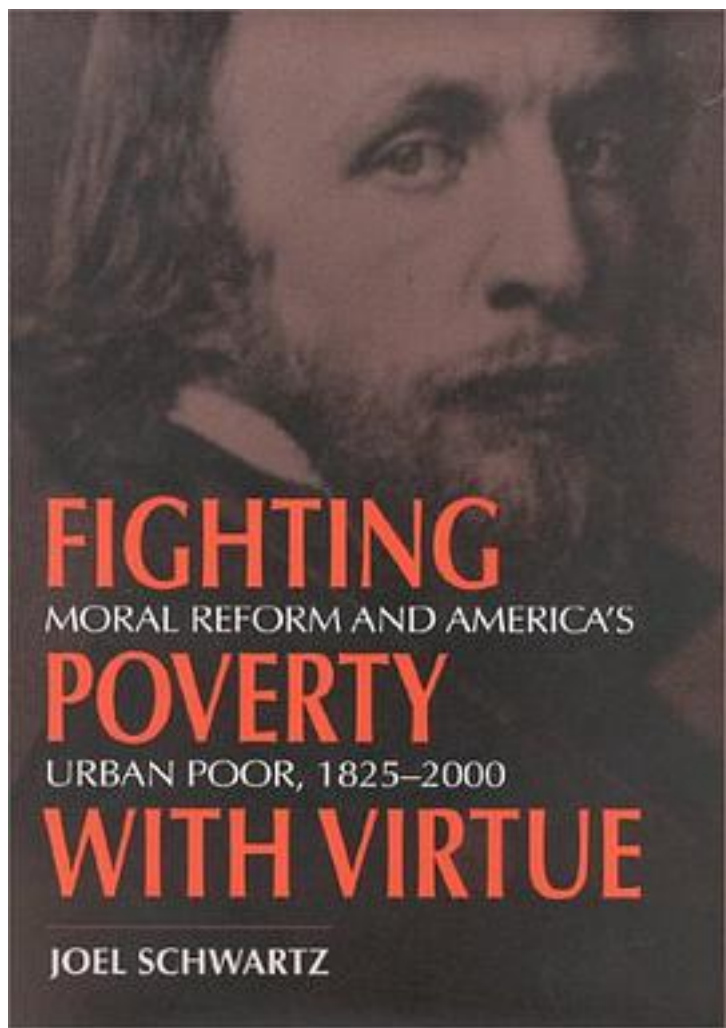


# Fighting Poverty with Virtue



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著者:Schwartz, Joel

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"Fighting Poverty with Virtue" is both an historical and a contemporary study of

attempts to promote the self-reliance and prosperity of America's urban poor by encouraging the practice of mundane virtues such as diligence, sobriety, thrift, and familial responsibility. Part One examines the efforts of four thoughtful nineteenth-century moral reformers who expounded this strategy: Joseph Tuckerman, Robert M. Hartley, Charles Loring Brace, and Josephine Shaw Lowell. This section explains concretely what they did (and why they did it), taking note of the obstacles confronting their work and their successes and failures in overcoming them. Part Two explains the twentieth-century critique of moral reform. Drawing from the work of figures such as Jane Addams, Walter Rauschenbusch, and (more recently) Frances Fox Piven, it examines the rise of a belief that the virtues promoted by the moral reformers were individualistic and 'bourgeois', hence inapplicable to the lives of the poor. Part Three assesses African Americans' historical commitment to the moral reformers' virtues, apparent in the writings of figures as divergent as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Dubois, and Malcolm X. Moving to the present, the book examines Americans' increasing respect for the utility and importance of the supposedly 'bourgeois' virtues, as manifested in both survey data and in improvements in various statistical indicators. The renewed commitment to a self-help strategy for fighting poverty is evident in the widespread interest in the work of faith-based charities and in recent shifts in public policy. The book concludes by assessing the reasons to be hopeful, but also to be sceptical, of the success of that strategy. "Fighting Poverty with Virtue" will interest a wide variety of historians and social scientists, as well as lay readers eager to understand the plight of the impoverished residents of America's cities, both yesterday and today.

作者介绍:

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