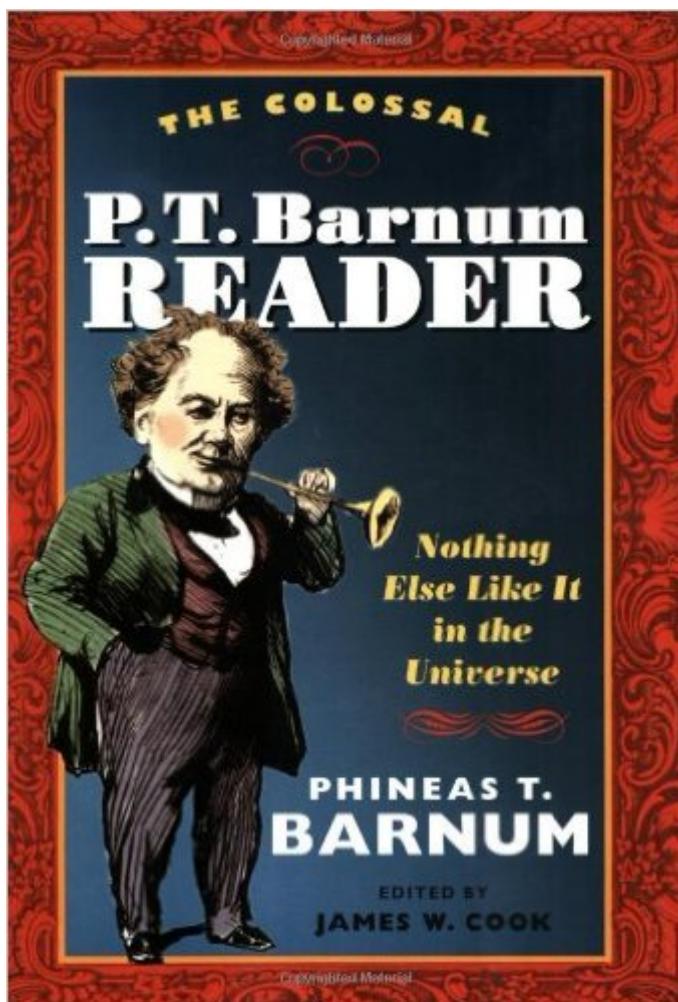


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# The Colossal P. T. Barnum Reader: NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT IN THE UNIVERSE



## Synopsis

The P. T. Barnum Reader reveals the trailblazing American showman P. T. Barnum as, by turns, a moral reformer, a habitual hoaxter, an insightful critic, a savvy puffer, a master of images, a sparkling writer, a relentless provocateur, and an early advocate of family entertainments. Taken together, these selections paint a new and more complete portrait of this complex man than has ever been seen before. James W. Cook's *The Colossal P. T. Barnum Reader* is the largest collection of Barnum's works ever produced. Included are excerpts from his pseudo-autobiographical novel *The Adventures of an Adventurer* (1841), his European letters from 1844-46 informing readers of the New York Atlas of his regal reception overseas, and a large selection from his *Ancient and Modern Humbugs of the World*, Barnum's 1864-65 insider's look into the frauds of nineteenth-century American culture.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Let me preface this review by saying that it will center entirely on the using the book in a college-level course. I used this as an assigned text in U.S. history survey in 2007. Frankly, I did not know how students would react to or engage with Barnum. They enjoyed the book and the sparks flew in our classroom discussion. I think this text works much better than Barnum's autobiography as an introduction to Barnum's historical significance. The only small criticism I will make of the book is that it would be even better (for classroom use) with a longer introduction that expands on Barnum's life, career, and historical context. James Cook has written brilliantly on these points, so

perhaps a second edition will include a longer introduction. I prepared one lecture to fill in some of these gaps. Also, the first selection, "Adventures of an Adventurer" is very difficult for undergraduates to grasp, so I just omitted it from the assigned reading.

Varied writings of P. T. Barnum that gives the reader an insight into his life and business thinking and strategies for success

Contemporary article by and about Barnum

fascinating stuff, recommended. quick delivery.

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