

Culture

Terry Eagleton

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TERRY EAGLETON CULTURE

'If Terry Eagleton didn't exist, it would be necessary to invent him.'
—Simon Critchley, author of *The Book of Dead Philosophers*



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Terry Eagleton : Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Culture:

16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. the book is a reprintBy D. morrisA great book by Eagleton but it is simply a reprint of a book published back in 2000. It is advertised as a new and original study, so be forewarned if you have Eagleton's earlier "The Idea of Culture." 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Eagleton on culture in its many guisesBy EarlCulture is Terry Eagleton's discussion of what culture is, what it isn't and what it

shouldn't be. In true Eagleton fashion he will make the reader chuckle then just as quickly start fuming. That has always been his strength, his ability to express his opinions clearly while pricking the skin of those he would argue against so that reading him becomes an active engagement whether you want it to be or not. When I used to use his *Literary Theory: An Introduction* to teach I found his ability to explain theories to which he did not subscribe well balanced and even when he interjected his views he did so fairly. I find that lacking in this book. Partly, I'm sure, because this is not meant to explain various schools of thought but to grapple with a concept from his own. Yet he sets up some thought, particularly postmodernism (or at least the aspects which adopt any form of relativism), as borderline stupid. Most people who embrace some form of cultural relativism do not practice the extreme version he argues against. This serves to make one whole chapter and parts of every other pointless strawman arguments. I expected better from someone for whom I have such high regard. That grudge he seems to have with someone or something in his past which makes him irrational when writing about postmodernism does not detract from a lot of what he has to say. The distinctions he makes and the ways in which he demonstrates the various definitions and, more importantly, uses of culture are spot on for the most part. These portions of the book are reminiscent of his better works on ideology, aesthetics and theory in general. I would recommend this to anyone interested in cultural and literary theory, capitalism and Marxist theory as it applies to culture. Eagleton never fails to engage the reader regardless of the degree of agreement. Reviewed from a copy made available through Goodreads First Reads. 9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. The many faces of culture By bronx book nerd This book was a challenge to read. One would think that a book about culture would be straightforward. One would be wrong. As it turns out, culture can have different definitions, from the things that people do every day, i.e. Irish culture, to the so called finer things in life - fine art, classical music, and bowling. Well, maybe not bowling. And where does culture come from? One would think that had a simple explanation. One would be wrong. Apparently the idea of culture grew out of colonialism as the colonizers needed a lexicon to distinguish their people from those they were colonizing (read, exploiting). By identifying the others "culture", especially as one that was inferior in many ways (no indoor plumbing) then the colonizer gain street (or unpaved road) cred for his efforts (and it was men). One would think that after defining culture, even in multiple ways, that it would then be easy to spot its causes and effects. One would.. oh, never mind. ON a more serious note, there is a lot of fascinating and interesting material about all the facets of culture. As a surprise bonus, Eagleton is hysterically funny, taking jabs at both Justin Bieber and Sara Palin. One of his conclusions is that culture, which usually was a counterpoint to the establishment, is now a commodified product of the establishment - i.e today's consumerist/capitalist society - and as such has lost its power to create meaningful alternatives.

One of our most brilliant minds offers a sweeping intellectual history that argues for the reclamation of cultures value. Culture is a defining aspect of what it means to be human. Defining culture and pinpointing its role in our lives is not, however, so straightforward. Terry Eagleton, one of our foremost literary and cultural critics, is uniquely poised to take on the challenge. In this keenly analytical and acerbically funny book, he explores how culture and our conceptualizations of it have evolved over the last two centuries from rarified sphere to humble practices, and from a bulwark against industrialisms encroaches to present-day capitalisms most profitable export. Ranging over art and literature as well as philosophy and anthropology, and major but somewhat "unfashionable" thinkers like Johann Gottfried Herder and Edmund Burke as well as T. S. Eliot, Matthew Arnold, Raymond Williams, and Oscar Wilde, Eagleton provides a cogent overview of culture set firmly in its historical and theoretical contexts, illuminating its collusion with colonialism, nationalism, the decline of religion, and the rise of and rule over the "uncultured" masses. Eagleton also examines culture today, lambasting the commodification and co-option of a force that, properly understood, is a vital means for us to cultivate and enrich our social lives, and can even provide the impetus to transform civil society.

"An impressive display of erudition." Publishers Weekly