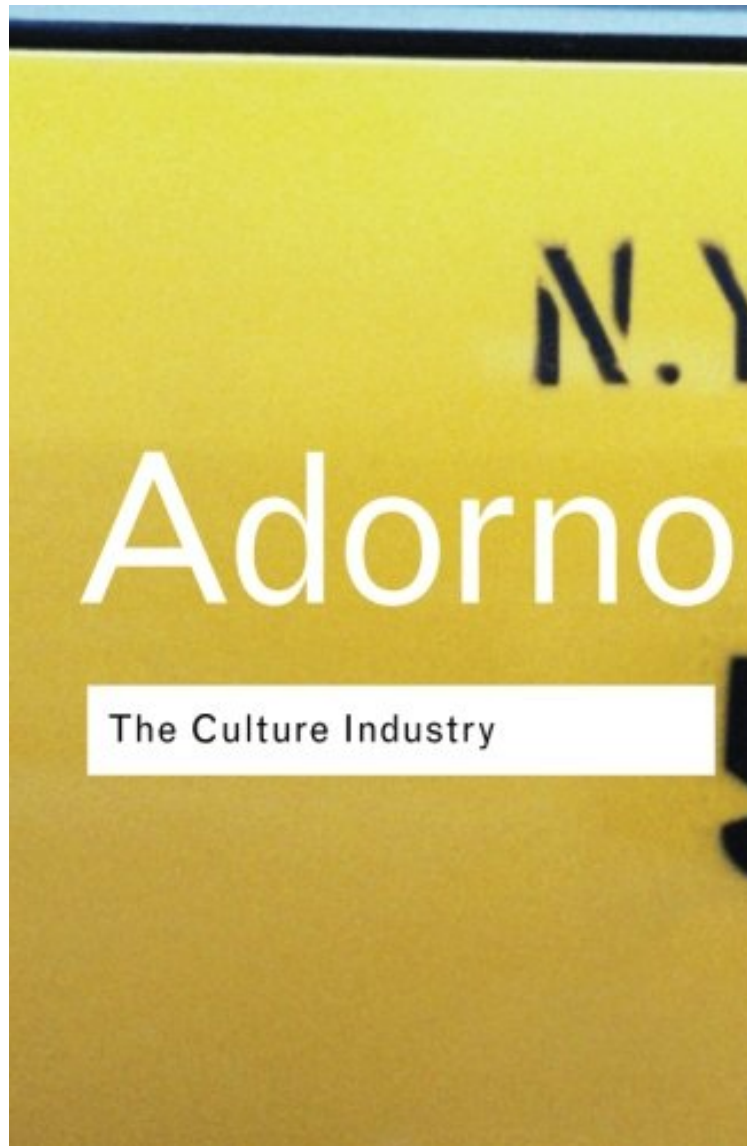


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Theodor W. Adorno

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Theodor W. Adorno : The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture (Routledge Classics) (Volume 20) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture (Routledge Classics) (Volume 20):

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An excellent (and still-relevant) perspective on the proto-progressive

mindBy Solomon MajorAfter an introduction that is both stultifying and adds little to the content to come, the book settles into Adorno's prose. (Also annoying is that the dates of the essays' original publications are not given; only their printings in edited editions are offered.) It is this that makes the book so difficult to rate because, while Adorno's theories are at once based on hysterical, fever-swamp constructions and assumptions that he often states as facts (rather than fallible premises), his logic and writing is quite incisive and insightful, *were* one to accept the assumptions upon which they were based. From the perspective of formal logic, his conclusions (logically) follow from his premises, no matter how fanciful (or irresponsible) those premises may be. As such, one might even call his arguments "rational," after a fashion, though I am less certain of this because the endeavor seems, ultimately, to be an exercise in teleology. That is, it is (abundantly) clear that Adorno hates Western culture (the locus of the eponymous "culture industry"), capitalism (which he confusingly misidentifies as "monopoly" capitalism), anything that might make the proles more comfortable and, therefore, inconveniently less "revolutionary" and radical, and a whole litany of other things besides. So it seems he *chooses* his foundation assumptions with care, so that he can extend them to their ultimate telos: a trenchant critique on all things cultural and Western. He trusts, with good reason, that given the right fodder, his formidable intellect will transport him to his ends, so long as he's selected the right points of departure. And so he chooses his assumptions not so much because of their empirical validity (which he denigrates anyway), their objective Truth (per, say, Popper) or even their social validity, but rather as the fuel for his engine of hatred for what he sees about him (although he has a particular loathing for the fascists, notwithstanding his own totalitarian inclinations, they are by no means the sole or even primary target for this particular set of critiques). As such, as the source of so much pre-determined and thus unreasoning-reason, his perspectives provide great insight into the contemporary Progressive movement and the adherents hitherto. Educated, erudite, and (radically) unhinged not by madness but by choice. Given the Frankfurt School's ongoing (though often unacknowledged and/or unknown) influence on the latter's thoughts and perspectives, the book's essays are every bit as relevant as when they were written. But while reading this provides some great insight and, indeed, food for thought, one must ultimately wonder: given the outcome, is the effort really worth the candle? 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I loved this collection of essays at times it can drift ...By Martin DuffyThe essay on Freetime is worth the price of the book alone. I loved this collection of essays at times it can drift into that French style of academic post modern writing , as in , this book is itself reflected unto its self look back at itself thinking about tomorrow , type thing , but not as intense. Great if your interested in the study of society glad I bought this book , due another read in fact . Enjoy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Gail F. HoakAmazing book. Prompt service.

The creation of the Frankfurt School of critical theory in the 1920s saw the birth of some of the most exciting and challenging writings of the twentieth century. It is out of this background that the great critic Theodor Adorno emerged. His finest essays are collected here, offering the reader unparalleled insights into Adorno's thoughts on culture. He argued that the culture industry commodified and standardized all art. In turn this suffocated individuality and destroyed critical thinking. At the time, Adorno was accused of everything from overreaction to deranged hysteria by his many detractors. In today's world, where even the least cynical of consumers is aware of the influence of the media, Adorno's work takes on a more immediate significance. The Culture Industry is an unrivalled indictment of the banality of mass culture.

"A volume of Adorno's essays is equivalent to a whole shelf of books on literature."-Susan Sontag "Adorno expounds what may be called a new philosophy of consciousness. His philosophy lives, dangerously but also fruitfully, in proximity to an ascetic puritanical moral rage, an attachment to some items in the structure and vocabulary of Marxism, and a feeling that human suffering is the only important thing and makes nonsense of everything else ... Adorno is a political thinker who wishes to bring about radical change. He is also a philosopher, with a zest for metaphysics, who is at home in the western philosophical tradition."-Iris Murdoch About the AuthorTheodor W. Adorno (1903-69). One of the towering intellectual figures of the twentieth century, and a leading member of the influential group of theorists known as the Frankfurt School. His works include Aesthetic Theory, Mahler, The Jargon of Authenticity and Negative Dialectics.