



The Consumer Society Reader

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A unique and definitive reader on our "national passion"—buying stuff—and its consequences for American society. We are citizens, owners and workers, believers and heathens, but today more than anything else we are consumers. How this came to be and its consequences for us all is the subject of this pioneering reader on the rise—and continued rise—of consumerism. *The Consumer Society Reader* features a range of key works on the nature and evolution of consumer society. It includes classics such as the Frankfurt School writers Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse on the Culture Industry; Thorstein Veblen's oft-cited writings on "conspicuous consumption"; Betty Friedan on the housewife's central role in consumer society; and John Kenneth Galbraith's influential analysis of the "affluent society." The book also includes much-discussed recent work by such leading critics as Pierre Bourdieu, Thomas Frank, bell hooks, Bill McKibben, and Janice Radway. A landmark in social criticism, *The Consumer Society Reader* is sure to become the standard book on the subject.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Schor (economics of leisure studies, Tilburg Univ., Netherlands) and Holt (advertising and sociology, Univ. of Illinois) have collected an impressive array of articles treating the multifarious aspects of consumer society. The anthology gathers classic essays by Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, John Kenneth Galbraith, Stuart Ewen, Pierre Bourdieu, and other familiar critics of consumption and supplements them with newer, lesser-known works. Topics range from Barry Manilow fan clubs and black Barbie dolls to Italian scooters and adman Bill Bernbach's groundbreaking publicity campaign for Volkswagon in the early Sixties. The result is a rich, complex portrait of commodity consumption in the United States and other parts of the Western world. In the end, the anthology lets the reader decide: does society empower consumers to purchase things that will increase their sense of well-being and individuality, or have we become slaves to global capitalism, buying things we do not need and in the process destroying the planet with our wasteful habits? Recommended for academic and larger public libraries. (Introduction not seen.)DAndrew Brodie Smith, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Lib., Washington, DC
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About the Author

Juliet B. Schor's research has focused on the economics of work, spending, environment, and the consumer culture. She is the author of *Born to Buy*, *The Overworked American*, and *The Overspent American*. Schor is senior lecturer on women's studies at Harvard University, as well as chair in the economics of leisure studies at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. She is a Guggenheim Fellowship recipient and a cofounder of the Center for a New American Dream, an organization devoted to ecologically and socially sustainable lifestyles.

Douglas B. Holt is assistant professor in the department of marketing at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alyson Hardy:

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