

[Download] Ad Nauseam: A Survivor's Guide to American Consumer Culture

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From Farrar, Straus and Giroux : Ad Nauseam: A Survivor's Guide to American Consumer Culture before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ad Nauseam: A Survivor's Guide to American Consumer Culture:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Pretty Much A "Guider" to Nothing. By ink penner--A book of essays about advertising. It's off to a good start, describing the insides and out of ad branding, placement, design and purpose. One of the most intriguing displays is on page 32, which shows a series of "perception" and "reality" photos of some current food displays. Ah, I liked where this book was goinghellip;. --zeroing in on today's adMeisters' way of presenting products in the best possible lighthellip;

even if in rather deceptive illuminations. In a rather (unfortunate) dark, small and detail-less layout of various food items, the McDonald's "Big Mac" photo shows a delicious-looking, towering sandwich, obviously prepared with much thought and love, neatly stacked with the trimmings in view; but the side-by-side comparison of same (of what consumers actually get) shows a slovenly construction, a slightly tipped fast-build sandwich at about 80% of the beauty shot's girth. And so it is with Wendy's, Arby's and Banquet products shown. They package the perception, we buy the not-quite-so-appealing reality; and this book's going to focus in and tell us all about the sleight of marketing hand that consumers experience everyday. (!) ~Not. After some lightweight essay discussions about product placement and general marketing, Ad Nauseum makes a turn for the worst and engages us in advertising history, physiological advertising design of the 20s and 30s, Hollywood legalities, prankster-ism, how 80s ads targeted kids, how marketeers use paid shoppers to influence other shoppers; none of which goes beyond a two to four-page "chapter." Before it gets really interesting, it's on to the next (rather) unconnected chapter; about, for instance, how ad-men of the 20s relied on gauging the buying public as rather unsophisticated and "idiotic" shoppers. So, how does all the generalized information on history, marketing, strategy relate to today's "American consumer culture"? It pretty much doesn't. Not here, anyway. ~And getting through the last 1/2 of the book is a struggle, with too often tiresome, pointless, unrelated, (short but) uncoordinated essays. Interesting note; this reader's library copy had folded page corners, as the self-absorbed previous reader used 5 or 6 as book-marks, a grubby but not uncommon practice to find his/her place. ~But page 240 is curious --the corner remains bent (!), presumably because the previous reader never went, understandably, beyond this point. --My sentiments exactly. (!) Getting through the concrete boredom of a stray essay about someone putting unwanted items into shoppers' store shopping carts, for example, is one of the many unfocused essays without much merit, insight or wisdom. Too, the chapter on "pranks" is remindful of calling the corner convenience store and asking if they had "Prince Albert in a can." Childish. Aimless. What does this supermarket mischief have to do with the mechanisms of modern American advertising --from the consumers' point of view (or the advertisers', for that matter)? --Not much, actually. A "guidebook" for the American consumer? --Hardly. This paperback might be good as some kind of marketing primer (maybe Advertising 100?); but as a useful read for the average consumer; not a chance. In lost-concentration form, it mercilessly goes on and on and on --essays haplessly unrelated and unexplained-- hellip; ad-nauseum. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Everything You Suspected... Is True By Brian Thompson Every so often, it's nice to read a book that makes you think, "Yes, I was right all along." Ad Nauseum was such a book for me. And in case you are wondering about the authors' approach to advertising, perhaps the image of a barf bag on the cover will provide a few hints. I divide nonfiction into two categories: heavily researched and annotated books that aim to be scholarly treatises, and more mass-market books meant to be easier reading. I put AD NAUSEUM squarely in the latter category. It's pretty honest from the get-go that it's more a collection of related pieces than a scholarly work. So, with that in mind, I read along quite happily, nodding my head in agreement many times, very much enjoying the fact that these authors seem to perceive the same things I do, and learning enjoyably as I read along. For those of you who don't know how Lysol started out, you're in for a shock... I particularly liked the look at trends in advertising from inception through today, as well a revisit of the idea of "subliminal advertising" and the unintended effects of one crazy man's tendency to see skulls and bestiality in ice cubes. Plenty of fun stuff in here, too, like the "secret" word that can be attached to the names of most SUVs, some really hilarious fake ads, and nice opinion pieces about, say, the type of guy who goes to taste-test Johnnie Walker scotch at a tent on the grounds of the Playboy Mansion. The writing's great, too. That snotty, we-know-it-all-and-are-VERY-hip Brooklyn tone. Truthfully, that annoys me sometimes, but for this book - it works, because, really, how can you write about the modern advertising business without being really, really snotty? But the writing's clever, and funny, and pokes fun at itself, too. My only complaint: A lot of the reproduced ads, etc., are much too small to see or read, and some of the printing on flowcharts, etc., is so light that I gave up trying to read it. There's a key unanswered question in the book, perhaps because there's no answer, and that is: Are Americans stupid? The authors do get on their high horses a little, talking about the white men who run (and always have run) the ad business, and how they like to look down their noses on everyone. But, authors: Have you watched TV lately? You know, reality TV, the Kardashians, and all those other cringe-inducing embarrassments? We may have to accept the possibility that yes, the average consumer is pretty dumb, pretty clueless, pretty self-absorbed. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An enjoyable class read By SI was required to read this book for a class and I found it to be informative yet playful. Ad Nauseum opens your eyes to aspects of advertising that you don't often think about while using humor to keep your attention. I also like the layout of the book. It's full of images of ridiculous ads and humorous mini quizzes. Not much was said in the postscript on how the problems with advertising can be changed, but overall I think it is very insightful especially for a high school student or college freshman. The book contains some important general information such as some of the history of advertising, subliminal advertising, and the psychology behind advertising. It then includes entertaining short chapters to help illustrate the bigger view and to poke fun at advertising. It is a simple read but I can appreciate that. The authors want the readers to have fun with this book but at the same time learn a thing or two about this crazy world that we live in. The goal of the book is awareness which it does

successfully. I have never posted a review on here, but I feel like I have to for this book because it's that awesome. Read it!

With the style and irreverence of Vice magazine and the critique of the corporatocracy that made Naomi Klein's *No Logo* a global hit, the cult magazine *Stay Free!*—long considered the *Adbusters* of the United States—is finally offering a compendium of new and previously published material on the impact of consumer culture on our lives. The book questions, in the broadest sense, what happens to human beings when their brains are constantly assaulted by advertising and corporate messages. Most people assert that advertising is easily ignored and doesn't have any effect on them or their decision making, but *Ad Nauseam* shows that consumer pop culture does take its toll. In an engaging, accessible, and graphically appealing style, Carrie McLaren and Jason Torchinsky (as well as contributors such as David Cross, *The Onion*'s Joe Garden, *The New York Times*'s Julie Scelfo, and others) discuss everything from why the TV program *CSI* affects jury selection, to the methods by which market researchers stalk shoppers, to how advertising strategy is like dog training. The result is an entertaining and eye-opening account of the many ways consumer culture continues to pervade and transform American life.

“In his opening salvo in the mental war against the paradoxes of late capitalism, George W. S. Trow proposed a motto: ‘Wounded by the Million; Healed—One by One.’ What the editors of *Stay Free!* set up inside the brilliant framework of their magazine is an arena where writers can roll up their sleeves and get cheerfully to work at shrugging off the succubus of commercial culture—for their own sakes, and for all our sakes. This book is a treasury of Trow’s kind of healing.” —Jonathan Lethem, author of *The Fortress of Solitude*