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Distinction: A Social Critique Of The Judgement Of Taste (Routledge Classics)



Synopsis

No judgement of taste is innocent - we are all snobs. Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction* brilliantly illuminates the social pretensions of the middle classes in the modern world, focusing on the tastes and preferences of the French bourgeoisie. First published in 1979, the book is at once a vast ethnography of contemporary France and a dissection of the bourgeois mind. In the course of everyday life we constantly choose between what we find aesthetically pleasing, and what we consider tacky, merely trendy, or ugly. Taste is not pure. Bourdieu demonstrates that our different aesthetic choices are all distinctions - that is, choices made in opposition to those made by other classes. This fascinating work argues that the social world functions simultaneously as a system of power relations and as a symbolic system in which minute distinctions of taste become the basis for social judgement.

Book Information

Series: Routledge Classics

Paperback: 640 pages

Publisher: Routledge; 1 edition (December 13, 1986)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0415567882

ISBN-13: 978-0415567886

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 1.4 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 27 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #84,134 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Philosophy > Aesthetics #57 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Aesthetics #407 in Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Anthropology

Customer Reviews

A book of extraordinary intelligence. -- Irving Louis Horowitz "Commonweal" One of the more distinguished contributions to social theory and research in recent years...There is in this book an account of culture, and a methodology of its study, rich in implication for a diversity of fields of social research. The work in some ways redefines the whole scope of cultural studies.--Anthony Giddens "Partisan Review" A book of extraordinary intelligence.--Irving Louis Horowitz "Commonweal" Bourdieu's analysis transcends the usual analysis of conspicuous consumption in two ways: by showing that specific judgments and choices matter less than an esthetic outlook in general and by

showing, moreover, that the acquisition of an esthetic outlook not only advertises upper-class prestige but helps to keep the lower orders in line. In other words, the esthetic world view serves as an instrument of domination. It serves the interests not merely of status but of power. It does this, according to Bourdieu, by emphasizing individuality, rivalry, and 'distinction' and by devaluing the well-being of society as a whole.--Christopher Lasch "Vogue "

Text: English, French (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have not finished yet, but so far, so great!

What can I say? This is maybe the most important piece of social theory written in the last 40 years. A bit dense, but a great read, and a beautiful book.

Thoughtful and insightful exploration of the way the objects we surround ourselves both create structure and are in themselves structuring.

A heavy, thorough and important read.

This is a must-read for Canon Theory specialists. I used it in as a primary source in my doctoral dissertation in the field.

They promised a second hand book, possible unread, and that is exactly what I got. It didn't smell and the pages were crisp. Would definitely use this bookstore again . The book itself is a classic for any sociologist and communication scholar, who wants to understand how taste is formed (cf why some people prefer theater over movies). Plenty of examples. Translation is excellent. Bourdieu writes/wrote like a typical French scholar, so the sentences are murky in French; this English translation is done very well.

"Taste unites and separates."Admit it. Discrimination exists, although it's not politically correct. Not so many people talk about the topic publicly and directly. When something exists but not talked about, it becomes mystery in every day life."Taste classifies."It is taste that classifies people. But taste itself has mysterious origin. Many people try so hard to 'upclass' and end up embarrassing

themselves, because they don't know the real taste is from deep inside and takes long time to grow. The power lies in the fact that you understand what induces the taste for specific preferences and how you can surround yourself with that kind of environment that will prune you into what you want to be. It's been a long, difficult read. Be patient and focus, it is worth the effort.

Great book if you want to read taste on Bourdieu. This book is very interesting. I read it two times.

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