

## Pessimism Philosophy Ethic Spirit

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He persuasively shows that pessimism has been - and can again be - an energizing and even liberating philosophy, an ethic of radical possibility and not just a criticism of faith. The goal - of both the pessimistic spirit and of this fascinating account of pessimism - is not to depress us, but to edify us

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Pessimism is a negative mental attitude in which an undesirable outcome is anticipated from a given situation. Pessimists tend to focus on the negatives of life in general. A common question asked to test for pessimism is "Is the glass half empty or half full?"; in this situation a pessimist is said to see the glass as half empty, while an optimist is said to see the glass as half full. Throughout history, the pessimistic disposition has had effects on all major areas of thinking. Philosophical

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Pessimism: Philosophy, Ethic, Spirit. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2006. Pp. 306. US\$37.50 (cloth ISBN 13: 978-0-691-12552-7). We tend to think of both pessimism and optimism as matters of temperament or mood.

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politics throughout the modern period. Laying out powerful grounds for pessimism's claim that progress is not an enduring feature of human history, Dienstag argues that political theory must begin from this predicament. He persuasively shows that pessimism has been--and can again be--an energizing and even liberating philosophy, an ethic of radical possibility and not just a criticism of faith. The goal--of both the pessimistic spirit and of this fascinating account of pessimism--is not to depress us, but to edify us about our condition and to fortify us for life in a disordered and disenchanting universe.

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Aesthetic and political representation are often treated separately, but this book argues that film offers a unique perspective through which to understand the dangers to equality and freedom that lurk in representative politics. The potential problems of representative democracy have long been debated: does it cultivate apathy and discourage citizen participation? What does it mean to be faithfully or well represented in a democracy? And how can appropriate, meaningful representation be achieved? Here, these questions are addressed from a new perspective. Representation, Joshua Foa Dienstag argues, can create the illusion of freedom and reciprocity in place of the real thing, and in both cinema and politics, what gives us pleasure is not the same as what secures or supports our existence as free and equal citizens. As this book shows, there are political dangers not visible within the current debates around democratic representation, dangers we can better understand and help to minimize by considering the way that human beings interact, emotionally, with their filmic representations. Dienstag looks at a series of films that directly confront issues of representation (*Her*, *Blade Runner*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *Melancholia*, and the *Up* documentary series) to diagnose these hazards and consider how best to respond to them. Each chapter looks at a specific film as emblematic of a different conception or problem of representation often ignored by mainstream political debates (such as reciprocity, happiness, boundaries, evil) to show that the relationship between representation and freedom is fraught with tension. This book continues Dienstag's earlier groundbreaking work on philosophical pessimism, understood not as something despairing, but as a rejection of the idea that these necessary tensions can be cured. Ultimately, Dienstag seeks to defend a kind of pessimistic politics that might produce a better sort of democratic representation than what we have today.

Weltschmerz is a study of the pessimism that dominated German philosophy in the second half of the nineteenth century. Pessimism was essentially the theory that life is not worth living. This theory was introduced into German philosophy by Schopenhauer, whose philosophy became very fashionable in the 1860s. Frederick C. Beiser examines the intense and long controversy that arose from Schopenhauer's pessimism, which changed the agenda of philosophy in Germany away from the logic of the sciences and toward an examination of the value of life. He examines the major defenders of pessimism (Philipp Mainländer, Eduard von Hartmann and Julius Bahnsen) and its chief critics, especially Eugen Dühring and the neo-Kantians. The pessimism dispute of the second half of the century has been largely ignored in

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secondary literature and this book is a first attempt since the 1880s to re-examine it and to analyze the important philosophical issues raised by it. The dispute concerned the most fundamental philosophical issue of them all: whether life is worth living.

A collection of aphorisms, fragments, and observations on philosophy and pessimism. Composed of aphorisms, fragments, and observations both philosophical and personal, Eugene Thacker's *Infinite Resignation* traces the contours of pessimism, caught as it is between a philosophical position and a bad attitude. By turns melancholic, misanthropic, and tinged with gallows humor, Thacker's writing tenuously hovers over that point at which the thought of futility becomes the futility of thought.

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This volume explores the place of antiquity in Enlightenment Europe. It considers the contexts, questions, and agendas that shaped eighteenth-century engagements with the ancient world, shedding new light on familiar figures and recovering forgotten chapters in this European story.

A tongue-in-cheek report on what the author identifies as pseudo-idealistic challenges facing conservatism today upholds such figures as Lord Salisbury, Calvin Coolidge, and Pat Buchanan as characteristic of authentic conservatism, in a report that calls for more realistic practices while

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covering such topics as diversity, education, and religion.

Returning home in the wake of his brother's death, a successful man must grapple with his coal-town roots For four generations, Colonel Tom Owen's family has been defined by the coal business. Having pulled himself out of the mines and through college, Tom is now a celebrated army surgeon who served in Europe under General Patton. But when his younger brother dies in a mine accident, he returns to their hometown of Coalville, Pennsylvania, where he confronts his grieving mother and learns the real cause of his brother's death. Tom resents the coalmines, and his new medical practice is dedicated largely to healing miners injured in them. Despite his distinguished career, he starts to have doubts about his value—both as a surgeon, and a human being. Tom has two paths before him, and his professional and personal destinies hang in the balance. This tale of going home again is one that will resonate with readers long after the final page. This ebook features an extended biography of Horace McCoy.

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