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# Masscult And Midcult Essays Against The American Grain Dwight Macdonald

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Willful Disobedience Farrar, Straus and Giroux  
Following The Broken Estate, The Irresponsible Self, and How Fiction Works—books that established James Wood as the leading critic of his generation—The Fun Stuff confirms Wood's preeminence, not only as a discerning judge but also as an appreciator of the contemporary novel. In twenty-three passionate, sparkling dispatches—that range over such crucial writers as Thomas Hardy, Leon Tolstoy, Edmund Wilson, and Mikhail Lermontov—Wood offers a panoramic look at the modern novel. He effortlessly connects

his encyclopedic, passionate understanding of the literary canon with an equally in-depth analysis of the most important authors writing today, including Cormac McCarthy, Lydia Davis, Aleksandar Hemon, and Michel Houellebecq. Included in The Fun Stuff are the title essay on Keith Moon and the lost joys of drumming—which was a finalist for last year's National Magazine Awards—as well as Wood's essay on George Orwell, which Christopher Hitchens selected for the Best American Essays 2010. The Fun Stuff is indispensable reading for anyone who cares about contemporary literature.

On Being Blue Springer  
A giant of 20th century art criticism, Clement Greenberg (1909-1994) set the terms of critical discourse from the moment he burst onto the scene with his seminal essays "Avant-Garde and

Kitsch" (1939) and "Towards a Newer Laocoon" (1940). In this work, which gathers previously uncollected essays and a series of seminars delivered at Bennington College in 1971, Greenberg provides his most expansive statement of his views on taste and quality in art. He insists that despite the attempts of modern artists to escape the jurisdiction of taste by producing an art so disjunctive that it cannot be judged, taste is inexorable. He maintains that standards of quality in art, the artist's responsibility to seek out the hardest demands of a medium, and the critic's responsibility to discriminate, are essential conditions for great art. He discusses the

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interplay of expectation and surprise in aesthetic experience, and the exalted consciousness produced by great art. *Homemade Esthetics* allows us to watch the critic's mind at work, defending (and at times reconsidering) his controversial and influential theories. Charles Harrison's introduction to this volume places *Homemade Esthetics* in the context of Greenberg's work and the evolution of 20th century criticism.

*The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby* New York Review of Books Offers an indictment of contemporary literary writing, providing assessments of such writers as Don DeLillo, Cormac McCarthy, and Annie Proulx.

*The Making of Middlebrow Culture* Ivan R Dee Gathers the limited edition's 11 original essays as well as new and previously uncollected pieces in a volume that offers insight into the author's views on such subjects as Native American whaling, the work of J. D. Salinger and his own family. By the award-winning author of

*The Point. Original.*

*The Rise of Liberal Religion* Univ of North Carolina Press On Being Blue is a book about everything blue—sex and sleaze and sadness, among other things—and about everything else. It brings us the world in a word as only William H. Gass, among contemporary American writers, can do. Gass writes: Of the colors, blue and green have the greatest emotional range. Sad reds and melancholy yellows are difficult to turn up. Among the ancient elements, blue occurs everywhere: in ice and water, in the flame as purely as in the flower, overhead and inside caves, covering fruit and oozing out of clay. Although green enlivens the earth and mixes in the ocean, and we find it, copperish, in fire; green air, green skies, are rare. Gray and brown are widely distributed, but there are no joyful swatches of either, or any of exuberant black, sullen pink, or acquiescent orange. Blue is therefore most suitable as the color of interior life. Whether slick light sharp high bright thin quick sour new and cool or low deep sweet dark soft slow smooth heavy old and warm: blue moves easily among them all, and all profoundly qualify our states of feeling.

*Songs of Love and Horror: Collected Lyrics of Will Oldham* Simon and Schuster Amy Bloom has won a devoted readership and wide critical acclaim for fiction of rare humor, insight, grace, and eloquence, and the same qualities distinguish *Normal*,

a provocative, intimate journey into the lives of “ people who reveal, or announce, that their gender is variegated rather than monochromatic ” —female-to-male transsexuals, heterosexual crossdressers, and the intersexed. We meet Lyle Monelle and his mother, Jessie, who recognized early on that her little girl was in fact a boy and used her life savings to help Lyle make the transition. On a Carnival cruise with a group of crossdressers and their spouses, we meet Peggy Rudd and her husband, “ Melanie, ” who devote themselves to the cause of “ ordinary heterosexual men with an additional feminine dimension. ” And we meet Hale Hawbecker, “ a regular, middle-of-the-road, white-bread guy ” with a wife, kids, and a medical condition, the standard treatment for which would have changed his life and his gender. Casting light into the dusty corners of our assumptions about sex, gender and identity, Bloom reveals new facets to the ideas of happiness, personality and character, even as she brilliantly illuminates the very concept of “normal. ” *Death Becomes Them* Oxford University Press

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Original critical essays on an iconic American periodical, providing new insights into twentieth-century literary culture This collection of newly commissioned critical essays reads across and between New Yorker departments, from sports writing to short stories, cartoons to reporters at large, poetry to annals of business. Attending to the relations between these kinds of writing and the magazine's visual and material constituents, the collection examines the distinctive ways in which imaginative writing has inhabited the 'prime real estate' of this enormously influential periodical. In bringing together a range of sharply angled analyses of particular authors, styles, columns, and pages, this book offers multiple perspectives on American writing and periodical culture at specific moments in twentieth-century history.

A Reader's Manifesto W. W. Norton & Company

A doctor's bold analysis of the cultural disease that afflicts us all. Despite an astonishing appetite for life, more and more Americans are feeling overworked and dissatisfied. In the world's most affluent nation, epidemic rates of stress, anxiety, depression, obesity, and time urgency are now grudgingly accepted as part of everyday existence they signal the American Dream gone awry. Peter C. Whybrow, director of the Neuropsychiatric Institute at

UCLA, grounds the extraordinary achievements and excessive consumption of the American nation in an understanding of the biology of the brain's reward system offering for the first time a comprehensive and physical explanation for the addictive mania of consumerism.

American Mania presents a clear and novel vantage point from which to understand the most pressing social issues of our time, while offering an informed approach to refocusing our pursuit of happiness. Drawing upon rich scientific case studies and colorful portraits, "this fascinating and important book will change the way you think about American life"

(Karen Olson, Utne Reader). Love and Other Poems Popular Press  
The definitive collection of lyrics from three decades of songwriting. As a performer, songwriter, and actor, Will Oldham has carved a singular path through the worlds of indie folk and cinema. Now the critically acclaimed, enigmatic artist presents his life's work: the lyrics to more than two hundred songs spanning the 1980s to the present, each with annotations that impart new meaning to his music. Oldham's aphoristic meditations—on death, patience, and turning

carelessness into a virtue—are, like his lyrics, profound, earthy, and often funny. They reveal flashes of Oldham's philosophy, the sources and circumstances that inspired his lyrics, and the literary ambition of his songwriting. Separated from their aural form, Oldham's lyrics become a new kind of poetry—candid, awkward, and wise—with influences as diverse as Rabindranath Tagore and The Mekons. A book that will delight his longtime fans and inspire young songwriters, Songs of Love and Horror reveals an artist who has captured extraordinary poetry in music despite being "a stranger among my own language."

The Fun Stuff New Directions Publishing  
You could describe D.H. Lawrence as the great multi-instrumentalist among the great writers of the twentieth century. He was a brilliant, endlessly controversial novelist who transformed, for better and for worse, the way we write about sex and emotions; he was a wonderful poet; he was an essayist of burning curiosity, expansive lyricism, odd humor, and radical intelligence, equaled, perhaps, only by Virginia Woolf. Here Geoff Dyer, one of the finest essayists of our day, draws on the whole range of Lawrence's published essays to reintroduce him to a new generation of readers for whom the essay has become an important genre. We get Lawrence the book reviewer,

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writing about *Death in Venice* and welcoming Ernest Hemingway; Lawrence the travel writer, in *Mexico and New Mexico* and *Italy*; Lawrence the memoirist, depicting his strange sometime-friend Maurice Magnus; Lawrence the restless inquirer into the possibilities of the novel, writing about the novel and morality and addressing the question of why the novel matters; and, finally, the Lawrence who meditates on birdsong or the death of a porcupine in the *Rocky Mountains*. Dyer's selection of Lawrence's essays is a wonderful introduction to a fundamental, dazzling writer.

#### A Rebel In Defense Of Tradition

New York Review of Books

This volume powerfully demonstrates the range and inexhaustible vitality of Ruskin's prose and will once again become an indispensable reference for Victorianists from a range of disciplines.

By Love Possessed New York Review of Books

Alex Dimitrov's third book, *Love and Other Poems*, is full of praise for the world we live in. Taking time as an overarching structure—specifically, the twelve months of the year—Dimitrov elevates the everyday, and speaks directly to the reader as if the poem were a phone call or a text message. From the personal to the cosmos, the moon to New York City, the speaker is convinced that love is “our best invention.” Dimitrov doesn't resist joy, even in despair. These poems are curious about who we are as people and shamelessly interested in hope.

#### The Bad Side of Books

Harvard University Press  
A new translation of two celebrated lectures on politics, academia, and the disenchantment of the world. The German sociologist Max Weber is one of the most venturesome, stimulating, and influential theorists of the modern condition. Among his most significant works are the so-called vocation lectures, published shortly after the end of World War I and delivered at the invitation of a group of student activists. The question the students asked Weber to address was simple and haunting: In a modern world characterized by the division of labor, economic expansion, and unrelenting change, was it still possible to consider an academic or political career as a genuine calling? In response Weber offered his famous diagnosis of “the disenchantment of the world,” along with a challenging account of the place of morality in the classroom and in research. In his second lecture he introduced the notion of political charisma, assigning it a central role in the modern state, even as he recognized that politics is more than anything “a slow and difficult drilling of holes

into hard boards.” Damion Searls's new translation brings out the power and nuance of these celebrated lectures. Paul Reitter and Chad Wellmon's introduction describes their historical and biographical background, reception, and influence. Weber's effort to rethink the idea of a public calling at the start of the tumultuous twentieth century is revealed to be as timely and stirring as ever.

#### Against The American Grain

Masscult and Midcult

On October 19, 1876 a group of leading French citizens, both men and women included, joined together to form an unusual group, The Society of Mutual Autopsy, with the aim of proving that souls do not exist. The idea was that, after death, they would dissect one another and (hopefully) show a direct relationship between brain shapes and sizes and the character, abilities and intelligence of individuals. This strange scientific pact, and indeed what we have come to think of as anthropology, which the group's members helped to develop, had its genesis in aggressive, evangelical atheism. With this group as its focus, *The End of the Soul* is a study of science and atheism in France in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It shows that anthropology grew in the context of an impassioned struggle between the forces of tradition, especially the Catholic faith, and those of a more freethinking modernism, and moreover that it

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became for many a secular religion. Among the adherents of this new faith discussed here are the novelist Emile Zola, the great statesman Leon Gambetta, the American birth control advocate Margaret Sanger, and Arthur Conan Doyle, whose Sherlock Holmes embodied the triumph of ratiocination over credulity. Boldly argued, full of colorful characters and often bizarre battles over science and faith, this book represents a major contribution to the history of science and European intellectual history.

Discovering Modernism  
Vintage

When Discovering Modernism was first published, it shed new and welcome light on the birth of Modernism. This reissue of Menand's classic intellectual history of T.S. Eliot and the singular role he played in the rise of literary modernism features an updated Afterword by the author, as well as a detailed critical appraisal of the progression of Eliot's career as a poet and critic. The new Afterword was adapted from Menand's critically lauded essay on Eliot in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Volume Seven: Modernism and the New Criticism*. Menand shows how Eliot's early views on literary value and authenticity, and his later

repudiation of those views, reflect the profound changes regarding the understanding of literature and its significance that occurred in the early part of the twentieth century. It will prove an eye-opening study for readers with an interest in the writings of T.S. Eliot and other luminaries of the Modernist era.

[American Mania: When More is Not Enough](#) Non Pareil Books

Argues that United States' creative class is fighting for survival and explains why this should matter to all Americans.

[A Moral Temper](#) New York Review of Books

Masscult and Midcult New York Review of Books

[Masscult and Midcult](#)

University of Virginia Press

This book is open access under a CC BY license. New media divide opinion; many are fascinated while others are disgusted. This book is about those who dislike, protest, and try to abstain from media, both new and old. It explains why media resistance persists and answers two questions: What is at stake for resisters and how does media resistance inspire organized action?

Despite the interest in media scepticism and dislike, there seems to be no book on the market discussing media

resistance as a phenomenon in its own right. This book explores resistance across media, historical periods and national borders, from early mass media to current digital media. Drawing on cases and examples from the US, Britain, Scandinavia and other countries, media resistance is discussed as a diverse phenomenon encompassing political, professional, networked and individual arguments and actions.

Loitering Melville House Pub

"An excellent book by a genius," said Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., of this now classic exploration of the 1960s from the founder of new journalism.

"This is a book that will be a sharp pleasure to reread years from now, when it will bring back, like a falcon in the sky of memory, a whole world that is currently jetting and jazzing its way somewhere or other."--Newsweek

In his first book, *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby* (1965) Wolfe introduces us to the sixties, to extravagant new styles of life that had nothing to do with the "elite" culture of the past.

*Discriminations* Harper Collins  
Though it has a lovely name, the real "Island of Dreams" is actually a hunk of reclaimed land in Tokyo Bay where the city dumps its garbage . . . and yet, Shozo Saka, a middle-aged widower, does indeed find the

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place beautiful: gravitating more and more, since the death of his wife, toward the Island's massive piles of trash. One day, however, his refuge is invaded by Yoko, a mysterious woman in black, who visits the Island on her motorcycle for no other reason than to treat it as her own private obstacle course. Soon Yoko has lured Saka away from his garbage-paradise, leading him back into a Tokyo far less benign than the things it's thrown away. Acclaimed on its first publication, *Island of Dreams* is a sinister satire on urban decay.