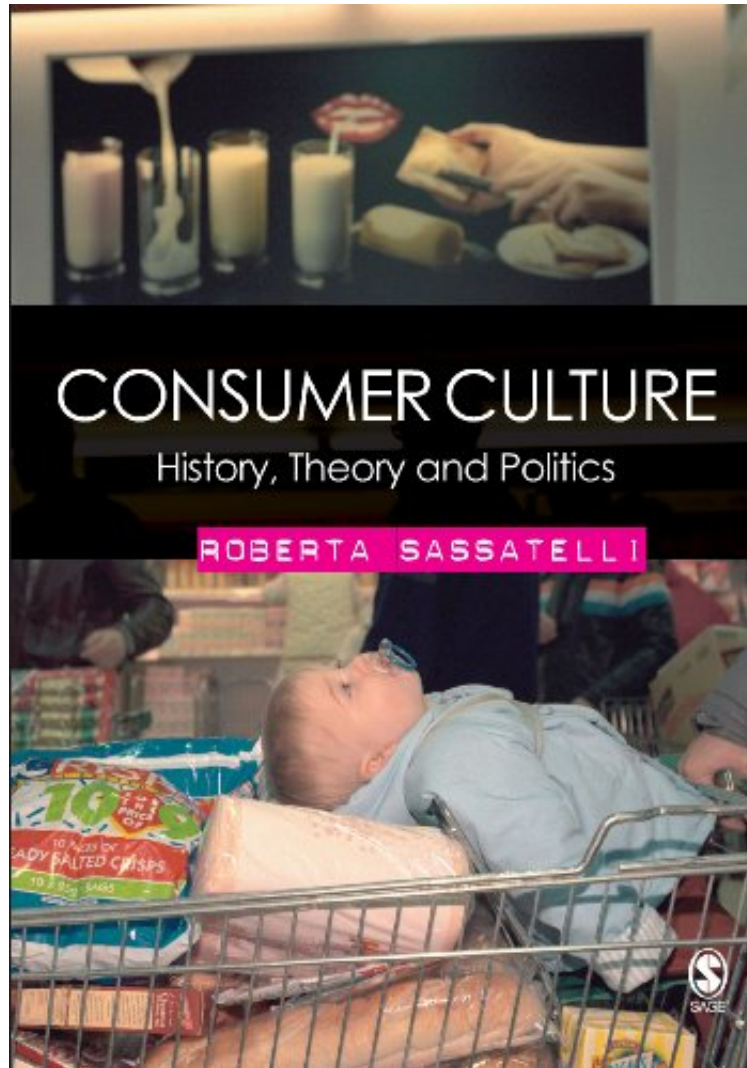


Consumer Culture: History, Theory and Politics

Roberta Sassatelli

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Roberta Sassatelli : Consumer Culture: History, Theory and Politics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Consumer Culture: History, Theory and Politics:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not badBy Dr.J.A.P.Is split into 3 subsections, History, cultural theory and political implications of consumer culture. VERY hard read, as in really not good for students who don't have a stellar grasp of the English language (and that includes most US college students). I'm a mid 40's Ph.D and I had a bit of struggle following it because of the complexity of the embedded sentence structures and the use of words so obscure that they will probably never show up on an SAT exam. I'm just starting my education in the field (my school wants me to teach it), but its discussions of history and anthropological theory (both my areas) correlate to what I already sort of knew -- but had never focused on directly. Lots of Pierre Bourdieu, Jean Baudrillard etc for the theory

parts, discussions of consumerism not really existing as a cultural phenomena till the colonial age (1650's), the interplay between people and things, constructions of personal identity, how local cultures shift the meaning and usage of items, how even McD's is forced to modify to local markets, etc.

"A thorough and wide-ranging synthetic account of social scientific research on consumption which will set the standard for the second generation of textbooks on cultures of consumption."- Alan Warde, University of Manchester
"The multi-disciplinary nature of the book provides new and revealing insights, and Sassatelli conveys brilliantly the heterogeneity and ambivalent nature of consumer identities, consumer practices and consumer cultures... Newcomers to consumer culture will find this an invaluable primer and introduction to the major concepts and ideas, while those familiar with the field will find Sassatelli's sharp analysis and discussion both refreshing and inspiring."- James Skinner, Journal of Sociology
"This is a model of what a text book ought to be. Over the past decade the original debates about consumption have been overlaid by a vast amount of detailed research, and it seems unimaginable that a single text could do justice to all of these. To do so would involve as much a commitment to depth as to breadth. I was quite astonished at how well Sassatelli succeeds in balancing the two... Ultimately, it's the book that I would trust to help people digest what we now have discovered about consumption and start from a much more mature and reflective foundation to consider what more we might yet do."- Daniel Miller, Material World
Showing the cultural and institutional processes that have brought the notion of the 'consumer' to life, this book guides the reader on a comprehensive journey through the history of how we have come to understand ourselves as consumers in a consumer society and reveals the profound ambiguities and ambivalences inherent within. While rooted in sociology, Sassatelli draws on the traditions of history, anthropology, geography and economics to provide: a history of the rise of consumer culture around the world a richly illustrated analysis of theory from neo-classical economics, to critical theory, to theories of practice and ritual de-commodification a compelling discussion of the politics underlying our consumption practices. An exemplary introduction to the history and theory of consumer culture, this book provides nuanced answers to some of the most central questions of our time.

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Material World Blog
The author needs to be applauded for taking on the vast challenge of presenting the enormous width and the manifold implications of consumption on the wider social structure and culture of modern societies. In modern markets, people talk, not money. Marian Adolf and Nico Stehr
Cultural Sociology
Sassatelli's relational approach to consumption certainly avoids falling into deterministic or univocal accounts... She frames her book with a series of dichotomies, swinging theoretical pendulums from apocalyptic pessimism to celebratory freedom... Readers will no doubt be impressed with Sassatelli's refusal to take any single account of consumption without rich and critical questioning. Ashley Mears
The Ambivalence of Consumption
In just 237 pages Sassatelli has written an impressive survey of an extraordinarily large and varied literature focusing primarily on developments in Europe and North America... And it is this vast compendium of research studies on consumer practices on these two continents carrying us through the present that makes this book so significant. Moreover, to make its contents accessible to students as well as professionals, it is written as a textbook with eight chapters, each of which is followed by a concise summary. Also helpful to readers is an insightful epilogue followed by a concluding section providing the author's recommendations of additional reading for students of consumer culture... To conclude, this is an intellectually impressive book that takes a fresh up-to-date approach to developments in consumer culture on both sides of the Atlantic. And while the author has far greater familiarity with consumer culture on the European side, major North American developments are not overlooked. The result is a new and helpful international approach to consumer culture at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Monroe Friedman
Journal of American Cultures
In my view, Sassatelli is most successful in offering a thorough introduction to the field... Sassatelli manages to provide useful analyses and to draw interesting connections between the literatures she discusses. I found particularly helpful her discussion of the 'normalization of consumption', whereby consumption that is the product of controlled choice is deemed most legitimate... Sassatelli's advocacy is always qualified. She attempts to incorporate the insights of even the most determinist perspectives, and cautions against going too far in seeing consumption as unequivocally liberating or able to escape structures of inequality. Laura J. Miller
Journal of Consumer Culture
Sassatelli is true to her word. She does address the history, theory and politics of consumer culture. The book offers a comfortable read. I think the most valuable contribution is the rounding up of many theories that have evolved over time about what is consumer society and why this matters... I did enjoy her discussion of practice tied to the notion of consumer capital... Consumption is hugely significant, and the more chances we have to learn

about its history, related theories and attendant politics, the better. Sue McGregor *International Journal of Consumer Studies* This is a work of impressive scope and depth, covering a substantial amount of ground. The multi-disciplinary nature of the book provides new and revealing insights, and Sassatelli conveys brilliantly the heterogeneity and ambivalent nature of consumer identities, consumer practices and consumer cultures. Furthermore, the author succeeds in discussing these complex issues in a clear and easily accessible way. This text would certainly be suitable for students at the undergraduate or graduate level, and indeed anyone else interested in this area. Newcomers to consumer culture will find this an invaluable primer and introduction to the major concepts and ideas, while those familiar with the field will find Sassatelli's sharp analysis and discussion both refreshing and inspiring. 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