



The Spirit of Disobedience: Resisting the Charms of Fake Politics, Mindless Consumption, and the Culture of Total Work

Curtis White

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Trained relentlessly to work and consume, we make daily lifestyle decisions that promote corporate profits more than our own well-being. We also find ourselves working more, living in fragmented communities, and neglecting our most basic spiritual and political values. As Curtis White puts it, In order to live, you will be asked to do what is no good, what is absurd, trivial, demeaning, and soul killing. Although we belong to the world s most affluent society, somehow we never have the chance to ask: How shall we live?

With his trademark humor and acerbic wit, White raises this impertinent question. He also debunks the conventional view that liberalism can answer it without drawing on spiritual values. Surveying American popular culture (including Office Space and The Da Vinci Code) to illustrate his points, White urges us to renew our commitment to human fundamentals as articulated by Henry David Thoreau-especially free time, home, and food-and to reclaim Thoreau s spirit of disobedience.

Seeking imaginative answers to his central questions, White also interviews John De Graaf (Affluenza), James Howard Kunstler (The Long Emergency) and Michael Ableman (Fields of Plenty) about their views of the good life in our time.

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