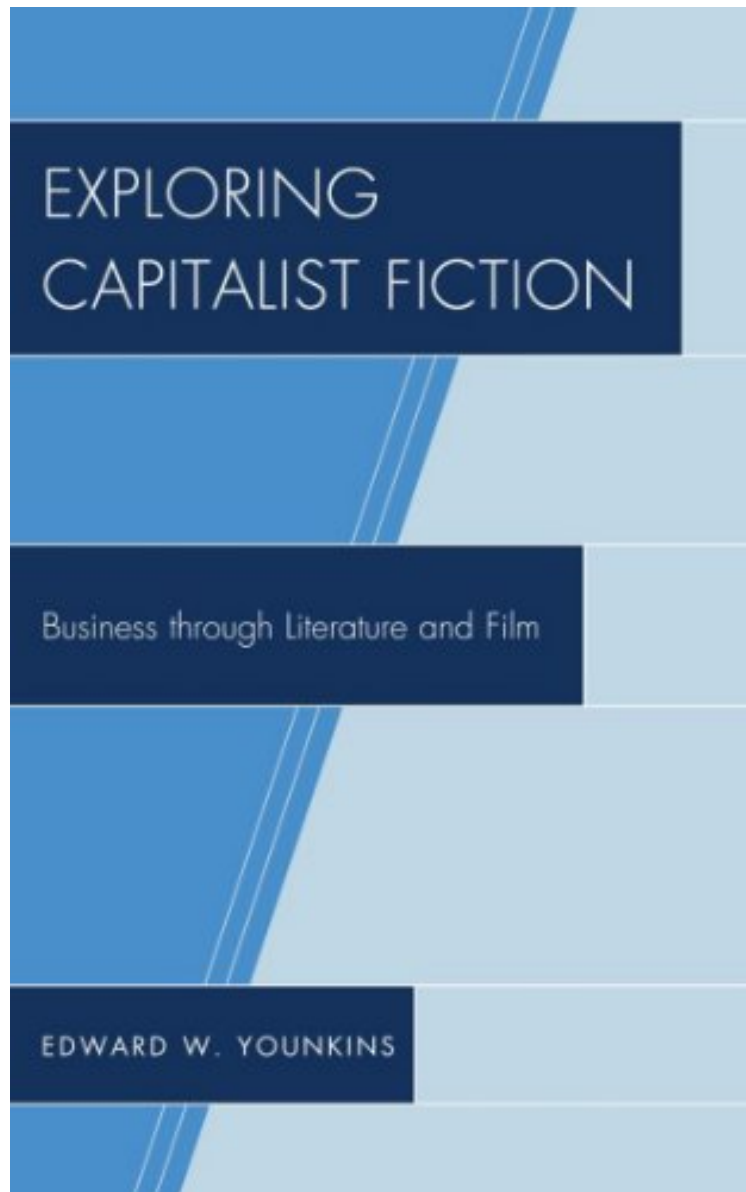


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# Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business through Literature and Film

*Edward W. Younkins*

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**Edward W. Younkins : Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business through Literature and Film** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business through Literature and Film:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Younkins provides an excellent view into the capitalist views of many of the ...By CustomerDr. Younkins provides an excellent view into the capitalist views of many of the great

novels, films, and plays of our time. Featuring 25 chapters (including the Ayn Rands' Atlas Shrugged, which is arguably the greatest combination of philosophy, business, and literature written to date), each one telling a synopsis of the story along with parallels into the everyday business life. Dr. Younkings goes into explicit detail about the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 while discussing Gordon Gekko and Jake Moore's saga in Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps, Lawrence "The Liquidator" Garfinkle's takeover of the NWEA in Jerry Sterner's play Other People's Money, and Henry Galt's brilliant tactics in Garet Garret's The Driver, just to name a few. It was refreshing to immerse myself into the work of capitalist fiction through Dr. Younkings' eyes. The knowledge gained from this book will be carried throughout my life and be exercised throughout my career. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. such as "The Great Gatsby"; films By Eric Wyant In "Exploring Capitalist Fiction", Dr. Younkings examines many well-respected works from the past and makes them applicable to the business world. The chapters provide a detailed summary of literary works, such as "The Great Gatsby"; films, such as "Wallstreet"; plays, such as "Death of a Salesman". After the works are briefly summarized, Dr. Younkings then explores a deeper meaning that relates to the business world. This was an easy read with useful information that would be ideal for any business related field. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book and intriguing experience!! By Zachary Bangor Great book!! Having been impressed with "Capitalism and Commerce", I was interested to see what "Exploring Capitalist Fiction" had to offer. It was everything I had expected and then some. He accurately summarizes 25 novels and films, which give a clear and precise representation of Capitalism and its many interpretations. If you are looking for creative illustration of capitalism and commerce from all perspectives, look no further. An intriguing experience!

Fiction, including novels, plays, and films, can be a powerful force in educating students and employees in ways that lectures, textbooks, articles, case studies, and other traditional teaching approaches cannot. Works of fiction can address a range of issues and topics, provide detailed real-life descriptions of the organizational contexts in which workers find themselves, and tell interesting, engaging, and memorable stories that are richer and more likely to stay with the reader or viewer longer than lectures and other teaching approaches. For these reasons, Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business through Literature and Film analyzes 25 films, novels, and plays that engage the theories, concepts, and issues most relevant to the business world. Through critical examinations of works such as Atlas Shrugged and Wall Street, Younkings shows how fiction is a powerful teaching tool to sensitize business students without business experience and to educate and train managers in real businesses.

This richly annotated bibliography of novels, films, and plays could be read in conjunction with studying business. Arguing that these imaginative works offer insights not found in textbooks or case studies, Younkings explicates their power to represent as well as entertain. After a summary introduction, the author presents 25 brief, chronological chapters, each focusing on a separate work, beginning with William Dean Howells's *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) and ending with Oliver Stone's film *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps* (2010). In summarizing these works, Younkings emphasizes universal themes, such as amorality in Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier*, the American Dream in Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, individualism in Ken Kesey's *Sometimes a Great Notion*, and competition in David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*. After a brief conclusion that again summarizes the content, the book ends with appendixes that list additional business novels, plays, and films. . . [T]his volume serves as an ideal primer for an instructor who wishes to include literature in a business course. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower- and upper-division undergraduates; faculty; general readers. (CHOICE) Exploring Capitalist Fiction, a new volume of literary analysis by Dr. Edward W. Younkings, offers perceptive, relevant, and engaging commentaries on 25 works of fiction which portray the business world and its relationship to all areas of human life. . . Younkings is to be commended for emphasizing the value of fiction as a teaching tool for both students of business and individuals immersed in the business world. . . Exploring Capitalist Fiction is an excellent means to appreciate the richness and variety of fictional portrayals of business, especially since the Second Industrial Revolution of the late 19th century. The book offers a concise introduction to many works and endeavors to motivate readers to seek out and experience the original novels, plays, and films. (The Rational Argumentator) Exploring Capitalist Fiction may not sound like a page-turner. But Edward W. Younkings, a professor of accountancy and director of graduate programs in the Department of Business at Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia, has produced a most appealing and useful text, one that can satisfy a variety of interests. . . Younkings gives the reader a good mix of works. There are novels, plays and movies, and in some cases such as "The Great Gatsby," novels that have been made into movies a number of times; 1949, 1974, 2000, 2003; an indication, perhaps, of the story's enduring attraction. . . In sum, there is a lot to like and a lot to learn in Exploring Capitalist Fiction. (El Paso Times) Younkings puts together a canon of economics-themed fiction here and does not stop with works that are just still popular today. . . Anyone who teaches business or economics will find in Younkings' book an extremely helpful guide to expanding one's teaching beyond the usual non-fiction standards to connect with students on a level that goes beyond mere concepts and into the illustrations of how humans truly interact with the economic systems around them. In other words, this book will help instructors use art to improve instruction while helping students consume popular culture more insightfully. (Ludwig von Mises)

Institute) Although his prior books establish Dr. Younkings as a scholarly and prolific philosopher of liberty, *Exploring Capitalist Fiction* focuses not on the philosophy of business but on the complex lives of fictional men who implement it. Its twenty-five plot summaries illustrate, unsurprisingly, that businessmen are neither more nor less moral or confused than the rest of us, from the crony-capitalist railroaders in Norris's *The Octopus*, Cahan's wealthy but unhappy David Levinsky, and Lewis's terrified conformist Babbitt to more heroic, less conflicted figures like Hawley's Cash McCall, Kesey's Stamper family, and King Vidor's Steve Dango. Dr. Younkings occasionally offers a valuable philosophical or economic insight, but the book is principally a welcome, fascinating, even-handed study of business and capitalism in literature. (John Egger, Towson University) *Exploring Capitalist Fiction* is one of those books I have needed for a long time, but just didn't know it. In this volume, Younkings assembles a remarkable collection of insights about how business is portrayed in literature and film. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the book is Younkings's ability to balance historical viewpoints with contemporary and whimsical perspectives with serious ones, across both film and print. And he does so while striking a balance between supportive and critical outlooks on business and capitalism that I would not have thought possible. This is an excellent book. (Marshall Schminke, University of Central Florida) Perhaps no subject has been so much discussed in literature and film yet so under-analyzed and examined as business. This volume is a virtual pioneer in remedying this situation. Drawing from novels, plays, and films, and ranging over a variety of attitudes towards business, Younkings selects works of depth and importance for anyone interested in exploring the treatment of business in fiction and thereby coming to appreciate its cultural and moral significance. Especially refreshing is Younkings's selection process which avoids the temptation to concentrate on contemporary works. Instead we see selections from a number of different eras with attention paid to lesser known works as well as some obvious favorites. I have little doubt that this book will become a standard reference work for those interested in the treatment of business through creative fiction. (Douglas Den Uyl, Vice President of Educational Programs, Liberty Fund) I am a testament to the validity of the theme of this book, which is that fiction can be a powerful tool for business education. A novel, *Atlas Shrugged*, changed my life and was far more important to me in successfully leading a business than any nonfiction book or college course. (John Allison, President and CEO, Cato Institute) Professor Younkings makes another contribution to the literature of freedom, this time by showing us what pro-capitalist fiction—and anti-capitalist, too—can teach us about business and its enemies. (Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr., Chairman and CEO, Ludwig von Mises Institute) Why do critics of laissez faire capitalism have all the good folk songs? All the good novels (well, most of them)? Ditto for poems, plays, stories. Why is virtually all of literature, music and art almost a wholly owned subsidiary of those who oppose economic freedom? Probably, because they work harder at it than we do. It is all the more important, then, that those of us who treasure the free marketplace and private property rights get into this "industry" as well. Now along comes a very important contribution in this regard: Edward Younkings's new book: *Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business Through Literature and Film*. He unerringly explores, contemplates and analyzes twenty-five important books and movies that deal with business. I cannot possibly overestimate the importance of this initiative in promoting liberty and the free society. I have been a fan of Ed's for many years now. I greatly admire his previous works, and this one fully lives up to his previous contributions. I am delighted to recommend this book, highly, to all those with an interest in both literature and freedom. A note to English majors: read this book! It will give you a perspective on literature you are unlikely, in the extreme, to have ever seen before. It will be a real thrill to see these books and movies not from the eyes of your typical leftist literature professor, but from the vantage point of someone who celebrates liberty. (Walter Block, Loyola University, New Orleans) Most people today spend at least a third of their weekday lives in the business world. Some view that world as a second family. Younkings' superb summaries and analyses of twenty-five works of capitalist fiction create the feel of what it is like to work in the modern institution known as business. In all of these fictional cases there are many complex personal, ethical, and psychological interactions: government vs. business, employer vs. employee, supplier vs. client, and, of course, fellow entrepreneur/employee vs. fellow entrepreneur/employee. Ethical issues are the star. Indeed, the book could easily be used as a text in business ethics courses. (Jerry Kirkpatrick, California State Polytechnic University) The struggle for liberty must consist of more than an intellectual appeal. As Ayn Rand demonstrated in her novels, the establishment of a free society will succeed only if people have an emotional investment in such an outcome. It is art that creates and supports the level of personal involvement required to motivate and sustain people in the face of unrelenting and unforgiving opposition. In his book *Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business Through Literature and Film*, Edward Younkings recognizes the power of art as a force both for and against the ideals necessary for a world in which we can exist fully as human beings. Tapping into a wide range of source material, Younkings explores the role of fiction in sustaining or retarding the course the Founders set for our nation. Providing clear yet succinct summaries of a variety of works—including *The Great Gatsby*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Atlas Shrugged*, and the movie *Wall Street*—Younkings succeeds in explaining and analyzing these twenty-five diverse works in the context of his book's themes. Readers of *Exploring Capitalist Fiction* will enjoy these bite-sized introductions to unfamiliar works as well as explorations of fiction they have already enjoyed. With luck, Younkings's efforts here will spark more interest in expanding the arguments for freedom beyond dry academic journals to include art that moves us, involves us, and

provides us emotional fuel in the face of the greatest task of our lives. (Russell Madden, Author of the novel, *Death is Easy*) Ed Younkings' newest book will be indispensable to anyone either teaching or studying the portrayal of business in American fiction, plays, and films over the past century and a quarter. His admirably evenhanded summaries of twenty-five important works in this tradition, and his exhaustive lists of other titles not discussed at length, will be useful also to the general reader who simply wants to discover more about how commercial enterprise has been depicted in novels, plays, and movies over the past hundred years or so. (Jeff Riegenbach, Author of *In Praise of Decadence*, and *Why American History Is Not What They Say: An Introduction to Revisionism*) Lawyer and statesman St. Thomas More argued that the study of literature provides greater moral understanding than does the study of law. Edward Younkings strengthens that argument through his perceptive and insightful examination of both pro- and anti-business fiction and film. (Samuel Bostaph, Emeritus Professor of Economics, University of Dallas) This work includes essays on an amazingly wide range of American novels, plays, and films from the past two centuries, all containing business and economic themes and content. Younkings' insightful reading of many of the major texts that explore issues of business and capitalism is a welcome addition to interdisciplinary studies. It can easily serve as a guideline for a course in either a College of Business or a College of Liberal Arts. (Mimi R. Gladstein, University of Texas at El Paso) Once more Ed Younkings has come up with an insightful discussion of an important topic. Professor Younkings writes in a way that is intelligible to the general audience while retaining the rigor of thought expected of an academic. *Exploring Capitalist Fiction* is fun to read and will change the way you look at a film, read a book or watch a play. (Gary Wolfram, Hillsdale College) In *Exploring Capitalist Fiction: Business through Literature and Film*, Edward W. Younkings proposes that the use of imaginative literature to portray and explain the behavior of individuals in business is a method that is richer and more realistic than what is presented in journal articles, textbooks, and even case studies. Through critical examinations of works such as *Atlas Shrugged* and *Wall Street*, Younkings shows how fiction is a powerful teaching tool to sensitize business students without business experience and to educate and train managers in real businesses. About the Author Edward W. Younkings is professor of accountancy and director of graduate programs in the Department of Business at Wheeling Jesuit University.