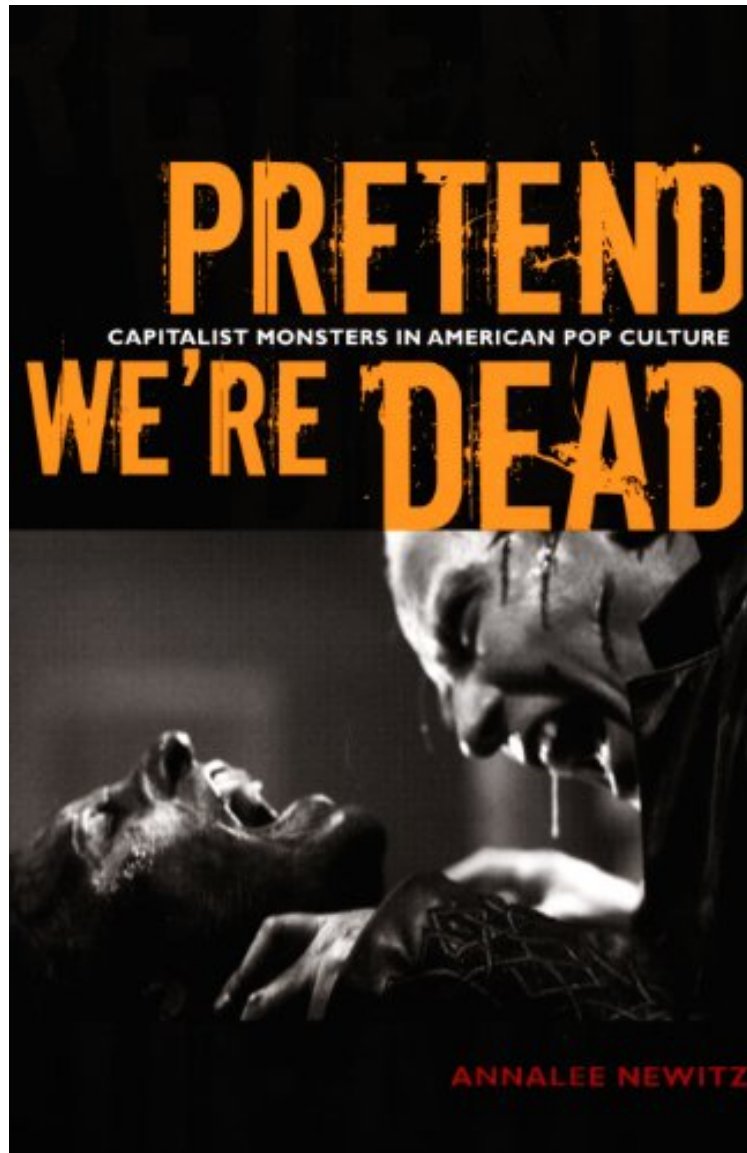


[Free pdf] Pretend We're Dead: Capitalist Monsters in American Pop Culture

Pretend We're Dead: Capitalist Monsters in American Pop Culture

Annalee Newitz

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Annalee Newitz : Pretend We're Dead: Capitalist Monsters in American Pop Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pretend We're Dead: Capitalist Monsters in American Pop Culture:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Engaging ScholarshipBy abcphdI first encountered this text as a graduate student at UC Berkeley. I was studying Anthropology, but the chapter called, "The Undead: A Haunted

Whiteness" changed the trajectory of my career forever. Newitz's analysis of zombie film history was exactly the kind of scholarship I wanted to emulate -- approachable, well-researched, fascinating material, and insightful analysis that transformed my perspective on the genre and inspired me to go even further. I went on to pursue a second MA (in Cinema and Media Studies) largely thanks to this new interest in film sparked by Newitz, and then finally my PhD in Cultural Studies. Now I teach different chapters from this book in a few different classes, including "Introduction to American Popular Culture," "Media Anthropology," "Film as Folklore," and "Monsters in America." Most undergraduates have found the text as engaging, approachable, and thought-provoking as I did. To the person who wrote a one-star review of this book under the name "Acute Observer" -- that's an ironic handle for someone who is apparently neither insightful nor observant. Your chief complaints seem to be that the book is not available for free (another irony given the book's implicit critique of capitalism) and that it doesn't have whole chapters solely devoted to your area of interest (Newitz does discuss histories of Frankenstein and Dracula, by the way, which you might know had you "paged through" beyond the table of contents). If you are the type of person who wants to understand a scholarly book merely by flipping through it, then no, I suppose Newitz's complex and engaging arguments are not for you. I caution others who might be interested in this book that you might actually have to read it -- which perhaps should also be a prerequisite for writing a review.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The analysis between HP Lovecraft and Birth of A Nation is just so good and is the height of this really great academic ...By sean parson This is such a well written and provocative book. The author does a phenomenal job providing unique and creative readings of horror movie, books, and trope that are not just creative but persuasive. The chapter on race and zombies, alone, is worth reading this book. The analysis between HP Lovecraft and Birth of A Nation is just so good and is the height of this really great academic book.

24 of 27 people found the following review helpful. Insightful and Provocative! By Dave Alber Pretend We're Dead by Annalee Newitz explores pop culture images of monsters as metaphors for experiences within American-style capitalism. Her premise is stated in her introduction, "Capitalism, as its monsters tell us more or less explicitly, makes us pretend we're dead in order to live. This pretense of death, this willing sacrifice of our own lives simply for money, is the dark side of our economic system" (6.) The following chapters of this energetic, erudite, and sometimes hilarious study of American pop culture are dedicated to five types of popular monsters, which Annalee shows to be projections of capitalist fears. The monsters are: Serial Killers, Mad Doctors, The Undead, Robots, and Mass Media. The final chapter ends this study of pop culture by reminding us that within this system, we are after all, "consumers" of images and cultural forms, which only exist to terrify us. A fun, yet important book!

In Pretend We're Dead, Annalee Newitz argues that the slimy zombies and gore-soaked murderers who have stormed through American film and literature over the past century embody the violent contradictions of capitalism. Ravaged by overwork, alienated by corporate conformity, and mutilated by the unfettered lust for profit, fictional monsters act out the problems with an economic system that seems designed to eat people whole. Newitz looks at representations of serial killers, mad doctors, the undead, cyborgs, and unfortunates mutated by their involvement with the mass media industry. Whether considering the serial killer who turns murder into a kind of labor by mass producing dead bodies, or the hack writers and bloodthirsty actresses trapped inside Hollywood's profit-mad storytelling machine, she reveals that each creature has its own tale to tell about how a freewheeling market economy turns human beings into monstrosities. Newitz tracks the monsters spawned by capitalism through B movies, Hollywood blockbusters, pulp fiction, and American literary classics, looking at their manifestations in works such as Norman Mailer's "The Executioner's Song"; the short stories of Isaac Asimov and H. P. Lovecraft; the cyberpunk novels of William Gibson and Marge Piercy; true-crime books about the serial killers Ted Bundy and Jeffrey Dahmer; and movies including Modern Times (1936), Donovan's Brain (1953), Night of the Living Dead (1968), RoboCop (1987), The Silence of the Lambs (1991), and Artificial Intelligence: AI (2001). Newitz shows that as literature and film tell it, the story of American capitalism since the late nineteenth century is a tale of body-mangling, soul-crushing horror.

"Pretend We're Dead sets our monsters free of the dank laboratory of psychosexual studies and sends them rampaging across the landscape of economic reality. A sweeping, liberating, and wonderfully readable book." —Gerard Jones, author of Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters, and the Birth of the Comic Book