

Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945

Charles F. McGovern

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Charles F. McGovern : Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. in a better researched and more lucid form than any other source ...By Tim WuThis is a truly exceptional work in terms of its scope, depth of research, clarity of writing, and overall excellence.McGovern covers the growth of consumerism over the early 20th century along with the rise of anti-consumerist reaction. He has captured, in a better researched and more lucid form than any other source I know, a

development that shapes our daily lives perhaps more profoundly than any other. This book is interesting and accessible to the general public, but also invaluable for research. I say this as a professor at Columbia university who has made great us of this book personally. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very good book. I bought it for a masters class ...By PittbullVery good book. I bought it for a masters class paper I was working on...you know how that goes, but I ended up really liking it and leaned a lot.

At the turn of the twentieth century, an emerging consumer culture in the United States promoted constant spending to meet material needs and develop social identity and self-cultivation. In *Sold American*, Charles F. McGovern examines the key players active in shaping this cultural evolution: advertisers and consumer advocates. McGovern argues that even though these two professional groups invented radically different models for proper spending, both groups propagated mass consumption as a specifically American social practice and an important element of nationality and citizenship. Advertisers, McGovern shows, used nationalist ideals, icons, and political language to define consumption as the foundation of the pursuit of happiness. Consumer advocates, on the other hand, viewed the market with a republican-inspired skepticism and fought commercial incursions on consumer independence. The result, says McGovern, was a redefinition of the citizen as consumer. The articulation of an "American Way of Life" in the Depression and World War II ratified consumer abundance as the basis of a distinct American culture and history.

"A fascinating intellectual journey. . . . a compelling story of American citizenship. Jean-Christophe Agnew, Yale University"
"This is a wonderful book, brilliantly researched and elegantly written. George Lipsitz, University of California, Santa Barbara"
"Provides a welcome addition to the canon of works on mass and consumer culture. . . . A meticulous analysis into the participation of two groups of people that have been instrumental in shaping the relationships between consumers. . . . Promises to provide fertile ground for discussion." -- "Winterthur Portfolio"
"Masterful. . . . Powerfully argued and deeply researched." -- "Journal of Contemporary History"
"Thoroughly researched, deeply grounded in archival collections, iconography, and secondary literature, and wonderfully illustrated with telling advertising imagery." -- "Register of the Kentucky Historical Society"
"McGovern's long awaited book rewards our patience as scholars with its exemplary study of how we lost our patience as a polity of consumers." -- "American Historical"
"A finely wrought, lavishly illustrated volume. . . . Highly recommended." -- "CHOICE"
"The latest addition to the important new literature on the political economy of consumer capitalism. . . . Represents a sturdy contribution to our thinking about what is arguably the most important question in contemporary American history." -- "Indiana Magazine of History"
"Particularly valuable in that McGovern argues persuasively." -- "American Journalism"
McGovern's long awaited book rewards our patience as scholars with its exemplary study of how we lost our patience as a polity of consumers.--*American Historical*
Sold American takes the reader on a fascinating intellectual journey through the febrile world of advertising publicists, copywriters, and critics as they debated the proper character and place of the consumer during the first half of the twentieth century. It is a compelling story of American citizenship that speaks not just to students of consumer culture but to all readers grappling with the meaning of the nation-state in an age of globalization.--Jean-Christophe Agnew, Yale University
Provides a welcome addition to the canon of works on mass and consumer culture. . . . A meticulous analysis into the participation of two groups of people that have been instrumental in shaping the relationships between consumers. . . . Promises to provide fertile ground for discussion.--*Winterthur Portfolio*
McGovern enables us to appreciate the formative struggles that defined today's 'common sense' understanding of the associations that link consumer spending to national citizenship, that put consumption at the center of the social world, and that define democracy as equal access to consumer goods. This is a wonderful book, brilliantly researched and elegantly written.--George Lipsitz, University of California, Santa Barbara
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From the Inside Flap
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