



Packaging Life: Cultures of the Everyday

Pramod K Nayar

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Packaging Life: Cultures of the Everyday is a study of the cultural politics of four aspects of everyday life-health, comfort, risk and mobility-as manifest in public culture. The book explores the commodification of these aspects, arguing that our experience and perception of these are mediated by discourses circulating in the mass media.

The author explores how notions of 'good' health, 'cosmopolitan' identities, and 'luxurious' lifestyles are constructed, arguing that such constructions, or what this book calls 'packaging', encourage us to buy particular commodities, adopt certain lifestyles, assimilate specific political beliefs and develop significant anxieties. Discourses, he suggests, morph into consumer practices, where particular kinds of bodies, objects, and practices are established as the norm-safe, stylish and cosmopolitan-so that they appear natural, legitimate and desirable and lead us, consumers, to buy, practice, believe in and adopt them. He also analyzes or tries to 'unpack' this underlying discourse within images, rhetoric, narratives and representations so that we understand the politics behind them.

'Unpacking' cultural politics, this book demonstrates, is the disentangling of the insidious regulatory frames of representation so that we generate dissident reading practices for public culture. The book is an essential reading for those who want to understand modern urban cultural rhetorics. Scholars and practitioners working in the fields of media and communication, consumer behaviour studies and cultural studies will find it highly engaging as well as provocative.

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