

public discourse in the age of show business

Introduction:

Public discourse, the lifeblood of a healthy democracy, is undergoing a dramatic transformation in the age of show business. The lines between genuine debate and entertainment are blurring, raising crucial questions about the quality of our conversations and the future of informed public opinion. This article will explore how the entertainment industry's influence is shaping public discourse, examining both the positive and negative implications of this increasingly intertwined relationship. We will delve into the impact of social media, the role of celebrity endorsements, and the challenges of distinguishing fact from fiction in a hyper-saturated media landscape. Understanding this complex interplay is vital for navigating the modern information ecosystem and fostering meaningful civic engagement.

Article Outline:

- I. The Rise of Entertainment-Driven News and its Impact on Public Discourse
- II. The Role of Social Media in Amplifying and Distorting Public Conversations
- III. Celebrity Endorsements and the Erosion of Trust in Traditional Authority
- IV. The Blurring Lines Between Fact and Fiction in the Age of Misinformation
- V. Strategies for Navigating the Entertainment-Dominated Information Landscape
- VI. The Future of Public Discourse in a Show Business-Influenced World

Article Body:

- I. The Rise of Entertainment-Driven News and its Impact on Public Discourse

Entertainment News Dominates the Media Landscape:

The 24-hour news cycle, driven by the need for constant content, often prioritizes sensationalism and entertainment value over in-depth analysis and factual accuracy. This shift has led to a decline in substantive political discussions and a rise in shallow, emotionally charged rhetoric.

The Prioritization of Ratings Over Substance:

News organizations, under pressure to attract viewers and maintain high ratings, may prioritize stories that are visually appealing and emotionally engaging, even if they lack significant political or social importance. This can lead to a distorted representation of reality and a lack of focus on critical issues.

Sensationalism Over Substance:

The focus on entertainment often leads to the simplification of complex issues, reducing nuanced debates to simplistic soundbites and emotionally charged narratives. This can hinder genuine understanding and compromise the ability of citizens to engage in informed decision-making.

II. The Role of Social Media in Amplifying and Distorting Public Conversations

Social Media as a Double-Edged Sword:

Social media platforms have revolutionized communication, offering unprecedented opportunities for public engagement. However, their algorithm-driven nature often prioritizes emotionally charged content, regardless of its accuracy. This can lead to the spread of misinformation and the polarization of public opinion.

Echo Chambers and Filter Bubbles:

Social media algorithms tend to reinforce pre-existing beliefs, creating echo chambers where users are primarily exposed to information that confirms their existing biases. This limits exposure to diverse perspectives and hinders productive dialogue.

The Spread of Misinformation and Fake News:

The ease with which misinformation and fake news can spread on social media poses a significant threat to public discourse. The rapid dissemination of unsubstantiated claims can quickly undermine trust in legitimate news sources and create confusion and distrust.

III. Celebrity Endorsements and the Erosion of Trust in Traditional Authority

Celebrities as Influencers:

Celebrities wield considerable influence over public opinion, and their endorsements can sway voters and shape public attitudes on various issues. However, their expertise often lies outside the realm of politics and policy.

The Appeal of Celebrity Influence:

The perceived authenticity and relatability of celebrities can make their endorsements particularly persuasive, even when lacking factual basis or informed opinion. This can undermine the credibility of experts and traditional authorities.

The Downside of Celebrity Endorsements:

Reliance on celebrity endorsements can lead to a decline in informed decision-making, as voters may base their choices on emotional appeals rather than substantive policy considerations. This erodes the importance of expertise and reasoned debate.

IV. The Blurring Lines Between Fact and Fiction in the Age of Misinformation

The Rise of Deepfakes and Manipulated Media:

Advances in technology have made it increasingly easy to create and distribute deepfakes and other forms of manipulated media, blurring the lines between reality and fiction. This makes it difficult to determine the veracity of information, further eroding public trust.

The Challenge of Verifying Information:

The sheer volume of information available online makes it challenging for individuals to verify the accuracy of news and information. This creates an environment where misinformation can thrive and undermine informed public discourse.

The Impact of Misinformation on Public Health and Safety:

The spread of misinformation about public health issues, such as vaccines or climate change, can have serious consequences, undermining public health initiatives and exacerbating existing problems.

V. Strategies for Navigating the Entertainment-Dominated Information Landscape

Media Literacy and Critical Thinking:

Developing strong media literacy skills and critical thinking abilities is crucial for navigating the complexities of the modern information ecosystem. This includes learning to evaluate sources, identify biases, and recognize misinformation.

Diversifying News Sources:

Consuming news and information from a variety of reputable sources helps to mitigate the risk of being exposed to biased or inaccurate information.

Fact-Checking and Verification:

Utilizing fact-checking websites and other resources can help to verify the accuracy of information before sharing it or basing decisions upon it.

VI. The Future of Public Discourse in a Show Business-Influenced World

The Need for Media Reform:

Addressing the challenges posed by the entertainment-driven nature of public discourse requires a multi-faceted approach. This might include media literacy education, regulatory reforms to address misinformation, and a renewed focus on journalistic ethics.

Promoting Civil Discourse and Deliberation:

Fostering respectful dialogue and encouraging citizens to engage in thoughtful deliberation is essential for maintaining a healthy democracy.

The Role of Education and Civic Engagement:

Education plays a crucial role in equipping citizens with the skills and knowledge necessary to engage effectively in public discourse. Promoting civic engagement and encouraging active participation in democratic processes is vital for countering the negative impacts of entertainment-driven news.

Conclusion:

The convergence of public discourse and show business presents significant challenges to informed civic engagement. The entertainment industry's emphasis on sensationalism, the amplification of misinformation on social media, and the influence of celebrity endorsements all contribute to a landscape where fact and fiction often blur. However, by fostering media literacy, promoting critical thinking, and engaging in thoughtful deliberation, we can navigate this complex environment and work towards a more informed and engaged citizenry.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

Q: How can I become more media literate? A: Seek out resources on media literacy from reputable organizations, practice critical thinking when consuming media, and evaluate sources for bias and accuracy.

Q: What can be done to combat the spread of misinformation? A: Support fact-checking initiatives, promote media literacy, and be cautious about sharing unverified information online. Report misinformation when you encounter it on social media platforms.

Q: What is the role of social media in shaping public discourse? A: Social media has amplified public conversations, but algorithms can create echo chambers and facilitate the spread of misinformation, requiring critical evaluation of content.

Q: How can we encourage more civil and productive public discourse? A: Promote respectful dialogue, encourage empathy, and foster a culture of listening and understanding diverse perspectives.

Related Keywords:

Public discourse, show business, media influence, social media, misinformation, fake news, celebrity endorsements, political communication, media literacy, critical thinking, civic engagement, information ecosystem, echo chambers, filter bubbles, deepfakes, manipulated media, news consumption, democratic participation.

public discourse in the age of show business: Amusing Ourselves to Death Neil Postman, 1986 Examines the effects of television culture on how we conduct our public affairs and how entertainment values corrupt the way we think.

public discourse in the age of show business: Amusing ourselves to death Neil Postman, 1982

public discourse in the age of show business: Amusing Ourselves to Death Neil Postman, 2005-12-27 What happens when media and politics become forms of entertainment? As our world begins to look more and more like Orwell's 1984, Neil's Postman's essential guide to the modern media is more relevant than ever. It's unlikely that Trump has ever read *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, but his ascent would not have surprised Postman." -CNN Originally published in 1985, Neil Postman's groundbreaking polemic about the corrosive effects of television on our politics and public discourse has been hailed as a twenty-first-century book published in the twentieth century. Now, with television joined by more sophisticated electronic media—from the Internet to cell phones to DVDs—it has taken on even greater significance. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* is a prophetic look at what happens when politics, journalism, education, and even religion become subject to the demands of entertainment. It is also a blueprint for regaining control of our media, so that they can serve our highest goals. "A brilliant, powerful, and important book. This is an indictment that Postman has laid down and, so far as I can see, an irrefutable one." -Jonathan Yardley, *The Washington Post Book World*

public discourse in the age of show business: Building a Bridge to the 18th Century Neil Postman, 2011-06-08 At a time when we are reexamining our values, reeling from the pace of change, witnessing the clash between good instincts and pragmatism, dealing with the angst of a new millennium, Neil Postman, one of our most distinguished observers of contemporary society, provides for us a source of guidance and inspiration. In *Building a Bridge to the Eighteenth Century* he revisits the Enlightenment, that great flowering of ideas that provided a humane direction for the future -- ideas that formed our nation and that we would do well to embrace anew. He turns our attention to Goethe, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Kant, Edward Gibbon, Adam Smith, Thomas Paine, Jefferson, and Franklin, and to their then-radical thinking about inductive science, religious and political freedom, popular education, rational commerce, the nation-state, progress, and happiness. Postman calls for a future connected to traditions that provide sane authority and meaningful purpose -- as opposed to an overreliance on technology and an increasing disregard for the lessons of history. And he argues passionately for specific new guidelines in the education of our children, with renewed emphasis on developing the intellect as successfully as we are developing a computer-driven world. Witty, provocative, and brilliantly reasoned, *Building a Bridge to the Eighteenth Century* is Neil Postman's most radical, and most commonsensical, book yet.

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centuries. We see afresh images most celebrated for their artistic merit (Picasso's *Guernica*, Goya's *Duendecitos*), images that provoked outrage (the 2008 Barry Blitt *New Yorker* cover, which depicted the Obamas as a Muslim and a Black Power militant fist-bumping in the Oval Office), and those that have dictated public discourse (Herblock's defining portraits of McCarthyism, the Nazi periodical *Der Stürmer*'s anti-Semitic caricatures). Navasky ties together these and other superlative genre examples to reveal how political cartoons have been not only capturing the zeitgeist throughout history but shaping it as well—and how the most powerful cartoons retain the ability to shock, gall, and inspire long after their creation. Here Victor S. Navasky brilliantly illuminates the true power of one of our most enduringly vital forms of artistic expression.

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Steven Livingston, 2020-10-15 This book shows how disinformation spread by partisan organizations and media platforms undermines institutional legitimacy on which authoritative information depends.

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public discourse in the age of show business: *A Crisis of Civility?* Robert G. Boatright, Timothy J. Shaffer, Sarah Sobieraj, Dannagal Goldthwaite Young, 2019-02-18 The state of political discourse in the United States today has been a subject of concern for many Americans. Political incivility is not merely a problem for political elites; political conversations between American citizens have also become more difficult and tense. The 2016 presidential elections featured campaign rhetoric designed to inflame the general public. Yet the 2016 election was certainly not the only cause of incivility among citizens. There have been many instances in recent years where reasoned discourse in our universities and other public venues has been threatened. This book was undertaken as a response to these problems. It presents and develops a more robust discussion of what civility is, why it matters, what factors might contribute to it, and what its consequences are for democratic life. The authors included here pursue three major questions: Is the state of American political discourse today really that bad, compared to prior eras; what lessons about civility can we draw from the 2016 election; and how have changes in technology such as the development of online news and other means of mediated communication changed the nature of our discourse? This book seeks to develop a coherent, civil conversation between divergent contemporary perspectives in political science, communications, history, sociology, and philosophy. This multidisciplinary approach helps to reflect on challenges to civil discourse, define civility, and identify its consequences for democratic life in a digital age. In this accessible text, an all-star cast of contributors tills the earth in which future discussion on civility will be planted.

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Gladstone analyzes the media and how it shapes our perceptions of the world. Now, from her front-row perch on the day's events, Gladstone brings her genius for making insightful, unexpected connections to help us understand what she calls—and what so many of us can acknowledge having—“trouble with reality.” Reality, as she shows us, was never what we thought it was—there is always a bubble, people are always subjective and prey to stereotypes. And that makes reality actually more vulnerable than we ever thought. Enter Donald J. Trump and his team of advisors. For them, as she writes, lying is the point. The more blatant the lie, the easier it is to hijack reality and assert power over the truth. Drawing on writers as diverse as Hannah Arendt, Walter Lippmann, Philip K. Dick, and Jonathan Swift, she dissects this strategy, straight out of the authoritarian playbook, and shows how the Trump team mastered it, down to the five types of tweets that Trump uses to distort our notions of what's real and what's not. And she offers hope. There is meaningful action, a time-tested treatment for moral panic. And there is also the inevitable reckoning. History tells us we can count on it. Brief and bracing, *The Trouble with Reality* shows exactly why so many of us didn't see it coming, and how we can recover both our belief in reality—and our sanity.

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public discourse in the age of show business: Conscientious Objections Neil Postman, 2011-06-08 In a series of feisty and ultimately hopeful essays, one of America's sharpest social critics casts a shrewd eye over contemporary culture to reveal the worst -- and the best -- of our habits of discourse, tendencies in education, and obsessions with technological novelty. Readers will find themselves rethinking many of their bedrock assumptions: Should education transmit culture or defend us against it? Is technological innovation progress or a peculiarly American addiction? When everyone watches the same television programs -- and television producers don't discriminate between the audiences for *Sesame Street* and *Dynasty* -- is childhood anything more than a sentimental concept? Writing in the traditions of Orwell and H.L. Mencken, Neil Postman sends shock waves of wit and critical intelligence through the cultural wasteland.

public discourse in the age of show business: Utopia Is Creepy: And Other Provocations Nicholas Carr, 2016-09-06 A freewheeling, sharp-shooting indictment of a tech-besotted culture. With razor wit, Nicholas Carr cuts through Silicon Valley's unsettlingly cheery vision of the technological future to ask a hard question: Have we been seduced by a lie? Gathering a decade's worth of posts from his blog, *Rough Type*, as well as his seminal essays, *Utopia Is Creepy* is “Carr's best hits for those who missed the last decade of his stream of thoughtful commentary about our love affair with technology and its effect on our relationships” (Richard Cytowic, *New York Journal of Books*). Carr draws on artists ranging from Walt Whitman to the Clash, while weaving in the latest findings from science and sociology. Carr's favorite targets are those zealots who believe so fervently in computers and data that they abandon common sense. Cheap digital tools do not make us all the next Fellini or Dylan. Social networks, diverting as they may be, are not vehicles for

self-enlightenment. And “likes” and retweets are not going to elevate political discourse. *Utopia Is Creepy* compels us to question the technological momentum that has trapped us in its flow. “Resistance is never futile,” argues Carr, and this book delivers the proof.

public discourse in the age of show business: Bobos in Paradise David Brooks, 2010-05-11 In his bestselling work of “comic sociology,” David Brooks coins a new word, Bobo, to describe today’s upper class—those who have wed the bourgeois world of capitalist enterprise to the hippie values of the bohemian counterculture. Their hybrid lifestyle is the atmosphere we breathe, and in this witty and serious look at the cultural consequences of the information age, Brooks has defined a new generation. Do you believe that spending \$15,000 on a media center is vulgar, but that spending \$15,000 on a slate shower stall is a sign that you are at one with the Zenlike rhythms of nature? Do you work for one of those visionary software companies where people come to work wearing hiking boots and glacier glasses, as if a wall of ice were about to come sliding through the parking lot? If so, you might be a Bobo.

public discourse in the age of show business: Twitter Dhiraj Murthy, 2013-09-04 Twitter has become a household name, discussed both for its role in prominent national elections, natural disasters, and political movements, as well as for what some malign as narcissistic “chatter.” This book takes a critical step back from popular discourse and media coverage of Twitter, to present the first balanced, scholarly engagement of this popular medium. In this timely and comprehensive introduction, Murthy not only discusses Twitter’s role in our political, economic, and social lives, but also draws a historical line between the telegraph and Twitter to reflect on changes in social communication over time. The book thoughtfully examines Twitter as an emergent global communications medium and provides a theoretical framework for students, scholars, and tweeters to reflect critically on the impact of Twitter and the contemporary media environment. The book uses case studies including citizen journalism, health, and national disasters to provide empirically rich insights and to help decipher some of the ways in which Twitter and social media more broadly may be shaping contemporary life.

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and modern that underpins most international thought. Uncovering this theological inheritance invites a fundamental reassessment of canonical figures, such as Hugo Grotius and Thomas Hobbes, and their contribution to theorizing international order. Second, this book shows how theological ideas continue to shape modern theories of international order by structuring the questions theorists ask as well as the answer they provide. It argues that the dominant vocabulary of international order, system and society, anarchy, balance of power, and constitutionalism, is mediated by the intellectual commitments of nominalist theology. It concludes by exploring the implications of thinking in terms of this theological inheritance, albeit in a world where God is only one of several possibilities that can be called upon to secure the regularity of order.

public discourse in the age of show business: *My Secret Brexit Diary* Michel Barnier, 2021-09-22 In June 2016, the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. As the EU's chief negotiator, for four years Michel Barnier had a seat at the table as the two sides thrashed out what 'Brexit' would really mean. The result would change Britain and Europe forever. During the 1600 days of complex and often acrimonious negotiations, Michel Barnier kept a secret diary. He recorded his private hopes and fears, and gave a blow-by-blow account as the negotiations oscillated between consensus and disagreement, transparency and lies. From Brussels to London, from Dublin to Nicosia, Michel Barnier's secret diary lifts the lid on what really happened behind the scenes of one of the most high-stakes negotiations in modern history. The result is a unique testimony from the ultimate insider on the hidden world of Brexit and those who made it happen.

public discourse in the age of show business: *Alter-Globalization* Geoffrey Pleyers, 2013-04-23 Contrary to the common view that globalization undermines social agency, 'alter-globalization activists', that is, those who contest globalization in its neo-liberal form, have developed new ways to become actors in the global age. They propose alternatives to Washington Consensus policies, implement horizontal and participatory organization models and promote a nascent global public space. Rather than being anti-globalization, these activists have built a truly global movement that has gathered citizens, committed intellectuals, indigenous, farmers, dalits and NGOs against neoliberal policies in street demonstrations and Social Forums all over the world, from Bangalore to Seattle and from Porto Alegre to Nairobi. This book analyses this worldwide movement on the bases of extensive field research conducted since 1999. *Alter-Globalization* provides a comprehensive account of these critical global forces and their attempts to answer one of the major challenges of our time: How can citizens and civil society contribute to the building of a fairer, sustainable and more democratic co-existence of human beings in a global world?

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public discourse in the age of show business: *A Comedian and an Activist Walk into a Bar* Caty Borum Chattoo, Lauren Feldman, 2020-03-24 Comedy is a powerful contemporary source of influence and information. In the still-evolving digital era, the opportunity to consume and share comedy has never been as available. And yet, despite its vast cultural imprint, comedy is a little-understood vehicle for serious public engagement in urgent social justice issues - even though humor offers frames of hope and optimism that can encourage participation in social problems. Moreover, in the midst of a merger of entertainment and news in the contemporary information ecology, and a decline in perceptions of trust in government and traditional media institutions, comedy may be a unique force for change in pressing social justice challenges. Comedians who say something serious about the world while they make us laugh are capable of mobilizing the masses, focusing a critical lens on injustices, and injecting hope and optimism into seemingly hopeless problems. By combining communication and social justice frameworks with contemporary comedy examples, authors Caty Borum Chattoo and Lauren Feldman show us how comedy can help to serve

as a vehicle of change. Through rich case studies, audience research, and interviews with comedians and social justice leaders and strategists, *A Comedian and an Activist Walk Into a Bar: The Serious Role of Comedy in Social Justice* explains how comedy – both in the entertainment marketplace and as cultural strategy – can engage audiences with issues such as global poverty, climate change, immigration, and sexual assault, and how activists work with comedy to reach and empower publics in the networked, participatory digital media age.

public discourse in the age of show business: The Perfect Response Gary C. Woodward, 2010-09-20 *The Perfect Response* offers a framework for assessing the nature of fluency, and explaining the personal attributes that account for why some communicators excel more than most in connecting with others.

public discourse in the age of show business: The Revolt of The Public and the Crisis of Authority in the New Millennium Martin Gurri , 2018-12-04 How insurgencies—enabled by digital devices and a vast information sphere—have mobilized millions of ordinary people around the world. In the words of economist and scholar Arnold Kling, Martin Gurri saw it coming. Technology has categorically reversed the information balance of power between the public and the elites who manage the great hierarchical institutions of the industrial age: government, political parties, the media. *The Revolt of the Public* tells the story of how insurgencies, enabled by digital devices and a vast information sphere, have mobilized millions of ordinary people around the world. Originally published in 2014, *The Revolt of the Public* is now available in an updated edition, which includes an extensive analysis of Donald Trump’s improbable rise to the presidency and the electoral triumphs of Brexit. The book concludes with a speculative look forward, pondering whether the current elite class can bring about a reformation of the democratic process and whether new organizing principles, adapted to a digital world, can arise out of the present political turbulence.

public discourse in the age of show business: The Attention Merchants Tim Wu, 2016-10-18 From the author of the award-winning *The Master Switch*, who coined the term “net neutrality”—a revelatory, ambitious and urgent account of how the capture and re-sale of human attention became the defining industry of our time. Dazzling. —Financial Times *Ours* is often called an information economy, but at a moment when access to information is virtually unlimited, our attention has become the ultimate commodity. In nearly every moment of our waking lives, we face a barrage of efforts to harvest our attention. This condition is not simply the byproduct of recent technological innovations but the result of more than a century’s growth and expansion in the industries that feed on human attention. Wu’s narrative begins in the nineteenth century, when Benjamin Day discovered he could get rich selling newspapers for a penny. Since then, every new medium—from radio to television to Internet companies such as Google and Facebook—has attained commercial viability and immense riches by turning itself into an advertising platform. Since the early days, the basic business model of “attention merchants” has never changed: free diversion in exchange for a moment of your time, sold in turn to the highest-bidding advertiser. Full of lively, unexpected storytelling and piercing insight, *The Attention Merchants* lays bare the true nature of a ubiquitous reality we can no longer afford to accept at face value.

public discourse in the age of show business: Discourse and Digital Practices Rodney H Jones, Alice Chik, Christoph A Hafner, 2015-02-11 *Discourse and Digital Practices* shows how tools from discourse analysis can be used to help us understand new communication practices associated with digital media, from video gaming and social networking to apps and photo sharing. This cutting-edge book: draws together fourteen eminent scholars in the field including James Paul Gee, David Barton, Ilana Snyder, Phil Benson, Victoria Carrington, Guy Merchant, Camilla Vasquez, Neil Selwyn and Rodney Jones answers the central question: How does discourse analysis enable us to understand digital practices? addresses a different type of digital media in each chapter demonstrates how digital practices and the associated new technologies challenge discourse analysts to adapt traditional analytic tools and formulate new theories and methodologies examines digital practices from a wide variety of approaches including textual analysis, conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, multimodal discourse analysis, object ethnography, geosemiotics, and

critical discourse analysis. Discourse and Digital Practices will be of interest to advanced students studying courses on digital literacies or language and digital practices.

public discourse in the age of show business: *The Europeans* Orlando Figes, 2019-10-08 From the “master of historical narrative” (Financial Times), a dazzling, richly detailed, panoramic work—the first to document the genesis of a continent-wide European culture. The nineteenth century in Europe was a time of unprecedented artistic achievement. It was also the first age of cultural globalization—an epoch when mass communications and high-speed rail travel brought Europe together, overcoming the barriers of nationalism and facilitating the development of a truly European canon of artistic, musical, and literary works. By 1900, the same books were being read across the continent, the same paintings reproduced, the same music played in homes and heard in concert halls, the same operas performed in all the major theatres. Drawing from a wealth of documents, letters, and other archival materials, acclaimed historian Orlando Figes examines the interplay of money and art that made this unification possible. At the center of the book is a poignant love triangle: the Russian writer Ivan Turgenev; the Spanish prima donna Pauline Viardot, with whom Turgenev had a long and intimate relationship; and her husband Louis Viardot, an art critic, theater manager, and republican activist. Together, Turgenev and the Viardots acted as a kind of European cultural exchange—they either knew or crossed paths with Delacroix, Berlioz, Chopin, Brahms, Liszt, the Schumanns, Hugo, Flaubert, Dickens, and Dostoyevsky, among many other towering figures. As Figes observes, nearly all of civilization’s great advances have come during periods of heightened cosmopolitanism—when people, ideas, and artistic creations circulate freely between nations. Vivid and insightful, *The Europeans* shows how such cosmopolitan ferment shaped artistic traditions that came to dominate world culture.

public discourse in the age of show business: *Why We're Polarized* Ezra Klein, 2020-01-28 ONE OF BARACK OBAMA’S FAVORITE BOOKS OF 2022 One of Bill Gates’s “5 books to read this summer,” this New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestseller shows us that America’s political system isn’t broken. The truth is scarier: it’s working exactly as designed. In this “superbly researched” (The Washington Post) and timely book, journalist Ezra Klein reveals how that system is polarizing us—and how we are polarizing it—with disastrous results. “The American political system—which includes everyone from voters to journalists to the president—is full of rational actors making rational decisions given the incentives they face,” writes political analyst Ezra Klein. “We are a collection of functional parts whose efforts combine into a dysfunctional whole.” “A thoughtful, clear and persuasive analysis” (The New York Times Book Review), *Why We're Polarized* reveals the structural and psychological forces behind America’s descent into division and dysfunction. Neither a polemic nor a lament, this book offers a clear framework for understanding everything from Trump’s rise to the Democratic Party’s leftward shift to the politicization of everyday culture. America is polarized, first and foremost, by identity. Everyone engaged in American politics is engaged, at some level, in identity politics. Over the past fifty years in America, our partisan identities have merged with our racial, religious, geographic, ideological, and cultural identities. These merged identities have attained a weight that is breaking much in our politics and tearing at the bonds that hold this country together. Klein shows how and why American politics polarized around identity in the 20th century, and what that polarization did to the way we see the world and one another. And he traces the feedback loops between polarized political identities and polarized political institutions that are driving our system toward crisis. “Well worth reading” (New York magazine), this is an “eye-opening” (O, The Oprah Magazine) book that will change how you look at politics—and perhaps at yourself.

public discourse in the age of show business: *To Change the Church* Ross Douthat, 2019-03-19 A New York Times columnist and one of America’s leading conservative thinkers considers Pope Francis’s efforts to change the church he governs in a book that is “must reading for every Christian who cares about the fate of the West and the future of global Christianity” (Rod Dreher, author of *The Benedict Option*). Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in 1936, today Pope Francis is the 266th pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Pope Francis’s stewardship of the Church, while

perceived as a revelation by many, has provoked division throughout the world. "If a conclave were to be held today," one Roman source told *The New Yorker*, "Francis would be lucky to get ten votes." In his "concise, rhetorically agile...adroit, perceptive, gripping account (*The New York Times Book Review*), Ross Douthat explains why the particular debate Francis has opened—over communion for the divorced and the remarried—is so dangerous: How it cuts to the heart of the larger argument over how Christianity should respond to the sexual revolution and modernity itself, how it promises or threatens to separate the church from its own deep past, and how it divides Catholicism along geographical and cultural lines. Douthat argues that the Francis era is a crucial experiment for all of Western civilization, which is facing resurgent external enemies (from ISIS to Putin) even as it struggles with its own internal divisions, its decadence, and self-doubt. Whether Francis or his critics are right won't just determine whether he ends up as a hero or a tragic figure for Catholics. It will determine whether he's a hero, or a gambler who's betraying both his church and his civilization into the hands of its enemies. "A balanced look at the struggle for the future of Catholicism...*To Change the Church* is a fascinating look at the church under Pope Francis" (*Kirkus Reviews*). Engaging and provocative, this is "a pot-boiler of a history that examines a growing ecclesial crisis" (*Washington Independent Review of Books*).

public discourse in the age of show business: Discourse on the Sciences and Arts

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1992 Rousseau attacks the social and political effects of the dominant forms of scientific knowledge. Contains the entire First Discourse, contemporary attacks on it, Rousseau's replies to his critics, and his summary of the debate in his preface to *Narcissus*. A number of these texts have never before been available in English. The First Discourse and *Polemics* demonstrate the continued relevance of Rousseau's thought. Whereas his critics argue for correction of the excesses and corruptions of knowledge and the sciences as sufficient, Rousseau attacks the social and political effects of the dominant forms of scientific knowledge.

public discourse in the age of show business: Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation George Washington, 2007-06-01

public discourse in the age of show business: Book of Illumination Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, Scott Alan Kugle, 2005 Presenting a mystical and theological analysis of our human urge to create idols for ourselves and out of ourselves, this medieval author carefully recounts the enlightening counsels of his own masters. He is most attentive to the subtle psychological working of our human ego, marshaling resources for his Islamic tradition that can confront and overcome it. The result of desisting from claiming as our right and ability what is clearly beyond our control is illumination of the heart, clarity of the mind, and tranquility of the soul. This new translation masterfully illustrates the goal of Ibn Ata' Allah's discussion of achieving inner illumination of the heart, which is close to the sense of enlightenment that has become common in English language discussions of spirituality and gnosis.

public discourse in the age of show business: Political Awakenings Harry Kreisler, 2011-03 As a kid, Noam Chomsky handed out the *Daily Mirror* at his uncle's newsstand on 72nd Street, inadvertently finding himself in a buzzing intellectual and political hub for European immigrants in New York. Iranian human rights Nobel laureate Shirin Ebadi and her husband signed their own legal contract, attempting to restore equality to their marriage after the Iranian Revolution effectively erased the legal rights of women. Elizabeth Warren set out to expose those frauds declaring bankruptcy and taking advantage of the system—only to discover, in her research, a very different story of hard-working middle-class families facing economic collapse in the absence of a social safety net. While studying at Oxford, a young Tariq Ali made a bet with a friend that he could work the Vietnam War into every single answer on his final exams. In this rousing, thoughtful, often funny, and always inspiring volume, a diverse and impressive group of thinkers reflect on those formative experiences that shaped their own political commitments. A fascinating new window into the revealing links between the personal and the political, *Political Awakenings* will engage readers across generations.

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