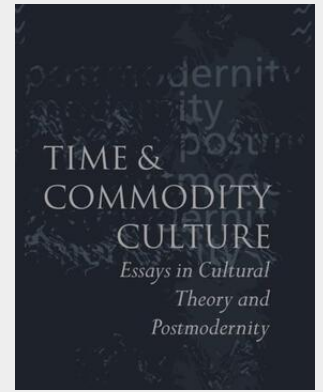


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Time and Commodity Culture

Essays on Cultural Theory and Postmodernity

Time and Commodity Culture is a set of four linked essays on the cultural systems of postmodernity. Rather than taking modernity and postmodernity as real historical epochs, however, it understands them as strategies for organizing time and social order by means of a 'nostalgic' division within them. Each essay explores a particular dimension of this organization of time, especially in relation to the anxieties and the possibilities created by the commodification of culture. The central essay, 'Gift and Commodity', studies two areas in which the speed of commodification has increased markedly in recent years: That of the person, and that of information. Using a mix of anthropological, legal, economic, and historical materials, it investigates the privatization of the commons in information by way of such things as the development of markets in human DNA, the trade in human organs, and the creation of property rights in 'personality'. 'What Was Postmodernism?' analyses the structured anxiety about the commodification of culture that is called 'postmodern theory'. A further essay explores tourism as a figure of modernity, and a final essay on memory explores the phenomena of 'recovered memory' and of Holocaust remembrance as ways of constructing temporally ordered forms of the real.



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