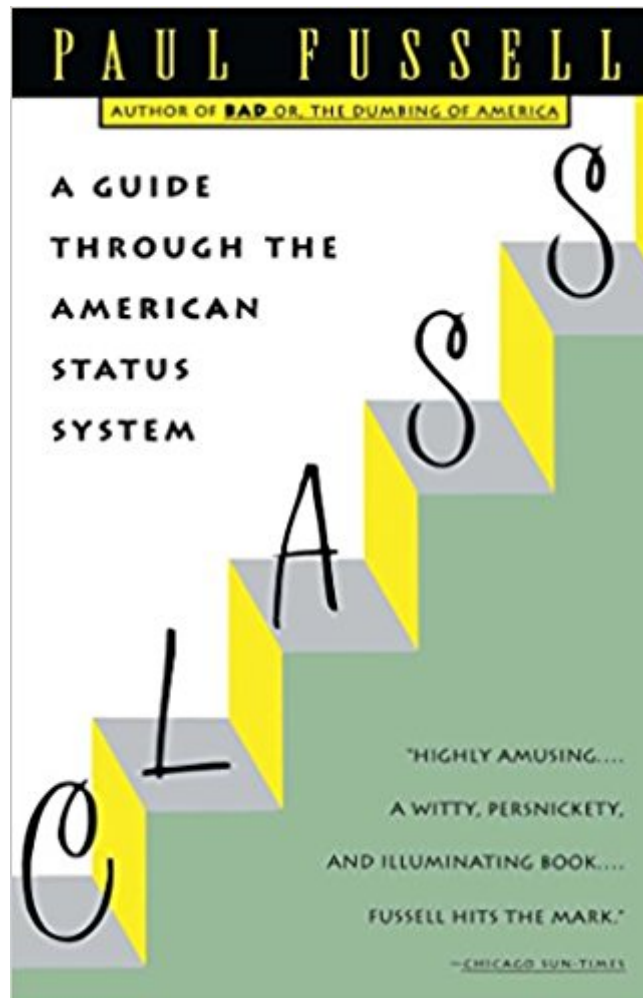




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Class: A Guide Through The American Status System



Synopsis

The bestselling, comprehensive, and carefully researched guide to the ins-and-outs of the American class system with a detailed look at the defining factors of each group, from customs to fashion to housing. Based on careful research and told with grace and wit, Paul Fussell shows how everything people within American society do, say, and own reflects their social status. Detailing the lifestyles of each class, from the way they dress and where they live to their education and hobbies, > is sure to entertain, enlighten, and occasionally enrage readers as they identify their own place in society and see how the other half lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Chicago Sun-Times Highly amusing....a witty, persnickety, and illuminating book....fussell hits the mark. The Washington Post Move over, William Buckley. Stand back, Gore Vidal. And run for cover, Uncle Sam: Paul Fussell, the nation's newest world-class curmudgeon, is taking aim at The American Experiment. Wilfrid Sheed The Atlantic A fine prickly pear of a book....Anyone who reads it will automatically move up a class. Alison Lurie The New York Times Book Review A shrewd and entertaining commentary on American mores today. Frighteningly acute.

Paul Fussell, critic, essayist, and cultural commentator, has recently won the H. L. Mencken Award of the Free Press Association. Among his books are The Great War and Modern Memory, which in 1976 won both the National Book Critics Circle Award and the National Book Award; Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars; Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World

War; and, most recently, BAD or, The Dumbing of America. His essays have been collected in The Boy Scout Handbook and Other Observations and Thank God for the Atom Bomb and Other Essays. He lives in Philadelphia, where he teaches English at the University of Pennsylvania.

Overvaluation and undervaluation are the primary characteristics of class distinction. Throughout Fussell's book these distinctions cover every inch of visible eccentricity. From the knot to the tie and from the facade of the facade, we learn the extent to which the image supersedes the man. Frankly, I found the book a bit silly. Fussell merely catalogues the ways in which status seekers seek their status. His approach seems manic in its' portrayal of the obvious. Nevertheless, the book is written in good humor. It is an easy and somewhat fun book to read... or merely skim through!

I have bought this book a handful of times over the years and given to people because it is hilarious. Even though it is from the 80's most of the points made still ring true.

Very interesting! This was written 20-30 years ago, however, and it seems like the research was from the 70s. It was a hilarious read. I would love to see an updated version.

An interesting book that addresses, in a semi-formal manner, the social and economic traits that are associated with groups or 'classes' of people. The descriptions are not applied in a highly specific manner but are used to explore how social 'standing' of different groups vary and how people in different 'classes', as defined by the author, move between these classes. While the book is not a scholarly treatise it does offer interesting insights with respect to how different social 'classes' are perceived and how they interact with one another.

I know this book was written tongue in cheek, yet, it provides a vocabulary to describe observable America (and Americans around us). I find myself ordering multiple copies of Class: A Guide Through the American Status System, always keeping one to replace the one I've loaned out, and then giving more as gifts. Important safety tip: Some friends/acquaintances may be uncomfortable with the contents. It's funny, as this outs them as the poseurs they probably are.

This was a quick and amusing read. The book was written many years ago, but the portraits it paints of the various classes still hold up.

Good overview regarding the class structure in America

This is a great book club book because you can count on a lively discussion. For me, the most important thing to look forward to in this book is a discussion of the fears and longings of the various classes, and the way that they affect the choices that people make. Overall, an interesting book that I will hold on to and probably read again in a few years.

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