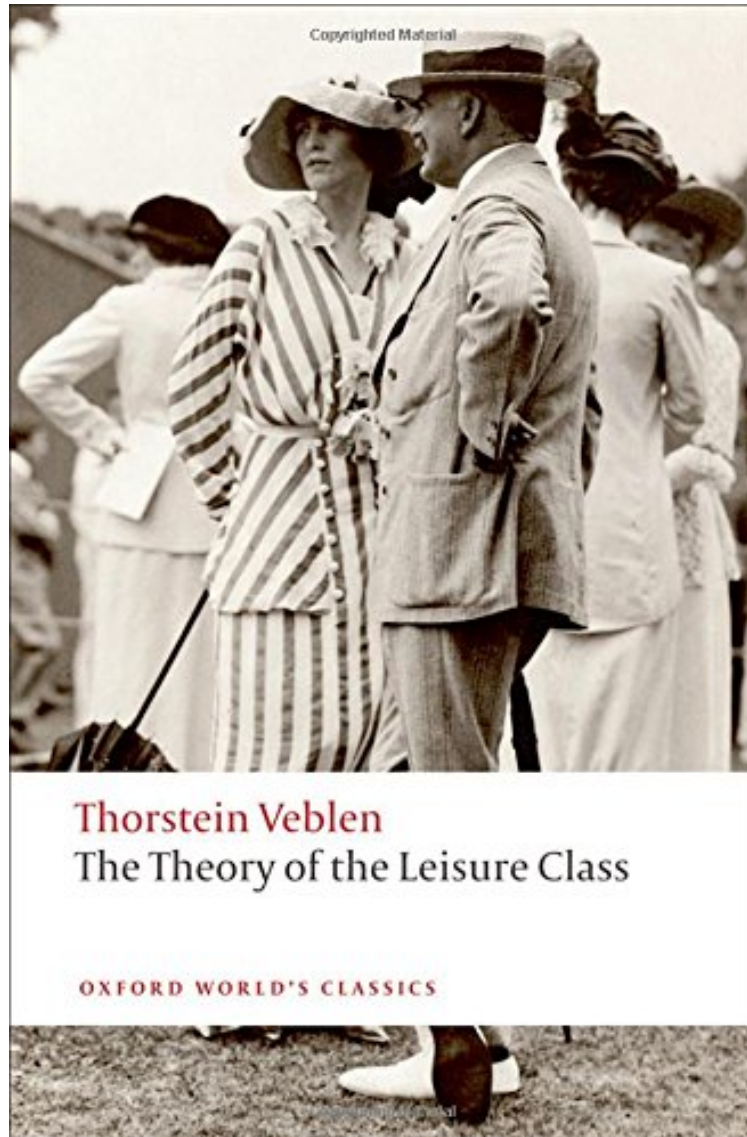


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## The Theory of the Leisure Class (Oxford World's Classics)

*Thorstein Veblen*

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**Thorstein Veblen : The Theory of the Leisure Class (Oxford World's Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Theory of the Leisure Class (Oxford World's Classics):

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Occypy Wall Street read this book! By Nancy L. Brown Clearly delineates the two figures on the historical horizon: the earlier, "savage" man (or woman - Veblen regards women as

those responsible for humanity's progress in food) who labors, admires craftsmanship, and, the later "barbaric" man: the predator who, by force and fraud, seizes and controls the usufruct to the detriment of the underlying population. In the semi-peaceful modern period, the barbarian is the pecuniary (monied) class, the businessmen and vested interests who seek a profit, as opposed to the technologists and laborers in charge of the actual production of goods. The profit comes usually at the sabotage of production, and is a matter of salesmanship, not technological knowledge. In this book Veblen paints the mindset of the pecuniary class: make believe: an anthropomorphic god, gradations in rank, and a showing of status by Not Working: conspicuous leisure, conspicuous waste, so that those who actually do work will find work "irksome" due to an envious comparison with the non-worker. With this book you'll learn why we have lawns rather than urban gardens, why sports and entertainment are so highly valued, why people hunt, why no one picks up garbage in a public place, why stock market crashes are the rule rather than the exception, why women paint their nails and bind their feet, and why there are priests even today. The man who predicted the stock market crash of 1929 and the world war to follow World War One, presents to you his very first book. Also, those who wish to improve their vocabulary and the grammar of an argument could not find a better teacher. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good research material. By Jeremy Jones The best deconstructed treatment of this topic from this period that I have found. A good read for anyone interested in understanding the origins of modern materialism and consumerism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By James F. Comer A very entertaining and thought-provoking classic.

In his scathing *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Thorstein Veblen produced a landmark study of affluent American society that exposes, with brilliant ruthlessness, the habits of production and waste that link invidious business tactics and barbaric social behavior. Veblen's analysis of the evolutionary process sees greed as the overriding motive in the modern economy, and with an impartial gaze he examines the human cost paid when social institutions exploit the consumption of unessential goods for the sake of personal profit. Fashion, beauty, animals, sports, the home, the clergy, scholars--all are assessed for their true usefulness and found wanting. Indeed, Veblen's critique covers all aspects of modern life from dress, class, the position of women, home decoration, industry, business, and sport, to religion, scholarship, and education. The targets of Veblen's coruscating satire are as evident today as they were a century ago, and his book still has the power to shock and enlighten. Martha Banta's introduction illuminates Veblen's uncompromising arguments as it highlights the literary force of Veblen's writing and its influence on later American writers such as Edith Wharton, Henry James, Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. She also sheds light on his critique of the plight of women and his evolutionary arguments as they relate to modern society. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

About the Author Martha Banta's forthcoming book from Yale (Summer 2007), *One True Theory and the Quest for an American Aesthetic* treats in depth Veblen's role as the champion of new modes of scientific inquiry that influenced many areas of social thought.