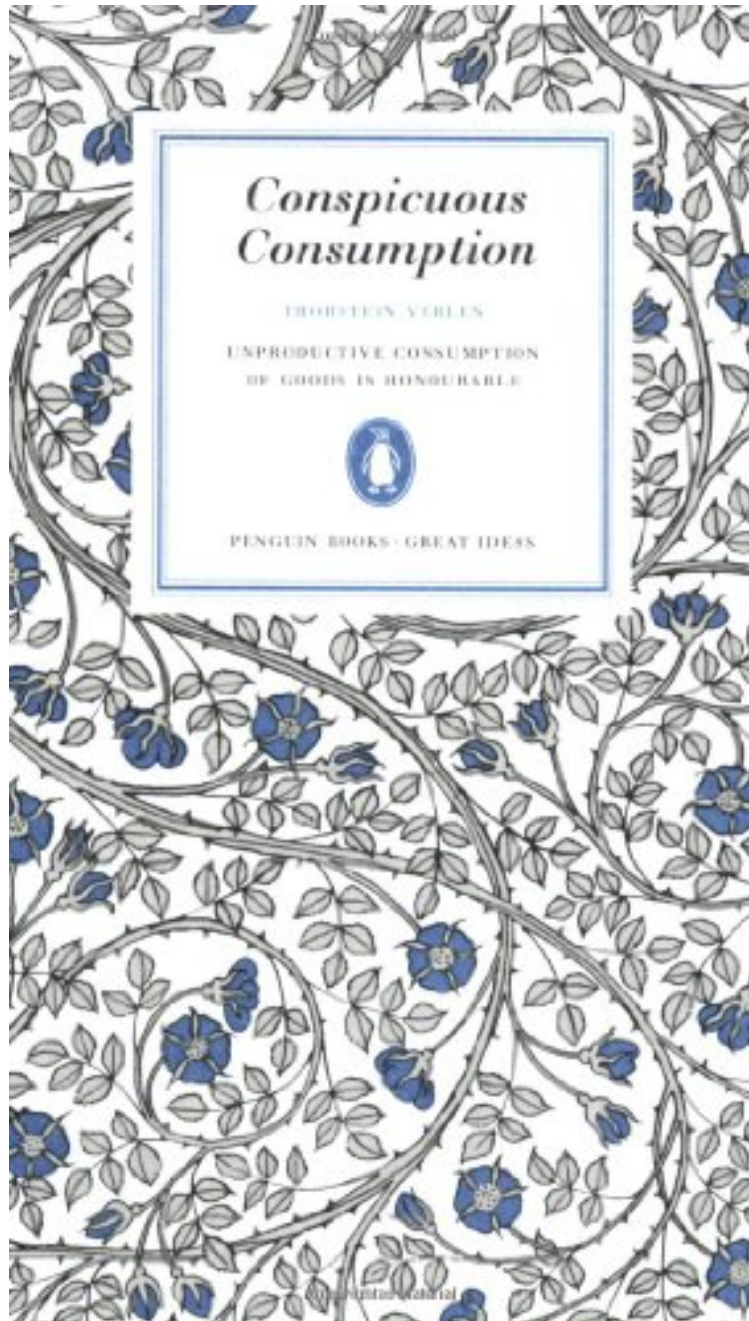


(Library ebook) Conspicuous Consumption: Unproductive Consumption of Goods Is Honourable (Penguin Great Ideas)

Conspicuous Consumption: Unproductive Consumption of Goods Is Honourable (Penguin Great Ideas)

Thorstein Veblen

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Conspicuous Consumption: Unproduction Consumption of Goods Is Honourable (Penguin Great Ideas):

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. evryone should read this bookBy randy thurmaneven though this was written close to a hundred years ago it is still so true today. the leisure class in all its wasteful and unproductive glory. even a conservative could like this book.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Just One More...It's Wafer Thin!By JungliesI last read this work whilst reading for my first bachelor's degree during the History of Economic Thought sections. It was one of those books which was instrumental in the development of a broader class of study, in this case Institutionalism, and the novelty of the idea was something which caught on and grew and developed.Rereading it now, I was struck immediately by the sheer verbosity of the text. If my friend Arthur Seldon, once the Editorial Director of the Institute of Economic Affairs, had applied his skills to it, it probably would have been too short to be a Reader's Digest Edition.However, Veblen's hypothesis begins from a division of a society into classes based on power, a power derived from prowess in hunting and the accumulation of assets, specifically trophies and women. The latter are described as chattels, an idea which remains in western societies today, although the accumulation of status for women who consort with men with power enables some power to transfer to them but it remains only available to them effectively as a loan.The logic which is followed reminds me of the work of von Mises, in it's a priori approach, but at it's conclusion there are many fundamentally unanswered questions. Veblen writes as though there is general acceptance of these processes without any rational other than the assumption that there are inherent tendencies within men which find expression in the accumulation process as he sets out. This assumption is debatable however. He produces no evidence to support his hypothesis and perhaps this area should be left more to anthropologists for further study. Neither does it deal with a basic notion of individuals voluntarily exchanging with each other. It may well be the case that Fred Flintstone hits Barney Rubble over the head with a club and drags Betty away by the hair, increasing his accumulation in the process and establishing himself as a more powerful man than Barney but this leads to a zero sum game where Fred has given everyone in Bedrock headaches but left him with an accumulation that cannot be increased as no one else will even bother to try to accumulate as Fred goes clubbing.How can such a society develop and why should it? Fred becomes King and can buy the best clubs available but to what end.There is certainly much to think about in this essay and some good notions and conjectures but there are some serious flaws in the arguments he proposes. How relevant this is to the 1960's in particular and contemporary society in general remains to be seen.40 of 43 people found the following review helpful. InsightfulBy RenaissanceManThis is one of those books that was written about 100 years ago but which turns your head in terms of how society and high society works. It answers some questions on why people wear luxuries and the rules of polite society.If you get this book, consider also reading *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Oxford World's Classics). At times when reading both the *Conspicuous Consumption* and *The Theory of the Leisure Class* you might think that the books are very outmoded but at the same time you recognize that there is a strata of society that still behaves by some of these rules today.Definitely, if you're looking to understand the finer nuances of high society, your education is not complete until you read both *Conspicuous Consumption* and the *Theory of the Leisure Class*.I was studying the behavior of royalty in ancient societies and wanted to do a bit of research into the parallels of modern Western society -- lets just say I received quite a bit of insight from these two works. Consider them.

The perfect books for the true book lover, Penguin's Great Ideas series features twelve more groundbreaking works by some of history's most prodigious thinkers. Each volume is beautifully packaged with a unique type-driven design that highlights the bookmaker's art. Offering great literature in great packages at great prices, this series is ideal for those readers who want to explore and savor the Great Ideas that have shaped our worldWith its wry portrayal of a shallow, materialistic 'leisure class' obsessed by clothes, cars, consumer goods and climbing the social ladder, this withering satire on modern capitalism is as pertinent today as it was when it was written over a century ago.

Great Ideas... is the right name for these slim, elegant paperbacks... They are written with precision, force, and care. ("The Wall Street Journal") Penguin Books hopes to provide an economical remedy for time-pressed readers in search of intellectual sustenance. ("USA Today")About the AuthorThorstein Veblen (1857–1929) was an American economist and sociologist. He was educated at Carleton College, Johns Hopkins University, and Yale University. His most famous work, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), is a satiric look at American society. Veblen coined the widely used phrases "conspicuous consumption" and "pecuniary emulation."