i must not think bad thoughts drive by essays on american dread dreams mark dery

I Must Not Think Bad Thoughts

The author explores the darkest corners of the American psyche--including the sexual fantasies of Star Trek fans, the hidden agendas of IQ tests, the homoerotic subtext of professional football, the poetic aspects of spam email and much more.

Escape Velocity - Cyberculture at the End of the Century

“Without a doubt the best guide I have read to the new computer culture . . . witty and provocative . . . sane and thoughtful” (J. G. Ballard). “A lively compendium of dispatches from the far reaches of today's computer savvy avant-garde”, Escape Velocity explores the dawn of the Information Age, and the high-tech subcultures that celebrated, critiqued, and gave birth to our wired world and a counterculture digital underground (The New York Times Book Review). Poised between technological rapture and social rupture, Escape Velocity poses the fundamental question of our time: Is technology liberating or enslaving us in the twenty-first century? Mark Dery takes us on an electrifying tour of the high-tech underground. Investigating the shadowy byways of cyberculture, we meet would-be cyborgs who believe the body is obsolete and dream of downloading their minds into computers, cyberhippies who boost their brainpower with smart drugs and mind machines, techno-primitives who sport “biomechanical” tattoos of computer circuitry, and cyberpunk roboticists whose dystopian contraptions duel to the death before howling crowds. “Re-prov[ing] Dery an astute and trustworthy patrolman of the cultural and social borderland between science fiction and non-fiction”, Escape Velocity stands alone as the first truly critical inquiry into cyberculture (Wired). Shifting the focus of our conversation about technology from the corridors of power to disparate voices on the cultural fringes, Dery wires it into the power politics and social issues of the moment. It is essential reading for everyone interested in computer culture and the shape of things to come.

Flame Wars - The Discourse of Cyberculture

Essays on electronic communication, cyberpunk culture, and rants and flames in cyberspace consider subjects such as the magazine Mondo 2000, the typewriter, virtual reality, feminism, comics, and erotica for cyberteens. Includes blurry b&w photos and illustrations, and an interviews with science fictions writers Samuel R. Delaney, Greg Tate, and Tricia Rose. Paper edition (unseen), $13.95. Annotation copyright by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR.

I Must Not Think Bad Thoughts - Drive-by Essays on American Dread, American Dreams

From the cultural critic Wired called "provocative and cuttingly humorous" comes a viciously
funny, joltingly insightful collection of drive-by critiques of contemporary America where chaos is the new normal. Exploring the darkest corners of the national psyche and the nethermost regions of the self--the gothic, the grotesque, and the carnivalesque--Mark Dery makes sense of the cultural dynamics of the American madhouse early in the twenty-first century. Here are essays on the pornographic fantasies of Star Trek fans, Facebook as Limbo of the Lost, George W. Bush's fear of his inner queer, the theme-parking of the Holocaust, the homoerotic subtext of the Super Bowl, the hidden agendas of IQ tests, Santa's secret kinship with Satan, the sadism of dentists, Hitler's afterlife on YouTube, the sexual identity of 2001's HAL, the suicide note considered as a literary genre, the surrealist poetry of robot spam, the zombie apocalypse, Lady Gaga, the Church of Euthanasia, toy guns in the dream lives of American boys, and the polymorphous perversity of Madonna's big toe. Dery casts a critical eye on the accepted order of things, boldly crossing into the intellectual no-fly zones demarcated by cultural warriors on both sides of America's ideological divide: controversy-phobic corporate media, blinkered academic elites, and middlebrow tastemakers. Intellectually omnivorous and promiscuously interdisciplinary, Dery's writing is a generalist's guilty pleasure in an age of nanospecialization and niche marketing. From Menckenian polemics on American society and deft deconstructions of pop culture to unflinching personal essays in which Dery turns his scalpel-sharp wit on himself, I must not think bad thoughts is a head-spinning intellectual ride through American dreams and American nightmares.

**Born to Be Posthumous - The Eccentric Life and Mysterious Genius of Edward Gorey**

The definitive biography of Edward Gorey, the eccentric master of macabre nonsense. From The Gashlycrumb Tinies to The Doubtful Guest, Edward Gorey's wickedly funny and deliciously sinister little books have influenced our culture in innumerable ways, from the works of Tim Burton and Neil Gaiman to Lemony Snicket. Some even call him the Grandfather of Goth. But who was this man, who lived with over twenty thousand books and six cats, who roomed with Frank O'Hara at Harvard, and was known--in the late 1940s, no less--to trapse around in full-length fur coats, clanking bracelets, and an Edwardian beard? An eccentric, a gregarious recluse, an enigmatic auteur of whimsically morbid masterpieces, yes--but who was the real Edward Gorey behind the Oscar Wildean pose? He published over a hundred books and illustrated works by Samuel Beckett, T.S. Eliot, Edward Lear, John Updike, Charles Dickens, Hilaire Belloc, Muriel Spark, Bram Stoker, Gilbert & Sullivan, and others. At the same time, he was a deeply complicated and conflicted individual, a man whose art reflected his obsessions with the disquieting and the darkly hilarious. Based on newly uncovered correspondence and interviews with personalities as diverse as John Ashbery, Donald Hall, Lemony Snicket, Neil Gaiman, and Anna Sui, BORN TO BE POSTHUMOUS draws back the curtain on the eccentric genius and mysterious life of Edward Gorey.

**The Reality Bubble - How Science Reveals the Hidden Truths that Shape Our World**

Shortlisted for the 2020 RBC Taylor Prize From one of the world's most engaging science
journalists, a groundbreaking and wonder-filled look at the hidden things that shape our lives in unexpected and sometimes dangerous ways. Our naked eyes see only a thin sliver of reality. We are blind in comparison to the X-rays that peer through skin, the mass spectrometers that detect the dead inside the living, or the high-tech surveillance systems that see with artificial intelligence. And we are blind compared to the animals that can see in infrared, or ultraviolet, or in 360-degree vision. These animals live in the same world we do, but they see something quite different when they look around. With all of the curiosity and flair that drives her broadcasting, Ziya Tong illuminates this hidden world, and takes us on a journey to examine ten of humanity's biggest blind spots. First, we are introduced to the blind spots we are all born with, to see how technology reveals an astonishing world that exists beyond our human senses. It is with these new ways of seeing that today's scientists can image everything from an atom to a black hole.

In Section Two, our collective blind spots are exposed. It's not that we can't see, Tong reminds us. It's that we don't. In the 21st century, there are cameras everywhere, except where our food comes from, where our energy comes from, and where our waste goes. Being in the dark when it comes to how we survive makes it impossible to navigate our future. Lastly, the scope widens to our civilizational blind spots. Here, the blurred lens of history reveals how we inherit ways of thinking about the world that seem natural or inevitable but are in fact little more than traditions, ways of seeing the world that have come to harm it. This vitally important new book shows how science, and the curiosity that drives it, can help civilization flourish by opening our eyes to the landscape laid out before us. Fast-paced, utterly fascinating, and deeply humane, The Reality Bubble gives voice to the sense we've all had -- that there is more to the world than meets the eye.

**Body Modern - Fritz Kahn, Scientific Illustration, and the Homuncular Subject**

A poster first printed in Germany in 1926 depicts the human body as a factory populated by tiny workers doing industrial tasks. Devised by Fritz Kahn (1888-1968), a German-Jewish physician and popular science writer, "Der Mensch als Industriepalast" (or "Man as Industrial Palace") achieved international fame and was reprinted, in various languages and versions, all over the world. It was a new kind of image--an illustration that was conceptual and scientific, a visual explanation of how things work--and Kahn built a career of this new genre. In collaboration with a stable of artists (only some of whom were credited), Kahn created thousands of images that were metaphorical, allusive, and self-consciously modern, using an eclectic grab-bag of schools and styles: Dada, Art Deco, photomontage, Art Nouveau, Bauhaus functionalism, and commercial illustration. In Body Modern, Michael Sappol offers the first in-depth critical study of Fritz Kahn and his visual rhetoric. Kahn was an impresario of the modern who catered to readers who were hungry for products and concepts that could help them acquire and perform an overdetermined "modern" identity. He and his artists created playful new visual tropes and genres that used striking metaphors to scientifically explain the "life of Man." This rich and largely obscure corpus of images was a technology of the self that naturalized the modern and its technologies by situating them inside the human body. The scope of Kahn's project was vast--entirely new kinds of visual explanation--and so was his influence. Today, his legacy can be seen in textbooks, magazines, posters, public health pamphlets, educational websites, and Hollywood movies. But, Sappol concludes, Kahn's illustrations also pose profound and
unsettling epistemological questions about the construction and performance of the self. Lavishly illustrated with more than 100 images, Body Modern imaginatively explores the relationship between conceptual image, image production, and embodied experience.

**Applied Ballardianism - Memoir from a Parallel Universe**

An existential odyssey weaving together lived experience and theoretical insight, this startling autobiographical hyperfiction surveys and dissects a world where everything connects and global technological delirium is the norm. The mediascapes of late capitalism reconfigure erotic responses and trigger primal aggression; under constant surveillance, we occupy simulations of ourselves, private estates on a hyperconnected globe; fictions reprogram reality, memories are rewritten by the future… Fleeing the excesses of 1990s cyberculture, a young researcher sets out to systematically analyse the obsessively reiterated themes of a writer who prophesied the disorienting future we now inhabit. The story of his failure is as disturbingly psychotropic as those of his magus—J.G. Ballard, prophet of the post-postmodern, voluptuary of the car crash, surgeon of the pathological virtualities pulsing beneath the surface of reality. Plagued by obsessive fears, defeated by the tedium of academia, yet still certain that everything connects to Ballard, his academic thesis collapses into a series of delirious travelogues, deranged speculations and tormented meditations on time, memory, and loss. Abandoning literary interpretation and renouncing all scholarly distance, he finally accepts the deep assignment that has run throughout his entire life, and embarks on a rogue fieldwork project: Applied Ballardianism, a new discipline and a new ideal for living. Only the darkest impulses, the most morbid obsessions, and the most apocalyptic paranoia can uncover the technological mutations of inner space. An existential odyssey inextricably weaving together lived experience and theoretical insight, this startling autobiographical hyperfiction surveys and dissects a world where everything connects and global technological delirium is the norm—a world become unmistakably Ballardian.

**Inventing the Future - Postcapitalism and a World Without Work**

A major new manifesto for the end of capitalism Neoliberalism isn’t working. Austerity is forcing millions into poverty and many more into precarious work, while the left remains trapped in stagnant political practices that offer no respite. Inventing the Future is a bold new manifesto for life after capitalism. Against the confused understanding of our high-tech world by both the right and the left, this book claims that the emancipatory and future-oriented possibilities of our society can be reclaimed. Instead of running from a complex future, Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams demand a postcapitalist economy capable of advancing standards, liberating humanity from work and developing technologies that expand our freedoms. This new edition includes a new chapter where they respond to their various critics.

**The Risk of Reading - How Literature Helps Us to Understand Ourselves and the World**

The Risk of Reading is a defense of the idea that deep and close readings of literature can help
us to understand ourselves and the world around us. It explores some of the meaning and implications of modern life through the deep reading of significant books. Waxler argues that we need "fiction" to give our so-called "real life" meaning and that reading narrative fiction remains crucial to the making of a humane and democratic society. Beginning by exploring the implications of thinking about the importance of story in terms of "real life", The Risk of Reading focuses on the importance of human language, especially language shaped into narrative, and how that language is central to the human quest for identity. Waxler argues that we are "linguistic beings," and that reading literary narrative is a significant way to enrich and preserve the traditional sense of human identity and knowledge. This is especially true in the midst of a culture which too often celebrates visual images, spectacle, electronic devices, and celebrity. Reading narrative, in other words, should be considered a counter-cultural activity crucial on the quest to "know thyself." Reading literature is one of the best opportunities we have today to maintain a coherent human identity and remain self-reflective individuals in a world that seems particularly chaotic and confusing. Each chapter takes up a well-known work of nineteenth- or twentieth-century literature in order to discuss more fully these issues, exploring, in particular, the notion of life as a journey or quest and the crucial relationship between language and our contingent everyday existence. Of particular interest along the way is the question of what literary narrative can teach us about our mortality and how stories offer opportunities to reflect on the ambivalent and profound meaning of mortal knowledge.