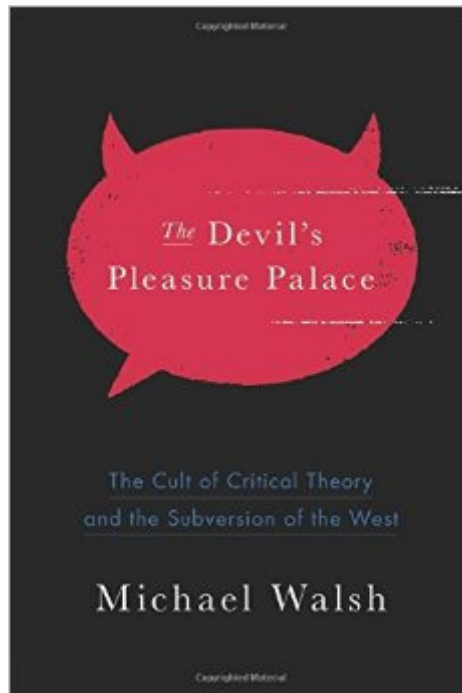


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# The Devil's Pleasure Palace: The Cult Of Critical Theory And The Subversion Of The West



## Synopsis

In the aftermath of World War II, America stood alone as the world's premier military power. Yet its martial confidence contrasted vividly with its sense of cultural inferiority. Still looking to a defeated and dispirited Europe for intellectual and artistic guidance, the burgeoning transnational elite in New York and Washington embraced not only the war's refugees, but many of their ideas as well, and nothing has proven more pernicious than those of the Frankfurt School and its reactionary philosophy of critical theory. In *The Devil's Pleasure Palace*, Michael Walsh describes how Critical Theory released a horde of demons into the American psyche. When everything could be questioned, nothing could be real, and the muscular, confident empiricism that had just won the war gave way, in less than a generation, to a central-European nihilism celebrated on college campuses across the United States. Seizing the high ground of academe and the arts, the New Nihilists set about dissolving the bedrock of the country, from patriotism to marriage to the family to military service. They have sown, as Cardinal Bergoglio—now Pope Francis—once wrote of the Devil, destruction, division, hatred, and calumny, and all disguised as the search for truth. *The Devil's Pleasure Palace* exposes the overlooked movement that is Critical Theory and explains how it took root in America and, once established and gestated, how it has affected nearly every aspect of American life and society.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I read this book because it seemed like it would be an interesting companion to James

Burnham's "Suicide of the West" • Burnham's book explains and analyzes the ideology of American liberalism, circa 1960. "The Devil's Pleasure Palace" • in a sense continues that story; it explains how that liberalism discovered the Critical Theory leftism of the Frankfurt School, and like Gollum discovering the One Ring, did not benefit from the discovery. "The Devil's Pleasure Palace" • is, indeed, somewhat interesting. But it generally fails at explanation and analysis, instead being mostly a rambling diatribe preaching to the converted. The core of Walsh's book is an attack upon the Frankfurt School and its "Critical Theory." • The Frankfurt School was a group of Marxist German scholars, many from Goethe University's Institute For Social Research in Frankfurt, who fled to the US before and after World War II, and then proceeded to repay this country's generosity by deliberately destroying its culture. These men included Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse. They also include, in Walsh's telling, indirectly, men like the Communist Antonio Gramsci (famous for calling for a "long march through the institutions," though he did not use those exact words, to combat bourgeois "cultural hegemony") and Georg Lukács, the Hungarian Communist (not to be confused with the writer John Lukács). The key principal of the Frankfurt School was that the existing culture of the West must be destroyed and replaced, because it is irrational and oppressive, originating in and containing nothing good.

The author's inside jacket intro on the main page says what prospective buyers need to know about the content of the book. Read it. Like Walsh, I grew up in the fifties, when our flag was revered and love of country was a given. That America is no more. I've wondered for years how we fell so fast and so far. "The Devil's Pleasure Palace" offers a riveting, authoritative answer to the question. I believe this book will come to be regarded as the seminal work on America's ugly transformation in the decades following Eisenhower's presidency. It is Walsh's masterwork. Here we learn about the Frankfurt School Marxist philosophers (Herbert Marcuse, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, others) who arrived on our shores after fleeing Nazi Germany, burrowed into our culture (especially academe), and began their "unremitting assault on Western values and institutions." • Which their acolytes continue to this day, aided by allies in the media and Democrats, whose affiliation Walsh has famously labeled "a criminal organization masquerading as a political party." • Walsh is a wordsmith. His prose is crisp, clear and engaging. He can be profound and elegant in one paragraph and playful and witty in the next. You don't dare let your mind wander when you read for fear you'll miss some choice expression or thought, and these populate every page. There is no filler in "Pleasure Palace." Some reviewers found distracting

Walsh's extensive and pitch perfect tie-ins to Genesis and such monumental works as Milton's "Paradise Lost," Goethe's "Faust," and Wagner's operas, to name a few.

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