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But What If We're Wrong?: Thinking About The Present As If It Were The Past

Chuck Klosterman



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Thinking About the Present As If It Were the Past

Read by Fiona Hardingham and Chuck Klosterman

Unabridged



Synopsis

We live in a culture of casual certitude. This has always been the case, no matter how often that certainty has failed. Though no generation believes there's nothing left to learn, every generation unconsciously assumes that what has already been defined and accepted is (probably) pretty close to how reality will be viewed in perpetuity. And then, of course, time passes. Ideas shift. Opinions invert. What once seemed reasonable eventually becomes absurd, replaced by modern perspectives that feel even more irrefutable and secure - until, of course, they don't. But *What If We're Wrong?* visualizes the contemporary world as it will appear to those who'll perceive it as the distant past. Chuck Klosterman asks questions that are profound in their simplicity: How certain are we about our understanding of gravity? How certain are we about our understanding of time? What will be the defining memory of rock music 500 years from today? How seriously should we view the content of our dreams? How seriously should we view the content of television? Are all sports destined for extinction? Is it possible that the greatest artist of our era is currently unknown (or - weirder still - widely known but entirely disrespected)? Is it possible that we overrate democracy? And, perhaps most disturbing, is it possible that we've reached the end of knowledge? Kinetically slingshotting through a broad spectrum of objective and subjective problems, *But What If We're Wrong?* is built on interviews with a variety of creative thinkers - George Saunders, David Byrne, Jonathan Lethem, Kathryn Schulz, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Brian Greene, Junot Díaz - and, Amanda Petrusich, Ryan Adams, Nick Bostrom, Dan Carlin, and Richard Linklater, among others - interwoven with the type of high-wire humor and nontraditional analysis only Klosterman would dare to attempt. It's a seemingly impossible achievement: a book about the things we cannot know, explained as if we did. It's about how we live now, once "now" has become "then".

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Klosterman asks some interesting questions and while I don't agree with the premise of much of what he poses, I enjoy the way his mind works so much that my ambivalence is overcome by my desire to understand how he thinks about complex issues. I hope he keeps writing about whatever topics engage these unique brain networks. I'll keep reading along.

Been a fan of Chuck K for years now, I've always enjoyed his pop culture commentary and essays. As he evolves, he seems to find an even deeper intellectual curiosity with every project. Wondering or speculating how things will be perceived centuries from now is an excellent and fascinating topic, especially in Klosterman's hands. He doesn't invite us to agree or disagree, he just takes logic to the next level.

I can't figure out if I love or hate the author - the sports and rock/roll stories are, to me, terrible, but then he writes something so profound that I'm forced to up his star rating because he may be one of our greatest writers. This book borders on greatness and causes you to really think about the world around you.

Meanders, but Klosterman does that on purpose. He's like a non-fiction Vonnegut. How does he know so much about modern culture? Like it's his job. Well, it's his job. But still. He's fun to read and I imagine when I disagree he wouldn't be mad, he'd be like "yeah, if you are paying attention some of this must be disagreeable." Made me think, not too hard.

had to read this for class but I really like the book. I look forward to going through it again when I'm less pressed for time. Some very interesting theories included in here.

Classic Klosterman. Thought provoking, but very accessible. Challenging enough to make you think, but readable enough you can discuss with friends at a bar. This is a very interesting thought experiment that has influenced my general perspective on most things. Worth your time.

Another great book by Chuck Klosterman. I'm a huge fan and have read all of his books. This one was one of his best.

My first klostermann book, so maybe I'm just not a fan of the way he writes but I felt he didn't stick to the theme that the title expresses. Reading this was similar to reading a bunch of one off topics that were not very impactful.

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