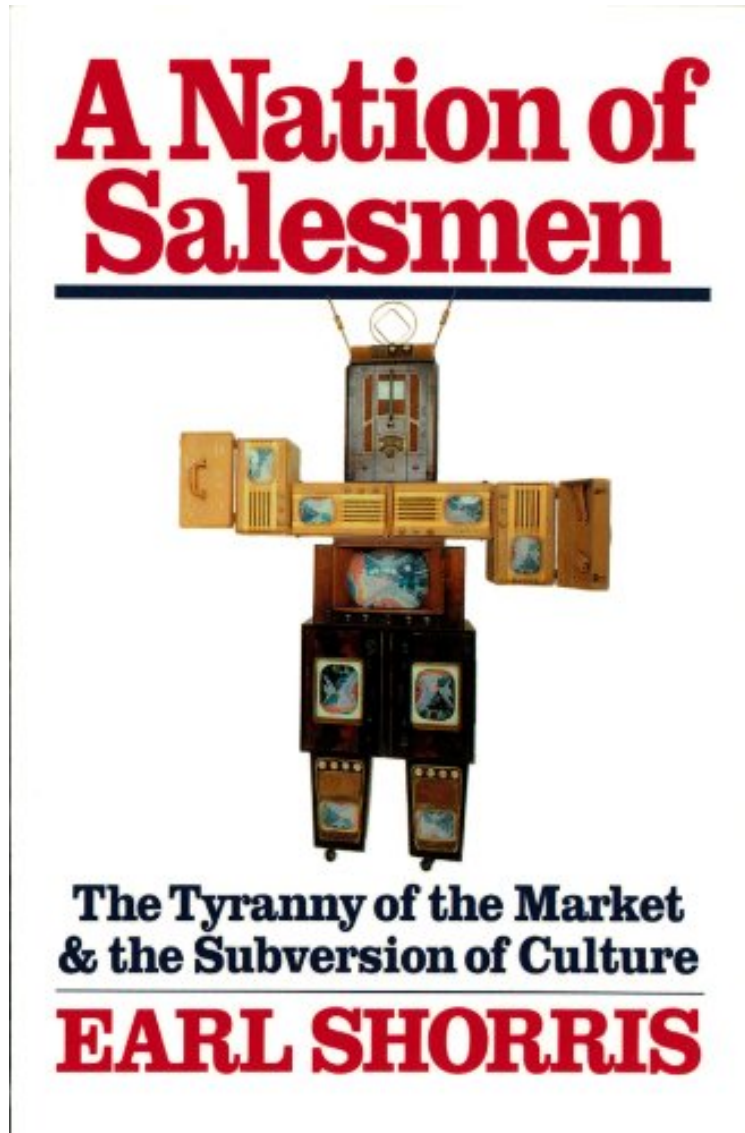


A Nation of Salesmen: The Tyranny of the Market and the Subversion of Culture

Earl Shorris

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Earl Shorris : A Nation of Salesmen: The Tyranny of the Market and the Subversion of Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Nation of Salesmen: The Tyranny of the Market and the Subversion of Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Thought-provoking read on USA as a nation of salesmen By Olga Shabalina The book provides historical approach to the origin of the Institute of salesmen in the USA. It is very convincing thanks to concrete names and figures, and entertaining at the same time. I highly recommend to read this

serious book. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Trilogy on the Death of the American Dream By Alan H. Macdonald For me Earl Shorris's "A Nation of Salesmen" is the mid-point of an unplanned, but enlightening, multi-author trilogy on the perversion of the American Dream caused by an insatiable 'hustling' and imperialist mindset. Coming as it does five and a half decades after the best American novel of the 20th century, Fitzgerald's "Gatsby", on the death of the American Dream, and three decades prescient of Morris Berman's concluding new non-fictional explanation of "Why America Failed", Shorris's "A Nation of Salesmen" weaves a narrative of fictional but 'teaching moment' vignettes headed with famous quotations examining the deceits of a market organized world, compared with the enlightenment of a new paradigm of human and humane thought. Shorris, if he is still alive, would immediately recognize that the Wall Street financial looting of 2008, and the stealthy assassinations by drones have inexorably led to what Occupy could become. Alan MacDonald Sanford, Maine 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Collection of pretentiously written articles about salesmanship By Eduardo WI bought this book a long time ago hoping it was more of a sociological study about salesmanship in America; it is not. It's a collection of articles from Earl Shorris that appeared in several magazines. That's not the real problem here, but the lack of substance and the constant use of notes (some of which are really unnatural) from famous people in order to beef up the concept, as if the writer didn't feel that what he was writing was important enough. I'll try 'Birth of a Salesman by Walter A. Friedman' to see if I have better luck on the subject.

If Adam is the archetype of man, and Eve of woman, then the serpent who sold the apple to Eve in the Garden of Eden was the first salesman: all culture and commerce flow from that act. In this groundbreaking book on the nature and meaning of the sale, Earl Shorris takes us on a journey that starts in Eden and comes at last to a consideration of where we are and what we have become in late twentieth-century America, where selling has finally become the dominant human activity. Shorris focuses on the perfection of this particular art here in America, where the vast frontier with its isolated settlements cast the salesman in a heroic role: he was literally the bearer of culture, the source of a panoply of needed and wanted items, everything from parasols to plowshares. He was Prometheus. All of this changed dramatically in the years following World War II, when it dawned on manufacturers and sellers that the American economy was producing more goods than people wanted or needed. Demand would have to be created in order to sustain the expansion of markets, and then, as the economy became oversold, the role of the salesman changed: his task was now to kill the competition. The argument of this brilliant work draws on classical philosophy, contemporary politics, psychology, and economics; it is grounded in the author's long experience as an advertising executive and consultant to major corporations. His firsthand observations and interviews with salesmen of every description form the anecdotal bedrock of the narrative, which is further enlivened by a series of fictions in which salesmen practice aspects of their trade. Out of these stories and insights emerges a chilling new paradigm of human life in our times: that of homo vendens. Shorris shows us how America became a nation of salesmen, and what this means to our economy, our politics, our culture, and our character - especially our freedom to live as dignified persons.

From Publishers Weekly Shorris, a former ad executive and a contributing editor to Harper's, argues that selling has become the dominant activity in American life, creating a marketing mentality that has corroded our culture, language and values. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Imagine the serpent throwing off God's curse, eschewing his dust diet, and ascending to the corridors of power. Shorris, a former advertising executive, here chronicles the change in perception of salespeople, once considered cheats but now seen as cultural heroes. For society, argues Shorris, this change does not bode well. The United States has embraced the ways of the salesperson to such an extent that it poses a threat to individuality, creativity, and spirituality. Shorris's book is wonderfully written, challenging, and scholarly. Although it is a work of philosophy, each chapter opens with cautionary parables about refugees of our commercial culture. Shorris excels at warning the reader about the dictatorship of "Homo vendens" but unfortunately spends little time on what we should do to change it. Recommended for economics, political science, and philosophy collections. Edward Buller, "Natural History," American Museum of Natural History, New York Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Drawing from his long experiences as an advertising executive and consultant to major corporations, Shorris' book addresses today's meaning of the sale. The author combines some of the principles of philosophy, politics, and applied economics, with his own firsthand observations and interviews with a wide array of salespeople, to illustrate how the U.S. became a nation of selling. Wielding insights and fictional stories, Shorris discusses what this means to our economy, politics, culture, and character. The thesis that selling has become the determinant activity in the U.S. is investigated in three parts: part 1 reviews definitions and history, part 2 tells about selling and how the U.S. became oversold, and part 3 examines the way the character of selling since World War II has caused people to have a new view of themselves, their freedom, and their dignity. This discerning narrative will certainly provoke thought among those engaged in selling; many others will also find it insightful. Joseph Leonard