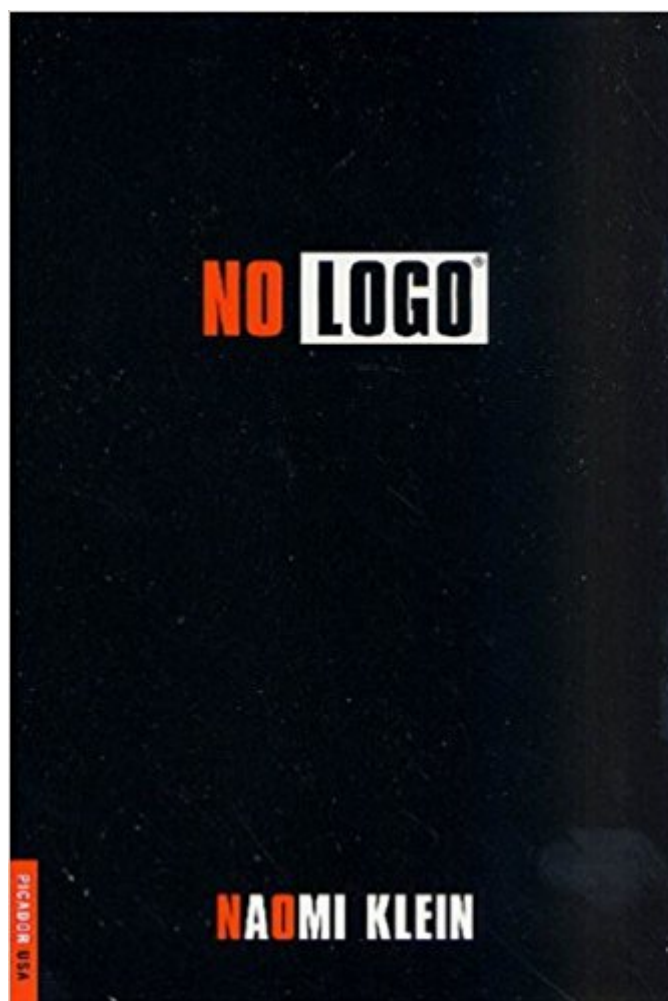


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No Logo



Synopsis

NO LOGO was an international bestseller and "a movement bible" (The New York Times). Naomi Klein's second book, The Shock Doctrine, was hailed as a "master narrative of our time," and has over a million copies in print worldwide. In the last decade, No Logo has become an international phenomenon and a cultural manifesto for the critics of unfettered capitalism worldwide. As America faces a second economic depression, Klein's analysis of our corporate and branded world is as timely and powerful as ever. Equal parts cultural analysis, political manifesto, mall-rat memoir, and journalistic exposé, No Logo is the first book to put the new resistance into pop-historical and clear economic perspective. Naomi Klein tells a story of rebellion and self-determination in the face of our new branded world.

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Customer Reviews

While I worried that this was a simple ideological diatribe, I was very happily surprised at the

intelligence and substance of Klein's book. It is a tough, well-reasoned manifesto for the anti-consumerism left of "Gen X." If you are wondering what was driving many of those protesters at the WTO and other summit meetings - most notoriously Seattle in late 1999 - then this book is the best place I know. It is part cultural critique, part economics and social policy, and partly a call to arms. Reading it has helped me to make sense of so much that I thought was simple, nihilistic anarchism. I was humbled to learn that there is far far more behind the movement than I had granted it. In a nutshell, Klein argues that the "superbrands" - the huge corporations such as Disney and Nike - are progressively taking over virtually all "public spaces," including school curricula, neighborhoods, and all-encompassing infotainment malls like Virgin Megastores. They are doing this in an attempt to enter our minds as consumers in the most intimate ways, which Klein and others find unbearably intrusive. Moreover, she argues, as they subcontract overseas, the superbrands are leaving first-world workers behind while they exploit those in the developing world under horrible conditions. It all adds up, she asserts, into a kind of emerging global worker solidarity that is developing new means (via internet exposes, protest campaigns, etc.) to push the superbrands to adopt more just policies and practices. What was so amazing and useful for me, as a business writer looking at the same issues, is that Klein so often hones in on the underside of what I think are good and effective business practices: the development of brand values, globalisation of the production/value chain to lower prices, and the like.

I found this book to be very interesting, and disturbing. Klein is certainly a Leftist, and generally as a conservative I would dispute much of her world-view but with the first half of her book she is on to something. I believe that the second half is less successful, and I do not share her idealization of graffiti artists and anti-global activists, but overall her book is a provocative and important one. Read and beware. I would like to respond to an earlier reviewer's comments, which many of my friends have directed me to when I told them of the book. Tristan from Australia finds fault with a graph in her book (not indexed for inflation) and then sets to beaking her over the head with it. I think he misses much of the point of her book - even if her graph is off. There is no question based on anecdotal evidence alone that advertising and the pervasiveness of "branded" space has increased. Look at modern sports stadiums, say the NFL - they're all named after corporations. The athletes at "FedEx Field" are all wearing brands that the team has negotiated (and been paid large sums to wear) - and they can be fined if they aren't wearing a "Starter brand" cap when they sit on the bench, etc. They then sit down and drink a Gatorade, while they watch the Coca-cola sponsored half-time show featuring Michael Jackson, Britney Spears or whoever the company believes they

can best get to flog their product. The highlights from the first half will be then shown on the X-brand half-time show, and then recreated using graphics from EA Sports John Madden game. You could avoid all this and go to a movie, but first you'll have to sit through advertisements before the movie - and not just for upcoming movies anymore.

..SHORT STORY: This is a very, very interesting book regardless of what the "ending" or the "higher purport" may be and irrespective of the pseudo-intellectual nitpicking by a number of other reviewers. So get it, read it and enjoy it. Even if it doesn't ruffle your fancies, it brims with real factual evidence about the dark side of big business so at the very least you'll leave with some very interesting information off a single, compact compilation. THE LONG, WINDING RAMBLE: The basic premise of the book is to highlight how advertising and general business practices have changed in the last twenty years. Essentially, companies decided that they were no longer in the business of selling products, because products are messy, duplicable, or even improvable. But if you are selling an idea, an experience, a set of associations, it is much harder for another company to compete with you. Think of Tommy Hilfiger for instance -- clothes manufactured in China and India for throw-away costs, but their designs are frantically devoured globally at horrendous price tags. This is why branding is big, and sometimes clandestine, business. The book is divided into four sections: 'No Space,' 'No Choice,' 'No Jobs' and 'No Logo.' 'No Space' is about the cluttering of our public spaces with ads; 'No Choice' describes different tactics used by big-name brands to drive independent retailers out of business; 'No Jobs' takes aim at sweatshop labour but with the corporations' "Brand, not products!" mentality in mind (it also includes details of Klein's trip to an Export Processing Zone just south of Manila); finally, 'No Logo' documents the global movement against branding and many of the organizations and people behind the revolt. POSITIVES: 1.

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