



The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life

By Richard Sennett

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“[Sennett] has ended up writing the best available contemporary defense of anarchism. . . . The issues [he] raises are fundamental and profound. His book is utopian in the best sense?it tries to define a radically different future and to show that it could be constructed from the materials at hand.”

–Kenneth Keniston, *New York Times Book Review*

The distinguished social critic Richard Sennett here shows how the excessively ordered community freezes adults?both the young idealists and their security-oriented parents?into rigid attitudes that stifle personal growth. He argues that the accepted ideal of order generates patterns of behavior among the urban middle classes that are stultifying, narrow, and violence-prone. And he proposes a functioning city that can incorporate anarchy, diversity, and creative disorder to bring into being adults who can openly respond to and deal with the challenges of life.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The issues Sennett raises are fundamental and profound. The book is utopian in the best sense - it tries to define a radically different future and to show that it could be constructed from the materials at hand.' New York Times Book Review 'We are prompted to think and dream and question old and tired cliches and some more recent ones, too, by an author whose mind is rich, wide-ranging, and, best of all, not afraid of life's ambiguities, not tempted to banish them all with ideological rhetoric' Robert Coles"

About the Author

Richard Sennett's books include The Corrosion of Character, Flesh and Stone, and Respect. He was the founding director of the New York Institute for the Humanities and now teaches sociology at New York University and at the London School of Economics.

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