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› Instruction Manual for 24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep

Verso 1781683107

Instruction Manual for 24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep

By Jonathan Crary

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This manual provides an informational guide to Jonathan Crary's influential work, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*. Published by Verso, the book critically examines the pervasive nature of contemporary capitalism and its impact on human experience, particularly the erosion of traditional temporal structures like sleep.

Crary argues that the relentless demand for constant activity and availability in a 24/7 society leads to a profound transformation of human life, perception, and social interaction. The text explores how this continuous operation blurs the lines between work and leisure, public and private, and intensifies consumerism and surveillance.



Image 1.1: The cover of *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*, depicting the title numbers against a backdrop of a building with many lit windows, symbolizing constant activity.

2. KEY THEMES AND CONCEPTS

Crary's analysis revolves around several core themes:

- **The 24/7 Non-Stop World:** The book posits that modern capitalism seeks to eliminate all forms of downtime, including sleep, to maximize productivity and consumption. This creates a perpetual present where traditional rhythms of life are disrupted.
- **Erosion of Sleep:** Sleep is presented as the last significant human activity that resists full integration into capitalist demands. Its diminishing role signifies a loss of a vital space for human autonomy and restoration.
- **Attention Economy and Surveillance:** Crary discusses how the continuous operation of digital platforms and media contributes to the management of individual attention and the expansion of surveillance, further integrating individuals into the capitalist system.
- **Loss of Community and Political Expression:** The constant engagement with digital interfaces and the erosion of shared temporal experiences are argued to undermine collective action and meaningful social interaction.

3. STRUCTURE AND ARGUMENT

The book is structured as a concise, yet potent, polemic. Crary builds his argument by drawing on a wide range of disciplines, including art history, philosophy, social theory, and media studies. He employs historical context to illustrate the gradual shift towards a 24/7 society, tracing its roots and implications.

The narrative progresses from an initial exploration of the concept of a non-stop world to a deeper dive into the specific mechanisms through which it operates, such as technology and economic pressures. The final sections often reflect on the potential for resistance and the importance of preserving spaces outside of capitalist control, with sleep serving as a primary example.

4. CRITICAL RECEPTION

24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep has been widely praised for its incisive critique of contemporary society and its thought-provoking analysis. Reviewers have highlighted its relevance in understanding the pressures of modern life and the subtle ways in which economic systems shape human behavior and experience.

The book is often cited in discussions concerning the sociology of time, media theory, and critical studies of capitalism. Its accessible yet rigorous approach makes it a valuable resource for both academic and general readers interested in the social and cultural impacts of globalization and technological advancement.

5. BOOK SPECIFICATIONS

Attribute	Detail
Title	24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep
Author	Jonathan Crary
Publisher	Verso
Publication Date	June 3, 2014

Language	English
Print Length	133 pages
ISBN-10	1781683107
ISBN-13	978-1781683101
Item Weight	2.31 pounds
Dimensions	5.08 x 0.38 x 7.7 inches

6. PUBLISHER INFORMATION AND FURTHER READING

For more information about Jonathan Crary and other publications, please visit the official website of the publisher, Verso Books. Verso is an independent publisher known for its critical and progressive literature.

Publisher Website: www.versobooks.com

Readers interested in related topics may explore other works by Jonathan Crary, such as *Techniques of the Observer* and *Suspensions of Perception*, which delve deeper into the history of visual culture and perception.