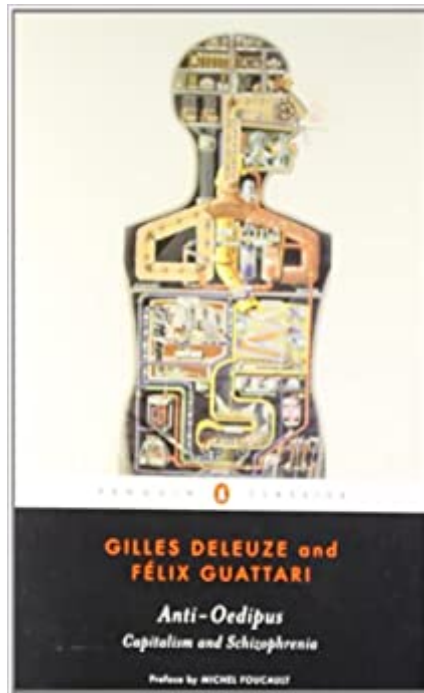




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# Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism And Schizophrenia (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

An "introduction to the nonfascist life" (Michel Foucault, from the Preface) When it first appeared in France, *Anti-Oedipus* was hailed as a masterpiece by some and "a work of heretical madness" by others. In it, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari set forth the following theory: Western society's innate herd instinct has allowed the government, the media, and even the principles of economics to take advantage of each person's unwillingness to be cut off from the group. What's more, those who suffer from mental disorders may not be insane, but could be individuals in the purest sense, because they are by nature isolated from society. More than twenty-five years after its original publication, *Anti-Oedipus* still stands as a controversial contribution to a much-needed dialogue on the nature of free thinking.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Renders palpable the metaphor of the unconscious as a worker, and does it in a brilliant, appropriately nutty way." -The New Republic

Text: English, French (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As far as the order, it came in a timely fashion - although there are some minor typos in the press. As far as the content of the book, I have mixed feelings - this book is a hot mess. The best thing

anyone could say about it is what Foucault states in the preface, about the book being more a work of art than a great theoretical system (like Kant, or Hegel lets say). And I'll accept the book as that, just art. The book starts off very strong, but, once you realize the authors are basically saying the same thing ten different ways, it loses its magic. The read itself can be difficult at times, but, it is very well paced, so that once you trudge through enough technical philosophy, things open up quite brilliantly - like having gotten through the forest into the open field. That feeling in-itself, ends up being a highlight of the book in a sense. The philosophy itself is messy, lacks focus towards the end, is packed far too much with neologisms, and in many ways ends up seeming unoriginal. The concept of a "Body Without Organs" aside - Essentially you have a Spinozist materialism that integrates itself with Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, and a bunch of others far too obscure for most readers to have any reference to. This is also a weakness of the text, as it is not very accessible (even to philosophers) in terms knowing whether the authors' interpretations of these other writers are actually spot on, or not. This makes critical analysis a daunting task, coupled with the neologisms, and messy layout of ideas. Another critique is that (being someone who has worked extensively, and intimately with the mentally ill - most notably schizophrenics - for many years) I wonder about the depth of understanding of schizophrenia. Philosophy proper, yes - economics, sure - a properly thoughtful and empirical sense of schizophrenia? I am doubtful. Guattari, maybe - but I am very skeptical that Deleuze has any significant experience with schizophrenics, and in fact, in the text, most references to schizophrenia are from other peoples case notes/research - notably, the authors who themselves malign Freud. ... I also have a hard time getting past the vast amount of undue credit given to Oedipus as an institution, and deeply engrained unconscious pattern, social, and individual. Still, if one approaches the book as a work of art, its fantastic, entertaining, and at times hilarious. All criticism aside, the book has a compelling sense of mystery that it instills, a wonderful aesthetic. This alone can bring me back to this book, for likely, the rest of my life. There are grand moments of detailed, original, philosophy (the Body Without Organs being a shining display), they are just, well, mixed in with a whole lot of other stuff that maybe the book could have done without.

I am only half way through this book, and it has been superb. Here is the quote that began to shift my conception of what psychoanalysis is: "The real is not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything is possible, everything becomes possible. Desire does not express a molar lack within the subject; rather, the molar organization deprives desire of its objective being" (37).

And really, really, really hard to follow. Trust me, this is one that'll make your head hurt. If Nietzsche

was tough, don't cross into this, it's going to scramble your brain. But if you're like me and you like that sort of thing, then this is your Mecca.

I was disappointed in this book considering all the stellar reviews. There is so much intellect on display that it is hard to filter out what the author is trying to tell you. At times the sentences run on with too many descriptives which made the dialog hard to follow and the points difficult to grasp easily. I prefer elegant structural simplicity, after all isn't simplicity at the heart of Zen? The author writes about the case histories as if they were physics experiments. The narrative implied empathy but I had a hard time feeling engaged with any of the 'subjects' or the author for that matter. The entire time I felt as if I was reading an article from a scientific journal. It seems to me that the target audience is academia. If you like a large dose of heavy handed wordy analysis with your Zen then this book is for you.

I was philosophy student in the 90s when this was cool and talked about.

Few other people on the planet could have written this book: you would need to take a professional philosopher, train him/her in the rigours of the full Rolfing training program, AND add 30 year's of intensive Zen meditation (under one of the greatest living teachers) and then--maybe--that person might have the experience, insight and wisdom to write a book like this one. Unique, and wholeheartedly recommended, and will definitely give you insight into living and being.

It's a bit over my head but a good reference book

It is interesting to observe the feelings of inadequacy arise as I attempt to harness the words to describe "The Spacious Body". A book of this depth and breadth rarely comes along as such a readable and enjoyable form. Oftentimes while reading "Spacious Body", I felt as if I were on a mental roller coaster, wondering which way was up and if I would ever catch my breath. But when the ride was over, I wanted to jump back on and do it again. As a former Philosophy professor at Purdue University, a Rolfer and a Zen monk, Jeffrey Maitland is a master at collecting the many pieces of mind/body/spirit. In his book, Dr. Maitland generously shares insights from his own mental/physical/spiritual development, as well as case history composites, so that the reader might come to a better understanding of the relationship that each part plays in our beoming whole. It's my bet that anyone who is on a journey will find something in this book that "speaks" to them and I

highly recommend the ride.

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