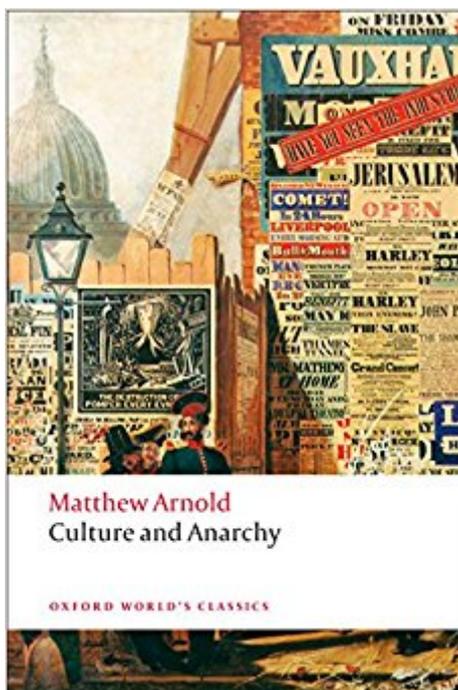


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# Culture And Anarchy (Oxford World's Classics)



## Synopsis

Matthew Arnold's famous series of essays, which were first published in book form under the title *Culture and Anarchy* in 1869, debate important questions about the nature of culture and society. Arnold seeks to find out what culture really is, what good it can do, and if it is really necessary. He contrasts culture, which he calls the study of perfection, with anarchy, the mood of unrest and uncertainty that pervaded mid-Victorian England. This edition reproduces the original book version, revealing the immediate historical context and controversy of the piece. The introduction and notes broaden out the interpretative approach to Arnold's text, elaborating on the complexities of the religious context. The book also reinforces the continued importance of Arnold's ideas its influences in the face of the challenges of multi-culturalism and post-modernism. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Major work of criticism by Matthew Arnold, published in 1869. In it Arnold contrasts culture, which he defines as "the study of perfection," with anarchy, the prevalent mood of England's then new democracy, which lacks standards and a sense of direction. Arnold classified English society into

the Barbarians (with their lofty spirit, serenity, and distinguished manners and their inaccessibility to ideas), the Philistines (the stronghold of religious nonconformity, with plenty of energy and morality but insufficient "sweetness and light"), and the Populace (still raw and blind). He saw in the Philistines the key to culture; they were the most influential segment of society; their strength was the nation's strength, their crudeness its crudeness; it therefore was necessary to educate and humanize the Philistines. Arnold saw in the idea of "the State," and not in any one class of society, the true organ and repository of the nation's collective "best self." No summary can do justice to *Culture and Anarchy*, however; it is written with an inward poise, a serene detachment, and an infusion of subtle humor that make it a masterpiece of ridicule as well as a searching analysis of Victorian society. The same is true of its sequel, *Friendship's Garland* (1871). -- The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Without the challenging precedent of 'Culture and Anarchy,' literary criticism and sociology in England and the United States would want both purpose and direction. Manifesting the special intelligence of a literary critic of original gifts, 'Culture and Anarchy' is still a living classic. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

*Culture and Anarchy* is one of the most important essays of the Victorian artistic mentality. It is a perfect companion to all of Ruskin's work and is a beautiful commentary on the artistic thought of the day .

I love diversity.

It was a little hard to get through, but worth the read.

Considering the state of our current political affairs, the book was a pleasant surprise. The style is very much of its time, and may seem circuitous and precious to a modern reader. But it IS a keen essay on the forces shaping English social thought at the time, and a lot of what Arnold says applies to our nation today--the deep divisions, the treasuring of party over society, the moronic worship of money and growth over humanity. It is an honest attempt to get us to think about why we think and act as we do. He attempts to ask us to reconsider our rush to self-destruction for the sake of ideology, stereotyping, and fear.

I think I described the view earlier. When I got the book it was in wonderful shape and I was very grateful for that. It is one of the reason I write what I am writing now. Thanks.

Some real nuggets included, but more than enough wandering about in the writing...

The kindle edition is NOT the Oxford World's Classics edition of the book. Marketing it as such is fraud. should exercise more oversight of what it sells. It is simply an antiquated edition available free from Google or the Internet archive. Don't be conned.

Matthew Arnold, a British poet and critic, wrote on the importance of culture in this work. He defined culture, famously, as "sweetness and light" - implying that culture represented everything good, everything not barbaric. The work is most important for the way it forwards the notion of an "organic" society - that is, a society that evolves slowly, that grows into maturity, that does not strive for sudden "advances" led by experts working all at once to implement great change. For anyone wondering about the relationship between modern conservatism and classical Liberalism, this is a decent place to start. "I am a Liberal," Arnold writes in the introduction, "yet I am a Liberal tempered by experience, reflection, and renouncement, and I am, above all, a believer in culture." If you wish to take an intellectual journey from Burke to Bork, Arnold must make up one leg of your trip.

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