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Reading Record

Douglas Kellner

Introduction to the Second Edition

from *One-Dimensional Man*

Response:

Kellner delves into the shaping and relevance of Marcuse’s ideas portrayed in *One-Dimensional Man*. Toward the end of the introduction, he argues that it continues to be relevant at the time of his introduction’s publication. I related to his account of Marcuse rallying with student activists and believe that today the society of the United States is standing at a crossroads between moving toward social change in favor of minority communities and reverting back to the social norms and values of an earlier, “better” time.

Discussion Question:

Kellner believes that *One-Dimensional Man* continued to be relevant to society decades after its publication. Has the internet made this work more relevant than ever or has it had an opposite effect?

Outline of Argument:

* Introduction (xi-xiii)
  + Book criticizes conformity, hope for expansion (xi)
  + Social critique still relevant (xi-xii)
    - Quote from Marcuse
  + Technological society changes life and thoughts (xii)
    - Short Marcuse quotes
  + Critical philosophy and critical social theory (xii-xiii)
* The Frankfurt School and *One-Dimensional Man* (xiii-xviii)
  + Influences from Heidegger, Hegel, and Marx (xiii)
  + Technological/robotic rationality takes away from individuality (xiii-xiv)
    - Influenced by Husserl and Heidegger
  + Dialectical philosophy - new way of thinking (xiv)
  + Negative thinking break existing norms of thought (xiv-xv)
  + Frankfurt School critique of fascism (xv)
  + Essentials for humanity shows inhibitions from society (xv-xvi)
  + Relation between Hegel and Marx, origin of modern social theory (xvi)
    - *Reason and Revolution* (1941) - first major work in English
  + One-dimensional vs dialectical thinking (xvi-xvii)
    - 1930s essays
  + Defining and categorizing dialectical theory (xvii)
    - Horkheimer, Adorno, Korsch
  + Marcuse did not work on dialectics project (xvii-xviii)
    - *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Adorno, Horkheimer)
* The Genesis and Development of *One-Dimensional Man* (xviii-xxix)
  + Still articulates the categorization of critical and dialectical thinking (xviii)
  + Development of ideas about technology and society (xviii-xix)
  + Capitalism and technology spread conformity and one-dimensionalism (xix-xx)
  + Theory of Social Change project (xx)
    - Marcuse and Neumann quote
  + Analyze social change and cohesion conflict (xx-xxi)
    - Marcuse and Neumann quote
  + Integrate philosophy, social theory, politics in works (xxi-xxii)
    - Marcuse and Neumann short quotes
  + Modern sociology according to Marcuse and Neumann (xxii)
    - Marcuse and Neuman short quote
  + Two tendencies in Critical Theory (xxii)
  + Marcuse develops themes for *One-Dimensional Man* (xxiii)
  + Theses create positions within *One-Dimensional Man* (xxiii-xxiv)
  + Themes of Marcuse - technology and social control (xxiv)
    - Marcuse short quotes
  + “Organized capitalism” (xxiv-xxv)
    - Marcuse short quotes
  + Theories about technological society begun (xxv-xxvi)
    - Marcuse short quotes
  + Ways to read theory - dialectical text contrasting 1D with multidimensional (xxvi-xxvii)
    - Marcuse short quotes
  + One-dimensional = conformity (xxvii)
  + Defining a one-dimensional man (xxvii-xxviii)
  + Book protests against industrial society and decline of individuality (xxviii)
  + Marcuse definition of human being and one-dimensional living (xxviii-xxix)
* The Critical Theory of One-Dimensional Society (xxix-xxxiv)
  + Describing ideas/examples raised in *One-Dimensional Man* (xxix)
  + Influences of Maracuse and ideas he critiques (xxx)
  + Marcuse ideas about capitalism vs individualism (xxx-xxxi)
    - Quote from *One-Dimensional Man*
  + Marcuse on labor and technology (xxxi-xxxii)
  + Why *One-Dimensional Man* is still relevant (xxxii)
    - Marcuse quote about 1964
  + No analysis of counter-tendencies against 1D society (xxxii-xxxiii)
  + Analyzes trends of society without counter-trends (xxxiii)
    - Marcuse quotes
  + Transformation of society possible seen in visions of other texts (xxxiii-xxxiv)
    - *Eros and Civilization*
    - *An Essay on Liberation*
    - *Counterrevolution and Revolt*
    - Marcuse quotes
  + *One-Dimensional Man* focuses on suppression of contradictions and liberation (xxxiv)
  + Learn to analyze containment, stabilization, contestation, struggle in society (xxxiv)
* Reception and Contemporary Relevance (xxxv-xxix)
  + Impact on society and social theory (xxxv)
  + Paradox to new radicalism that associated with in 60s (xxxv-xxxvi)
  + Rally activists during Vietnam (xxxvi)
  + Academic reception of book (xxxvi)
    - C. Wright Mills
    - Daniel Bell
    - John Galbraith
  + Most influential social theory, criticisms influence (xxxvi-xxxvii)
    - *An Essay on Liberation*
    - *Counterrevolution and Revolt*
  + Analysis confirmed by government response to social changes (xxxvii)
    - Marcuse quote
  + How Marcuse would react to Reagan and Bush (xxxvii-xxxviii)
  + Examples of one-dimensionalism in US politics (xxxviii)
  + Relevance to Persian Gulf war (xxxviii-xxxix)
  + Legacy and continued relevance, call to action (xxxix)