



The Fate of Ideas: Seductions, Betrayals, Appraisals

Robert Boyers

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As editor of the quarterly *Salmagundi* for the past fifty years, Robert Boyers has been on the cutting edge of developments in politics, culture, and the arts. Reflecting on his collaborations and quarrels with some of the twentieth century's most transformative writers, artists, and thinkers, Boyers writes a wholly original intellectual memoir that rigorously confronts selected aspects of contemporary society.

Organizing his chapters around specific ideas, Boyers anatomizes the process by which they fall in and out of fashion and often confuse those who most ardently embrace them. In provocative encounters with authority, fidelity, "the other," pleasure, and a wide range of other topics, Boyers tells colorful stories about his own life and, in the process, studies the fate of ideas in a society committed to change and ill equipped to assess the losses entailed in modernity. Among the writers who appear in these pages are Susan Sontag and V. S. Naipaul, Jamaica Kincaid and J. M. Coetzee, as well as figures drawn from all walks of life, including unfaithful husbands, psychoanalysts, terrorists, and besotted beauty lovers.

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