

ON RESISTANCE

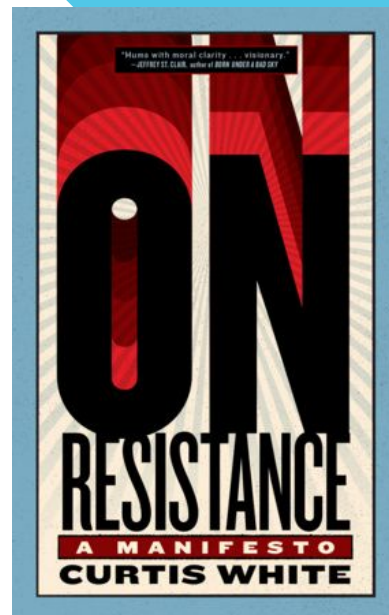
A Manifesto

A part of the Activist Citizens Library Series

Curtis White

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“Aims to reassert the primacy of artists and writers in resisting fascism ... an indispensable insider’s view.” — **Publishers Weekly**

“*On Resistance* hums with moral clarity in our increasingly obscure times and, as such, is a visionary text that has arrived at precisely the desperate moment we need it most.” — **Jeffrey St. Clair, editor of *CounterPunch*, author of *Born Under a Bad Sky***

“*On Resistance* demolishes the self-congratulatory mythology of American philanthropy and the creeping corporate capture of cultural life—and does it with wit.” — **Bhaskar Sunkara, president, *The Nation***

INTRODUCTION

From the writer *Elle* calls the "most inspiringly wicked social critic of the moment" comes a hands-on, don't-lose-hope study of how writers, painters, musicians, and other cultural figures respond to fascism ...

We live in a time where independent thinking, love of literature and ideas, and passion for human expression are all under attack from a ruthless and uncaring government and a culture that values only immediate gratification and digital flash.

In *On Resistance*, Veteran writer and activist Curtis White offers spiritual hope and intellectual fortification for those in despair about the bankruptcy of American life. Drawing on a range of books, films, essays, and artworks, White shows how our rich collective literary heritage gives us mental ammunition for our fight against the forces that would reduce us all to commodities and consumers. In doing so, he has penned a new classic in the noble history of American polemics.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do we think that politics and culture are separate things?
2. People commonly think of the 1960's "counterculture," with its psychedelic music and art, as a good example of political resistance through culture. Does that resistance still exist or is it lost to us?

ON RESISTANCE. . .

3. Curtis White writes that he came of age “among people who had dropped out of the world as we’d known it.” What does “dropping out” look like today?
4. Do music streaming services like Spotify provide platforms for political resistance? Or frustrate that resistance?
5. Perhaps dropping out is commonplace now. For example, farmer’s markets and local organic farming have separated themselves from industrial agriculture. Is that a form of dropping out?
6. White suggests that national and local cultures are dependent upon stories that we tell ourselves about who we are. Is it possible to tell stories that counter the stories that we were born into? Can art help us to tell our own stories?
7. For example, Western cultures tell stories about nations and patriotism. They tell stories about what it means to be a man or a woman. They tell stories about race. How do music, art and poetry try to change these stories in the present?
8. White encourages us to “make ourselves useless” and to “take back our emptiness.” Your human “emptiness” is filled by the culture you were born into. How would you fill that emptiness if you were free to do so?
9. White concludes that “our true values are not to be found in what we think, or in what we say we believe, but in how we live.” Do we live in a way that expresses our true nature?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Curtis White was born in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1951. He moved to San Francisco in 1969 and experienced the Countercultures of the late '60s and early '70s. This experience led him to join with the Fiction Collective, now FC2, an independent literary publisher run by its authors. He has written seventeen works of fiction and social criticism, most of them published through independent publishers — such as Melville House.

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