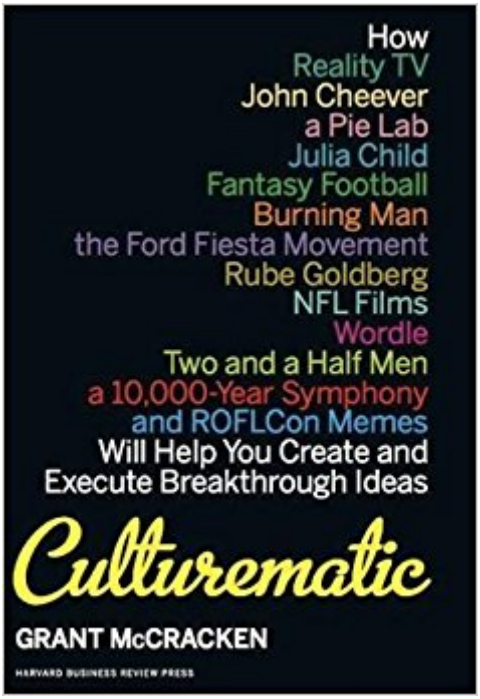
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Culturematic: How Reality TV, John Cheever, A Pie Lab, Julia Child, Fantasy Football . . . Will Help You Create An



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Synopsis

Welcome to Culturematic: How Reality TV, John Cheever, a Pie Lab, Julia Child, Fantasy Football, Burning Man, the Ford Fiesta Movement, Rube Goldberg, NFL Films, Wordle, Two and a Half Men, a 10,000-Year Symphony, and ROFLCom Memes Will Help You Create and Execute Breakthrough IdeasA Culturematic is a little machine for making culture. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s an ingenuity engine.Once wound up and released, the Culturematic acts as a probe into the often-alien world of contemporary culture, to test the atmosphere, to see what life it can sustain, to see who responds and how. Culturematics start small but can scale up ferociously, bootstrapping themselves as they go.Because they are so inexpensive, we can afford to fire off a multitude of Culturematics simultaneously. This is evolutionary strategy, iterative innovation, and rapid prototyping all at once. Culturematics are fast, cheap, and out of control. Perhaps as important, they fail early and often. They are the perfect antidote to a world where we cannot guess whatÃ¢â ¬â„¢s coming next.In Culturematic, anthropologist Grant McCracken describes these little machines and helps the reader master them. Examples are drawn from NFL Films, Twitter, the Apple Genius Bar, Starbucks, Ford, SNL Digital Shorts, Restoration Hardware, UNICEF, J. Crew, Pie Lab, USA Network, and the GEICO gecko.For the traditional producers of culture—the creators of movies, design, advertising, publishing, magazines, newspapers, and corporate R&D—this book will inspire new innovation and creativity.For the emerging producers of culture—the digital players—this book will serve as a practical handbook. Culturematic: our app for creating the world anew.

Book Information

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press; First Edition, First Printing edition (May 15, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1422143295

ISBN-13: 978-1422143292

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #131,854 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Decorative Arts & Design > Industrial & Product Design #752 inÃ Â Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > General #1163 inÃ Â Books > Business & Money >

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“McCrackenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s lively exploration of how media experiments, rule breaking, and parody can expose culture and move it forward proves fascinating and provocative.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Publishers Weekly“Inspirational and quirky, McCrackenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s book offers insight on why corporations might want to do this, and suggests a recipe for going about it.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Research-Technology Management“This book is for all businesses and is written to inspire new innovation and creativity.Ã¢â ¬Â• — T+D magazine (American Society for Training & Development)“McCrackenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s point is that in the modern world it is almost impossible to know where the next big idea is coming from… But, thanks to social media and also to the fact that the world is in many ways a lot more homogenous than used to be the case, certain ideas, thoughts, programmes spread like wildfire.Ã¢â ¬Â• — futureofbusiness.com“Grant McCracken introduces, in this thought-provoking book, the notion of the culturematic, a machine for making culture – otherwise described as an ingenuity engine... McCracken has interesting observations about how the growing inscrutability of the world haunts traditional producers of culture.Ã¢â ¬Â• — The Irish Times“Worth the read if youÃ¢â ¬â„¢re trying to create meaning and value in the world.Ã¢â ¬Â• — LeadershipNow (leadershipnow.com)“Working in the digital culture industry, Culturematic is certainly inspirational. If nothing else, itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s an excellent compendium of cultural artifacts that have touched the zeitgeist in the last few years.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Social Media Group (socialmediagroup.com)“Engagingly written and accessible to both business and lay people, the book will have broad appeal to entrepreneurs, marketers, inventors, artists, and people looking for a creativity boost in their professional or personal lives.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Library Journal“his book will definitely lead you to a greater appreciation of your own inner curiositiesÃ¢â ¬Â• — Marketing Daily/MediaPostADVANCE PRAISE for Culturematic“No one views American culture—nor discovers its meaning—in quite the way Grant McCracken does. With his sparkling Culturematic as your guide, go from consuming culture to making it, one small, achievable, and ingenious step at a time.Ã¢â ¬Â• — B. Joseph Pine II, coauthor, The Experience Economy and Infinite Possibility“Culturematic pulls back the curtain on the fascinating cultural world that drives brands, corporations, and society. Both a revealer of history and a predictor of the future, Grant McCracken provides tools for innovation and mischief that will help you place yourself and your company on the relevant edge of culture. A

guidebook, a tool, and a great read.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Stanley Hainsworth, Chief Creative Officer, Tether“Grant McCracken is a cool guy and thinker with consistently cutting-edge insights about the way people are thinking, working, and feeling. McCrackenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s challenge here, to be a culture-making entrepreneur—‘a CulturematicÃ¢â ¬â„¢—resonated strongly with me, as I expect it will for many people and leaders who want to invent their futures by starting small.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Peter Sims, author, Little Bets; Cofounder and Director, Fuse Corps“We are leaving behind a marketing age that rewarded safe bets. Culturematic prepares us to listen more and hear the answers in unexpected places.Ã¢â ¬Â• — John A. Deighton, Harold M. Brierley Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School“There Ã¢â ¬â„¢s a misconception that innovation lives only in labs populated by white-coat wearing scientists. In his wide-ranging and entertaining book, Grant McCracken shows how that is not true. Culturematic manages to be both an engaging and practical guide to creativity and innovation. A worthwhile read.Ã¢â ¬Â• — Scott D. Anthony, Managing Director Innosight Asia-Pacific; author of The Little Black Book Innovation

"No one views American culture--nor discovers its meaning--in quite the way Grant McCracken does. With his sparklingÃ Â CulturematicÃ Â as your guide,Ã Â go from consuming culture to making it, one small, achievable, and ingenious step at a time." Ã Â --B. Joseph Pine II, coauthor, The Experience EconomyÃ Â and Infinite Possibility Ã Â "Culturematic pulls back the curtain on the fascinating cultural world that drives brands, corporations, and society. Both a revealer of history and a predictor of the future, Grant McCracken provides tools for innovation and mischief that will help you place yourself and your company on the relevant edge of culture. A guidebook, a tool, and a great read." Ã Â --Stanley Hainsworth, Chief Creative Officer, Tether Ã Â "Grant McCracken is a cool guy and thinker with consistently cutting-edge insights about the way people are thinking, working, and feeling. McCracken's challenge here, to be a culture-making entrepreneur--'a Culturematic'--resonated strongly with me, as I expect it will for many people and leaders who want to invent their futures by starting small." Ã Â --Peter Sims, author, Little Bets; Cofounder and Director, Fuse Corps Ã Â "We are leaving behind a marketing age that rewarded safe bets.Ã Â Culturematic prepares us to listen more and hear the answers in unexpected places." Ã Â --John A. Deighton, Harold M. Brierley Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School Ã Â "There's a misconception that innovation lives only in labs populated by white-coat wearing scientists. In his wide-ranging and entertaining book, Grant McCracken shows how that is not true. Culturematic manages to be both an engaging and practical guide to creativity

and innovation. A worthwhile read." Ã Â --Scott D. Anthony, Managing Director, Innosight Asia-Pacific; author of The Little Black Book of Innovation.

In Culturematic, McCracken introduces a methodology of creativity. By following his methodology, you create a "Culturematic," a thought process* that creates intriguing new concepts. McCracken gives countless examples of recent pop culture phenomena he believes originate from Culturematics.The methodology for creating a Culturematic is simple, if unclear. Using examples pulled from the book, the methodology is: 1. Test the world: Ask "What if..." or "What if I..." (e.g. What if I invented a professional sports league?) 2. Discover Culture: Your "what if" should reframe culture and produce new culture (e.g. Lonely Island starts with "What if I prematurely ejaculated to an insane degree," ends in Jizz in My Pants skit.) 3. Unleash value: Profit! (e.g. Think about all the money made by Julie and Julia food blog, or Supersize Me)To his credit, McCracken immediately seems to realize his methodology is vague and unhelpful. As such, he spends a significant portion of the rest of the book attempting to clarify what following these three steps actually entails. Such clarifications include: -Culturematics have no desired or definite outcome when born. -Culturematics are not posturing in anyway (except incidentally). -Culturematics reframe the world in a way that makes it more organized, more tangible, or breaks previous distinctions (such as between art and science). -Culturematics have something like an emergent order (and as such, you should go out in the world and experience ideas unrelated to your own). -Culturematics work from native curiosity and excitement. -Culturematics should focus on small ideas that can grow, rather than on big ideas. -Culturematics shouldn’t conform to taste, social rules, or genres. -Culturematics should result in small scale projects that can fail without much consequence.These clarifications, of course, don’t really connect to his Culturematic methodology. Instead, they’re just good tips for being creative, said better elsewhere.McCracken then attempts to show how you can apply the Culturematic approach to yourself (by being a spectacle or curator, for instance). He does the same for various creative mediums, and then concludes by discussing how corporations can employ the approach. (I believe another review discusses the corporation part more.)There are numerous problems with the book, as should be evident here. McCracken has clearly stumbled upon an idea. Unfortunately, he has trouble conveying it clearly: his linguistic invention of the "Culturematic" fails to illuminate, as do his countless examples. Even worse, the lack of clarity does not result from his idea being so novel as to defy easy description; rather, other writers have already said it better. (See, for example,Ã Â Accidental Genius: Using Writing to Generate Your Best Ideas, Insight, and ContentÃ Â for content generation, andÃ Â Words That Work: It’s Not What You Say, It’s What

People HearÃ Â for what content tends to influence others. Secondarily, I'd recommend the blogs Barking Up The Wrong Tree, Brain Pickings, or even Inc.com.)In short, don't buy this book; buy those others.----------*McCracken also uses Culturematic to describe people and entities embodying this thought process.

In his last book, Chief Culture Officer, Grant McCracken made the case for why firms must pay attention to culture to succeed. In this book, McCracken outlines a method for doing this effectively. He defines a Culturematic as a tool for cultural innovation. They are basically tests - you answer a "what if..." question, try it out, discover what works (and what doesn't), and then unlock value from what you learn.The idea is deceptively simple, but profound. You may read the descriptions of the book and say "but I'm not interested reality TV, fantasy football, ROFLcon etc." It doesn't matter. What McCracken describes is an experimental approach to innovation that applies more generally than might be obvious. Experimenting is at the core of any successful innovation effort, and the tools described in this book can be used in much wider contexts than those used as examples in it. In that, it is a good companion toÃ Â Little Bets: How Breakthrough Ideas Emerge from Small Discoveries.The ideas in this book will be useful to anyone interested in innovation, design thinking or those running organisations that have a strong connection to culture (be it low or high). On top of that, it is well-written and fun to read - an added bonus.

As an Equity Analyst, I love reading business strategy books to gain new insights into how to look at companies. I discovered Culturematic while listening to a recent HBR Ideacast podcast interview with its author, Grant McCracken - [...] I was intrigued and downloaded the book onto my Kindle. I found Culturematic a refreshing change from most business strategy books as McCracken approaches the concept of innovation from his expertise as an anthropologist. It is interesting as McCracken's own blog which "sits at the intersection of anthropology and economics" - [...]-camps - is a culturematic itself as it brings together two unrelated domains and creates a new way for people to look at corporate strategy. Another example of a company that is a culturematic which follows McCracken's "...rules: Don't look for big ideas. Seek small ideas that can grow. Fail fast. Fail often. Keep learning and never give up." is lululemon - [...]. I highly recommend you check out this fascinating book!

This is a wonderful book that uses metaphor and storytelling to refresh and reaffirm today's too often trivialized notion that the secrets to building iconic brands are all around us, imbedded in the

popular culture. It reminds us that the perfect is the enemy of the good and it touts the efficacy of the "think it, do it, fix it" model. From its title (If that doesn't evoke Ron Popeil then you've missed some classic infomercials.) to its many fresh examples (Not the predictable parade of Coke and Starbucks and Apple.) the author liberally uses the principles he presents. This very book is a 'culturematic': a thing that is sent out into the world to discover meaning and create value.

Grant is a great chronicler of social science trends and the forces that shape our culture consciousness. He deserves to be better known. I personally I have read all his books and consider his thinking to be a huge influence on my own writing and thinking. Culturematic deserves to be read.

A hard book to describe. If you are interested in a breakdown of how things of great success come to fruition in the world today, check it out. I was very happy that the kindle Text-To-Speech function was enabled on this book as I often use that when driving.

I bought this as a gift for my daughter and she is enjoying reading it. Not my style of reading but works for her.

I bought it because brands needs to understand the culture to fit in and become icons. This book explains that.

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