

## Society's Books of Note

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Daniel Horowitz, *On the Cusp: The Yale College Class of 1960 and a World on the Verge of Change*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015. \$24.95. 336 pp.

Daniel Horowitz, the Mary Higgins Gamble Professor of American Studies emeritus at Smith College, asks, "How did the 1950s become 'The Sixties'?" The book examines "the dynamics of social and political change through the experiences of a small, and admittedly privileged, generational cohort." Part memoir, part collective biography, and part cultural history, Horowitz's narrative illuminates the evolution of personal and social change.

Jon Ronson, *So You've Been Publicly Shamed*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2015. \$27.95. 290 pp.

Journalist, Jon Ronson, offers both satirical and unnerving insight into the consequences of an ever expanding social media and its power to shame and humiliate. Ronson calls this the democratization of shaming, and he effectively illustrates how this process emboldens cruelty at the same time empowering the growing presence and profitability of new forms of social media.

John Gray, *The Soul of the Marionette: A Short Inquiry into Human Freedom*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015. \$23.00. 179 pp.

John Gray, author of *The Silence of Animals: On Progress and Other Modern Myths*, takes on the question of

free will in this foray into human ambition and its vicissitudes. "Drawing on the widest possible reading (from the Gnostics to Philip K. Dick)," Gray provides an "engaging meditation on everything from cybernetics to the fairground marionettes of the title."

Scott L. Montgomery and Daniel Chirot, *The Shape of the New: Four Big Ideas and How They Made the Modern World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015. \$35.00. 512 pp.

Scott L. Montgomery and Daniel Chirot, both at the University of Washington, assess how revolutionary ideas from the Enlightenment about freedom, equality, evolution, and democracy have reverberated through modern history and shaped the world as we know it today. They argue "that it is impossible to understand the ideological and political conflicts of our own time without familiarizing ourselves with the history and internal tensions of these world-changing ideas."

Brooke Borel, *Infested: How the Bed Bug Infiltrated Our Bedrooms and Took Over the World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. \$26.00. 224 pp.

Science writer and journalist, Brooke Borel, recounts the long and enduring history of the bed bug and its equally long impact on our collective psyche, reviled while at the same time inspiring art, literature, and music. She provides "fascinating details on bed bug science and behavior as well as a captivating look into the lives of those devoted to researching or eradicating them."