



From Lowbrow to Nobrow

By Peter Swirski

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Swirski begins with a series of groundbreaking questions about the nature of popular fiction, vindicating it as an artform that expresses and reflects the aesthetic and social values of its readers. He follows his insightful introduction to the socio-aesthetics of genre literature with a synthesis of the century long debate on the merits of popular fiction and a study of genre informed by analytic aesthetics and game theory. Swirski then turns to three "nobrow" novels that have been largely ignored by critics. Examining the aesthetics of "artertainment" in Karel Capek's *War with the Newts*, Raymond Chandler's *Playback*, and Stanislaw Lem's *Chain of Chance*, crossover tours de force, *From Lowbrow to Nobrow* throws new light on the hazards and rewards of nobrow traffic between popular forms and highbrow aesthetics.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Swirski writes intelligently, quotescopiously, and approaches his themes passionately". **Montreal Review of Books**

"Swirski begins with a series of groundbreaking questions about the nature of popular fiction, vindicating it as an art form that expresses and reflects the aesthetic and social values of its readers. He follows his insightful introduction to the socio-aesthetics of genre literature with a synthesis of the century-long debate on the merits of popular fiction and a study of genre." **Review of International American Studies**

"eye-opening must-read about popular literature as art... the best study to date of the rise of that novel literary-cultural formation 'nobrow'." **Popular Culture Review**

"This superb book will make all previous studies in popular culture moot... must be owned by all libraries and cultural studies scholars". **Ray B. Browne**

"bracing reproof to those who moan about the death of reading or the brain-rotting effects of reading only popular fiction." *The Guardian*

"I would rank this book among the top five in popular culture studies."

About the Author

Peter Swirski is a Canadian scholar and literary critic featured in *Canadian Who's Who*. He is Amazon's #1 Bestseller in, among other categories, American Literary Criticism and in Canadian Literary Criticism. Specialist in American literature and culture as well as in popular culture studies, he is the author of seventeen award-winning books, including *Ars Americana*, *Ars Politica* (2010), *American Utopia and Social Engineering* (2011), *American Political Fictions: War on Errorism* (2015), *American Crime Fiction* (2016), and *When Highbrow Meets Lowbrow: Popular Culture and the Rise of Nobrow* (2017).

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