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The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism, Where all of Life is a Paid-For Experience

By *Jeremy Rifkin*



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Visionary activist and author **Jeremy Rifkin** exposes the real stakes of the new economy, delivering "the clearest summation yet of how the Internet is really changing our lives" (**The Seattle Times**).

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- Sales Rank: #1002317 in Books
- Published on: 2001-03
- Released on: 2001-03-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .90" w x 6.00" l, .78 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 320 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

He's been called the postmodern Chicken Little, but it happens that the sky really is falling. Jeremy Rifkin pulls the plug on the trend away from property ownership and free public life in *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All of Life Is a Paid-For Experience*. As usual, he's a bit ahead of the curve--most of us aren't fully immersed yet in the sea of leased products and packaged experiences that he sees awaiting us. Still, his eerie vision of a world of gatekeepers paying each other for access to nearly every aspect of human life brings a chilling new meaning to the phrase "pay to play" and should spark some debate over our new cultural revolution.

Using examples from business and government experiments with just-in-time access to goods and services and resource sharing, Rifkin defines a new society of renters who are too busy breaking the shackles of material possessions to mourn the passing of public property. Are we encouraging alienation or participation? Can we trust corporations with stewardship of our social lives? True to form, the author asks more questions than he answers--a sign of an open mind. If property is theft, leased access is extortion, and *The Age of Access* warns us of the complex changes coming in our relationships with our homes, our communities, and our world. --*Rob Lightner*

From Publishers Weekly

In his latest synthesis of business analysis and academic philosophizing, Rifkin (*The End of Work*, *The Biotech Century*, etc.) argues that we are in the midst of a new age in which "concepts, ideas and images--not things--are the real items of value" and where "the purchase of lived experiences becomes the consummate commodity." In the book's first half, Rifkin contends that ownership of property has become increasingly devalued. Today's companies avoid amassing physical capital, which can later prove "an albatross" that prevents them from keeping up with rapid technological advances. Instead, they prefer to "outsource ownership," contracting third parties to provide and maintain equipment. This trend combines with others, such as the proliferation of service relationships, to put more emphasis on access than ownership, heralding a time when what companies sell will be human experience itself and all cultural activities will be commodified. In the book's second half, Rifkin shows how "experience industries"--such as travel and entertainment--are coming to dominate the new global economy. "More and more of the global cultural sphere--its natural wonders, cathedrals, museums, palaces, parks, rituals, festivals--is being siphoned off into the marketplace," he says, where it serves as a backdrop "for enacting paid-for cultural experiences" that is divorced from historical context. As in Rifkin's earlier works, the author asserts the truth of his ideas in considerable detail without offering much supporting evidence, leaving readers either to believe him or not. Even so, his larger historical and social perspective and lack of technological boosterism is refreshing.

Agent: Jim Stein. (May)

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From Library Journal

The author of 14 previous books, including *The End of Work* and *The Biotech Century*, Rifkin is a noted social critic and president of the Foundation on Economic Trends in Washington, DC. In this important work, he examines the trends that underlie our transition from a service-based economy to one based on the convergence of commerce and culture. Specifically, he notes a broad range of structural changes, including the shift from markets to networks and from ownership to access, the reduced value of physical property and the rise of intellectual property, and the increased marketing of human relationships where culture has

become the ultimate commercial resource. His most riveting assertion is that these developments are in sharp contrast to the situation in the rest of the world, in which, as Rifkin states, over 50 percent of the people have never made a phone call, much less been connected to the emerging global information network.

Recommended for both public and academic libraries.

-Norman B. Hutcherson, Kern Cty. Lib., Bakersfield, CA

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Madeline Wayt:

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. Advantages you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The details you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with education books but if you want truly feel happy read one having theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. The actual *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism, Where all of Life is a Paid-For Experience* is kind of guide which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

Manuel Thomas:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Publications can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their own reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only situation that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the information about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their talent in writing, they also doing some research before they write to the book. One of them is this *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism, Where all of Life is a Paid-For Experience*.

Audrey Spence:

The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism, Where all of Life is a Paid-For Experience can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort that will put every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing *The Age of Access: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism, Where all of Life is a Paid-For Experience* nevertheless doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource data that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information may drawn you into new stage of crucial imagining.

Tanya Caggiano:

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