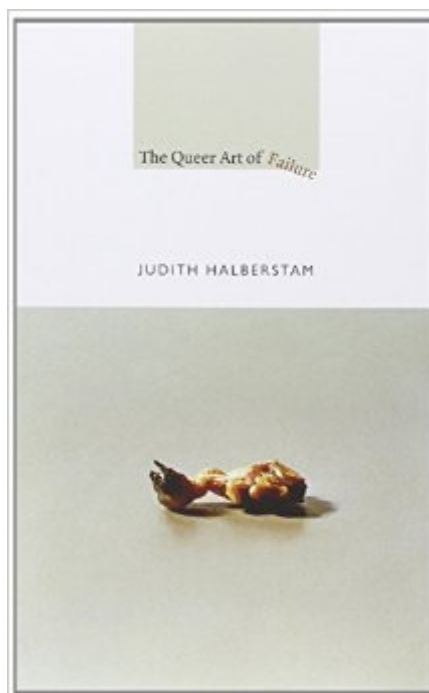


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The Queer Art Of Failure (a John Hope Franklin Center Book)



Synopsis

The Queer Art of Failure is about finding alternatives to conventional understandings of success in a heteronormative, capitalist society; to academic disciplines that confirm what is already known according to approved methods of knowing; and to cultural criticism that claims to break new ground but cleaves to conventional archives. Judith Halberstam proposes a low theory as a mode of thinking and writing that operates at many different levels at once. Low theory is derived from eccentric archives. It runs the risk of not being taken seriously. It entails a willingness to fail and to lose one's way, to pursue difficult questions about complicity, and to find counterintuitive forms of resistance. Tacking back and forth between high theory and low theory, high culture and low culture, Halberstam looks for the unexpected and subversive in popular culture, avant-garde performance, and queer art. She pays particular attention to animated children's films, revealing narratives filled with unexpected encounters between the childish, the transformative, and the queer. Failure sometimes offers more creative, cooperative, and surprising ways of being in the world, even as it forces us to face the dark side of life, love, and libido.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the most refreshing critical theory books I have read in a long time. In this book, Halberstam advocates for a queer failure that defies capitalist models of success. This queer failure embraces forgetting, stupidity and CGI animated films. Halberstam provides examples of failure

which she reclaims, from coming in 4th place in the Olympics to the characters in the movie "Dude, Where's My Car?" The section on the queer politics of CGI animated films is especially good. With loads of examples such as "Finding Nemo," "Monsters INC," "Bee Movie," and more, she explores the underlying messages of socialist revolt present in the films and how they challenge capitalist models of success.² Two things in particular make this book especially worth reading. 1. The use of "low theory" as an alternative to "high theory" allows for an imminently readable text that is full of extended pop culture analysis that reclaims a lot of films you probably don't take too seriously. And 2. The writing is relaxed, fun and at times funny. It doesn't read like your average academic text. And while I breezed through it, it is also really provocative. I highly recommend it.

I really don't read too much critical theory, but this book was introduced to me by the phrase "this should be required reading for gay people!" so I gave it a shot. It was a bit of a difficult read, in that I'm not sure I understood everything in the first pass, but the prose is often phenomenal and issues she raises gave me some fertile ground for thought and discussion with friends. I'll probably read this book a second time after sitting with it for a while.

I must say that, as a scholar I was impressed with this work, but as a queer member of society, I was also moved by the possibilities suggested herein. In so many ways this work has had a profound impact on my life and the way that I see the world.

Came in wrap. So, I knew it was brand new!

Alot of food for thought and reflection. Well written and intelligent.

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