



Two Cultures?: The Significance of C. P. Snow (Canto Classics)

By F. R. Leavis

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In this first annotated edition of F. R. Leavis' famous critique of C. P. Snow's influential argument about 'the two cultures', Stefan Collini reappraises both its literary tactics and its purpose as cultural criticism. The edition will enable new generations of readers to understand what was at stake in the dispute and to appreciate the enduring relevance of Leavis's attack on the goal of economic growth. In his comprehensive introduction Collini situates Leavis's critique within the wider context of debates about 'modernity' and 'prosperity', not just the 'two cultures' of literature and science. Collini emphasizes the difficulties faced by the cultural critic in challenging widely-held views and offers an illuminating analysis of Leavis's style. The edition provides full notes to references and allusions in Leavis's texts.

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Editorial Review

Review

"... this is the picture that has come down through the decades about Snow's lecture: that the sciences and the humanities have, regrettably but probably inevitably, come to take very different path. But this was not really Snow's point ... Snow had no intention of distributing blame for the divorce even-handedly. Both the lecture itself and the controversy it spawned are complex phenomena, and in his editions of Snow's lecture and of the most famous response to it, by the literary critic F. R. Leavis, Stefan Collini has carefully and skillfully disentangled the many stands. The tale he tell is instructive in many respects - and perhaps more important now than it was when Leavis gave his response, fifty years ago."

Books and Culture

About the Author

Stefan Collini is Professor of Intellectual History and English Literature at the University of Cambridge. Most recently he is author of 'The Chatto List': Publishing Literary Criticism in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain', (Review of English Studies 63, 2012) and What Are Universities For? (2012).

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