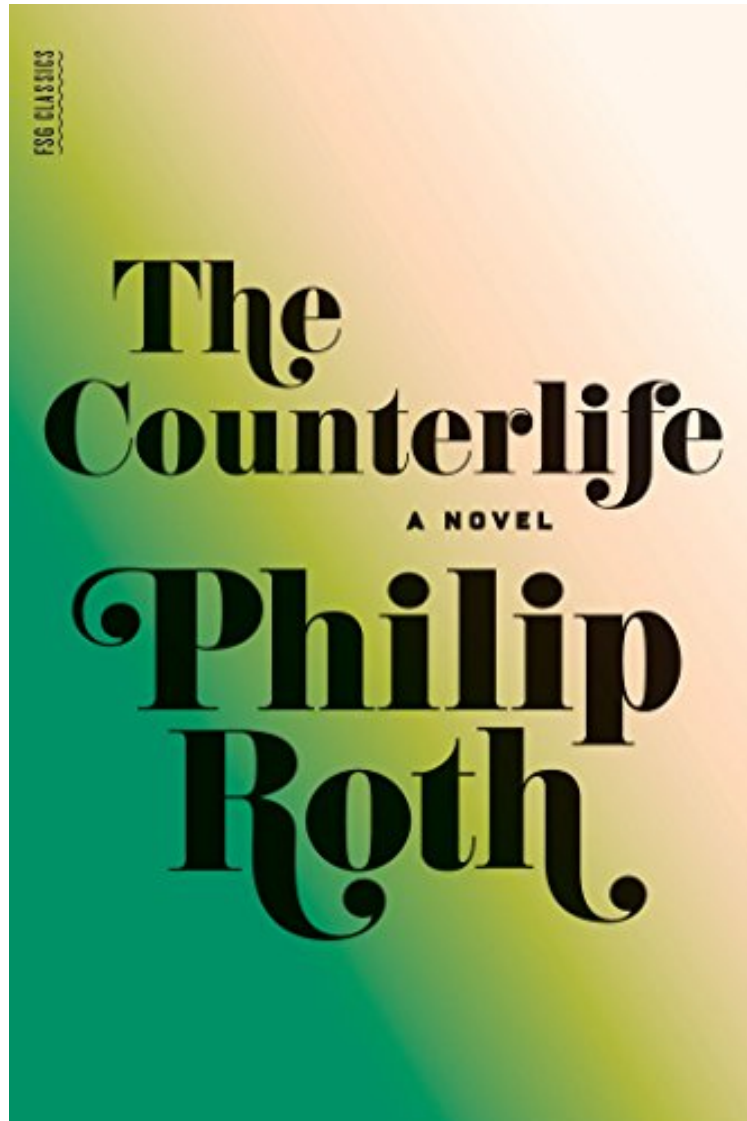


(Free pdf) The Counterlife: A Novel

The Counterlife: A Novel

Von Philip Roth

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Von Philip Roth : The Counterlife: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Counterlife: A Novel:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Philip Roth's The Counterlife - A Quest for IdentityVon Ein KundePhilip Roth is one of the most highly acclaimed Jewish-American writers of our time, and The Counterlife confirms his skill as a craftsman and a philosopher on Jewish matters. Roth creates perfect environments for the scrutiny of a subject one frequently encounters in his work: The intellectual secular Jewish male's search for and affirmation of his identity. This theme is woven into each of the

novel's five chapters, which are authored in first-person narrative by the fictional writer Nathan Zuckerman. Zuckerman defines identity by weighing secularity against religious fervor, masculinity against femininity, potency against impotency, and Jewish awareness against anti-Semitism. While the novel is set in Zuckerman's fictional world, the chapters each tell separate stories. The situations Zuckerman creates vary, and thus three forms of Jewish identity between which he seems to be caught are examined. Zuckerman experiences the identities of the secular son of traditional Jewish parents, of being a militant Jew's brother, and of the son-in-law grappling with his mother-in-law's anti-Semitism which causes the failure of yet another attempt at family life. Similar themes can be identified in Roth's other works, such as *Goodbye, Columbus* and *Portnoy's Complaint*. However, the post-modern structure of *The Counterlife* allows for their juxtaposition within one novel, thereby offering the reader a spectrum of the protagonist's issues of identity. Roth's prose is explicit, witty, and even funny, making the novel a truly enjoyable and engaging read. In the interest of authenticity, he does not recoil from using obscenities. He mocks Jewish-American militancy and pseudo-religiosity by the creation of Ben-Joseph, the author of the "Five Books of Jimmy," who really misses baseball in Israel and later hijacks an El Al plane for hopeless ends. Nevertheless, Roth does not lose sight of the danger inherent in this militancy. Zuckerman finds his brother's carrying a gun alarming. He detects a loss of "Henry's [his brother's] Henriness," and wonders whether Henry has "developed, postoperatively, a taste for the ersatz in life".

A well-rounded novel, and certainly a must for those interested in Jewish-American writing. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The Most Universal Piece of literature. A must for everyone. Von Ein Kunde

The Counterlife - By Philip Roth My review: By Aglae Mizrahi. I encountered Philip Roth's genius of intellect and understanding of social behavior by way of "*The Counterlife*", actually the unique of his titles I read. Moreover, I admit, the finest publication I have obtained. Roth enchants with utterly well endowed vocabulary and prose. In addition, simultaneously conveying completely dissimilar philosophical perceptions, religious attachments, and life experiences. Line by line he describes Jewish people, in particular, The American Diaspora characteristics. Seems as if Roth desire is to convey ideas about Jewish Secularism: American Jewish in particular. He attains this by positioning side by side the extremes: Diaspora's Secularism against Zionism, meaning of real Jewish beliefs to American's or European's Anti-Semitism, ethnically self contempt against ethnic, and a lot more. Actually he tricks the reader. He leads one to think is only a Jewish title. He is a universal writer. Everything told applies to these well known compulsion into stereotyping all people into this or that psychological category. This is universal. It relates to whites, Afro-Americans, Catholics, Hispanics, etc. It is a world tendency. Even to me, native of a country where prejudice does not go further than the semantics, since we are all creatures of a cocktail of very distinct groups of society. The more one tries to hide what one is, the more propensity one is to fall into the stereotyped world. Using the Jewish example, the more secular Nathan, amid his principal characters, the more he says not to be observant, the more it bothers him to have a son uncircumcised. The Brit Mila has to be perfect. Moreover, the Bar Mitzva grandiose, even if the kid doesn't comprehend anything. Isn't it right that there is an abnormal tendency to catalogize us all into Freudian or not Freudian misbehaviour, self compulsion is universal in late generations. I am certain the hint to the success of antidepressants around, all self compulsive persons, with thousands of drugs claiming to be the panaceas for us all is actually self hatred. Does not the media blind or Brian-washes us to be perfect, beautiful, sexual, virile, thin, etc. No wonder each and all of us desires to escape, and that is what "*The Counterlife*" brings us in each of his five chapters, escapism from reality. Philip Roth employs sarcasm, irony, jokes, satire, euphemisms, and all grabbed to conceive this important piece of literature, That has to be read more than once. It owns magnetism and Excellency. I recommend it an open and honest hearth. Excellent Piece of Literature, If it could be I would put Ten. Excellent read for anyone, and also for the price since one gets enchanted by this title. Buy it. It is also worth the money. I have already become a fan of Roth, he has utterly beguiled me, I have got to get all his titles. Aglae 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A book about loss of innocence Von Ein Kunde

The Counterlife is a splendidly written and multi-layered book, one that forces the reader to refocus its reading as the book expands its meaning in deeper and larger territories. First, the book appears as a witty and often cruel description of middle-class life in American suburbia. Then, one of the book's main centers (there are several) takes center stage: what is it to be a Jew in today's world, between Israel and America? Sex, of course, and more specifically, what's at stake in sexual relationships, is also one of Roth's topic (as it has always been). Finally, as the book unfolds, we understand its key concern: the definition of one's identity, through the fictions told by oneself and refracted by others (the book has three narrators: the author, and the two Zuckerman brothers). Then, all the book's plural themes: fiction writing, men/women relationships, Eros and Thanatos, Jewishness and anti-Semitism, get blended into a reflection about the loss of innocence, the exile from the pastoral, and the inescapable mirror games of fiction that define/defy personal identity.

Kurzbeschreibung *The Counterlife* is a novel unlike any that Philip Roth has written before, a book of astonishing 180-degree turns, a book of conflicting perspectives and points of view, and, by far, Roth's most radical work of fiction. *The Counterlife* is about people enacting their dreams of renewal and escape, some of them going so far as to risk their

lives to alter seemingly irreversible destinies. Every major character (and most of the minor ones) is investigating, debating, and arguing the possibility of remaking the future. Illuminating these lives in transition and guiding us through all the landscapes, familiar and foreign, where these people are seeking self-transformation, is the mind of the novelist Nathan Zuckerman. His is the skeptical, enveloping intelligence that calculates the price that's paid in the struggle to change personal fortune and to reshape history. Yet his is hardly the only voice. This is a novel in which speaking out with force and lucidity appears to be the imperative of every life. There is Henry, the forty-year-old New Jersey dentist, who risks a quintuple bypass operation in order to escape the coronary medication that renders him sexually impotent. There is Maria, the wellborn young Englishwoman, who invites the disdain of her family by marrying the American she knows will be less acceptable in Gloucestershire. There is Lippmann, the Israeli settlement leader, who contends that "everything is possible for the Jew if only he does not give ground." The action in *The Counterlife* ranges from a dentist's office in quiet suburban New Jersey to a genteel dining table in a tradition-bound English village, from a Christmas carol service in London's West End to a Sabbath evening celebration in a tiny desert settlement in Israel's occupied West Bank. Wherever they may find themselves, the characters of *The Counterlife* are tempted unceasingly by the prospect of an alternative existence that can reverse their fate. *The Counterlife* was a finalist for the National Book Award and winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award. The saga of Henry and Nathan Zuckerman continues, 13 years after novelist Nathan Zuckerman first appeared in Roth's 1974 effort, *My Life as a Man*. In *The Counterlife*, the dentist Henry suffers an unsettling--and for Roth, a predictable--side effect to his heart medication: impotence, which leads him to undergo an ill-fated operation. The multi-layered plot line travels from New York to London to Israel, while the characters undergo a series of surprising transformations. In the words of Nathan, a change in one's life causes "a counterlife that is one's own anti-myth." It's vintage Roth. *Pressestimmen* "Roth is a comic genius... In this book (wonderfully sharp, worryingly intense) he is an electrifier" (Martin Amis) "Unquestionably his masterpiece" (John Banville) "Boisterously serious, dense, fizzing and formally audacious... The final thing that needs to be said about *The Counterlife*... is that it's fucking funny" (Julian Barnes *London of Books*) "No other writer combines such a surface of colloquial relaxation with such a dense load of mediating intelligence - Roth has never written more scrupulously or, in spots, more lovingly" (John Updike *New Yorker*) "Magnificent...splendid... I hope *The Counterlife* felt, as Mr. Roth wrote it, like a triumph, because that is certainly how it reads to me" (*New York Times Book*)