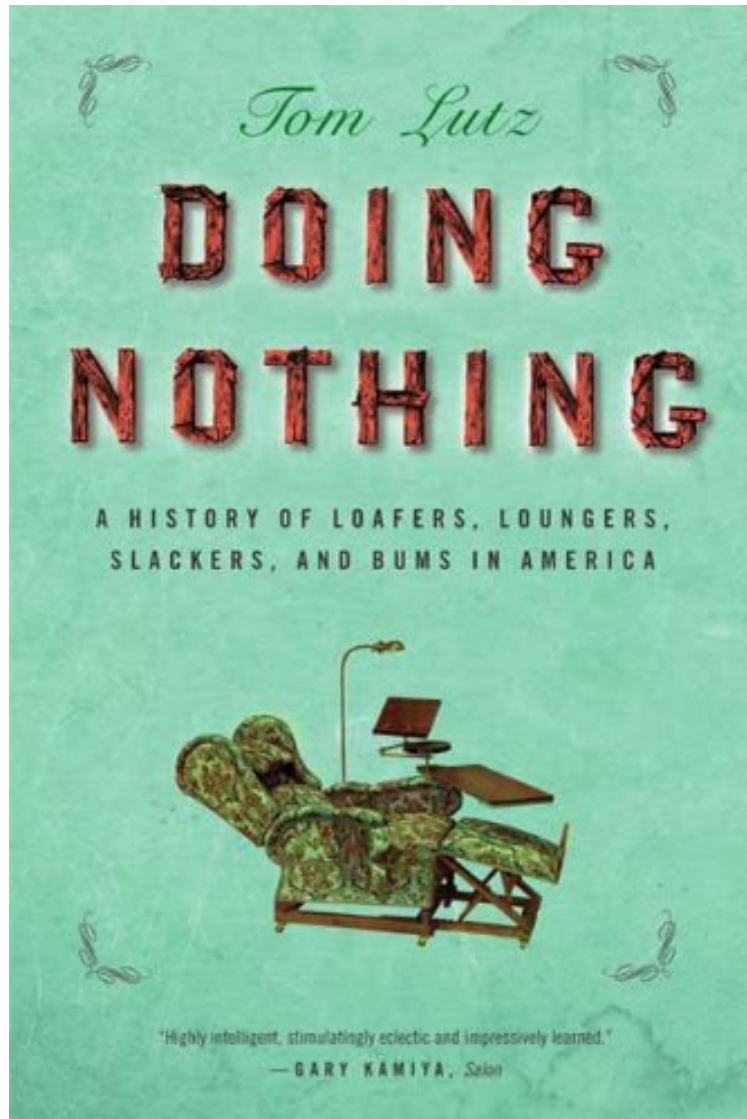


[FREE] Doing Nothing: A History of Loafers, Loungers, Slackers, and Bums in America

Doing Nothing: A History of Loafers, Loungers, Slackers, and Bums in America

Tom Lutz

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Tom Lutz : Doing Nothing: A History of Loafers, Loungers, Slackers, and Bums in America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Doing Nothing: A History of Loafers, Loungers, Slackers, and Bums in America:

86 of 90 people found the following review helpful. Excellent, an entertaining read By Customer I got this book largely because I was curious as to how anyone could write a history of people who did nothing. After all, people who do nothing wouldn't do enough to leave a history behind (that follows, doesn't it?) Well, Lutz surprised me. People who do

nothing, or at the least strive to not work, are quite an interesting crew. I ran into a lot of famous people I had never thought of as loafers before: such as Ben Franklin and Samuel Johnson. Of course the usual suspects were also there: like Kerouac and Ginsberg (and the beats in general.)The author seems to suggest that he is something of a slacker himself. But I found that hard to believe as clearly a great deal of work went into this book. The amount of digested reading, research, review of cultral materials such as films, etc., was impressive. The writing was also quite good. Either Lutz is a very good writer or he has an excellent editor. I say that because he wove a large amount of disparate material into a fascinating narrative about people and segments of society committed to doing nothing. The pace was never boring; while the amount of information presented was always informative and stimulating. And as I read, sprawled out on the couch, I found myself reflecting more deeply on just where I fit into the argument of, to work or not to work.... I guess I'd have to say that Doing Nothing proved to be an edifying read.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Starts off great. Wonderful premiseBy Ingersoll11969Starts off great. Wonderful premise, very funny, and informative. Then about 75 pages in, it turns into a coma-inducing slog only an academic could love.To be fair I didn't finish it. I labored through it to a little past the halfway point and gave up. It's too bad because it began with such promise.9 of 14 people found the following review helpful. ehBy T. WardI don't know how Tom managed to take such a fun subject and just suck the life right out of it. The subject and people he covers are interesting despite his best efforts, but if you ever wondered why English teachers have a reputation for ruining great literature for youngsters world-wide, well, you won't after you read this. The book is not engaging in any way, but rather you feel like Tom is taking the extensive research he did for the book and whacking you in the face with it. It's essentially a very wordy list of people who at one time or another over the last 300 years had some sort of opinion on the nature of work. As you might imagine, this is a long list. If you find this book at a used book store or maybe sitting on a bench in a train station I'd say go for it, but otherwise your money would be better spent elsewhere.

From the author of *Crying*, a witty, wide-ranging cultural history of our attitudes toward work—and getting out of it—Couch potatoes, goof-offs, freeloaders, good-for-nothings, loafers, and loungers: ever since the Industrial Revolution, when the work ethic as we know it was formed, there has been a chorus of slackers ridiculing and lampooning the pretensions of hardworking respectability. Reviled by many, heroes to others, these layabouts stretch and yawn while the rest of society worries and sweats. Whenever the world of labor changes in significant ways, the pulpits, politicians, and pedagogues ring with exhortations of the value of work, and the slackers answer with a strenuous call of their own: "To do nothing," as Oscar Wilde said, "is the most difficult thing in the world." From Benjamin Franklin's "air baths" to Jack Kerouac's "dharma bums," Generation-X slackers, and beyond, anti-work-ethic proponents have held a central place in modern culture. Moving with verve and wit through a series of fascinating case studies that illuminate the changing place of leisure in the American republic, *Doing Nothing* revises the way we understand slackers and work itself.