

The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities

By Richard Sennett

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"Visionary, often brilliant." —*Los Angeles Times*

From the assembly halls of Athens to the Turkish baths of New York's Lower East Side, from eighteenth-century English gardens to the housing projects of Harlem—a study of the physical fabric of the city as a mirror of Western society and culture.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Sennett's study of urban culture began with a discourse on public and private life, *The Fall of Public Man* (LJ 12/15/76), and continued with the historical novel, *Palais Royal* (LJ 12/86). This, the final installment of his loose "trilogy," seeks to relate architecture, urban planning, and sculpture to the cultural life of cities, from the time of ancient Athens to late 20th-century New York. The author achieves a great deal more, for he offers a broad humanistic reflection on many of the elements that constitute modern culture: literature, spiritual rootlessness, philosophy, music, poetry, ballet, bars, and public baths. The central thesis, that modern humans suffer because of the dichotomy between their subjective private experience and their outside public life, is thoroughly persuasive. Almost every page of this elegantly written work of cultural history contains food for thought, e.g., "The essence of developing as a human being is developing the capacity for ever more complex experience." For general collections.

- *Bennett D. Hill, Georgetown Univ., Washington, D.C.*

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Review

"Over the past 20 years, Richard Sennett has been at the forefront of those generalists endeavoring to synthesize the urban insights of history, architecture, the arts and social sciences into a coherent cultural vision. . . . A wonderful, stimulating, richly thoughtful work that should add much to our debate about cities in the coming years." (Philip Lopate - *Newsday*)

"A radical, original rethinking of our relationship to the built environment." (*Publishers Weekly*)

"Sennett brings an immensely civilized perspective to the forms and patterns?the visual experiences?of cities, primarily New York City, interpreting how they shape, reflect, or, sadly, fail to reflect, the human beings who built and use them. . . . Provocative and learned." (*Kirkus Reviews*)

From the Back Cover

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