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Heidegger In Chicago: A Comedy Of Errors



Synopsis

What would have happened if the notoriously obscure German philosopher Martin Heidegger had visited America? Jef Costello's uproarious comedy of errors *Heidegger in Chicago* offers a plausible answer: he would have been misunderstood. Costello's *Heidegger* makes his way through a surreal and blithely anachronistic landscape populated by washed-up TV actresses, Vegas crooners, PC academics, and cult leaders. He encounters such figures as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Savitri Devi, Charles Manson, Yukio Mishima, and J. Edgar Hoover. Along the way, Heidegger is mistaken for a playboy, a Leftist, a Nazi, a nihilist, the "next big thing" in pop, and even a small black child. *Heidegger in Chicago* offers hilarious sendups of Hollywood, Michael Jackson, Las Vegas, German idealism, political correctness, and Objectivism, with the wickedest Ayn Rand parody ever. You'll laugh until it hurts—and maybe even learn a little bit about Heidegger. Mr. Costello deserves wine and flowers for *Heidegger in Chicago*, having finally elucidated the mysterious Jackson-Heidegger Conjunction, a delicate topic heretofore skirted in the work of Jackson biographers. Let me recommend, nay coerce serious-minded readers to invest in plural copies of Mr. Costello's sober delineation of the development of philosophic inquiry as elaborated both in this country and some other places, a performance that has beyond question found echoes in the canyons of educated New York. "Tito Perdue, author of *The Node* "Heidegger in Chicago is a rare thing indeed: an intellectual romp from an actual intellectual. From *Candide* to *Chance the Gardener*, the visitor from another land has been a favorite tool of the satirist. Jef Costello raises the bar by making his not-so-naïve naïf the greatest philosopher of the XXth century: Martin Heidegger. Costello tears into pop fads and social conventions to reveal "the things themselves." It's Count Keyserling's *Travel Diary* staged as *Auntie Mame* "but with real wit, not tired camp." James J. O'Meara, author of *End of an Era: Mad Men and the Ordeal of Civility* About the Author Jef Costello is a writer based in New York City. His many essays and reviews have appeared at North American New Right, the webzine of Counter-Currents Publishing (www.counter-currents.com). He is also the author of *The Importance of James Bond & Other Essays* (San Francisco: Counter-Currents, 2015). His writings have been translated into German, French, Russian, and Swedish.

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Customer Reviews

What do you get if you take one part Sartor Resartus, three parts satirical recounting of 18th, 19th and 20th century German (and Western) philosophy, one part Alice in Wonderland, mix in stylistic and thematic elements worthy of Tom Wolfe (white suit, not southern agrarian), Hunter Thompson and Norman Mailer, season well with 60s/70s camp culture ranging from Being There, the Pink Panther, The Prisoner, D.C. comics and Gilliganâ™s Island all the way to Bond flicks, the Beatles, B action movies, art house pretention and then even further to the Manson clan, J. Edgar Hoover and Nazi esoterica, and then put it all in the service of a mocking critique of contemporary American culture and its precipitous decline?The answer is: Jef Costelloâ™s Heidegger in Chicago.For a novella that can be read in the span of a few hours, the quantity of cultural references, (high, middlebrow and pop), cast of characters (including cameos by historical figures as well as truly hilarious caricatures of others), scope, speed and variety of the action and plot, are breathtaking and head-shakingly vast. To call this novella âœover-the-topâ• does not even begin to do it justice. Almost every paragraph contains innuendo, inside jokes, obscure (and not-so obscure) references or satire of some real world person, event or idea. The pace is fast, and one feels as if one is in the novelistic equivalent of The Great Race on acid. If this novella had an accompanying soundtrack, it would be a compilation of music from Benny Hill, Danger Man, Casino Royale, Bond movies and Lolita.So, is the book overwrought, overdone and completely over-the-top? The answer is yes, but it

totally works.

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