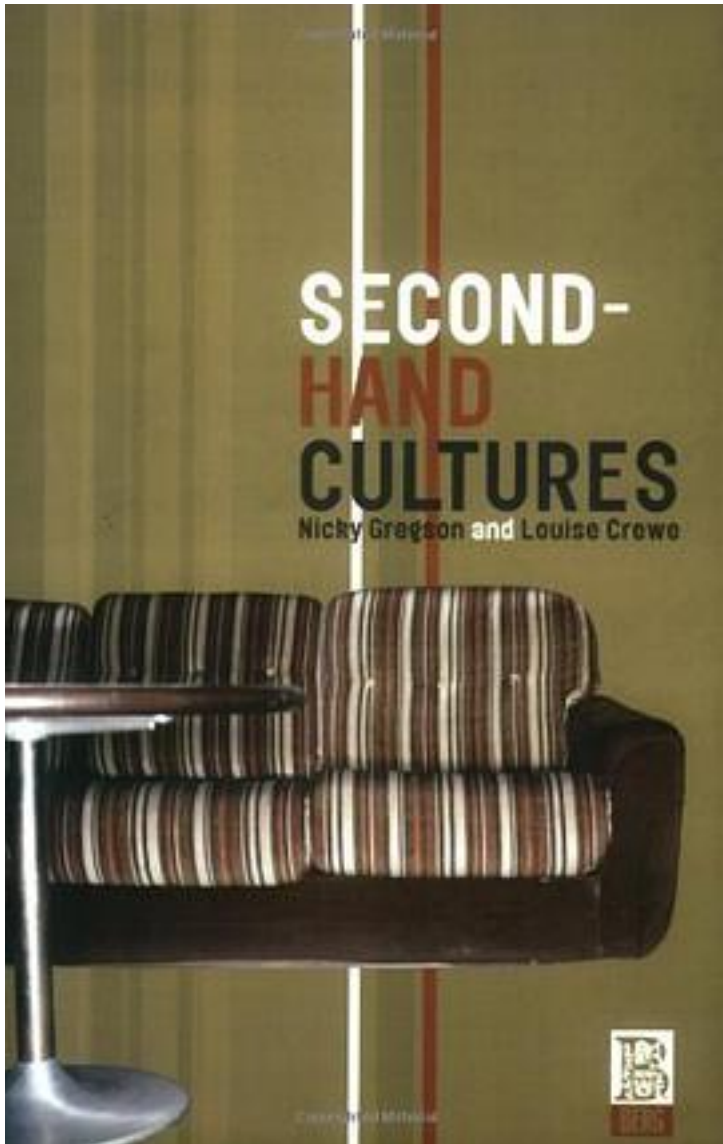


Second-hand Cultures



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'Antique', 'vintage', 'previously owned', 'gently used', 'cast-off -- the world of second hand encompasses as many attitudes as there are names for it. The popular perception is that second-hand shops are largely full of junk, yet the rise of vintage fashion and the increasing desire for consumer individuality show that second hand shopping is also very much about style. Drawing on six years of original research, Second-Hand Cultures explores what happens when the often contradictory motivations behind style and survival strategies are brought together. What does second hand buying and selling tell us about the state of contemporary consumption? How do items that begin life as new get recycled and reclaimed? How do second hand goods challenge the future of retail consumption and what do the unique shopping environments in which they are found tell us about the social relations of exchange? Answering these questions and many more, this book fills a major gap in consumption studies. Gregson and Crewe argue that second hand cultures are critical to any understanding of how consumption is actually practised. Following the life stories of goods as they travel into and through second hand sites, the authors look at the work of traders as well as consumers' investments in second hand merchandise including gifting and collecting as well as rituals of personalization and possession. Through its revealing investigation into the practices and customs that make up these unconventional retail worlds, this much-needed study carefully unpacks the persuasive allure of the previously owned.

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