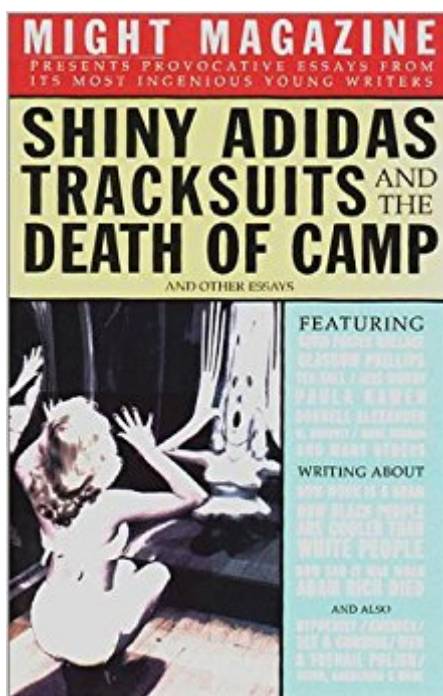


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# Shiny Adidas Tracksuits And The Death Of Camp And Other Essays From Might Magazine



## Synopsis

Prepare yourself for the best and brightest from *Might* magazine. These provocative accounts of cultural chaos tackle every tacky and/or annoying issue that has made the 20th century so ripe for the Apocalypse -- from the lost diaries of H.R. Haldeman to David Hasselhoff's world tour. Includes: "The Perverse Blessing of AIDS" by David Foster Wallace "Are Black People Cooler Than White People?" by Donnell Alexander "Hey America! There's Gangs Under Your Bed!" by Jess Mowry "The Future of Indentured Servitude" by R.U. Sirius "College is for Suckers" by Ted Rall "Get Out the Youth Vote, Then Get the Hell Out" by Marc Herman "The T-Shirt: More Problems of Signification in American Low Culture" by Glasgow Phillips "The Unsavory Rise of Faux-Caesar Salad" by Heidi Pollock "The Tragic and Untimely Death of Adam Rich" by Christopher Pelham-Fence "Why I Went Right Wing" by Paula Kramen And much, much more!

## Book Information

Mass Market Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Berkley Trade (August 1, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0425164772

ISBN-13: 978-0425164778

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.7 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,906,449 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > Magazines](#) #5187 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Humor](#) #7215 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Essays](#)

## Customer Reviews

This collection of essays from the late, lamented *Might* magazine deserves a place on any post-boomer's bookshelf. *Shiny Adidas Tracksuits* bristles with interesting thoughts and novel turns of phrase; most pieces are short (fewer than five pages), and all are well written and precisely observed. Referring to *Might's* editorial principles, the editors write: "One rule was that every issue of *Might* had to have a lot of swearing in it, ideally in the headlines. Another rule was that, even though we had about a month or two to put each issue together, the magazine had to go to press with somewhere between thirty and forty egregious spelling and grammatical errors. But the one rule that really got us into trouble, the one that basically doomed us from the start, was this one: We

would not publish anything we didn't care about.... In observing this rule, the one that said we had to like the things we printed, we were precluded from publishing the sorts of things that might have kept the magazine afloat: namely articles about celebrities, clothes, electronics, makeup, cars, video games, beer, nightlife generally, and beer." Instead, the writers in *Shiny Adidas Tracksuits and the Death of Camp* describe quirky personal quests, examine pop-culture doodads, and spout crackpot theories. The book, like the magazine, somehow avoids the creeping contagion of irony and remains absolutely fresh, vigorous, and friendly. Apart from David Foster Wallace, most contributors aren't national commodities (which is sort of the point), but they deserve to be, and deserve your attention. This book is a fitting epitaph to a sparkler of a magazine. --Michael Gerber

...thoughtful and wide-ranging essays... -- Entertainment Weekly, Margot Mifflin

I originally bought this book through .com because I first learned about it as having an article written by Mark Dougherty, the vocalist for a music group called Soul Coughing. I was intrigued because, in addition to being brilliant, wacky musicians, the lyrics to much of their work are some of the funniest, catchiest, nonsensical clips of genius that I have ever heard. Naturally, I had to read-on. What I found was something that I didn't even know existed: a semi-underground, irreverent and now extinct publication called 'Might Magazine'. Although I was never exposed to it firsthand, I can see how many might have considered this publication to have a lot of potential, if uneven and frustrating at times. There is such a thing as too much tongue-in-cheek, and the collective smirk on the faces of all the contributors included in this book could create enough energy to power the sun for a year. This wouldn't be so bad if, after reading all that, one weren't left with the feeling that half these guys are making the smug and annoying assumption that they are smarter than you. Still, this collection has a lot of things going for it, including some truly quirky and original humor. Three of my favorites are: 'Are Black People Really Cooler Than White People?', the story on Adam Rich's death, and the essay attacking outdoor extreme sports as a trendy fetish. Many others, like the essay on the ubiquity of the American caesar salad, seem truly trivial in a weak attempt at quirky, camp humor. In fact, many of these essays make you wonder, 'Why would anyone ever want to write on this subject?', and on more than one occasion, I sometimes wished that they would stop. Despite this, the celebration of camp culture is a topic that is very worthy of publication. This book comes as a recommendation largely for that reason alone.

I purchased this book for one reason and one reason only... Might's post-mortem tribute to "Eight is

Enough" star, Adam Rich. Of course, it was just a parody of such tributes and Adam was in on it, but it started one of the better celebrity death rumors to run rampant on the internet. The other articles range from biting funny, to mildly amusing, to the kind of pseudo-intellectual stuff written by people who \*think\* they're a lot more intelligent than everyone around them. It's an interesting mix. Overall... I kept it as a bathroom book. Worth the lettuce if you like eclectic reading and have a decent education. But if you listen to Top 40 radio and love shows like "Boy Meets World," it's probably going to be too weird for you.

I cried the day I got my last issue of *Might Magazine*. Not because I had just bought a subscription and was out 19 bucks, but because I felt like I was losing a friend. *Might* was smart, funny, and lovable. Buy this book and experience some of the *Might* genius.

In *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, Dave Eggers talks a bit about the short-lived magazine he and a group of friends founded. This is a collection of the best articles from that magazine. Very intelligent, sarcastic, and funny if not always important, they cover such topics as the annual meeting of Phil Campbell's from around the world in *Phil Campbell, Alabama* (written by Phillip G. Campbell), why black people are cooler than white people, how the world's conflicts can be solved through simple design principles, and "The Thing About Men and Nail Polish." A good friend bought me this book, which was very nice because it was one of those rare gifts for no reason that make you feel especially good. Now I will lend it back to him because he should read it too.

It's sad when things die, especially when those things are good magazines like *Might*. Based in San Francisco, the five times yearly pub went belly up last year despite a small and loyal readership. But alas, in the big, ugly world of glossy magazines, it's always the little guy that gets his insides handed to him on a platter. The editorial staff seems to be taking the sudden loss of employment in stride and recouped enough to compile a selection of some writing from issues past. The writing works best when it gets to the point, and rearranges what we think we know into what actually is. The brief rambling by Soul Coughing lead singer M. Doughty injects a dose of reality into the insanity of celebrity (whatever the caliber) and syndicated cartoonist and columnist Ted Rall spews venom at the institution of higher learning with "College is for Suckers." The longer musings on pop-culture like "Adidas Track Suit," "Cool Like Me," and "T-Shirts" are required reading! ! , but the fictional tome on the death of Adam Rich is lacking without the visual punch of the 1977 *Eight is Enough* publicity photos from the article. The selection is varied and arguably not the best of the best, but the essays

give the newcomer a glimpse into the sublime joy of an issue of *Might*. Considering that they never paid for their writing, they attracted quite a group of contributors including David Foster Wallace, Donnell Alexander and R.U. Sirius. I think the best work was done in between the lines, in the small print with the recognizable and sarcastic voice that the magazine shouted with. They were smart-alecs most of the time, but could shift gears into just plain smart when needed. They were cool enough to turn the tables on people like Michael Moore (*Roger & Me*) and Elle MacPherson, but silly enough to 'out' people who weren't really gay. The periodical racks are a cold and unfeeling place without the well-meaning magazine that cared, and even though I ache from the idea I'll never hold a crisp new issue in my hands - this book helps dull the pain.

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