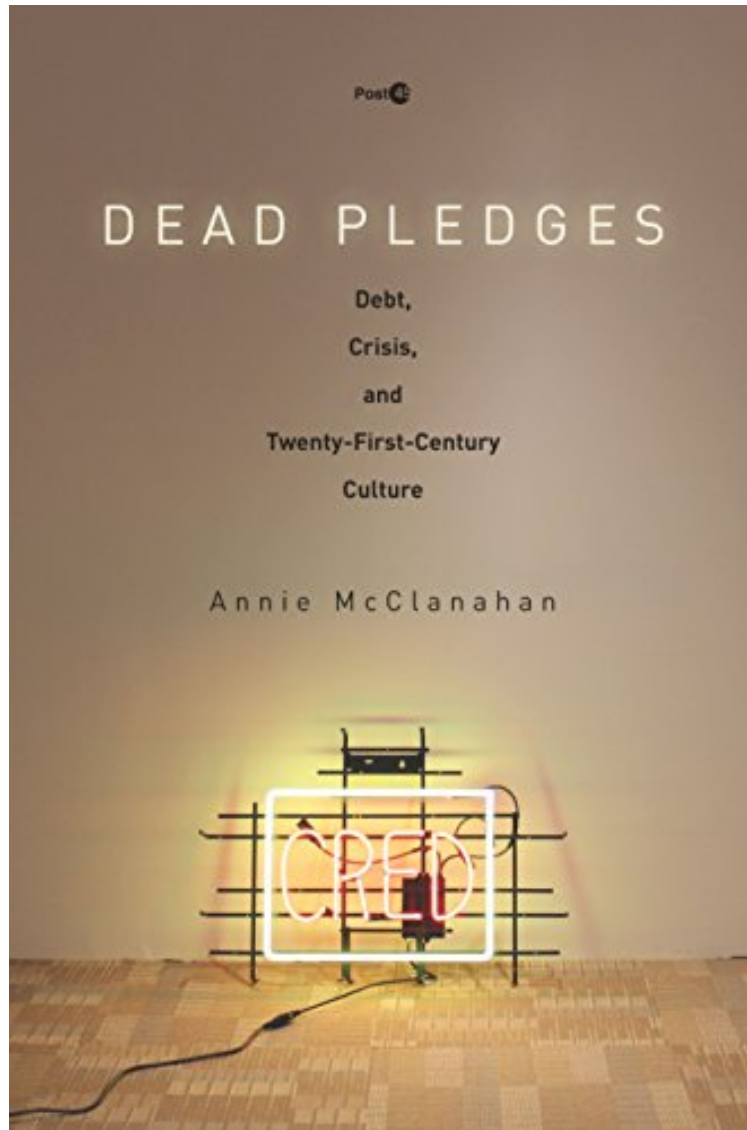


(Download ebook) Dead Pledges: Debt, Crisis, and Twenty-First-Century Culture (Post*45)

Dead Pledges: Debt, Crisis, and Twenty-First-Century Culture (Post*45)

Annie McClanahan

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Annie McClanahan : Dead Pledges: Debt, Crisis, and Twenty-First-Century Culture (Post*45) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dead Pledges: Debt, Crisis, and Twenty-First-Century Culture (Post*45):

Dead Pledges is the first book to explore the ways that U.S. culturemdash;from novels and poems to photojournalism

and horror movies—has responded to the collapse of the financialized consumer credit economy in 2008. Connecting debt theory to questions of cultural form, this book argues that artists, filmmakers, and writers have re-imagined what it means to owe and to own in a period when debt is what makes our economic lives possible. Encompassing both popular entertainment and avant-garde art, the post-crisis productions examined here help to map the landscape of contemporary debt: from foreclosure to credit scoring, student debt to securitized risk, microeconomic theory to anti-eviction activism. A searing critique of the ideology of debt, *Dead Pledges* dismantles the discourse of moral obligation so often invoked to make us repay. Debt is no longer a source of economic credibility, it contends, but is a system of dispossession that threatens the basic fabric of social life.

"McClanahan opens up the personal onto the macro of the social and the collective. In *Dead Pledges*, the novel and especially the realist novel turn out to be productive sites to pursue such a project due to the scalar negotiation and rich characterization that are typical of the genre—and in the credit-crisis novel both of those are under pressure" (Arne De Boever *Boundary 2*) "McClanahan calls her cultural texts her "literary laboratories," wherein she distills and deconstructs these competing narratives about capitalism, crisis, and debt. As a work of cultural critique, *Dead Pledges* is uniquely capable of deconstructing the literary and aesthetic devices that structure these competing narratives in a way that political economy cannot." (Sofia Cutler *Los Angeles of Books*) "Dead Pledges offers an exemplary demonstration of how literary and cultural analysis can address urgent social and political problems. A timely work of critical debt theory, it is poised to reshape the transdisciplinary debates around debt and contemporary capitalism." (Richard Dienst *Rutgers University*) "In a series of nuanced yet militant readings, McClanahan makes an incisive case for the centrality of the political economy of debt to contemporary art, culture, and politics. *Dead Pledges* is a powerful contribution to cultural and social theory that advances the debate over capital and its representations, a debate of vital importance to economic thought, artistic practice, and political action." (Alberto Toscano, *Goldsmiths University of London*) "McClanahan's argument is developed in part through readings of photographs of foreclosed homes and their landscapes, where in the moment of debt crisis the antisociality of (or our alienation from) property as a commodity comes to the fore. *Dead Pledges* brilliantly brings this antisociality home in its final chapter, which examines how housing and foreclosure have become a site of terror in contemporary horror films...McClanahan's most important contribution is how she brings out the dark side of the debt economy and crisis; that is, her attention to the hollow subjects and hostile objects that now populate our worlds. *Dead Pledges* illuminates the forms of structural coercion and social violence that accumulate around us, like wreckage no longer blown forward by any wind of progress." (Brian Whitener *The New Inquiry*) "Dead Pledges is remarkable for its economic history, drawing on thinkers from Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Nietzsche, and bringing this history of economic thought to bear on the policies and arguments of Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke, and Robert Shiller, among others. For its historical framing of the contemporary economic crisis alone, *Dead Pledges* marks an important intervention into contemporary debates about cultural forms and the economy. For those working at the intersection of contemporary literature and economics it is a must-read." (Davis Smith-Brecheisen *Mediations*) "Dead Pledges stands out among recent criticism for its cogent description of the culture produced by our deregulated, financialized economy, which has spawned various species of hyper usury whereby consumer credit risk and national credit ratings have themselves become tradeable objects...We need more books like this one." (David Hawkes *Times Literary Supplement*) About the Author Annie McClanahan is Assistant Professor of English at the University of California, Irvine.