



The Power of Glamour: Longing and the Art of Visual Persuasion

Virginia Postrel

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In provocative detail with more than one hundred illustrations, critically acclaimed author Virginia Postrel separates glamour from glitz, revealing what qualities make a person, an object, a setting, or an experience glamorous.

What is it that creates that pleasurable pang of desire—the feeling of “if only”? If only I could wear those clothes, belong to that group, drive that car, live in that house, be (or be with) that person? Postrel identifies the three essential elements in all forms of glamour and explains how they work to create a distinctive sensation of projection and yearning.

The Power of Glamour is the very first book to explain what glamour really is—not just style or a personal quality but a phenomenon that reveals our inner lives and shapes our decisions, large and small. By embodying the promise of a different and better self in different and better circumstances, glamour stokes ambition and nurtures hope, even as it fosters sometimes-dangerous illusions.

From vacation brochures to military recruiting ads, from the Chrysler Building to the iPad, from political utopias to action heroines, Postrel argues that glamour is a seductive cultural force. Its magic stretches beyond the stereotypical spheres of fashion or film, influencing our decisions about what to buy, where to live, which careers to pursue, where to invest, and how to vote.

The result is myth shattering: a revelatory theory that explains how glamour became a powerful form of nonverbal persuasion, one that taps into our most secret dreams and deepest yearnings to influence our everyday choices.

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