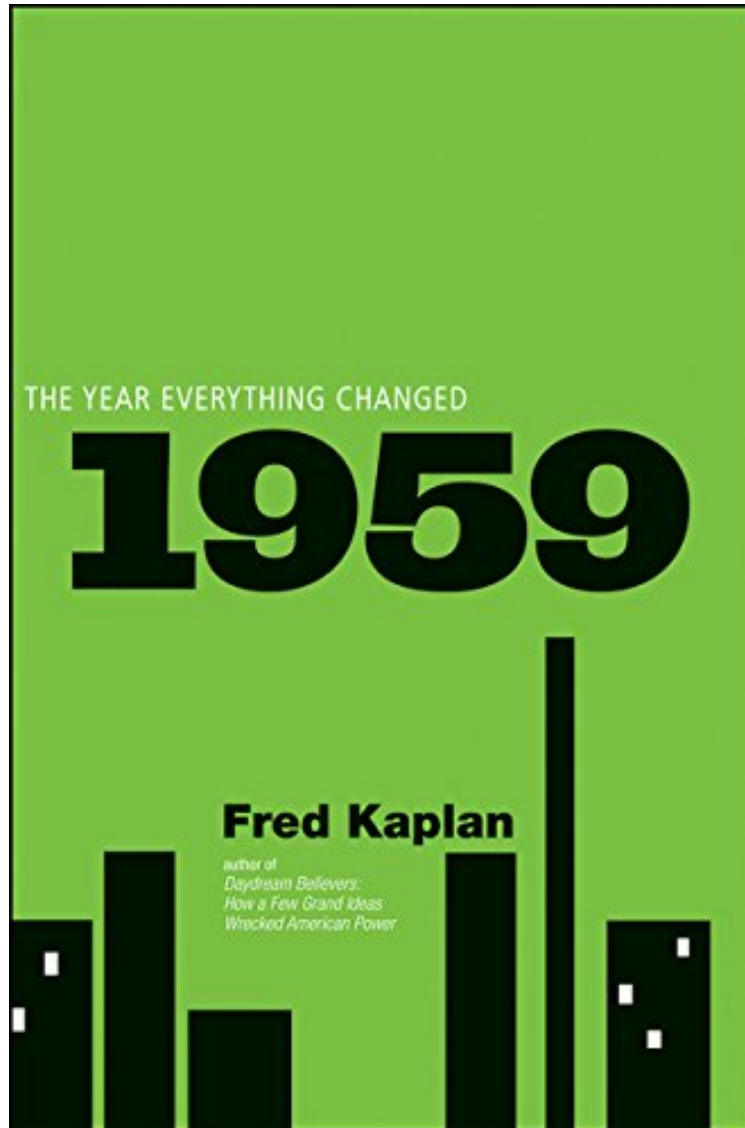


1959: The Year Everything Changed

Fred Kaplan

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#699054 in Books Fred Kaplan 2010-04-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.46 x .92 x 6.321, .89 #File Name: 0470602031344 pages 1959 The Year Everything Changed | File size: 75.Mb

Fred Kaplan : 1959: The Year Everything Changed before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 1959: The Year Everything Changed:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It was a very good year? By Phillip Skaga Kaplan makes an excellent case the year 1959 was one, if not the, turning point for subsequent decades of USA history. The book is clearly an introduction to forces leading up to what happened in 1960 and rest of the decade. Among other things the USA dominant position in international affairs includes much of what happened in 1959. He writes history as literature including insights typically not found in more traditional historians such as Paul Johnson. Johnsons Modern Times

hypothesizes that relativity theory spread as a forceful idea effectively permuting subsequent socio-cultural and economic patterns of world history. Johnson's book covers history from 1919 to 1979 compared to one year for Kaplan. 1959 is essentially only concerned with historical experiences in the USA. The thesis of Kaplan's book is stated in early pages as A feeling took hold that the breakdown of barriers in space, speed and time made other barriers ripe for transgressing. This is directly comparable to the first chapter in Johnson's book *Modern Times* which articulates events confirming relativity dating from physical measurements made in the critical year 1919. It was, Johnson states, as though the globe had been taken off its axis and cast adrift in a universe which no longer conformed to accustomed standards of measurements. It was felt there were, therefore, few or perhaps no standards for measuring all human behavior any more. Reading Kaplan (2008) and Johnson (1992) together is not a bad idea though Kaplan is the more current and fluent of the two. Robert, another Kaplan, also writes (*The Coming Anarchy*) from a different point of view about threats of nation-state disintegration he traces to tribalism and sectarianism. Both of these are consequences, and as well as influences, of events in 1959, 1919 and subsequent worldwide socio-politico-economic changes of every ilk. A common thread in all of these books is technology which, for the curious, leads to reading many other books being published distinctly establishing power of technology to influence everything in human life as well as the environment. While there is much to be gained by reading all three of these books selecting just 1959 supplies a broader discussion of all diverse and complex forces affecting the world today begun in a single year. The most important element left out of these books is climate change. Tracing exact influences between climate and socio-politico-economic forces is more complex but are clearly definable vector forces as in corporate drive to capture large segments of earth's surface for the mineral values. Explicit and elementary actions damaging localities as in eastern USA coal or Peruvian copper mines for example. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you never thought how important 1959 was, just read this book! By Robert V. Rose, retired education researcher I finished my premed studies, and spent the summer in Germany. I had never thought that it was a pivotal year, but Kaplan mentions so many. Birth control pills; Castro came to power; JFK announced his big campaign; microchip invented; "New Frontier", Motown, Malcolm X, radiotelescopes, Edsel, Toyota all new names; Guggenheim museum opens. So I think I'm now convinced. It WAS a pivotal year. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. More like How Everything in NYC Changed By E. King Given the wealth of things that actually occurred at the end of the 50's, it's too bad that the author spends so much time talking about how what happened in NYC was part of the events that changed everything. Started out ok, but after awhile, I was tired of reading about the Village and the beatniks. Read David Halberstam's *The Fifties*. That's a great read about the 50's and how events changed the world.

Acclaimed national security columnist and noted cultural critic Fred Kaplan looks past the 1960s to the year that really changed America. While conventional accounts focus on the sixties as the era of pivotal change that swept the nation, Fred Kaplan argues that it was 1959 that ushered in the wave of tremendous cultural, political, and scientific shifts that would play out in the decades that followed. Pop culture exploded in upheaval with the rise of artists like Jasper Johns, Norman Mailer, Allen Ginsberg, and Miles Davis. Court rulings unshackled previously banned books. Political power broadened with the onset of Civil Rights laws and protests. The sexual and feminist revolutions took their first steps with the birth control pill. America entered the war in Vietnam, and a new style in superpower diplomacy took hold. The invention of the microchip and the Space Race put a new twist on the frontier myth. Vividly chronicles 1959 as a vital, overlooked year that set the world as we know it in motion, spearheading immense political, scientific, and cultural change. Strong critical acclaim: ""Energetic and engaging"" (Washington Post); ""Immensely enjoyable . . . a first-rate book"" (New Yorker); ""Lively and filled with often funny anecdotes"" (Publishers Weekly). Draws fascinating parallels between the country in 1959 and today. Drawing fascinating parallels between the country in 1959 and today, Kaplan offers a smart, cogent, and deeply researched take on a vital, overlooked period in American history.

From Publishers Weekly. Slate columnist Kaplan takes a contrarian view to the common wisdom that the '60s were the source of the cultural shift from pre-WWII traditions to the individualistic, question-authority world of today. In Kaplan's view, the watershed year in this transformation is 1959. He delves into that year's cultural and political scene, citing Miles Davis and his revolutionary album *Kind of Blue*; William Burroughs and his equally revolutionary novel, *Naked Lunch*; and the opening of Frank Lloyd Wright's radically designed Guggenheim Museum in New York City as examples of fundamental breaks with past conventions. Kaplan's case is cemented by three 1959 events that he convincingly argues were catalysts for paradigm changes in relationships between men and women (the pharmaceutical company Searle sought FDA approval for the birth control pill), in how citizens view their government (the first American soldiers were killed in Vietnam) and in communications and information transfer (the microchip was introduced to the world). Kaplan doesn't quite convince that 1959 was the year when the shockwaves of the new ripped the seams of daily life, but his writing is lively and filled with often funny anecdotes as he examines some key elements in the transition from the mid to late 20th century. 16 bw photos. (July) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Immensely enjoyable reading... a first-rate book You'd be amazed how much stuff was going on in the unpromising year 1959, and how it all comes under the heading

of breaking the chains of the old and embracing the new... [Kaplan]'s a sort of wonky hipster, a type that subsumes and coalesces almost all of the characters -- physicists, poets, jazz musicians, astronomers -- who set America on fire at the end of the Eisenhower decade, and who people 1959, Kaplan's new book, which puts all of his passions between hard covers." (The New Yorker) "Kaplan's premise is certainly a good one. He's arguing that the real fulcrum of the 20th century and beyond is not -- as many argue -- the 1960s, but the unsung '50s. Those who love the AMC series "Mad Men," set just after the epochal year, will find much to love in Kaplan's book." (Los Angeles Times, July 19, 2009) Kaplan makes an intriguing case that 1959 was an authentic annus mirabilis. (Wall Street Journal, June 15, 2009) "Where he really shines is in his ability to capture longer-term trends in the snapshot of the year.... In Kaplan's careful interpretation of the year, 1959--even aside from its headline scientific and cultural milestones--was a simmering cauldron of innovation and change, with superficial conformity and false shallows hiding the depths beneath." (DailyKos) This sprawling, holistic joy of a book explores, expands and provokes reassessment of an entire era--not just a year--in a way that is deeply satisfying and enlightening. (dailykos.com, June 7, 2009) Slate columnist Kaplan takes a contrarian view to the common wisdom that the '60s were the source of the cultural shift from pre-WWII traditions to the individualistic, question-authority world of today. In Kaplan's view, the watershed year in this transformation is 1959. He delves into that year's cultural and political scene, citing Miles Davis and his revolutionary album Kind of Blue; William Burroughs and his equally revolutionary novel, Naked Lunch; and the opening of Frank Lloyd Wright's radically designed Guggenheim Museum in New York City as examples of fundamental breaks with past conventions. Kaplan's case is cemented by three 1959 events that he convincingly argues were catalysts for paradigm changes in relationships between men and women (the pharmaceutical company Searle sought FDA approval for the birth control pill), in how citizens view their government (the first American soldiers were killed in Vietnam) and in communications and information transfer (the microchip was introduced to the world). Kaplan doesn't quite convince that 1959 was the year when the shockwaves of the new ripped the seams of daily life, but his writing is lively and filled with often funny anecdotes as he examines some key elements in the transition from the mid to late 20th century. 16 bw photos. (July) (Publishers Weekly, May 4, 2009) "An engrossing story about not just where the 60s came from but the birth of the future. Kaplan does a masterful job of weaving together the strands in politics, society, culture, and science that have brought us to the postmodern age." Jonathan Alter, author of The Defining Moment: FDR's Hundred Days and the Triumph of Hope "It turns out there's only one degree of separation between Miles Davis, the brilliant jazz innovator, and Herman Kahn, the Strangelovian nuclear-war theorist and his name is Fred Kaplan. No one else could throw this fabulous cocktail party of a popular history, teeming with defiant hipsters, visionary inventors, artistic rulebreakers, and troublemakers of all kinds." Hendrik Hertzberg, Senior Editor, the New Yorker "1959 is a riveting account of the year our modern age began. Everything did change, and you'll be amazed by how much was going on, and how much it has affected the way you live your life now." Kevin Baker, author of Strivers Row, Dreamland, and Paradise Alley "Take a ride on the New Frontier with Fred Kaplan, your insightful (and hip) guide to the space race, thermonuclear war, the civil rights movement, the sick comics, the Beats, and the beginnings of the Vietnam War, all to a soundtrack by Dave Brubeck, Ornette Coleman, Miles, and Motown." Donald Fagen, cofounder, Steely Dan