



Retro: The Culture of Revival (FOCI)

Elizabeth E. Guffey

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Flares are in. Flares are out. Flares are back again. Fads constantly cycle and recycle through popular culture, each time in a slightly new incarnation. The term 'retro' has become the buzz word for describing such trends, but what does it mean? Elizabeth Guffey explores here the ambiguous cultural meanings of the term and reveals why some trends just never seem to stay dead.

Drawing upon a wealth of original research and entertaining anecdotal material, Guffey unearths the roots of the term retro and chronicles its evolving manifestations in culture and art throughout the last century.

Whether in art, design, fashion or music, the idea of retro has often meant a re-emergence of styles and sensibilities that evoke familiar touchstones of memory from the not-so-distant past. Guffey explores how and why the past keeps coming back to haunt us in a variety of forms, from the comeback of Art Nouveau nearly fifty years after its original decline, to the infusion of Art Deco into the kitsch glamour of Pop art, to the recent popularity over 1980s vogue. She also considers how advertisers and media have employed the power of such cultural nostalgia, using recycled television jingles, familiar old slogans and famous art to sell a surprising range of products.

An engrossing and wholly unprecedented study, *Retro* reveals how the past is embedded in the future of contemporary art and culture.



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