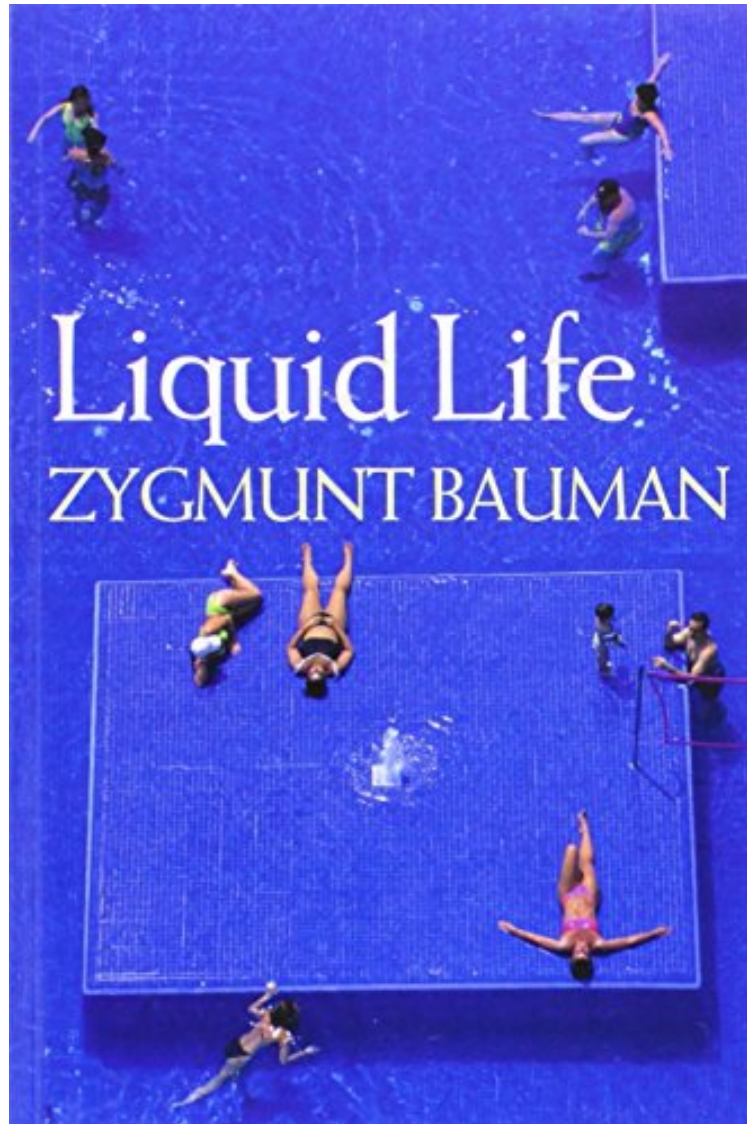


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## Liquid Life

*Zygmunt Bauman*

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#1202489 in Books 2005-06-24Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.06 x .56 x 6.04l, .59 #File Name: 0745635156224 pages | File size: 48.Mb

**Zygmunt Bauman : Liquid Life** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Liquid Life:

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. SuperbBy Dr. Lee D. CarlsonIn another of his works, and sometimes repeating the content thereof, the author defines 'liquid modern' as a society in which changes are occurring so fast that its members cannot successfully form habits and routines to deal with these changes. In fact customs, habits, and routines are completely antiquated ideas as far as personal and ethical responsibility are concerned. The

same thing goes for predicting future events by extrapolating what has happened in the past. Recognition of individual achievement is short-lived; background and expertise become obsolete in the blink of an eye. The author's commentary in this book is interesting and his rhetoric sharp as a sword, but from a scientific standpoint it is sophomoric and quotes statistics carelessly. Concerned about the state of education and "domination through deliberately cultivated ignorance and uncertainty" he bemoans the fact that there is "no way to count the risks", but would he be receptive to methodologies that can in fact do that? The comparison with the "heroes" of the Enlightenment and the heroes of today is fascinating and inspiring, even though this may not be the author's intent. Clearly he favors the hero of the Enlightenment and gives three sets of contrast between his choice and the "hero" of today. The heroes of today are just as restless and ambitious as those of the Enlightenment, but the author complains, they are seeking change for its own sake, a goal which is to be pursued "in perpetuity." Thankfully the author turns against the nihilism and confusion of "postmodern" philosophy with his discussion of T. Adorno and the 'message in a bottle' allegory. The dispersion of such he says assumes that the message is worth reading and that the effort needed is justified. There are many such messages today, but they are not put into a bottle and thrown into the ocean. Instead, the glass bottle is the Internet pages of social networks and online news commentary. They are easily found; one does not need to wait until they are splashed onto an isolated beach. Some are frivolous and some are profound, but all implicitly respect the notion that they hold value for someone somewhere. So yes, life in modern times is precarious and fraught with constant uncertainty, but this does not make it sub-optimal or undesirable, as the author tirelessly implies. Indeed, one can reasonably assert that it is the very uncertainty and velocity of modern life that makes it good and interesting for all involved, and that we do not live in Arendtian "dark times" as the author aggressively asserts. Granted, life today might take some getting used to, especially for those who are accustomed to holding their position. But in modern times one cannot hold one's position. One must always advance, always cover new territory, always take on new challenges, and revel and delight in transience and volatility. The author makes momentary reference to individuals who he thinks enjoy this type of "nomadic" existence to use his words. But he forgets his entire thesis here when he states that such people are "close to the top of the global power pyramid." He forgets that like everything else in the twenty-first century, social hierarchies, aka "power and pyramids" are purely transitory and don't have time to condense into long-lasting structures. They can be mocked, snubbed, and ridiculed with loud laughter, and they can be dismantled with ease and without too much conscious effort. Further, and turning Jean Baudrillard on his head, members of liquid life can celebrate a world in which everybody makes a toast when someone says "this is true", "this is real". Far from being intimidating, rapid change and out-of-control technological advance is highly motivating and an ultra strong source of patterns of thought that will, to paraphrase the author, have to be "pretty different from everything we have got used to" in order to deal with modern liquid life. Such is the exhilarating logic of the twenty-first century. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. this is a very important book for understanding modernity, ...By potoolet this is a very important book for understanding modernity, post-modernist thought, and for understanding social development by one of the most important sociologists writing today. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Lisa Weiche Great book.

'Liquid life' is the kind of life commonly lived in our contemporary, liquid-modern society. Liquid life cannot stay on course, as liquid-modern society cannot keep its shape for long. Liquid life is a precarious life, lived under conditions of constant uncertainty. The most acute and stubborn worries that haunt this liquid life are the fears of being caught napping, of failing to catch up with fast moving events, of overlooking the 'use by' dates and being saddled with worthless possessions, of missing the moment calling for a change of tack and being left behind. Liquid life is also shot through by a contradiction: it ought to be a (possibly unending) series of new beginnings, yet precisely for that reason it is full of worries about swift and painless endings, without which new beginnings would be unthinkable. Among the arts of liquid-modern living and the skills needed to practice them, getting rid of things takes precedence over their acquisition. This and other challenges of life in a liquid-modern society are traced and unravelled in the successive chapters of this new book by one of the most brilliant and original social thinkers of our time.

From the Back Cover Liquid life is the kind of life commonly lived in our contemporary, liquid-modern society. Liquid life cannot stay on course, as liquid-modern society cannot keep its shape for long. Liquid life is a precarious life, lived under conditions of constant uncertainty. The most acute and stubborn worries that haunt this liquid life are the fears of being caught napping, of failing to catch up with fast moving events, of overlooking the use by dates and being saddled with worthless possessions, of missing the moment calling for a change of tack and being left behind. Liquid life is also shot through by a contradiction: it ought to be a (possibly unending) series of new beginnings, yet precisely for that reason it is full of worries about swift and painless endings, without which new beginnings would be unthinkable. Among the arts of liquid-modern living and the skills needed to practice them, getting rid of things takes precedence over their acquisition. This and other challenges of life in a liquid-modern society are traced and unravelled in the successive chapters of this new book by one of the most brilliant and original social thinkers of our

time.About the AuthorZygmunt Bauman (1925-2017) was Emeritus Professor at the University of Leeds