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Anti-Matter: Michel Houellebecq and
Depressive Realism ...

Michel Houellebecq is possibly the
the planet's most famous and
enigmatic pessimist.. His gnosticism
has become ubiquitous. He
propagates the view that life is
painful and disappointing , death is
terrifying and mysterious, the human
condition an unenvious exercise in
schadenfreude.

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the kind of intelligent, sophisticated
response to provocative work that
affirms criticism ' s value as art in
itself. The book is ostensibly a long
essay about the work of Michel
Houellebecq, the controversial French
novelist who recently took his
country ' s highest literary award for
...

Anti-Matter: Michel Houellebecq and
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The inspiration for this essay, and its principal focus, is the French author Michel Houellebecq. Anti-Matter could be described as a piece of extended literary criticism, and that would be sort of right, but it would be more exact to say it uses Houellebecq ' s novels as a basis for thinking about pessimism and how it relates to honesty, how novelists justify their work, what people think art is for, and philosophical materialism, amongst other things.

Anti-Matter (Ben Jeffery) » p.1 »

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Anti-Matter: Michel Houellebecq and Depressive Realism. A more rigorous, less stylized version of the kind of long critical essay usually associated with writers like Geoff Dyer and Pierre Bayard, Anti-Matter is a work of

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criticism that honors—and occasionally exceeds—its source.

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Anti-Matter: Michel Houellebecq and Depressive Realism ...

Michel Houellebecq (French: [mi ʁel be k]; born Michel Thomas; 26 February 1956 or 1958) is a French author, known for his novels, poems and essays, as well as an occasional

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actor, filmmaker and singer.. His first book was a biographical essay on the horror writer H. P.

Lovecraft. Houellebecq published his first novel, Whatever, in 1994. His next novel, Atomised, published in 1998, brought ...

Michel Houellebecq - Wikipedia
Anti-Matter: Michel Houellebecq and Depressive Realism | Anti-Matter: Michel Houellebecq and Depressive Realism Paperback – November 16, 2011 by Ben Jeffery (Author) Michel Houellebecq, author of five novels including Atomised and Platform, has become possibly the world ' s most famous literary pessimist.

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Michel Houellebecq, author of five

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rooted in sentimentality and anti

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Zero Books (2011) It can be hard to

keep French writer-provocateur

Michel Houellebecq ' s novels

straight in one ' s head. Like Haruki

Murakami — in some ways his gentler

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(and far more gifted) Japanese counterpart — Houellebecq writes about the sulky crises of middle-aged male protagonists confronting existential superfluity while dealing with the destabilizing presence of alternately willing and withholding nubile.

Death Dreams – The New Inquiry
ANTI MATTER MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ
AND DEPRESSIVE REALISM

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An interrogation of art's ability to face unpleasant truths.

Michel Houellebecq is perhaps the single most successful and controversial of all contemporary novelists writing in French. Houellebecq has become a global publishing phenomenon: his books have been translated worldwide, three film adaptations of his work have been produced, and the author has been the subject of million-euro publishing deals and of successive media scandals in France. If Houellebecq is unique in contemporary French writing, it is thanks not only to his extraordinary success, but to the unparalleled scope of his narrative ambition. In the work

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which most forcefully marked his breakthrough to the mainstream - *Les Particules élémentaires* - Houellebecq made a significant appeal to the science-fiction genre in order to undergird his critique of contemporary society. For Houellebecq presents humanity - at least modern, western humanity - as in a terminal state of decadence and decline and ripe for replacement by its post-human successor. His novels narrate a metaphysical mutation or paradigm shift through which humanity as we know it ceases to be the over-riding value or focus of our world when it comes into conflict with a competitor in the form of a post-human or neo-human species. It is the aim of this book to appraise the global significance of Houellebecq's novelistic visions while at the same

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time situating them within the context of French literature, culture and society.

Michel Houellebecq, author of five novels including *Atomised* and *Platform*, has become possibly the world 's most famous literary pessimist. His work declares that life is painful and disappointing, death is terrifying, and the human condition is a nasty sort of joke. He has been wildly successful – translated into over 25 different languages and hailed as the voice of a generation. Beginning with Houellebecq 's novels, this book explores the concept of ' Depressive Realism ' in literature and philosophy – the proposition that the facts of life are bleak and unkind. Ranging over work by David Foster Wallace, Susan

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Sontag, Fredric Jameson and Margaret Atwood, *Anti-Matter* surveys the case for pessimism, asks how a mass culture rooted in sentimentality and trivialisation manages to produce so much cynicism and apathy, and hunts for the space that remains for serious, life-affirming art.

Michel Houellebecq is France ' s most famous and controversial living novelist. Since his first novel in 1994, Houellebecq ' s work has been called pornographic, racist, sexist, Islamophobic, and vulgar. His caricature appeared on the cover of the French satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo* on January 7, 2015, the day that Islamist militants killed twelve people in an attack on their offices and also the day that his most recent

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novel, *Soumission*—the story of France in 2022 under a Muslim president—appeared in bookstores. *Without God* uses religion as a lens to examine how Houellebecq gives voice to the underside of the progressive ethos that has animated French and Western social, political, and religious thought since the 1960s. Focusing on Houellebecq's complicated relationship with religion, Louis Betty shows that the novelist, who is at best agnostic, “is a deeply and unavoidably religious writer.” In exploring the religious, theological, and philosophical aspects of Houellebecq's work, Betty situates the author within the broader context of a French and Anglo-American history of ideas—ideas such as utopian socialism, the sociology of

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secularization, and quantum physics. Materialism, Betty contends, is the true destroyer of human intimacy and spirituality in Houellebecq ' s work; the prevailing worldview it conveys is one of nihilism and hedonism in a postmodern, post-Christian Europe. In Betty ' s analysis, “ materialist horror ” emerges as a philosophical and aesthetic concept that describes and amplifies contemporary moral and social decadence in Houellebecq ' s fiction.

A new novel by the author of *Whatever* follows the lives and fortunes of Bruno and Marcel, born to a bohemian mother during the 1960s, who are brought up separately and pursue their own individual paths--as Bruno battles madness and sexual obsession and Michel, a molecular

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biologist, comes up with a unique way to express his disgust with the violence of humankind. Reprint. 25,000 first printing.

As the 2022 French Presidential election looms, two candidates emerge as favourites: Marine Le Pen of the Front National, and the charismatic Muhammed Ben Abbes of the growing Muslim Fraternity. Forming a controversial alliance with the political left to block the Front National ' s alarming ascendancy, Ben Abbes sweeps to power, and overnight the country is transformed. This proves to be the death knell of French secularism, as Islamic law comes into force: women are veiled, polygamy is encouraged and, for our narrator François – misanthropic, middle-aged and alienated – life is

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set on a new course. Submission is a devastating satire, comic and melancholy by turns, and a profound meditation on faith and meaning in Western society.

Michel Houellebecq ' s Serotonin is a caustic, frightening, hilarious, raunchy, offensive, and politically incorrect novel about the decline of Europe, Western civilization, and humanity in general. Deeply depressed by his romantic and professional failures, the aging hedonist and agricultural engineer Florent-Claude Labrouste feels he is “ dying of sadness. ” He hates his young girlfriend, and the feeling is almost certainly mutual; his career is pretty much over; and he has to keep himself thoroughly medicated to cope with day-to-day life. Suffocating

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in the rampant loneliness, consumerism, hedonism, and sprawl of the city, Labrouste decides to head for the hills, returning to Normandy, where he once worked promoting regional cheeses and where he was once in love, and even—it now seems—happy. There he finds a countryside devastated by globalization and by European agricultural policies, and encounters farmers longing, like Labrouste himself, for an impossible return to a simpler age. As the farmers prepare for what might be an armed insurrection, it becomes clear that the health of one miserable body and of a suffering body politic are not so different, and that all parties may be rushing toward a catastrophe that a whole drugstore 's worth of antidepressants won ' t make

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Best-selling French novelist Michel Houellebecq pays tribute to the master of horror, H. P. Lovecraft Part biographical sketch, part pronouncement on existence and literature, the best-selling French novelist Michel Houellebecq's H. P. Lovecraft: Against the World, Against Life, was published in France in 1991 and is the first non-fiction text ever published by the author. Here, France's most famous contemporary author praises his prewar American alter ego 's style, which couldn't be less like his own. With a foreword by Lovecraft admirer Stephen King, this eloquently translated edition is an insightful introduction to both Lovecraft 's dark mythology and Houellebecq 's deadpan prose.

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Widely acknowledged as an important, if highly controversial, figure in contemporary literature, French novelist and poet Michel Houellebecq has elicited diverse critical responses. In this book Carole Sweeney examines his novels as a response to the advance of neoliberalism into all areas of affective human life. This historicizing study argues that le monde houellebecquien is an 'atomised society' of banal quotidian alienation populated by quietly resentful men who are the botched subjects of late-capitalism. Addressing Houellebecq's handling of the 'failure' of the radical thought of '68, Sweeney looks at the ways in which his fiction treats feminism, the decline of religion and the family, as well as the

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And Depressive Realism' and the Sartrean notion of 'engaged' literature. Reading the world with the disappointed idealism of a contemporary moralist, Houellebecq's novels, Sweeney argues, fluctuate between despair for the world as it is and a limp utopian hope for a post-humanity.

This book approaches David Foster Wallace not only as a fiction writer but also as a cultural critic and a moral philosopher whose formal innovations were intended as "therapies" for the pervasive dis-eases of our time.

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