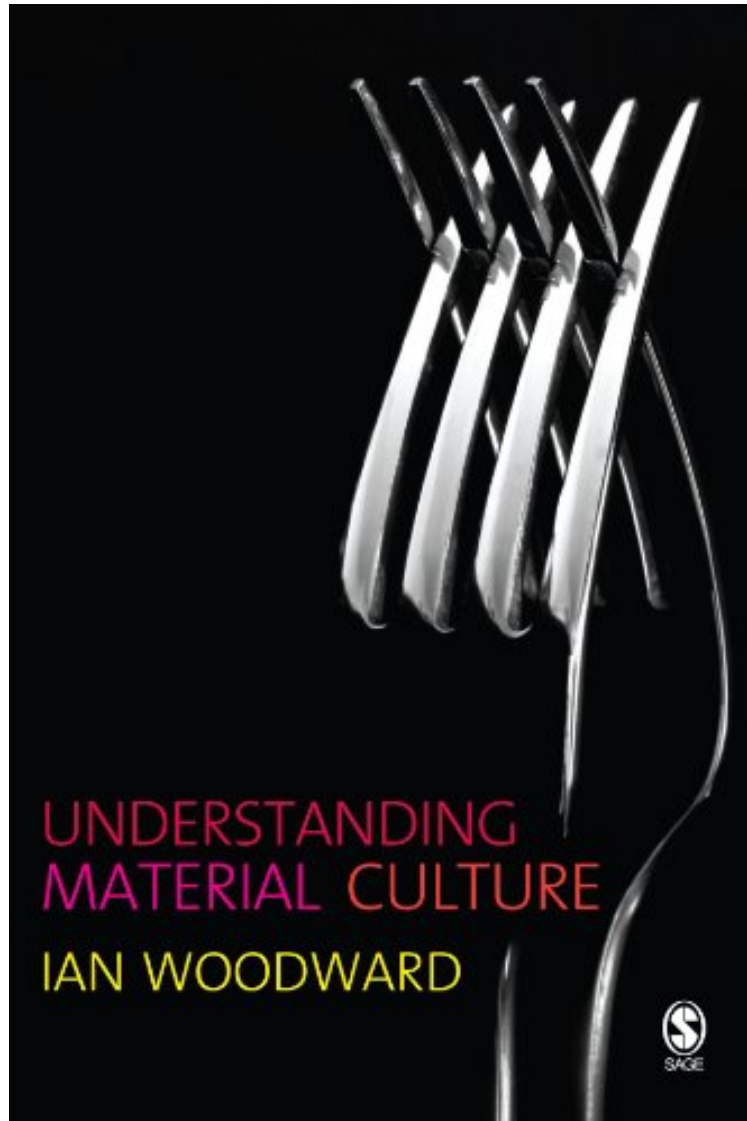


# Understanding Material Culture

*Ian Woodward*

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**Ian Woodward : Understanding Material Culture** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Understanding Material Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy CustomerA good course material reference with good examples.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pretty good, very biased toward the anthropological field (and ...By CustomerUsed as a textbook in one of my classes. Pretty good, very biased toward the anthropological field (and I say this as an anthro major). Sometimes goes in circles, or on and on, but you eventually get the ideas. What I like most are the vocabulary words!2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great Introductory TextBy

Roderick A. Vesper The book is well written. If you are already familiar with the key theories behind the studies of material culture it may get a bit repetitive. But this repetition is part of what makes it a strong introduction. There are introductions to key philosophers and theorists and each chapter has a nice summary. Later chapters refer back to earlier concepts, but offer a brief summary of what was stated earlier which only reinforces them for you.

Why are i-pods and mobile phones fashion accessories? Why do people spend thousands remodelling their perfectly functional kitchen? Why do people crave shoes or handbags? Is our desire for objects unhealthy, or irrational? Objects have an inescapable hold over us, not just in consumer culture but increasingly in the disciplines that study social relations too. This book offers a systematic overview of the diverse ways of studying the material as culture. Surveying the field of material culture studies through an examination and synthesis of classical and contemporary scholarship on objects, commodities, consumption, and symbolization, this book: " Introduces the key concepts and approaches in the study of objects and their meanings;" Presents the full sweep of core theory - from Marxist and critical approaches to structuralism and semiotics - to evaluate the frameworks for approaching the material world;" Shows how and why people use objects to perform identity, achieve social status, and narrativize life experiences;" Analyzes everyday domains in which objects are important: social status, identity, social performance and narrativization;" Shows why studying material culture is necessary for understanding the social. This book will be essential reading for students and researchers in sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, consumer behaviour studies, design and fashion studies.

This book deserves its niche, both as a textbook covering long standing debates and discussions, but also as an entry point to a particular perspective. It comes about as close as anything I have seen to a genuine standard textbook that tries to transcend particular disciplines.--Material World This book deserves its niche, both as a textbook covering long standing debates and discussions, but also as an entry point to a particular perspective. It comes about as close as anything I have seen to a genuine standard textbook that tries to transcend particular disciplines. (Material World) About the Author Ian Woodward is Associate Professor in the School of Humanities at Griffith University, Australia.