



# The Culture of Redemption

*Leo Bersani*

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## **The Culture of Redemption** Leo Bersani

In this frankly polemical book, Leo Bersani does battle with a pervasive view in modern culture: the idea that art can save us from the catastrophes of history and sexuality. Bersani questions this assumption and ranges widely through modern literature to prove his point. He makes fascinating comparisons between Melanie Klein and Marcel Proust; the enigmatic and more unresolved works of Freud; Walter Benjamin, Baudelaire, and Nietzsche; Andr   Malraux and Georges Bataille; Flaubert, Melville, Joyce and Thomas Pynchon.

Bersani is not telling us to put down Freud or Eliot or Proust or Joyce. But he is urging us to make new evaluations and to be aware of the enervating concealed morality of high modern culture. This is literary criticism of the first order – a defense of “the absolute singularity of human experience” – and deserves the widest readership among those who are devoted to literature but are suspicious of the redemptive role that has been assigned to it.

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