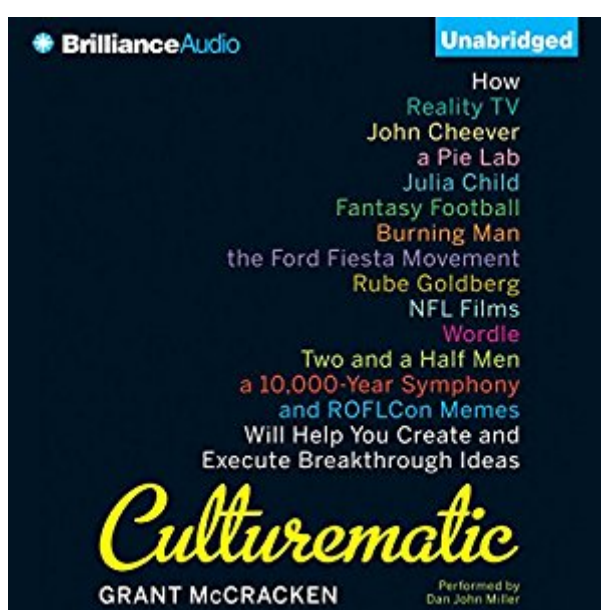


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# Culturematic: How Reality TV, John Cheever, A Pie Lab, Julia Child, Fantasy Football... Will Help You Create And Execute Breakthrough Ideas



## Synopsis

A Culturematic is a little machine for making culture. It's an ingenuity engine. Once wound up and released, the Culturematic acts as a probe into the often-alien world of contemporary culture, to test the atmosphere, to see what life it can sustain, to see who responds and how. Culturematics start small but can scale up ferociously, bootstrapping themselves as they go. Because they are so inexpensive, we can afford to fire off a multitude of Culturematics simultaneously. This is evolutionary strategy, iterative innovation, and rapid prototyping all at once. Culturematics are fast, cheap, and out of control. Perhaps as important, they fail early and often. They are the perfect antidote to a world where we cannot guess what's coming next. In Culturematic, anthropologist Grant McCracken describes these little machines and helps the reader master them. Examples are drawn from NFL Films, Twitter, the Apple Genius Bar, Starbucks, Ford, SNL Digital Shorts, Restoration Hardware, UNICEF, J. Crew, Pie Lab, USA Network, and the GEICO gecko. For the traditional producers of culture - the creators of movies, design, advertising, publishing, magazines, newspapers, and corporate R&D - this book will inspire new innovation and creativity. For the emerging producers of culture - the digital players - this book will serve as a practical handbook. Culturematic: our app for creating the world anew.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In Culturematic, McCracken introduces a methodology of creativity. By following his methodology, you create a "Culturematic," a thought process\* that creates intriguing new concepts. McCracken

gives countless examples of recent pop culture phenomena he believes originate from Culturematics. The methodology for creating a Culturematic is simple, if unclear. Using examples pulled from the book, the methodology is: 1. Test the world: Ask "What if..." or "What if I..." (e.g. What if I invented a professional sports league?) 2. Discover Culture: Your "what if" should reframe culture and produce new culture (e.g. Lonely Island starts with "What if I prematurely ejaculated to an insane degree," ends in Jizz in My Pants skit.) 3. Unleash value: Profit! (e.g. Think about all the money made by Julie and Julia food blog, or Supersize Me) To his credit, McCracken immediately seems to realize his methodology is vague and unhelpful. As such, he spends a significant portion of the rest of the book attempting to clarify what following these three steps actually entails. Such clarifications include: -Culturematics have no desired or definite outcome when born. -Culturematics are not posturing in anyway (except incidentally). -Culturematics reframe the world in a way that makes it more organized, more tangible, or breaks previous distinctions (such as between art and science). -Culturematics have something like an emergent order (and as such, you should go out in the world and experience ideas unrelated to your own). -Culturematics work from native curiosity and excitement. -Culturematics should focus on small ideas that can grow, rather than on big ideas.

I have been a fan of Grant McCracken for several years. Not only has his blog been consistently thoughtful and timely, but back before social - his blogroll was the standard for creative-cultural amazingness. I've mostly enjoyed his books with head-nodding and inner exclamations of "yes, absolutely." This book is different, in a good way. This book had me wanting to hurry up and finish it so I could get up and DO SOMETHING CULTUREMATIC, almost similar to the way one feels at the end of A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius by Dave Eggers (who is a Culturematic reference.) The book starts nicely by building relevance, especially if you are a fan of the often mentioned with this title Little Bets: How Breakthrough Ideas Emerge from Small Discoveries or the great Gilmore and Pine books (The Experience Economy, Updated Edition & Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want.) McCracken's discussion and points about modern culture making are diverse and simple to understand. What he is writing about in Culturematic weaves into many existing conversations. After establishing relevancy, he helpfully gives the reader dozens of up-to-date examples.

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