

This book concentrates on three novels set in the rapidly changing white-collar milieu of Berlin during the Weimar Republic. All three novels are concerned with the disarray, anguish and tension of commercial *Angestellten* – figures who are involved in selling, advertising, and other growing consumer-orientated industries. Focusing on the socially critical import of the narrative and characterization, it is argued that much of the everyday experiences of the protagonists is shaped by commercial influences which penetrate their jobs, their places of entertainment and their private and public relationships in very subtle, but nonetheless powerful and often damaging ways. The study not only emphasizes connections and parallels between the novels which have frequently been overlooked. By examining contemporary developments in the Berlin entertainment world, the commercialist ethos and the architecture of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, it also sets them in several interrelated contexts yielding new perspectives on the relationship between the novels and the society and culture of Weimar Berlin.