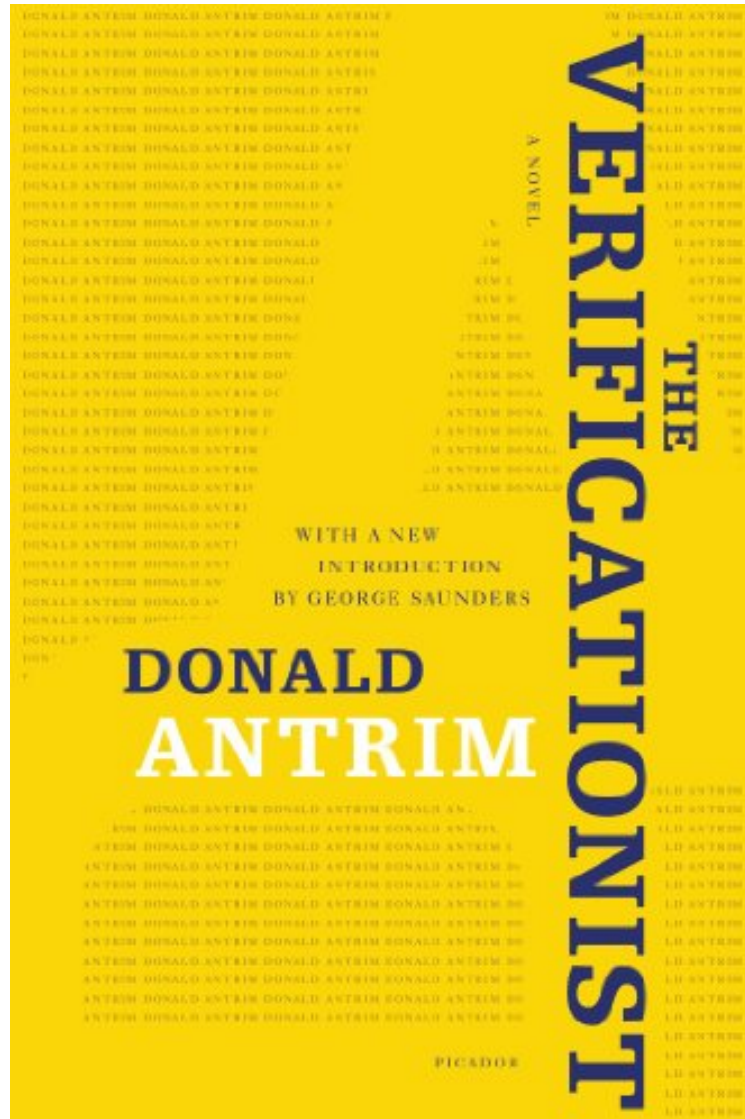


(Free) The Verificationist: A Novel

The Verificationist: A Novel

Von Donald Antrim

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Von Donald Antrim : The Verificationist: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Verificationist: A Novel:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Batter up - this book is flat as a pancake!Von neurotomeThis is a novel of internal monologue and external dialogue experienced by a clinical psychologist as he meets his professional colleagues for brunch at a pancake house. An abridged version appeared in the New Yorker as a piece of short fiction - and that in itself ought to tell you something

about the audience for which the novel is intended. Antrim is a darling of the NYT Review of Books, and this novel fits the formula to a T: a book about upscale, well-educated white people nattering on, in an unusual and diverting way, about the particular neuroses and life events and issues typical of that group. Nothing much gets said or done, and in the end you're left to contemplate how this sort of fiction is actually remarkably well symbolized by pancakes: light, sweet, fluffy, homogenous, mild in flavor, and probably bad for you, yet there's always a new way to prepare it. (Can someone say CREPES?) I didn't like it very much. Your mileage may vary. 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Refreshing to read such good work Von A Reader Having read some of the reviews posted here, I felt compelled to write something about this book... The Verificationist is a truly refreshing book to read, and it lives up to the high praise it has received. I am particularly struck by the author's ability to unravel complicated states of being in a manner that is believable and at the same time representative of the symbolic blockages we experience in daily life; predicated by the non-communication of the spiritual (for lack of a better term) and the material, the essential and the superfluous (e.g., the conquest of the former by the latter). Antrim understands neurosis (or is it normalcy?)--and he's composed a tableau of what has become so prevalent in the contemporary, late-babyboomer--a state of hobbled, quotidian psychosis. So, yes, this book is not for the phlegm-headed--nor is it for those who limit their diet to the (mostly) 19th-century novel (although it continues down the same road established by the likes of Sterne, Fielding, and, indeed, even as Eliot would have it later on)--but The Verificationist is most certainly for anyone who wants to take the time to learn about the state of the novel today... This is one of the better examples of what can happen when everything goes right. 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Not for me. Von P. Meltzer Sometimes, when a book is CLEARLY schlocky, poorly written and/or unentertaining, it is easy to pan it without a second thought. With other books, however--which for the reader share only the "unentertaining" part--but which are otherwise not poorly written and on a more sophisticated level, one must step back and ask oneself: Let's wait a minute. Is it possible that this is a work of creative genius and that I simply don't "get it." That my imagination and/or intellect may be too limited to appreciate what a wonderful (provocative, intelligent, well-crafted, etc., etc.) book this actually is? Well I asked myself those kinds of questions, and while I would readily concede that my reaction may well be a function of my own intellectual limitations, particularly given all the raves this book got, I don't care--I'm sticking with my convictions. I found the book to be almost insufferable throughout. It was nearly impossible for me to trudge all the way through--though I did, page by agonizing page, waiting for it to end. I simply can't believe that everyone who reads this book could find it so wonderful, and if I'm the only one in the world who would recommend against it, so be it.

Kurzbeschreibung With a New Introduction by George Saunders A New York Times Book Notable Book of the Year It is early spring, and Tom has called together his fellow psychologists at the Krakower Institute for their biannual pancake supper a chance for like-minded analysts to talk shop and casually unburden themselves over flapjacks. But, as Tom knows (at least subconsciously), his brainy colleagues are a little on edge simmering with romantic tension and professional grievance, their stew of conflicting ego and id just might boil to the surface before the pretty waitress brings their next coffee refill. When Tom tries to provoke a food fight, a rival colleague locks him in a therapeutic hold, triggering a transcendent if totally bizarre transformation that will free Tom to confront his greatest pleasures and fears. Darkly funny and beautifully written, The Verificationist confirms Donald Antrim as one of America's best and most original authors. de The narrator of Donald Antrim's The Verificationist is a middle-aged psychotherapist who meets a handful of colleagues at a pancake house one evening to engage in the seemingly innocuous activity of socializing while eating stacks of fried batter. What commences is a psychosexual deadpan comedy fraught with academic grandstanding, subtle flirting, and lots of good eatin'. Before long, Tom decides to start a food fight, but is restrained in a bear hug by Bernhardt, the father figure of the group. Our hero then proceeds to have an out-of-body experience in which he eavesdrops on his cohorts and ruminates on such things as the very essence of the pancake: We eat pancakes to escape loneliness, yet within moments we want nothing more than our freedom from ever having so much as thought about pancakes. Nothing can prevent us, after eating pancakes, from feeling the most awful regret. After eating pancakes, our great mission in life becomes the repudiation of the pancakes and everything served along with them, the bacon and the syrup and the sausage and coffee and jellies and jams. But these things are beneath mention, compared with the pancakes themselves. It is the pancake--Pancakes! Pancakes!--that we never learn to respect. Antrim's prose, at home somewhere between the psychologist's couch and a diner's Naugahyde booth, follows this tack for just shy of 200 pages, without chapter or page breaks. Readers familiar with the writer's earlier novels, The Hundred Brothers and Elect Mr. Robinson for a Better World, will spot this as his preferred modus operandi. Tom, likewise, follows in the tradition of Antrim's other narrators--a timid yet well-meaning intellectual training his considerable observational and confessional skills upon a tableau at once pathetically banal and rife with meaning. Antrim has a talent for creating characters who speak contemporary psychobabble that falls far short of explaining the absurdity of their dilemmas. Rebecca, the pulchritudinous teenage waitress, and Escobar, Tom's suave Mediterranean

friend, not only play their hour upon stage with earnest precision but serve to accentuate Tom's essentially pitiful nature. While Antrim's cast this time out is considerably downsized (literally 100 brothers appeared in *The Hundred Brothers*), he remains a writer who delights in bouncing disparate characters off one another with hilarious, disastrous results. In plumbing the pathologies of millennial manhood, *The Verificationist* is part Robert Bly men's retreat, part sex comedy, and part doctoral thesis. It is served up like a combo platter, best enjoyed in a single sitting, and undeniably tasty. --Ryan Boudinot.co.uk

What happens if 20 psychoanalysts meet for an informal supper in the Pancake House? This is the curious, and comic, starting-point of Donald Antrim's third novel, *The Verificationist*: "all the teaching analysts coming together as friends, drinking limitless coffee refills, sharing opinions and impressions of the various candidates at the Institute, of crises or patients' breakthroughs in our private practices". It sounds like a recipe for professional bedlam and Antrim runs with all the potential of his cast and setting. Thomas, the first-person narrator of the book, delivers his story at breakneck speed, delving in and out of the conscious and unconscious minds of himself, his colleagues and their waitress to craft a novel from the unsentimental and surrealist work of free association. Imagine, that Thomas is being held in the (immensely strong) arms of one of his male colleagues, Dr Bernhardt, who is trying to prevent the outbreak of a food fight: "Dr. Bernhardt is holding me in the air because he doesn't want me to throw cinnamon-raisin toast at Peter Konwicki...here I am in the air over everyone's heads, feeling sick to my stomach and hanging on to a pot lid!"

Infantilism, sexuality, violence, authority, attraction: the commonplace ingredients of psychoanalysis become part of the heady mix of Antrim's narrative as it explores the ever-strange dynamics of a supper party to travel through minds, history and the bizarrely-imagined world of the therapeutic professionals. --Vicky Lebeau