

The Rack

By A. E. Ellis, Derek Lindsay

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"There are certain books we call great for want of a better term, that rise like monuments above the cemeteries of literature: *Clarissa Harlowe*, *Great Expectations*, *Ulysses*. *The Rack* to my mind is one of this company." - Graham Greene

"A terrific book . . . a penetrating examination of the nature of suffering . . . to read it is in itself an experience." - *Time and Tide*

"Quite possibly a masterpiece." - *Irish Times*

"Book of the year if there ever was one." - V. S. Pritchett, *New Statesman*

"A work of sombre power, of soaring comedy." - Cyril Connolly, *Sunday Times*

"[V]ery remarkable . . . Ellis's humour is grim, but behind the book one has the impression of an unusual and powerful mind." - *The Observer*

"Then consider yourself an experiment of the gods in what a man can endure . . ." This is the sardonic advice of a doctor to his patient, a young Englishman suffering from tuberculosis in the days before effective antibiotic treatment, and it sets the theme for this brilliant novel. The hero, Paul Davenant, has arrived at a sanatorium in the Swiss Alps with high hopes of a full cure and a normal life. But as the weeks and months pass interminably by, Davenant undergoes endless tests and medical procedures, each more horrific and dehumanizing than the last, all the while facing the possibility that his case may be hopeless. Despite the pain, indignity, and tediousness, Davenant never loses sight of the outrageous, farcical side to his situation, the absurdity of it all. When he falls in love with a fellow patient, he becomes determined to recover his health, but will he succeed, or will all the tortures he has endured have been for nothing?

When *The Rack* was first published in 1958, the critical acclaim was universal: reviewers compared it with the works of Proust, Mann, and Camus and declared it a masterwork destined to take its place among the great novels of the 20th century. This edition, the first in 25 years, features a new introduction by Andrew Sinclair.

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The Rack By A. E. Ellis, Derek Lindsay Bibliography

- Rank: #1763441 in Books
- Published on: 2014-07-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .87" w x 5.51" l, 1.09 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 390 pages

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Editorial Review

Review
There are certain books which we call great for want of a better term, that rise like monuments above the cemeteries of literature: - The Rack, to my mind is one of this company. Graham Greene Penelope Mortimer wrote: 'It is often glibly said that a work of art is an experience - The Rack is one of the rare instances of this actually being so. It is a book which must, inevitably, have a permanent effect on the reader. In this case the usual terms of praise become almost meaningless. So powerful is Mr Ellis's inspiration, so driven by the urgent necessity of expression, that one is not so much conscious of having read a account of an ordeal as of having lived through two years of unbearable physical and mental agony - and survived.'

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alan Levin:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style in this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world could share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their own reader with their story or their experience. Not only situation that share in the publications. But also they write about the ability about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors in this world always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some research before they write for their book. One of them is this The Rack.

Sharon Garon:

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