

## Naomi Klein

Person: Naomi Klein

Author: Marlo Edwards , McMaster University

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Description Naomi Klein is a Canadian journalist, media commentator, and most famously the author of *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (2000), a critique of the corporate takeover of public space. Klein's youth (she was 30 when the book was published), her clear and compelling prose, and the fact that the book was released shortly before the World Trade Organization talks in Seattle all contributed to *No Logo* becoming a key text in the antiglobalization debate. *No Logo* interweaves personal stories about growing up in a "branded culture" with trenchant exposés of the exploitative labour and marketing practices of large North American companies including Gap, Nike, Microsoft, and Starbucks. Klein documents commodity culture's canny transition from selling "products" to selling "brands" — essentially a shift away from the trafficking in cultural goods and a move towards the peddling of cultural identities. Klein's book also provided one of the first detailed analyses of the methods and motives of the growing anti-corporate/antiglobalization resistance movement — from culture jammers to computer hackers to public protesters — that is set on dismantling the "to buy is to be" mantra of postmodern capitalism. Klein is persuaded that the counter-messages exemplified by such creative civil disobedience represent a first step en route to regaining the commons. Klein's text has been criticized by proponents of globalization as well as by specialized scholars in the area for having a simplistic view of world trade policies. And, like utopian social critics before her, she has been taken to task for being vague about practical alternatives to consumer capitalism. Nonetheless, Klein's vigour and her "coolness" as a documenter of the troubling interweaving of culture and consumerism have indisputably brought the value of cultural engagement, political dissent, and moral responsibility to popular attention.