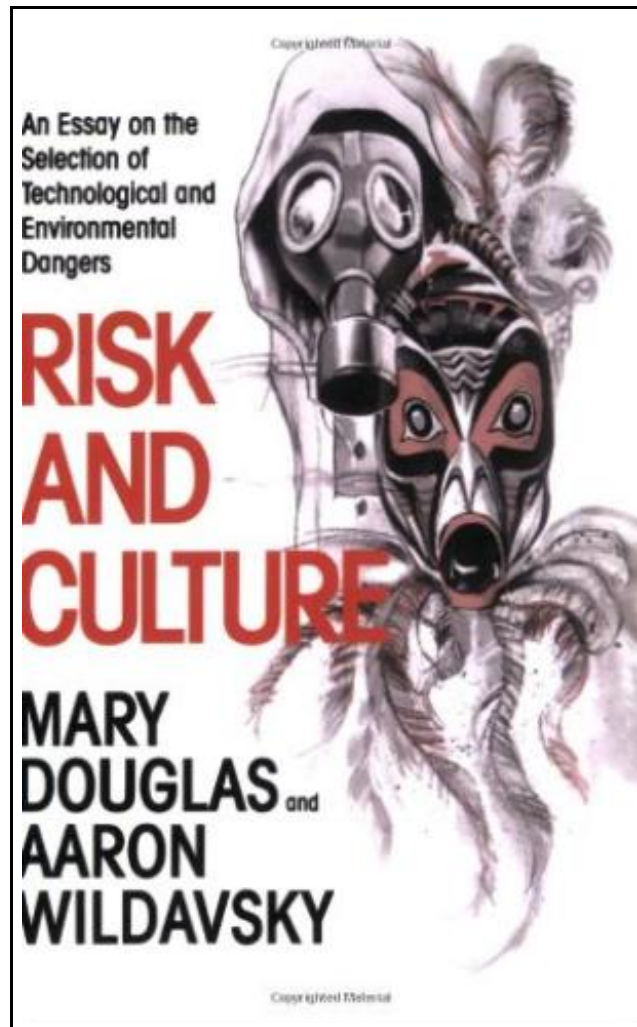


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RISK AND CULTURE



University Press Group Ltd Okt 1983, 1983. Buch. Book Condition: Neu. 261x157x17 mm. Neuware - With flair and scholarly acumen, British anthropologist Mary Douglas (*Purity and Danger*) and Berkeley political scientist Aaron Wildavsky (*Speaking Truth to Power*) apply the yardstick of cultural bias to American society - and attack scientific objectivity, in the bargain. What is it, they ask, that Americans fear Why have we, above all other modern societies, fostered strong environmental groups, concerned with single issues (like the building of a nuclear-power plant next door), as well as with the technological threat to planetary survival Their answers derive from cultural analysis of nomadic groups, of isolated communities like the Hutterites or the Amish, and of contemporary American society itself. Each culture, each community, the authors aver, has its pollution beliefs, connecting certain actions to disasters (e.g., the woman's adultery causes the child to die). To deny the involvement of personal, moral, and political values is absurd. Yet in appeals to science, to risk-assessment analysis, Americans pretend that their fears are rational. Building their argument in early chapters that deal with fear, risk, and scientific disagreement, the pair then develop parallels between America today and pre-modern cultures, singling out three common ways that groups in society are structured. There is the centrist hierarchy, exemplified by a bureaucracy with stability and resistance to change. There is the individualist economic model, also centrist, that allows persons to move and compete for gain or loss in the market. And there is the sectarian 'border,' composed of egalitarian voluntary groups united by a common doctrine - usually a transcendent religious or moral precept - critical of the center. For example, the Sierra Club tends to be hierarchical, while Friends of the Earth and the Clamshell Alliance are sectarian. Douglas & Wildavsky suggest a...



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