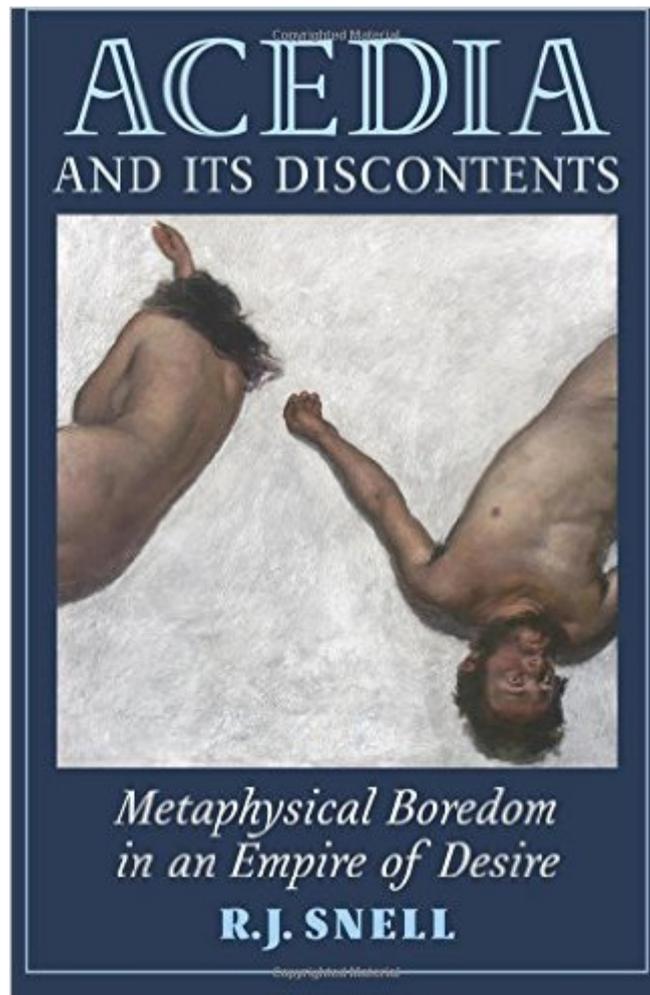


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# Acedia And Its Discontents: Metaphysical Boredom In An Empire Of Desire



## Synopsis

While the term "acedia" may be unfamiliar, the vice, usually translated as sloth, is all too common. Sloth is not mere laziness, however, but a disgust with reality, a loathing of our call to be friends with God, and a spiteful hatred of place and life itself. As described by Josef Pieper, the slothful person does not "want to be as God wants him to be, and that ultimately means he does not wish to be what he really, fundamentally is." Sloth is a hellish despair. Our own culture is deeply infected, choosing a destructive freedom rather than the good work for which God created us. "Acedia and its Discontents" resists despair, calling us to reconfigure our imaginations and practices in deep love of the life and work given by God.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Moore: I somewhat randomly landed upon a talk of yours where you discuss a few of the issues in the book. It was a wonderfully stimulating talk on a subject that I already knew a fair bit about. Still, it motivated me to read your book. Having now read *Acedia and its Discontents*, I was not disappointed. In short compass (127 pages) you offer the reader much. What motivated you to write *Acedia and its Discontents*?  
Snell: Some years ago, I read a remarkable essay by Michael Hanby entitled "The Ontology of Boredom," in which he describes the contemporary Western life as deeply affected by a kind of bored nihilism resulting in the judgment that both the world and our own lives were fundamentally meaningless. Unlike earlier struggles with nihilism found in thinkers like Camus or Nietzsche, the nihilism of our time tends less to an epic struggle to find meaning than to an endless search for the stimulation of entertainment and consumption. Our nihilism is of the

debonair versionâ€”nothing really matters, but have you seen the most recent HBO show?I shared the essay with students, who responded with a profound recognition and agreement with Hanby. Against the ontology of boredom, we would read the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, seeing two visions of life at struggle. First, the sense that the world could move us only to a kind of blasÃ© consumption; second, the sense that Christ plays in ten thousand places, and thus everything matters deeply and amazingly, for God gives himself to us through everything. I want to recover a world in which all things burst forth with the radiance of God. I want a world of loveliness.Moore: Since some readers may not be familiar with the word acedia, would you give us a brief definition?

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