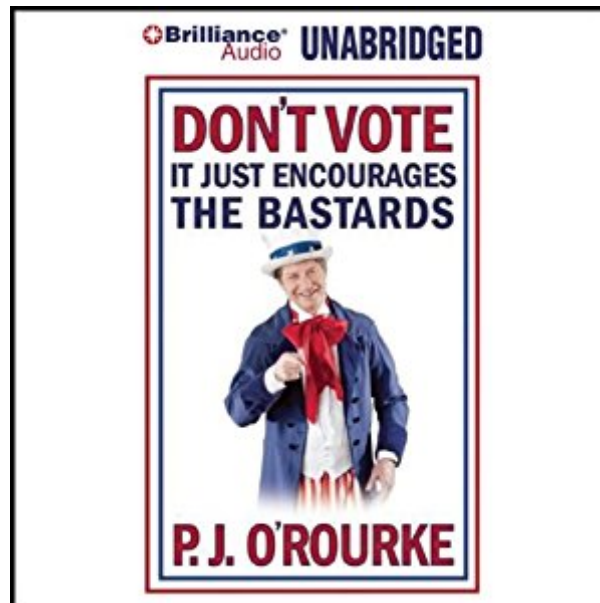




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# Don't Vote - It Just Encourages The Bastards



## Synopsis

In *Don't Vote - It Just Encourages the Bastards*, best-selling humorist P. J. O'Rourke, whose *On the Wealth of Nations*, about the foundations of economics, has been published in 18 languages, delivers a hilarious theory of politics. America's most subversive conservative, O'Rourke describes government as a devil's bargain between power, freedom, and responsibility, and goes on to hilariously skewer the politicians who have bargained with us to consolidate power, and the many mini-bargains and evasions that citizens have made with the consequences of their choices. P. J. O'Rourke begins with a party game that comes to us from late-night giggle sessions in all-girls boarding schools: "Kill, F@#%, Marry." Pick three men - or, in O'Rourke's version, three political ideologies, i.e., Democrat, Republican, and Independents (a.k.a. Confused). Then you have to choose which to terminate with extreme prejudice, which to go for a roll in the hay with, and which to settle down with permanently for a boring life in the suburbs. This astute tool of political analysis works on the parts of government as well as on the political thinking that led to those parts: Kill the Department of Education, screw Social Security, and marry the Armed Forces. The same for political policies: Screw the bailout, marry a balanced budget, and national health care kills you. O'Rourke explores the basis of our democracy - the aforementioned power, freedom, and responsibility, a.k.a. the "Kill, F@#%, Marry" of liberty and self-rule. O'Rourke favors - reluctantly, he admits - responsibility. From the woes of nation-building to the woes of letting politicians rebuild the automobile industry, no irresponsibility of America's political establishment is spared. Why, he asks, was the health care reform debate framed in terms of health insurance? ("When your house is on fire, do you call Allstate or 911?") Listen to P. J. O'Rourke on the pathetic nature of politics and laugh through your tears or, what the hell - just laugh.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is my favorite book to read while bait fishing from the shoreline. I could hardly go a page without laughing out loud, and there was actually quite a bit of food-for-thought. It has become a widely held mainstream belief, albeit a false and ridiculous one as mainstream things tend to be, that political satire and comedy is the trademark of left-wing progressivism. Mr. O'Rourke tears into this belief with fierce intellectual savageness and humorous wit, all the while maintaining a humble presence of self-satire and presenting stimulating, informative and statistically validated arguments and explanations for the individualist, pro-liberty classical liberal/ constitutional conservative position. Unlike mainstream political satirists like Samantha Bee who solely rely on emotion and rhetorical fallacy, O'Rourke uses humor to point out folly AND THEN compliments these anecdotes, one-liners and buildups with real arguments, reasons, and empirical evidence. Whether you ultimately agree with his politics or not, I find this approach to political humor to be much more friendly and welcoming than mindless name calling. There are no safe spaces or trigger warnings to be found in this book, particularly if your name starts with Hillary and ends with Clinton. This book is not just for grouchy right-wingers looking for a distraction from the nonsense of mainstream media, it's for anyone who agrees that politics is a load of b\*\*\* s\*\*\*.

As we are in the midst of a Presidential election and the campaign mud-slinging is in full force, I was in the mood for some humor injected into the political realm. I was first introduced to P.J. O'Rourke while working for his lecture agency, and for years I have enjoyed reading his books and columns. *Don't Vote* is a collection of chapters dealing with the issues of the 2010 election and O'Rourke's leanings have changed slightly from libertarian to leaning Republican. Some of the chapters are rehashes of previous columns altering the means to make his points. Sometimes they work, sometimes they don't. It's not his best work, but there were times when I truly appreciated his humor. He talks about becoming a father and how his anything goes political stances of the past have changed now that he has children. "I have lost all my First Amendment principles about rap songs lyrics. I am infuriated by them. Because I cannot understand a word that hip-hop musicians say. For all I know what's spewing out of their

mouths is "We need a single-payer national health care system," or "Home mortgage interest tax deductions subsidize the urban sprawl, increase the burden on transportation infrastructure, and lead to greater production of greenhouse gases." "Thanks for the comic relief, P.J. We could all use a little of that while we're dodging campaign telephone calls!"

Sad commentary on what has happened to America made palatable by humorous presentation.

This is a good quality work with a gratuitous amount of Libertarian rhetoric as amusing quips. Very enjoyable even if you're not a libertarian. This is just good for anyone skeptical of government.

It's hard to be critical of this book because it was, after all, written by a humorist. So there's always that "out" waiting. Sure, there is the pretense of scholarship here and there, and those are the best parts, but you often get the impression that O'Rourke needs, first and foremost, to be loved. Hence the quips. This book is kinda the written version of your standard P.J. O'Rourke appearance on Bill Maher's show. That whiff of neediness comes through. It is easy to see how fiscal conservatives would like and enjoy the book. It is undeniably aimed at them, notwithstanding the later chapters. Social conservatives ... not so much, unless they are the cheek pinching, "Oh that P.J., what a little scamp!" types. Anyway, it's certainly smart enough and well written enough that most people should read it, regardless of their political orientation. As someone who has no use for Bill Clinton, the Clinton-as-Lecher-In-Chief punchlines still came across as very dated. But at the end of the day, there are smart, important, and at times funny books like Matt Taibbi's new book, *Griftopia*, and then there's *Don't Vote* ....

I have read almost all of P.J. O'Rourke's books and he always keeps me laughing, no matter what his subject matter is.

Witty all the way. I agree with some things he says. I think he is an anarchist. Laugh with him.

This is good to make you think about the issues facing our country. If you don't like him or his place in the political spectrum, then you probably will not enjoy it.

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