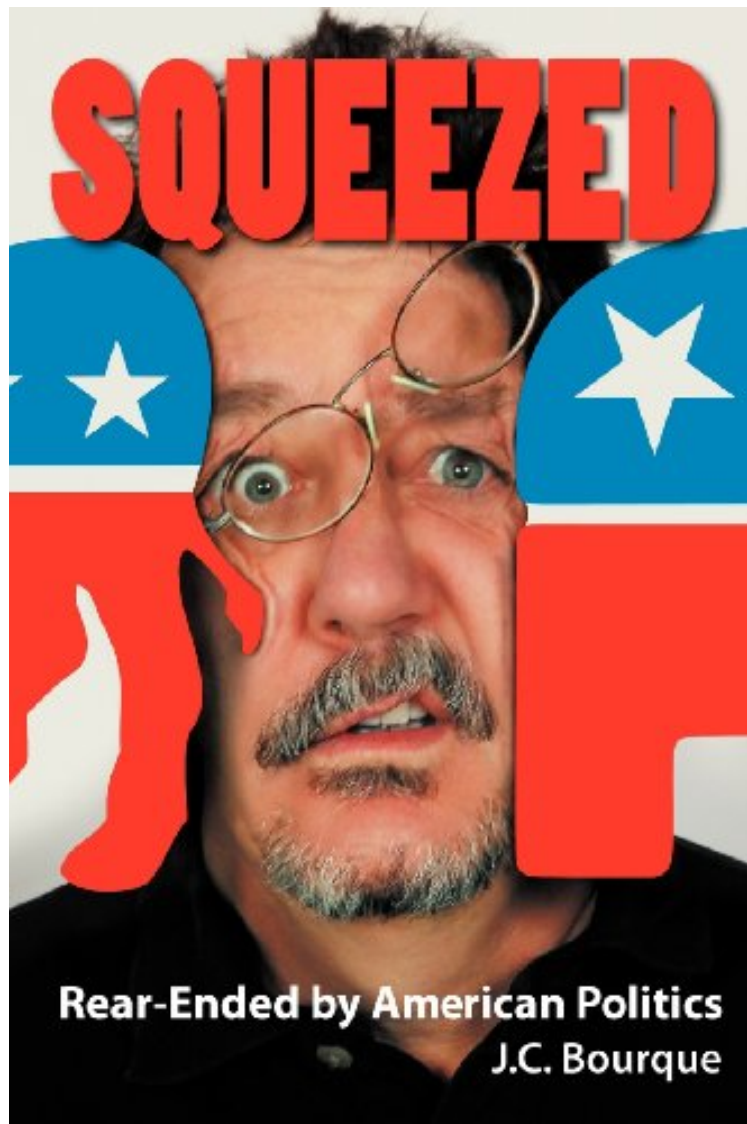


[Free] Squeezed: Rear-Ended by American Politics

Squeezed: Rear-Ended by American Politics

J. C. Bourque

*ebooks | Download PDF | *ePub | DOC | audiobook*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#4340071 in Books Snarkiman Publishing 2011-12-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.02 x .48 x 5.981, .69 #File Name: 0984933700230 pages | File size: 61.Mb

J. C. Bourque : Squeezed: Rear-Ended by American Politics before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Squeezed: Rear-Ended by American Politics:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. When Is A Rant Not A Rant? By Michael Charney Bourque's book, Squeezed: Rear-ended by American Politics, is a frequently funny, often over-the-top diatribe against extremists on both sides. Whether you are a save-the-world, tree-hugging, composting ultra-liberal or a gun-clinging, Bible-thumping, conspiracy theorizing right-wing fundamentalist, Bourque has a few choice words for you: America: Put

your head between your knees and breathe into the bag. Bourque, who calls himself a "Middle," just wants to be left alone. He's tired of people who, as he says, "think globally" but "overreact locally." He doesn't want to hear about your activism, or your belief system, or your latest theory on What's Wrong with the World. He just wants to go about his business, live his life, and make up his own mind without being judged, lectured to, and, inevitably, excoriated for his beliefs. And he's betting (at least enough to invest in writing a book) that you'll agree, that you (in fact, the majority of us) don't really care to have extremists raise our awareness. "Awareness raising is an activity that many activists engage in because it allows them to feel good about themselves without doing anything really important about the problem," he writes. Too often, too true. Bourque moves comfortably from topic to topic in what he admits is less a narrative than a continuing sequence of episodic outrage. He discusses our propensity to think in purely binary terms, the activist tendency toward what he calls "blurtosis," our never-ending fight with cognitive dissonance, and our amazing facility at confusing coincidence with causation. He argues convincingly that extremists should, frankly, just get over it. Ultimately--beyond all the humor (and it is funny; the guy has a great ranting voice), the many bullet lists of how we should and shouldn't behave, the repeated streams of slashed-together words/phrases/paragraphs/sections/chapters, and the clever use of what he calls "nounjetives," the book forces an unexpected self-reflection. How many times have I gone past the point of gentle conversation with others and slipped into what counterparts may consider extremism? Sure, I think I'm civil when I talk about these things, but do they? And have I cared enough about what they want out of such conversations? Those questions are worth thinking about.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. If this book is the answer, what indeed then is the question? By Herbert L. Calhoun This provocative, often insightful, sometimes thought provoking, and always ranting book, reminds me of the most famous of Samuel Johnson's critiques: that it is both good and thoughtful. However, the good part is not very thoughtful, and thoughtful part is not very good. The author sees a solution, but has not yet found a problem that the solution fits. So, using the same tactics as those he criticizes, the book rants at the messengers rather than at the message. He skims along the surface unconcerned that there is a cancer gathering steam just beneath the thin ice he is ranting upon. He waxes eloquently with rich and funny metaphors about the sins of those actively thrashing about in an effort to examine and address the symptoms of a disease that is destroying the American body politic. But the author unlike many of those he analyzes and criticizes, is unconcerned about the nature of the disease, that the ice holding him will soon crack, or that the American body politic is dying. Standing on safe, hallowed and non-controversial ground, he attacks all attempts at remediation - that is all attempts to fix the problem through better awareness, open debates, alerting others to the disease, or in general being active, open and concerned about the ever-diminishing "common good?" Anything other than sitting mute on a log is seen by him as being self-absorbedly engaged in passionate meddling -- a kind of activism he sees as harmful and undemocratic: as mindless attempts to change the status quo for the sake of changing it: the disease that is in large part itself the status quo, be-damned? He sees (and seizes) the moral high ground as that of transforming the deadlocked binary world into an equally dysfunctional and inert tri-nary one, one in which the "middle-of-the roaders," "independents," "undecideds" and "uninformed," are rhapsodized, and then (by fiat) raised to the level of equality with everyone else -- especially with the vocal and active? In the author's mind "inactivity and remaining mute" is a democratic virtue? Most of all, the author seems to fail to appreciate the context within which he is operating: within a republican form of democracy, whose life-blood is "informed open dialogue," "shared conversations" about what is undermining the common good, what is wrong with the system and how they both are to be fixed? If he had pulled his "squeezed head" out of his own already much too tight dernier for just one second, maybe he would have been able to see that the inmates are running the asylum; and that there is an overall method to this dysfunctional madness: binary (or tri-nary) gridlock perfectly serves the interests of the puppet-masters who are the cancer on our system. It is they who have strangled our democracy with corrupt political money and with meaningless amusements for the author's "politically tone deaf and mute but sanctified non-activists," those that the puppet masters so easily manipulate and that he so easily lionizes. It is not the messengers, but those with the message: those who by orchestrating and stoking the fires of the internecine binary (and tri-nary) warfare, keep the disease that is destroying our democracy alive. It is easy enough to write a "cute book" that is mostly all sound and fury, that loudly proclaims nothing, and that with the same empty words, plays the role of feigned victim while attacking the symptoms but not the disease. As he eloquently tells us what we already know, no one is fooled by his fancy tap-dancing around the `real' issues. We know well from the subtext and the framing of his rant, where all his sympathies really lie: He is a foot soldier for the status quo; and this book is just another clever vehicle in which those who lack the courage to stand up for bankrupt right wing ideas can hide and try to "distance" themselves from the racist cancer that is destroying this country. Despite the subtext that overshadows the cleverness, it is still not a bad book. Four stars

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Choosing Sides...or Not: Brainless Equality By Grady Harp J. C. Bourque has just the right medicine tonic to swallow as we progress into the 2012 political campaign mud slinging exceptionally expensive (when no one has any money) endless brouhaha of silly nonsense that we call American politics. Finally someone - and that someone is the rasty curmudgeon Bourque - can put it all into perspective. The joy of reading this hilarious if biting summation of bipartisan crazy making is that no matter what your political leanings this book hits it all. In someone else's hands this

book may be off-putting, but Bourque is such a natural comedian that he can quote facts and make them seem like fresh approaches rather than the yesterday's lunch messes we face on TV and radio and media noise. His dissection of both the Conservatives and the Radicals - the Right and the Left - are so on target that, to quote Jonathan Safran Foer, 'Everything is illuminated'. For instance, in defining the opposing groups Bourque labels them Right-Wing Extremists and Left-Wing Extremists: 'The first category, Right-Wing Extremists (RWE), are people who are afraid of change, frightened by human nature, terrified of Socialism or hinky about sex and feel a compelling need to share these feelings with the rest of us.....Alternatively, they might be televangelist, Bible-thumping, morality-police types who have received the Word of God (somehow) and are compelled by faith to spread their idea of morality to everyone' At the other end of the spectrum are the Left-Wing Extremists (LWE). These are people who consider themselves intellectually superior to the rest of us and, because of this, believe it is their job to engineer a perfect society for us all to inhabit. Whether they possess the proper credentials and wisdom to overhaul society is irrelevant: in the LWE world view, intellectual prowess in ANY subject conveys equal prowess in ALL subjects.' You get the gist of his writing from these two excerpts. In another spot he sates 'In short, RWEs have a rigid concept of morality and a flaccid idea of sex, while the LWEs are the polar opposite.' While the sound waves and written words hit us from all sides until November of this year, keep a copy of J.C. Bourque's book SQUEEZED at hand. He somehow puts it all into a sense of order - and it looks like there is none. Grady Harp, April 12

Humorous critique of Liberal and Conservative extremism in U.S. politics, media and public discourse. Includes commentary on pop culture, human nature and contemporary society.

From the Author Squeezed By What? Political discourse has been rancorous since the invention (or infestation) of politics in ancient times. It is said that Cicero once called Plutarch "...a puffed up, toga-clad windbag who fancies himself a Delphic Oracle, but in fact more closely resembles a Pelvic Orifice." Some scholars dispute this account as apocryphal, owing to the fact that Cicero died 89 years before Plutarch was born. No matter. Let's not let the validity of a good example stand in the way of making a point. It was later said of Benjamin Disraeli: "He is a self-made man and worships his creator." That one actually happened. Consider this, from Andre Marrou: "Politics' is made up of two words, 'poli,' which is Greek for 'many,' and 'tics,' which are blood-sucking insects." What do they have in common? They're all clever and show at least a modicum of intellectual ability. That's not how we do it in the political shriek-o-sphere these days. We call each other nasty names and spew vitriol all over people who disagree with us. We scream at one another across picket lines and often end up in violent clashes. But mostly, we just call others "idiots" if they happen to have a different viewpoint. And who are most of the people who are doing this? Political extremists. Ultraconservative and ultraliberal political extremists. And dumb asses. Well, I'm sick of this nastiness, especially since most of the people I know aren't creating this hostile climate. It's the politicians, the Wackos With a Cause and the media who are doing it. Squeezed: Rear-ended by American Politics is the beginning of the fight to take back our political discourse from these jerks. It's the Manifesto of the Maddened Moderate's coming ascendance in our political system. It's the Credo of the Crusading Centrist. The Voice of the Vanguard who Vow to Vanquish Verbal Viciousness. Unless nobody buys it. But let's try to stay positive, okay? This book takes these poisonous partisan philistines out behind the woodshed for some old-fashioned attitude adjustment. And best of all-- in a vivid demonstration of the kind of hypocrisy that I find so irritating-- it's even nastier than the people I'm complaining about! So, dig in. The fun is about to begin. About the Author JC Bourque is a cranky middle-aged curmudgeon who works in the advertising field. His family, friends and coworkers had given him an ultimatum: either write a book or shut up. This is that book. Later, they regretted making that demand, because it took forever for him to write it, and didn't result in him shutting up. In fact, it got worse. And now, his family, friends and coworkers have to endure the public ridicule, humiliation and hazing that accompanies their association with the guy. So, what have we learned here? Be careful what you wish for; you just might get it.