



Third World America: How Our Politicians Are Abandoning the Middle Class and Betraying the American Dream

Arianna Huffington , Coleen Marlo

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It's not an exaggeration to say that middle-class Americans are an endangered species and that the American Dream of a secure, comfortable standard of living has become as outdated as an Edsel with an eight-track player—that the United States of America is in danger of becoming a third world nation.

The evidence is all around us: Our industrial base is vanishing, taking with it the kind of jobs that have formed the backbone of our economy for more than a century; our education system is in shambles, making it harder for tomorrow's workforce to acquire the information and training it needs to land good twenty-first-century jobs; our infrastructure—our roads, our bridges, our sewage and water, our transportation and electrical systems—is crumbling; our economic system has been reduced to recurring episodes of Corporations Gone Wild; our political system is broken, in thrall to a small financial elite using the power of the checkbook to control both parties.

And America's middle class, the driver of so much of our economic success and political stability, is rapidly disappearing, forcing us to confront the fear that we are slipping as a nation—that our children and grandchildren will enjoy fewer opportunities and face a lower standard of living than we did. It's the dark flipside of the American Dream—an American Nightmare of our own making.

Arianna Huffington, who, with the must-read Huffington Post, has her finger on the pulse of America, unflinchingly tracks the gradual demise of America as an industrial, political, and economic leader. In the vein of her fiery bestseller *Pigs at the Trough*, *Third World America* points fingers, names names, and details who is killing the American Dream. Finally, calling on the can-do attitude that is part of America's DNA, Huffington shows precisely what we need to do to stop our freefall and keep America from turning into a third world nation.

Third World America is a must-listen for anyone disturbed by our country's steady descent from twentieth-century superpower to backwater banana republic.

Third World America: How Our Politicians Are Abandoning the Middle Class and Betraying the American Dream Details

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From Reader Review **Third World America: How Our Politicians Are Abandoning the Middle Class and Betraying the American Dream for online ebook**

***Dee's Reading Time Matters says**

Sorry to say this but "Third World America: How Our Politicians..." is true! At the time of the publication of this book, Huffington's focus was on the changes of American becoming a Third World nation but as my reading---- we are there! The world as we know it has come to pass with the downtrodden philosophy of this book. Politicians have betrayed us by abandoning the middle class and the poor thus helping the very ones who don't need it--- the 1 percenters and I'm not referring to the MC!

“It’s not that capitalism isn’t working. It’s that what we have right now is not capitalism. What we have is corporatism. It’s welfare for the rich. It’s the government picking winners and losers. It’s Wall Street having its taxpayer-funded cake and eating it, too. It’s socialized losses and privatized gains.”

This is in essence the tax reform that we witness the GOP secretly composed and passed under Trump's complicit administration.

Highly recommended --- the book will leave you speechless to the crime that politicians play daily with our lives turning the USA into a Third World NATION!

Al says

When I read books that are so purposely written to promote an agenda or position, I always try to be extra cautious, and not to over react. Once again, Arianna Huffington has laid out a case by not only supplying facts, but by supporting these with hundreds of specific examples.

I have listened to, and read, her ideas for some time now. I can tell you this; I believe we all need to hear what she has to say. We owe it to our families, and to our country, to open our minds and to consider her logical and credible case.

I am also very impressed by her world view. A view that has been developed by the combination of a very keen mind and a very big heart. That sounds like the perfect balance to me!

Ebony says

Arianna is clearly biased against third world countries. I get her point. The book is peppered with extreme metaphors, but I can't help but cringe at the fact that she chose one with images of suffering people of color and rarely mentions race in the book. Middle class is almost always code for white when white people talk about it so the premise of the book is that white people finally learn what it's like to be black and black people don't exist. That was a hard pill for me to swallow for 237 pages, but the extreme deterioration of the country that she documents is even harder to swallow. Page after page, I kept thinking, if white folks have got it this bad, what's happening to black folks? It gave me a new respect for the "news" in the Huffington Post. I think of it mostly as a pundit and gossip blog, but a lot of the stats that I've been looking for are online. I wanted a recent book that sums America's atrocities, when really I should be reading the news. I think it's even more pertinent now that there be a HuffPo Global Black because I would love to go to a site

that has stats for the African diaspora. I also feel some type of way that she just got a \$315 million influx of cash to fund her American Dream and yet she isn't an American and doesn't pay her contributors. The irony is not lost on me. She means well. Her facts, while poorly documented because it's a lay book, paint a clear picture of how fucked up the country is in digestible terms, but at least a nod to personal complicity would have been nice.

Lauren Hopkins says

I started reading this six years ago lmao. I guess I gave up on it? But I picked it up again recently to finally finish it because I'M NOT A QUITTER and I think six-years-ago-me was right to be like BYEEEE. It kind of reads like a college freshman's "university writing 101" essay with a prompt that's like "What's wrong with the USA?!" and she just lays it all out with like, her intro and thesis, her five supporting paragraphs (or chapters in this case), and a conclusion. Very neat and tidy but there's nothing really of substance here that you wouldn't get from even the most basic bitch poli sci majors who watch the Daily Show. Like, shocking, America sucks because we don't spend money on education or infrastructure and banks like to steal from the middle class. Groundbreaking.

Crystal says

There hasn't been any doubt for a long time that America is sliding into third-worldism, but Arianna has laid it all out in a logical form and with startling statistics and an historical perspective. When all the quips, posits, and analyses from pundits and scholars that I've followed are presented so cogently in one book, the prognosis for our country is even more horrifying than I previously thought. Basically, it's the disappearance of the middle-class that is the harbinger of American's demise, and she clearly lays out each and every thing that is bringing that about, including unfair taxation, foreclosures, layoffs, to declining education. The last chapter states that this is not yet a "done deal," and she proposes ways in which the situation can be turned around. However, the primary one she discusses is campaign finance reform, and we all know where that one is going -- nowhere. Written with her signature wit, this is a highly readable book, and in my estimation, an extremely important one.

Todd Martin says

Surrounded by the utter nonsense being spewed by the no-nothing, balloon heads on the right (our founding fathers worked tirelessly to abolish slavery, spudnut moments, uprisings in Egypt leading to an Islamic caliphate, blah blah blah) who seem to worship ignorance with a passion previously reserved by 16-year old boys for Charlies Angel posters, I was ready to be revived by a good old fashioned scree from the left. Instead *Third World America* serves up failing schools, crumbling infrastructure, a rise in economic disparity and a struggling middle class. Instead of welfare programs and big government spending, Huffington suggests re-inventing education through competition between schools, investment in infrastructure, tax structure incentives that promote small businesses, development of public transportation including high speed rail, public campaign financing, cuts in wasteful military spending, tighter restrictions on Wall Street and a breakup of the 'too-big-to-fail banks'.

Perhaps the right has gone so far off the rails into a delusional fantasyland of tea-bagging and tax cuts that simple, common-sense proposals and reasonable and rational discourse are now what pass for leftist rhetoric.

The reality is that Huffington provides eminently practical and reasonable suggestions to help grow the economy and keep the US competitive in a changing global economic climate. Far from being a socialist manifesto, the book does a good job summarizing the economic problems we currently face and sensible steps that can be taken to alleviate them.

Despite the title, the book ends on a hopeful note that I found to be completely unwarranted and out of touch with conditions on the ground. Being nice and investing in social capital may be a good thing, but doesn't carry much weight in the face of a frothing, brainless, zombie mob of xenophobes who yearn to replace democratic governance with a theocracy and believe Obama is the anti-christ. Sorry to say, but stupidity is winning.

James says

While I share Arianna Huffington's political views and agree with almost all of what she writes in her book, I can't help but notice that this book seems to have been hastily put together. In fact, if one follows Huffington's blog, then one has already read everything that appears in this book. Filled with clichés and phrases that smack of contemporary political correctness, this book is quite the disappointment. The book reads like a blog post or a news article and, while extensively cited (almost all citations are of Internet sources including Huffington's own blog), Huffington's claims seem overly broad and not sufficiently researched to be regarded as anything more than a collection of her previous writings organized for publication in book form. I genuinely appreciate Arianna Huffington's contributions to progressive/liberal causes. However, this book does not contribute as much as I would have expected of her.

Trevor says

Something needs to be done about democracy, particularly democracy in America. It seems clear that the vast majority of American people actually want to see America become a more equal society, a society where there is a 'level playing field' and where most people actually are in the 'middle' and not clustered about the 'extremes' of the very poor and pointlessly wealthy. That they want their politicians to do things to put people into jobs and to provide a reasoned debate about things that matter. And yet, looking in from afar, the main person in the news over there (and it seems the person most likely to become the next President) is some nut job from Texas – someone that makes Bush II look good in the way I understood Shrek 2 to be much better than I had remembered it after I had seen Shrek 3. It is almost as if Rick Perry's sole aim in life is to take from the poor so he can give to the rich. It is all very depressing.

The main thing I will remember from this book is the idea that if you were to get everyone in America and stand in a line from richest to poorest then the person right in the middle would be the middle class. This seems like as good a definition of middle class as any other I've ever heard. The terrifying thing this book points out though about this guy in the middle is that since the mid-1970s they have seen their real income drop. This is despite the fact that their productivity as a worker has substantially increased since then. This should be a national scandal, instead people just shrug their shoulders.

An article I read recently suggested that despite being prepared to bring the world economy to the brink of economic collapse rather than contemplate taxes on the obscenely wealthy (and despite some of the obscenely wealthy saying they should be taxed), the Republicans are looking at ways to increase taxes on the middle class. The US can hardly be considered a democracy anymore, it is now a plutocracy – so much so

that even trying to imagine someone from the poor even thinking they have an equal say with someone from very rich is so unthinkable as to be nearly satire. Even Obama became president as a millionaire (estimated wealth at the time – it has grown substantially since, apparently – was between \$1-2.5 million) – although, admittedly, that did make him the poorest of all of the candidates. If Pascal was right and we laugh and cry about the same things, it is time for a sitcom about a non-corrupt politician, not beholden to corporate interests and lobbyists. Someone who could say classic one liners like, “I’m not sure how that would wash with my electorate”, “I can’t take your money” or “Our democracy is based on the separation of church and state for the benefit of both church and state”.

The great sucking sound of US jobs leaving the country is so loud now that people can’t hear it. Nothing is done to alleviate unemployment except words – sure there is talk, but talk is cheap. Trillions of dollars were poured into banks ‘too big to fail’ by sucking money out of families too small to bother about.

This book is supposed to leave the reader with a sense of hope. Following page after page of statistics that would make you weep and near endless examples of just how dire, just how intractable the problems facing us are, she thinks a couple of feel good stories of people Bill and Ted-ing (being excellent to one another) will be enough to bring back that inner glow. Well, it did exactly the opposite for me. I came away from this book feeling very depressed. Her examples of how we can shift our bank accounts to smaller banks as a protest against the banks too big to fail is a case in point. Don’t bother – as soon as you do the big bank will buy your small bank. I know you have been told of the joys of being a customer – and how powerful you are as a customer. Well, there is something better to be and it is called a citizen. Anyone who tells you that you should be a customer rather than a citizen is stealing something from you much more precious than you can afford to lose.

The only other part of this book that was clearly a nonsense was her repeating all of the stuff in *Waiting for Superman* about the evil education unions and how they are single-handedly responsible for the near total collapse of the US education system. My friend Laura put me onto this article by Diane Ravitch <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archi...> that answers most of the overwrought criticisms of teachers and their unions that are used in this book.

The collapse of the middle class in the USA and elsewhere is terrifying to watch. For much of the twentieth century it looked like capitalism had somehow dodged the bullet that Ricardo, Marx and Co. said was virtually inevitable – the total impoverishment of the working class they saw as a universal law of capitalism. It looked like we were heading instead for the total elimination of the working class as they became the middle class. But that is no more. And the problem is that the right people aren’t angry, the people who pay their taxes only to see those taxes be given to banks to prop them up, banks that then foreclose on the very taxpayer’s whose taxes saved them. Surely, those are the people you might expect to be angry.

I find that if I think about this stuff for too long I start to feel seasick.

Justin says

A must-read for those who still blindly cling to the notion that America remains the the brightest, most powerful nation in the world despite the overwhelming proof to the contrary; as well as for those who naively think that the government will actually do what is needed to right the sinking ship before things get out of hand. This book documents what ails America and takes our so-called leaders to task for putting the good of their corporate overlords ahead of that of America’s middle class families.

Kira says

Arianna Huffington is a very smart woman, and as such I can't blame her for wanting to write a best-seller, even if the logic behind it still confounds me (i.e. "I founded one of the most highly trafficked sites on the Internet, but you know what, I think I'll write a book. Bound to reach more people that way!") *Third World America* is a clean and informative introduction to what's wrong with the country today (or at least what was two years ago) and anyone who doesn't have their nose perpetually in the business section of the Times or Wall Street Journal would be well-served by absorbing all of this calamitous information in one fell swoop (I should note that it's an incredibly fast read.) But for everyone else, those who have been following the news, much of this will come as a recap of things you already know, with very little else. Sure, Arianna has some good suggestions for getting America on the up and up, but she could have saved me 250 pages and just written a really nice HuffPo article.

[FULL REVIEW]

Book Calendar says

Third World America How Our Politicians Are Abandoning The Middle Class And Betraying The American Dream by Arianna Huffington

Arianna Huffington is the founder of The Huffington Post which is a liberal news and opinion site. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/> . This book is being used as a platform for change.

Third World America attacks lobbyists and financial institutions for destroying the American middle class. It is more vitriolic against the Republican party than the Democratic party, but does not spare either side.

Arianna Huffington's main focus of attack is the lobbyists and financial institutions which participated in creating the mortgage and financial crisis which drove many homes into foreclosure, eliminated jobs, and had devastating consequences for the middle class. She describes how foreclosures and credit card debt have created a poverty industry fueled by lobbyists.

She gives many examples of how it is harder and harder to stay part of the middle class. Now, the dream is to keep what you have; stay in your home, keep your job, and hold onto your assets. Wealth is being transferred out of public institutions into private companies.

Congress looks the other way when we bailout companies like AIG, pay massive amounts for contracts to polluters like British Petroleum, and don't monitor companies like Blackwater closely enough. She is describing a fusion of government with private industry that lacks transparency.

This is most apparent in our infrastructure which is crumbling. Our roads, schools, trains, bridges, dams, and electrical grid all need upgrading. It is obvious that things are not quite working right. Trains are slower, schools are worse, and government is entangled.

In my own industry, I have watched downsizing, layoffs, and cuts to libraries. Now, I am seeing for the first time corporate takeover of public institutions like libraries by private companies like LSSI <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/27/bus...> . It is an example of how companies will take over private institutions if possible, lower pay of people in communities, and be less transparent. What she is writing is very relevant to my own experience.

The answers which she gives are very liberal in nature. Have the government hire more people in public service, invest in infrastructure, stimulate green jobs, stop foreclosures, and regulate Wall Street. I am not sure this will work that well. It is a consistent liberal message. It feels very much like the consistent conservative message about what we should do about the economy. Both have pieces that have been tried to limited effect. There seems to be an unwillingness to acknowledge the world has changed and we might need to change and try a slightly different approach.

Where she most resonates with me is on the individual level. We can take money out of the banks and insurance companies which caused the crisis and invest in local banks and credit unions. We can start managing our personal finances better. We can also try to stay healthier, educate ourselves, and volunteer in our community. The personal steps which she suggests are not liberal or conservative, they are practical.

The book has an index and extensive notes. It is written as liberal opinion piece for the man on the street. The book is muckraking, expressive, and entertaining.

This is an excellent work. It is a call for change. It is a reminder that we should try and get the government to work for us, not lobbyists, financial institutions, or special interests. While many of Arianna Huffington's solutions on the national level seem impractical, her call to change on the individual level is very appropriate. This book is well worth reading. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/thirdwo...>

Becky says

Sometimes I picture mass groups of us Americans roaming the roads of America in a zombie-like state searching for a purpose of why we're still here, asking ourselves what America could possibly any longer need from us. It would seem we've earned our right for freedom to do nothing through our own efficiency and that our roaming was simply from boredom. We realize we've created this efficiency through things like our outsourcing of jobs to other countries and our technological advancements – so we've been told... and so we roam...and we imagine that bad as boredom may be, we take some solace in knowing that an efficient country would mean a well taken care of country and people, free from poverty and homelessness...and so we roam...

Arianna Huffington's book *Third World America* does a great job in waking us from this zombified state - before we set out to roam - by pointing out just where we stand, which is far from an efficient state that is beneficial to us – a state that if not addressed could lead to a third world status. She does a great job in pulling into focus the multitude of topics that come across our information highways on a regular basis, but that sometimes overwhelm us or get lost in the flood of it all. She uses numbers to paint a clearer picture for us on certain topics and more than anything she reminds us that there is still plenty for us Americans to do - things that most of us probably don't think about because we've been so distracted by elections, international affairs, the effects of corporate corruption, ethnic/racial tensions, our superior status in technology, etc. Though we've convinced ourselves, or allowed ourselves to be convinced, that we've evolved to some superior state of a technologically lived life and left the past behind – the past of hard labor, the past of manpower, the past of building our great land - Huffington points out that these services are still desperately

needed for so much, including of all things, a needed overhaul of America's core infrastructure – our roads, our bridges, our dams, our electrical grids, etc. She does a great job of enlightening us as to why something as important as our infrastructure is so little talked about – reasons most of us already know such as our politicians being swayed by special interest groups and corporate lobbyists. Therefore she points out how if things are ignored we will be a third world country due to the condition of things as basic as our infrastructure along with our human condition because we didn't utilize our human resources the way we could.

Huffington is an intelligent, practical thinking person who doesn't seem to play to any special interest other than the interest of common sense and her appreciation of America. Though she's a Greek immigrant, she knows America's past, understands its purpose, and seems to deeply care for its future – in other words, a true American. It's refreshing that she points out the good and the bad of everyone involved as she sees it. This book will not be extremely revelatory for those who keep up with current events regularly (though a nice refresher), but it will be an intellectual, patriotic catalyst for those who don't. Definitely a good book to awaken the American spirit!

Desiree says

Scary book about how our politicians sold us out and are turning the USA into a third world country!

We have let our infrastructure go so badly that bad roads cause more crashes than drunk drivers! In a 2008 study, 80% of Americans believed government was controlled by "a few big interests looking out for themselves." Averaged out, each member of the legislative branch received \$6.5 million from special interests! "Not only have we failed to control corporations, corporations have flipped the equation and taken control of us."

If you have ever wondered just what happened to our country, just pick up this book! Easy to read and understand, more frightening than any horror novel!

Crown Publishing says

This book opened my eyes. As it's so aptly said - we have gone from trying to live the American Dream to living the American Nightmare. And this book is a no-nonsense account of who's to blame.

But it's more than pointing fingers and naming names. Arianna helps us figure out what exactly we can do to turn the tide and stop our descent into the third world.

Conor says

This book was... fine. I think I have to stop reading the broad surveys of what is wrong with America and switch to more distilled analyses, because it all tends to run together.

Also, as founder of HuffPo, Arianna displays some *serious* chutzpah by decrying the media's bias and

sensationalism.
