



Time Will Run Back

Henry Hazlitt

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Time Will Run Back Details

Date : Published 1966 by Arlington House (first published 1954)

ISBN :

Author : Henry Hazlitt

Format : Hardcover 368 pages

Genre : Fiction, Economics, Politics

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From Reader Review Time Will Run Back for online ebook

Patrick Peterson says

I read this over 30 years ago, (approx. date) and thought it was pretty interesting. From what I can remember, it is a fictional story about the son of the Soviet Union's leader who takes over after his father dies.

He has funny ideas about how society could be better managed by devolving power from the central government to private enterprise. Amazing.

Wish I could remember more. Perhaps some day I will have time to read it again.

The author, Henry Hazlitt, was an economic journalist (with The New York Times and then Newsweek) and world famous for his best selling book "Economics in One Lesson." Part of the reason why the book did so well is the quality of his writing. This work was his only fiction book.

June says

My review is not regarding the economics of the book, much of which I agree with. I am rating this novel as a novel, and there was basically no plot in this novel. The entire book was a dialogue between two characters regarding economics. I could not finish it, because of how boring it was. If I wanted to read a treatise on economics, I would have picked up "Economics in One Lesson."

Bram says

The book is labelled as a "1984 with a solution". Both books were written at the same time, but both are completely different types of dystopias. 1984 is very well written and a great warning, because Orwell is very good at portraying a nightmare society.

Hazlitt's Time Will Run Back is, compared to 1984 very poor written. It's not a realistic story and the characters aren't convincing. However, Hazlitt is a very good teacher of Economics, and the conversations about how to run a society are a great read.

Eric says

One of the best books I've read.

Henry says

As a story this book fails because it is too much this telling what happened instead of showing. As a book on economics it fails because it is too optimistic about how people really will behave - the thesis is probably

correct, but it tried to pretend that something that needs hundreds of years will happen in just a few.

If you want to learn about economics from an book that you can read for pleasure it works, but it isn't enjoyable enough to be a pleasure book, and isn't correct enough to be a text book.

Yogy TheBear says

Henry Hazlitt is one of my favorite economic authors and I totally agree and consider his positions right. But I am totally dissapointed by what he done here with this book !! I recomend to all that are not acustomed to this author or the austrian theory of economics to pick another of his books because they are great !!

The concept he tried to do is inead a very interesting one full of potential; the first chapters were very good and the similarities with 1984 were facinating. But Hazlitt wanted to combine here the austrian theory of economics into a suitable plot. He totally failed the plot part !!

Peter is a character with global power whose actions affect the entire world, in order to create a plot for such a character you need much more world bilding and more character development and more characters and relations !! What Hazlitt did not realize is that his project should have been a 1000 page book to succede, like Ayn Rand's book !!

For me who know all the economical theory discussed in this book, I was more interested about the plot !!

What Hazlitt produced was a book with dialogue, like Plato's dialogue on economical issues in wich the plot just offers a context for the dialogue...

Shane says

I have been reading a number of odd books lately, and this fits right in. I believe that Hazlitt was a brilliant and gifted economist, not so much as a writer of fiction. This has an interesting premise; in a world where communism wins the battle of world domination, a new leader is promoted who had a completely sheltered adolescence. He can not stand the hypocrisy of socialism and strives for a more free and open society. The execution falls a bit flat and it is easy to see why Orwell's "1984" became more of a classic. The worlds start out very similar; and this book actually offers solutions through a free-market approach but Orwell has a better refined execution and even a grudgingly reluctant acceptance of socialism (to make it palatable to English teachers).

The ebook I purchased from LvMI through Amazon had many typographical errors.

Emery says

This book is amazing. It's written at about a 7th grade level. That's both the bad news and the good news. Hazlitt is really disguising a basic explanation of economics and political systems in a somewhat pedantic, but very understandable way. He presents the difference between capitalism and communism, both economically and politically, in a way that makes both easy to understand. Of course, it is biased towards capitalism, but that is both understandable and agreeable. I personally agree with his positions, but it doesn't matter. He provides you with the basics of the arguments and you can argue against him if you like. It's just that the arguments are posited in an easy to understand way and provides a basis for more exploration into economic theory. It's well done, if not a little primitive.

Bob says

This didactic (that is, a thing to teach) novel is based on the premise that a educated but ignorant dictator would invent capitalism even if he took power over some place like Stalin's Soviet Union. The book is poorly written. It offers intriguing insight as to how socialism continues to progress even though its flaws are more and more plainly evident to scholars. This was a hard book to get ahold of. Before I had seen the dust jacket of this book, I had never seen a picture of Hazlitt. He looks like Robert Douglas who played Ellsworth Toohey in *The Fountainhead*.

Nathan says

The plot is a bit contrived. It is about the world if communism had taken over and the thought process that eventually leads them back to capitalism. The principles are well taught even if the characters and dialogue aren't that great.

Nedland P. says

I understand this book is out of print, but it is a wonderful read. It starts in a future time when markets and capitalism do not exist, and shows how they would develop to correct the wrongs of a socialized economy.

Scott says

The story feels forced but does make the economics lectures feel less dry.

Jason Vanzin says

If you enjoy movies without a ton of action but with great dialog, then you will enjoy this book. *12 Angry Men* is a good example of the type of movie I'm talking about. The dialog between the two main characters Peter and Adams are full on economic insights that you will learn more economics by the time you finish than most get in their economic courses in college.

Bob says

An excellent book if you are looking for an easy introduction to economics and free market systems. Although it is similar to classic books like *Animal Farm*, it is much different in its purpose. This book is all about helping you to understand how the free market works and how government interference will hinder the market. Basic economic principles are discussed in a light technical fashion which is easy to grasp. The basic plot works as a frame to hold your interest as the author delves into more theoretical topics. It was a fun book

to read and helped me to swallow the somewhat harder medicine of economics.

Mo Bo says

This book was written very much in the style of Orwell and Huxley, and written about the same time as 1984 and Animal Farm. Don't be turned away by the title, which isn't actually the original title in the first place. Yes, Hazlitt has an agenda that most today don't agree with, but he makes his case in a way that will keep you glued in until the last page.

Jim says

As a novel, this is an adequate book. The plot and dialog are often contrived, and it's no surprise that this book didn't launch an economics thriller genre. But the conversations beret Peter and Adams, as unlikely as they are, do offer good lessons on economics that must people are not likely to come across. Dare I say I now better understand the issue of "economic calculation" that Mises and others have written about?

This is not a great novel, but it conveys an important message in an approachable way. Good could come from reading it.

Clarence says

Anyone who recognizes the name Henry Hazlitt will not be surprised that this book is about economics, even though it is fiction. The plot is a thin veneer over dialogs between the two main characters, which, in fits and starts, take one from the beginning position of "Mankind is at its apex having lived in socialist paradise for centuries" to "Wow, capitalism (in the meaning of a society built around economic liberty) is so superior, what were we thinking?".

What I like about the book is that it doesn't just explain capitalism and say it's wonderful; rather, the conversations involve arguments, false starts, testing hypotheses, etc. It is an easy read, and can bring more or less to the reader depending on how actively or passively he follows the discussion. It's a good self-directed text for people of any age who have never gone beyond the buzzwords that they're inundated with on this subject in our society, but I think it would also make a fine selection for a reading/discussion group.

The story sets up a very artificial scenario: the world has been a single socialist state for a few hundred years, following the complete eradication of all evidence that it was anything else. Everyone knows that we are so much better off than in the old days when the common people were exploited by the capitalists, though nobody knows exactly how. The protagonist, Peter, after living a privileged life exiled on an island with his mother, at 21 is sent for by his father in Moscow, who happens to be the dictator of Wonworld. Peter, confused by the squalor and repression evident all around, tries to understand the workings of the world for a few weeks while his father advances him upward through the ranks of society, quickly grooming him to become his successor. Soon his father fades and Peter is amassing more and more power as a member of the Politburo and then the de facto head of the government. He makes one friend on the Politburo, Adams (#3 in the ranking with Peter's father being #1 and Peter himself having become #1-A) and one enemy, #2.

Peter, a natural genius as required by the story, thinks things don't have to be as they are. His dialogs with

Adams begin with his just trying to get Adams to explain things that he doesn't understand, and their back-and-forth progresses down a road of incremental understanding of economics, property rights, and freedom. Adams provides a foil to Peter's speculations, and sometimes they both play Devil's Advocate. Peter starts implementing the new ideas gradually, some of which work and some of which don't, and he and Adams increase their understanding as they see not only their mistakes but also learn from unanticipated results they see as the reforms bring forth emergent behaviors in the population, such as the spontaneous formation of markets after the people are allowed to exchange state-supplied consumer goods among each other. As Peter introduces more and more reforms, he and Adams together discover the workings of production, incentives, profit and loss, the meaning of money, and the "invisible hand".
