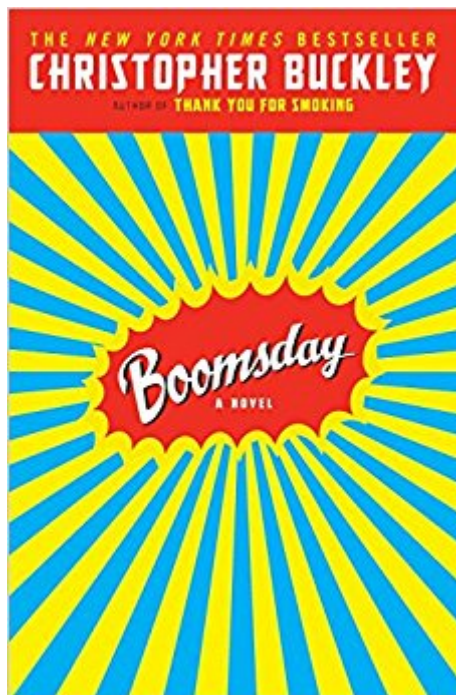


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Boomsday



Synopsis

BOOMSDAY'S heroine is Cassandra Devine, a charismatic 29-year-old blogger who incites massive political turmoil when, outraged over mounting Social Security debt, she politely suggests that Baby Boomers be given government incentives to kill themselves by age 75. Her modest proposal catches fire with millions of her outraged peers ("Generation Whatever") and an ambitious Senator seeking to gain the youth vote in his presidential campaign. With the help of Washington's greatest spin doctor, the blogger and the politician try to ride the issue of euthanasia for Boomers (they call it "Transitioning") all the way to the White House, over the forceful objections of the Religious Right and, of course, Baby Boomers, who are deeply offended by demonstrations on the golf courses of their retirement resorts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

[Signature] Reviewed by Jessica CutlerIt's the end of the world as we know it, especially if bloggers are setting the national agenda. In his latest novel, Buckley imagines a not-so-distant future when America teeters on the brink of economic disaster as the baby boomers start retiring. Buckley takes on such pressing (however boring) topics as Social Security reform and fiscal solvency, as does his protagonist. And get this: she's a blogger. Buckley's heroine is "a morally superior twenty-nine-year-old PR chick" who blogs at night about the impending Boomsday budget crisis. Of course, "she was young, she was pretty, she was blonde, she had something to say." She has a large, doting audience that eagerly awaits her every blog entry. And her name? Cassandra. And the name of her blog? Also Cassandra. Of course, Buckley doesn't let his allusion get by us: "She was a

goddess of something," another character struggles to remember, which gives his heroine the opportunity to educate us about the significance of her namesake. "Daughter of the king of Troy. She warned that the city would fall to the Greeks," she explains. "Cassandra is sort of a metaphor for catastrophe prediction. This is me. It's what I do." So Cassandra, doing what she does, starts by calling for "an economic Bastille Day" and her minions take to destroying golf courses in protest. Cassandra grabs headlines and magazine covers, and the president starts wringing his hands over what she might blog about next. Her follow-up: a radical but tantalizingly expedient solution to that most vexing of issues, the Social Security problem. Cassandra proposes that senior citizens kill themselves in exchange for tax breaks. Buckley, author of *Thank You for Smoking*, shows great imagination as he fires his pistol at the feet of his straw women and men. In 300-plus pages, though, it would be nice if he had found a way to endear us to at least one of his characters. Yes, we know that Washington is "an asshole-rich environment," as one puts it, but some Tom Wolfe-style self-loathing might be good for characters who use the word touch. Full disclosure: I'm a blogger of Cassandra's generation, and at times the totally over-the-top, relentlessly us-against-them scenario reminded me that I was reading a book written by someone not of the blogging generation, someone who Cassandra would want put down. Oh, the irony in these generationalist feelings. Then again, maybe that's exactly Buckley's point. Jessica Cutler is the author of *The Washingtonienne*. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Once again, political satirist Christopher Buckley (*Thank You for Smoking*) delivers a firecracker of a novel that explodes with imagination, irony, and wit. Buckley sometimes overexplains, to show off how smart he is, but he is discussing Social Security here. Besides boring subject matter, the novel contains a completely over-the-top premise and a lead character that strains credibility. So the overexplanation works, for the most part, because it evokes laughs. "If you're looking for a lighter, frothier version of Tom Wolfe," says the *Los Angeles Times*, "Boomsday is your ticket." Also of note: as the first release of the new publishing imprint Twelve, *Boomsday* comes packaged in an eye-catching, pop-art package. Copyright © 2004 Phillips & Nelson Media, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Christopher Buckley's humor is so close to real that it's sometimes hard to laugh -- but then, you do anyway. For anyone who follows politics -- and especially anyone who is still idealistic in the face of the creeping virus of unavoidable cynicism -- Buckley speaks for you. I find I want to compare him to

Hiaasen, but it's an unjust comparison. Carl Hiaasen is comical and outrageous in his plot-lines and characterizations. When I read Hiaasen I feel like I do when I read Harry Potter. It's unreal in its bigness and broadness. Buckley is not like that. He is just a bit-beyond-the-completely-typical, which makes his work hysterically funny. Plus, it also flatters readers by intimating that they are "in on" something -- privy to a secret truth; the truth of how close he gets to reality without just writing current events or parody. Much like a very smart inside joke that you hoard for its delight and for the status it confers on you, if you get it.

Different premise. Who is going to pay for all the increasing number of elderly. The young are going to get taxed and taxed. There is going to have to be a fundamental change. However no politician that values his job is going to do anything. Besides congress has their program for themselves and do not have to live with what the rest of us do. In case you aren't aware, look at all the perks that congress has, even if they serve 1 term, for the rest of their life.

Boomsday is not a biting satire, but it is entertaining none the less. Mr. Buckley has written more subtle books, but his nuance of Washington life and intrigue is probably uncomfortably spot on. Too often we look at our national leaders as demigods, as opposed to people who lead lives very similar to our own. The fact that we recognize ourselves in many of the characters in this novel is upsetting to some readers. But not to this one. Although the protagonist in this text is the least interesting character, she serves as the catalyst by which we meet the more infinitely appealing supporting cast. Their clever idiosyncrasies and obvious faults are funny because many readers share them. The characters of President Peachum and the evangelist Gideon Payne are some of the more enjoyable characters in this text precisely because they are so flawed. Who doesn't root for the biggest idiot in the room? My only complaint is the let down of the ending. Buckley builds the climax to dizzying heights, and then can't top the buildup. The resolution is a let down. But the journey to it was worth the ride. For another great Buckley DC satire check out his older White House Mess.

The main theme of the soon-to-be crushing expense of senior citizen entitlements is certainly relevant today and I found his over the top play on it an engaging and funny. Ditto on his portrayal of how Washington DC works behind the scenes, though I certainly hope it's closer to fiction than reality. Most of the characters are interesting and never are lacking a witty retort. The story moved at a good pace and, as I approached the ending of the book, things were moving along ... and then all of a sudden - epilogue. Pardon me? Another reviewer noted that epilogues are usually a writer's

away of wrapping up without having to write a decent ending, and I definitely concur. The rushed ending left me feeling somewhat cheated out of the proper ending I deserved - an unfortunate way to end what was a entertaining read.

After reading a very huge downer of a book on the dysfunctional juvenile justice system, I needed a sure-fire pick-me-up. As usual, Mr. Buckley came to the rescue. "Boomsday" is another fine example of why the author won the Thurber Prize for American Humor. Delightful pandemonium begins on the first page and never slows down. Politicians, businessmen, lobbyists, public relations representatives, religious leaders and the general American populace are lampooned about their narcissistic and hypocritical ways. No one is spared the author's sarcastic, playful wit. His trademark of continually interjecting ever-more outrageous scenarios embellished with snappy dialogue is why Mr. Buckley is one of my favorite authors in the area of political farce. A fast read that will delight wonks and neophytes alike.

christopher buckley writes very humorous political satire. they are short and very entertaining, with only a mild dose of a political message underneath. I've read all his books, they are all pretty similar to one another so if you try reading one and you like it, you may find yourself hooked.

Perhaps this is what real politics are like. The book starts strong and is exciting for the entire first half... Then it offers some outrageous personal character twists, then it ends. So perhaps that's how politics work in D.C. today (I tend to think so). Everyone rally's around a subject, then it sort of fizzles away. Quite a fun book though and I thoroughly enjoyed reading it. Even got me thinking if "Transitioning" (or radical ideas like it) would really be much worse than some of the paths we are currently heading down as a nation.

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