



Crashing the Gate: Netroots, Grassroots, and the Rise of People-Powered Politics

Jerome Armstrong, Markos Moulitsas Zúñiga, Simon Rosenberg (Foreword by)

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Two political bloggers offer their views on the current political landscape in America and provide an insightful look into the new progressive movement, aided by advances in technology, that is changing the face of politics.

Crashing the Gate: Netroots, Grassroots, and the Rise of People-Powered Politics Details

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From Reader Review Crashing the Gate: Netroots, Grassroots, and the Rise of People-Powered Politics for online ebook

Brian says

I was hoping this would have some real ideas on grass roots. Unfortunately the authors say right out of the gate that the only option is to take over the Democratic party. I don't think that is possible. There are a few good democrats here and there (Kucinich), but really most of them are still only concerned with getting re-elected. This was written before the big win (ha) in 2006. What did the democrats do with that? Absoulutely nothing. They voted to keep their seats in congress and go along with the status quo. We have more of the same now. Just as the extreme right has monoplolized the Republican party, the Democrats continue to marginalize those more to the left inthe Democratic party. It is impossible to take over something that is so wholly owned by big business. Good luck with that guys.

It all seems pretty pointless since we seem to get the same crap regardless of who is in power. We are still in Iraq, escalating in Afganistan, and still willing to bail out Wall Street. I think I should just say no to Big Government and Big business and join up with the Amish. Crap no more computer!!!

Danielle says

Disclosure: I did not want to read this book. A co-worker forced it on me. But I'm glad I read it. Although some of the research is spotty and strategically placed to make the points they want, I still thought a lot of what these guys had to say was worth listening to. It is a pretty accurate diagnosis of what is wrong with the Democratic party and how it can be fixed.

Jon-Erik says

Make Democratic party win by emulating Republican party's tactics. Has it really come to this? Yeah, I guess it has.

Rayne says

The most important point of this book, and yet the one most likely to be lost upon progressives over the next election cycle, is that single-issues can work against themselves. Very important for activists and organizers.

Sylvia Moore says

I came to this book late, since it was published in 2006. But it really made me understand how events unfolded differently after the book was published - the Democrats retaking of Congress, and the rise of

Barack Obama. The Obama campaign obviously took this book's lessons to heart. The Obama administration, however, has not. Unfortunately, I see that the same old Democratic establishment - its shortsightedness, its incompetence, its mistakes - described in this book, has infected the new administration. Just look at the whole healthcare debacle right now - the messaging, the strategy - has the dumb Democratic establishment written all over it. I think our President should re-read this book.

kevin says

It's a little too chummy with Howard Dean at points, but Howard Dean has pretty much saved the Democratic Party from itself, so I will cut them some slack. One of the few books on the topic of pre-Obama progressive politics that's innovative.

Teddy says

Powerful insight into the shortcomings of today's democratic party and what we can do to galvanize the left and lay waste to Cretin GOPers!

xVirgo says

Democrat propaganda.

Margot Friedman says

Might be a little dated now, but this book gave me a great overview of how the Internet was opening up politics.

Chloe says

A fantastic how-to that can be said to have served as the 2006 guide to retaking Congress. Armstrong and Moulitsas take a lot of criticism for their respective blogs, MyDD and DailyKos, but never let it be said that they are ignorant of electoral politics. A great read that should be picked up by anyone who works on a campaign or has even a passing interest in how democracy works in the 21st Century.

Eduardo says

Although it bills itself -- an important tome for political change and suggests how people can fight their apathy -- It's a broken record.

David says

Good summary of the new forces at work in the American political system, especially focusing on the rise of the netroots.

I especially appreciated the strong condemnation of Democratic consultants whose interests don't seem to be lined up with those of us who like winning.

Tony Cohen says

if you aren't that switched on into politics, you REALLY should give this a read....

Moxie says

Quick, inspiring read on the netroots and Democrats.

M. Fenn says

What a good book! I highly recommend it, if you're interested in what the Democrats are doing wrong, and what they can do right. Also, just how darned evil the Republican party is, and unfortunately smart. The authors, if you don't already know are blog pioneers. Armstrong founded MyDD.com, and Zuniga founded Daily Kos. They take on the old-fashioned approach the Democrats have had until now, and give some good ideas on the changes that need to happen. I was alternately depressed and encouraged by the this book.

The only thing that annoyed me about it, though, was in the chapter on single-issue groups and how they've had a hand in destroying the party. To be honest, I can't imagine having a single issue to work on politically. There are just too many things that need fixing. But there are people out there so focused on their issue that they won't work with other groups if that issue isn't first on the list. The three examples they chose were environmental issues, labor issues, and women's issues. I didn't really have a problem with most of it. They even convinced me that, yes, voters in Pennsylvania should vote for Casey even though he's anti-choice. The logic being that his record on other progressive issues is pretty good, and that he would most likely vote against any of the Republicans' choices for judges. And that those votes were more likely to come up than any anti-choice legislation might. Once Casey defeats Santorum, the strategy would be to find a pro-choice Democrat to replace him.

Hmm. I must say I'm skeptical about that part. Why can't the Democrats find a pro-choice candidate to begin with? Why are women again being asked to put their needs on hold for the sake of the party? Haven't we heard this before? Again and again?

I also found the authors approach to the subject of abortion to naive and uneducated. They imply through the quote that they use that women's opinion of abortion has changed, from one of black and white certainty to

uncertainty, from celebration to one of sadness. Like the women who had abortions right after they became legal weren't sad about it. Please. The subject has never been black and white, on a personal level or a political one. The impression I got is that, to save what rights we have and get more votes to support them, we need to compromise. They also seem to think that the pro-choice movement doesn't care about reducing unwanted pregnancies. Obviously, they've never checked out Planned Parenthood's website (or many others).

I came away from that section of the book feeling that the authors hadn't really done their research. I also disagree with the need to compromise. I think, to get more voters in the pro-choice fold, we need to two things. One, make it more obvious that the pro-choice movement is all about reducing unwanted pregnancies, fighting hard for access to birth control and emergency contraception (which we are doing, but if Democrats don't see this, obviously the message is getting lost somewhere). The second thing: become more radical. I've come to the conclusion, as a lot of people before me have, that Roe v. Wade was a bad decision, and it was not argued correctly. The fight should not have been (and should not now) be about privacy. It should be about freedom from slavery, the freedom from having another human being take possession of your body without your consent, the right to bodily security, liberty and autonomy. In that respect I think Armstrong and Zuniga are right in that the mainstream pro-choice movement has dropped the ball. But Armstrong and Zuniga take it in the wrong direction. The Republicans need to be called on their anti-woman anti-choice strategy as much as Armstrong and Zuniga want to call them on their economic and foreign policy strategies. And the Democrats need to field strong progressive and pro-choice candidates the first time around, instead of making us wait until they get around to it.

That said, though, *Crashing the Gate* is a good read. If you haven't read it, give it a shot.
