



Do the Right Thing: Inside the Movement That's Bringing Common Sense Back to America

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When Governor Mike Huckabee entered the Republican presidential race, he was the ultimate dark horse, with almost no money, no consultants, and no name recognition beyond Arkansas. The so-called experts were highly amused by this former small state governor from blue-collar roots who also played bass in a rock band. He wouldn't have a prayer against the well-connected and financially wired pros like Rudy Giuliani, Mitt Romney, and Fred Thompson.

But Huckabee had one big advantage: a common sense message that connected with millions of people, and not just his fellow evangelical Christians. He spoke about family values, fair taxes, and helping hard-working, middle-class Americans in a tough economy. And to the dismay of some Republicans, he talked about fighting Wall Street greed and K Street corruption.

Huckabee shocked the country by winning the all-important Iowa caucuses and seven other states, while spending far less than the other major candidates. He created an army of passionate volunteers and small donors, transforming his campaign into a true movement that will endure long after Election Day.

Do The Right Thing is Huckabee's amazing story, in his own words—from making commercials with Chuck Norris to meeting a Michigan woman who insisted on donating her wedding ring. But this is more than just a campaign memoir. It's a vision for a smarter, fairer type of politics—"vertical politics"—that focuses on common sense solutions for education, health care, the economy, and many other issues. It's not about right versus left; it's about taking America up rather than down.

Huckabee also shows how the Republican Party can heal its divisions—between social and fiscal conservatives, the wealthy and the middle class, the religious and the secular—and become a true majority party again.

Do the Right Thing: Inside the Movement That's Bringing Common Sense Back to America Details

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Nathan says

For all those who think they have Mike Huckabee pegged as a closed-minded, right-wing conservative, - you may be pleasantly surprised. Governor Huckabee identifies areas in US politics and social life that are in need of repair and gives practical steps we can accomplish on a daily basis to improve not only our situation, but more importantly, the situation of those around us.

Mike Huckabee was my candidate of choice in the '08 primaries, and I hope I get another opportunity to support him in the 2012 election.

April says

This book was on the new release shelf and just kept calling my attention everytime I went to the library so I finally checked it out. While he's got some great ideas on why our country is in such a mess right now they are overshadowed by his examining why his campaign was so great and reasons they didn't win. Can you believe other people ran against him and people voted for them not him??? The never of those people!!! Also he lets it be known from the prologue that he really hates Mitt Romney and makes a point through out the book to belittle him at every chance.

This book would have been better if he had left the campaign trail out and instead focused on what makes a great country.

Alan says

Good insights into the presidential campaigning process, and many insights into Huckabee's history, record and positions. Offers impressions and his personal experiences of many other candidates and national figures he encountered in the campaigning process. Many profiles of his campaign staffers (paid and volunteer).

2 things I was surprised to find here in common with the last book I read by Gen Zinni:

1. He repeats the conventional wisdom of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. On one end of the judgement scale, it's just wrong. At the kind end of the spectrum, the criticism lacks any context that Katrina exceeded the scope of practically every previous American disaster in each individual measure (# of deaths, # of houses destroyed, # of evacuees, square miles affected, cost of damage, on and on), and the impact of the inaction of the governor of Louisiana and the mayor of New Orleans, not to mention the impact of environmental lawsuits that flouted Army Corps of Engineers efforts to improve the New Orleans levee system for years before the catastrophe.
2. He gives credence to the prediction of GEN Shinseki that the invasion of Iraq would require 400,000 - 500,000 troops, which was totally bonzo. The peak number in Iraq during The Surge was only about 150,000. Should more have gone in earlier? In retrospect, yes, but Shinseki's estimate was ludicrously off-base compared to the force required to remove Saddam, and the too-small force left behind for transition to independent governance was far closer to the right-size 150,000 than 400,000 is.

One of the best insights is the media obsession with campaign process to the exclusion of caring about

records and positions.

Bottom line, a good read with lots of tales.

Joe B says

My main policy is never to spend a cent on this stupid political works. Well, my mom got this for free, so I was happy to read it. The thing I find great about this book is nothing really that is said in the book. I disagree on many issues with Mike, especially at times when he is talking sense in one paragraph and then uses a complete twist of logic to justify a very conservative point (Gay marriage, no abortion, no taxes, etc). I did come out of this book noticing two things:

Mike is definitely onto something about the flat tax and I would probably vote for him just to see that happen.

Also, it was really interesting to read in Obama's book something exactly Mike was saying as well, and it made me realize that good politicians, regardless of party, really are in touch with the same concept: horizontal politics and law abiding. Horizontal politics means that people will just vote for the other party if something in their life sucks (Well, it's more complicated than that!). I noticed Mike and Obama both agree that Americans need to start thinking not about themselves, but what laws are the most fair and what is best for all of us. Remember, we all fight on the same team!

The concept of law-abiding is the only reason I still have a small conservative part in my heart. The idea is this: If Americans just did the right thing (Title of the book), then we would need any laws, probably have lower taxes, and be happy. But because big time bankers are screwing us over, we need regulation. In a perfect America, I think conservatives are right: less laws, less control by the Fed. But unfortunately, this is where Mike and I disagree. I don't think this perfect world is coming around anytime soon and we need laws to essentially establish checks and balances between the people.

Bernie says

This book is the story of Mike Huckabee's campaign for the Presidency and his views on quite a number of topics. I wish I had read it before the primary. Having read it, I certainly would have considered voting for him. Personality-wise, he is folksy and humorous. He's got a nice way with words.... love his new TV show on Fox. More important, he is the one Republican who has the potential to be a uniter, a unifier. He seeks options that move America forward rather than being encamped in ideological groups. At the same time, he is thoroughly conservative. If for no other reason, Huckabee's endorsement of the FairTax is worthy of the public's attention of him. He has done a lot on a small budget. I know that even the conservative media is not paying him much attention, but that is good. I think he will come out from under the radar in 2012. One thing that annoyed me though, is that despite his conservative credentials, he thinks it's great to continue subsidies to agriculture. This doesn't jibe with the rest of his ideas. However, I keep in mind that, coming from an agricultural state, and being a politician. I could respect him more though if he had remained consistent.

Dan says

This is two books in one: a manifesto for conservatives, and an underdog presidential campaign memoir.

The manifesto is an articulate and cogent outline of what it means to be a conservative. Even if you don't agree with him (he and I differ on many things), you can't discount that he feels passionately about his worldview and can express it very well.

Even better is the tale of his failed bid for the Republican presidential nomination. Anyone who likes politics will like this story. He wasn't just the "religious right" candidate as he was framed to be by the media; he was a comprehensive candidate with interesting and relevant positions on the whole spectrum of public policy. He got the short shrift in the media; he was a far more interesting candidate than people were led to believe.

Good read for people who like politics, and good read for people who want to understand modern day conservatism in elegant prose.

Paul says

I truly think that Mike Huckabee is one of the most personable politicians out there. I was really surprised by the quality and detail of his ideas in this book regarding taxes and healthcare. Whether or not he could reform things the way he wants, I honestly don't know. But he surely talks of clear change and doesn't just say the word "change" a bunch of times like some other guy who is currently President. What hampers the book a little is all the talk of his campaign. It is astounding how far he came with the little money he had for the campaign (at least he made it sound minute), but it simply made me more angry that others are able to spend so much more. Makes me wonder if things would have been different with more resources. Still, oddly, he doesn't talk much about reform.

The one thing you walk away with is that change must come from within the people and not government. We have a long way to go to change our attitudes toward life, but it's not impossible. Also, if you are not religious, he really doesn't pour on the "God" talk so that shouldn't bother (offend?) you.

Beth says

LOVED IT!!! All I can say after reading this book is... HUCKABEE 2012!! i am SO relieved to finally see that there ARE good "politicians" out there that are interested more in making positive changes and good decisions for this country based on their belief system and morals... not necessarily based on their political affiliation (i.e. Republican vs. Democrat) but more so based on what is BEST for ALL involved. While I was not interested in politics much until about the past 4 years or so, this book has caused me to pledge to become personally involved in the next political cycle. It gave me back much hope for the upcoming leaders of this country that I had lost when McCain won the nomination for the GOP and the eventual election win of Obama the Socialist in 2008.

JT says

I thought this book was terrific. This book discussed Mike Hucklebee's political career and his campaign throughout the primaries. He also discussed many important moral and political issues that have been discussed in recent political campaigns.

I really liked the book. I agree with all of Mike Huckabee's political stances. He has many good ideas. He did not get out many of his good ideas out when he was campaigning for president because he did not have the funding that his competitors had. The book was clear and well written. It contained many good ideas for problems that our government is dealing with.

Lisa says

I picked this book up because I was a Romney supporter and I heard that Mike Huckabee took some shots at Romney in his new book. Did Huckabee take shots at Romney? Sort off--I think he was mostly explaining his strategy in the Republican Primary. Romney has tons of money to set up offices and run ads and looks like the one with the best chance (he has the best hair and looks so presidential), so Huck and McCain form an alliance and go after him. Along the way Romney makes a few remarks that don't please Huck. That's the soap opera part--luckily there is much more to the book! Huckabee talks about a vertical scale to judge by: crime is down (that's good), unemployment is up (that's bad). He says most politicians use a general horizontal scale--which is to hold to the party line. His idea is more results oriented and commonsense.

Mike has a chapter on the Fair Tax that makes a lot of sense. He had read a book called The Fair Tax Book by John Linder and Huckabee uses a some of his material. I wish Mike would get this guy on his TV show so people could hear more about it and seriously consider the fair tax. Mike makes some good arguments for the the fair tax, which is a national sales tax. Why punish people for working more and harder by taxing them at a higher rate? People with the most money, will spend it, so tax them. It will also tax people that come here as tourists or on business who make use of roads and other services. And all those people who cheat on taxes or make their money illegally will pay into the system also when they buy goods or services.

I really liked Chapter 2, The Best Government of All, which is to govern yourself hence the title, Do the Right Thing. As individuals get off track and make selfish and bad decisions, it hurts all of us.

Another favorite chapter was "Welcome to Washington, DC: The Roach Motel." I wish those guy in Washington would "Do the right thing!" So many don't and they are not punished by it, but are rewarded! Read this book--Huckabee has some good ideas! I still like Romney and think he is a results oriented guy that understands the way things work.

Laura Schrillo says

Wish he was our President. Nothing shocking or amazing just common sense. One of my favorite quotes "An oft-quoted African proverb claims, "It takes a village to raise a child." It might be more accurate to say that if it takes the whole village, the cost is going to be unbearable. It would be better if mom and dad did that job and that a child was raised by parents with virtues rather than by the village."

Common sense take on why America is no longer the beacon it once was. If you are not a person of faith you probably won't like his answer. And if it just isn't your fault, you probably won't like his take on personal responsibility.

Liz says

This book has great common sense - why we need morality in government, but also the goal of self-government versus big government. He also detailed wonderful and bold reforms for taxes, education, poverty, and health care. His vertical politics (instead of right versus left) echoes my heart.

His distaste for Mitt Romney was evident, but so is mine. So I rather enjoyed hearing my beliefs confirmed, through several examples and quotations, of Romney's snobbishness, inability to understand middle America, and political underhandedness. (Full disclosure: I first like Romney when he announced, because he's Mormon and Mormons are generally so moral. But then I learned more about his record, and how he flipped on every single issue, and I then turned away from Romney).

All in all, I highly recommend this book, especially to my moderate Christian friends who voted for Obama. I think you will find much more in common with Huckabee than you do with BO, and certainly more than John McCain.

Only four stars because he tends to repeat himself in places, and his punctuation is not always stellar (who is his editor?).

Astin says

I picked this book off my Grandma's shelf over Christmas, and the fact it took me 3 months to read shouldn't be a critique on this book, but rather on my insanely overbusy life these days. Generally, let me just say that the majority of the books on my Grandma's shelf would not be my first choice to read. Not necessarily because of political leanings, but more because memoirs and autobiographies are inherently too one-sided for my ethos, especially when it comes to politics. However, I became intrigued by Mike Huckabee when listening to him in debates during the 2008 election, and he had vocalized ideas that I was curious about. So the book came home with me.

This memoir tells the story of his 2008 campaign, and it was indeed remarkable in many respects. Reading this now, while the current 2012 primary rages onwards, was incredibly insightful, especially of the candidates who are running again this time, most notably Romney and Ron Paul. I definitely gained insight into what a campaign entails, the realities of politicking, and the God-awful amount of \$\$ and influence that can be poured into it. These aren't new revelations, but let's just say Huckabee paints an unforgettable picture of this reality. His descriptions and stories about Romney just adds to my inability to trust him. His stories about Ron Paul only confirm his consistency over time, and despite the different political camps they occupy, there is a mutual respect between these 2 men that I found insightful.

In the context of his campaign story, Huckabee relates some principles that guided his years as a governor,

and inform his vision of our country today. His vision is backed by 10 years of experience. His credibility is hard to dispute. I haven't heard another critique of his years as Arkansas Governor (and I'm definitely open to reading one!), he maintained his social conservative agenda even when faced with a very very Democratic legislature, and negotiated meaningful changes. He was also fiscally conservative and responsible in a way that few governors can claim.

One item that I found especially interesting was his argument for the 'Fair Tax.' I've been interested in the 'Flat Tax' concept for some time - this is something that takes this concept and goes a bit further, essentially taxing consumption rather than production. Its a concept that I wish more people were talking about these days.

I very rarely turn on the TV, so I haven't followed his show, but I like and respect him enough as a person that he one of the very few people with shows that I would watch if given the choice. I'm very curious as to what he thinks about the current Republican primary.

There are very few politicians that I find have the authenticity to gain my respect. Huckabee is one of them - and he has an effective track record behind him. There aren't many in this camp. This is an excellent read for anybody who is interested in this man, the current political climate, or seeking ideas for a way forward for our nation.

Ken Roebuck says

Mike Huckabee with his bipartisan record and executive experience as a Governor of Arkansas should have been elected president or at least VP. And no doubt he may have been if the media hadn't labeled him the "religious "candidate and he had raised more money and had the Republican establishment behind him but if that was the case I suppose then he would have been no different than John McCain or Mitt Romney. Nonetheless, it was impressive what he was able to accomplish as a virtually unknown grass roots candidate with quite limited resources. He definitely had some refreshing ideas and policy positions. I particularly liked his support of the Fair Tax which would put the dreaded IRS (or as I like to call it the Infernal Revenue Service) out of business to no longer penalize the hard work and productivity of the American worker. Employees would no longer have federal income or payroll taxes deducted from their pay checks and the tax burden would shift to a consumption based system in which taxes are levied when you buy a new product or service. A truly equitable tax for all that would eliminate the underground economy and tax loop holes for the rich and privileged. A fair tax: what a novel concept. Now that is doing the right thing!

KenJustice.com says

I tried read this book as I was just learning about Ron Paul, so Huckabee's perspective was starting to smell kind of fishy. I couldn't even finish the book. I tried to sell it on ebay, figuring some fan-boy would want an autographed copy. No dice. I eventually sold it to Bookman's for almost nothing in store credit.
