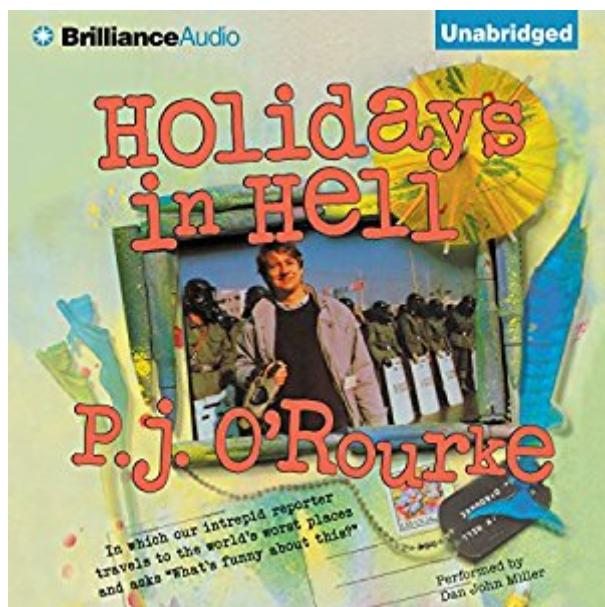


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Holidays In Hell: In Which Our Intrepid Reporter Travels To The World's Worst Places And Asks, 'What's Funny About This'



Synopsis

Holidays in Hell follows P. J. O'Rourke on a global fun-finding mission to the most desperate places on the planet, from the bombed-out streets of Beirut to the stultifying blandness of Heritage USA. P.J.'s unforgettable adventures abroad include storming student protesters' barricades in South Korea, interviewing Communist insurrectionists in the Philippines, and going undercover in Arab garb at Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock Mosque. Packed with P.J.'s classic riffs on everything from Polish nightlife under communism to Third World driving tips, Holidays in Hell is one of the best-loved books by one of today's most celebrated humorists - a full-tilt, no-holds-barred romp through politics, culture, and ideology.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 9 hoursÂ andÂ 22 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Brilliance Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 25, 2011

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B005ZGJON8

Best Sellers Rank: #51 inÂ Books > Audible Audiobooks > Humor > Political Humor #265 inÂ Books > Audible Audiobooks > Humor > Essays #357 inÂ Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Language Arts & Disciplines

Customer Reviews

This book is a very healthy product of a healthy type of thinking. It is a good sign that this country is "in good shape" as long as it can produce intelligent opposition to some weird or unhealthy world and domestic events (for example, "The Simpsons" and "South Park" as well as "Politically Incorrect Guide to..." book series). It is a good sign of the "society health" when there are native writers like O'Rourke, who can give an objective view (presented wittily and with humor slightly ironical and often with subtle sarcasm) on some present or recently powerful political movements, events and tendencies. I myself from the former Soviet Union, and the article about socialist Poland was probably the most interesting from the point of view that it was almost the same what I saw in Russia. It is not so important how pathetic the picture of everyday life was seen by the American ,

but the final conclusion a reader should come to (and O'Rourke makes it obvious) - how sick the idea of an artificial social structure based on an approach is, "to take everything away from the haves and then share with everybody" (it is what Russian writer Mikhail Bulgakov's character Sharikov said in his "Heart of a Dog"). Almost without exceptions the stories in the book cut through propaganda and bare the truth behind the facades. The "Among the Euro-Weenies", although written some time ago is more and more relevant today. Moreover, O'Rourke dialogues are short, immensely interesting and compressed, giving points difficult not to accept.

This book is absolutely hilarious. I love O'Rourke's writing style and quick wit. Kept me laughing throughout. Very interesting exploits told thru a very witty style. Keeps you laughing and engaged. Kinda sad when I reached the end.

If you aren't familiar with PJ O'Rourke, the caustic, politically-incorrect humorist who used to write for the Rolling Stone when it was worth reading, this book of collected travel writings from the 1980's is a good place to start. Besides being funny, O'Rourke has an irritating way of insulting your favorite politician or political movement by pointing out their idiocy and forcing you to realize you are an idiot too for believing them. And you still enjoy the article. O'Rourke is fairly conservative, in a libertarian sort of way, so if you think Gore is exciting, Hillary (or Bill for that matter) is sexy, and Obama is a black descendant of slaves who fought his way to the top via expensive prep schools, Columbia and Harvard, you probably won't enjoy this book. O'Rourke savages Republicans too, but he seems to enjoy skewering liberals more. That said, this book is a collection of mostly foreign travels (with some American sites thrown in) to various dysfunctional areas of the world. If you have ever spent time in some of these places, he grasps their essence much better than a serious, straight-up political writer. Probably because he realizes that most politicians and official press agencies are steaming piles of horse-apples. There are chapters on Lebanon, Russia, Nicaragua, Poland, Korea, El Salvador, Disney World, South Africa, Harvard, the Phillipines, and Panama. Most of these chapters were written at the time of some ideological war. How can you not laugh at things like the Sandinista Director of Censorship denying there is any censorship by saying, "They [Newspaper La Prensa] accused us of suppressing freedom of expression. This was a lie and we could not let them publish it." On a somber note, you will note that the same Sandinistas are back in power in Nicaragua, Europeans are still weenies ("Among the Euro-weenies" is still spot on), and all the bureaucratic and political shenanigans and ironies are identical to what I suffered last time I tried to get on an airplane. (I never did make it since my 6 year old was on the "no-fly" list. Damn, how did

they know he was such a spoiled brat?) So read this and laugh, and then you can cry later when it all hits home.

Whee! If I were inclined to travel to any of the places the author has gone to; I hope I would have his matchless sense of humor. Humor is the only thing that would get me to venture into Libya, Mali or any other turbulent country. Common sense keeps me home with this very funny and friendly book.

Author's best work. A funny, easy read

I had this book a while back and lent it to a "friend" and it just disappeared, so I had to have it again as it's one of my favorites. Laugh out loud funny.

The book that first made me fall in love with P. J. O'Rourke.

Great read. Humorous and spot on. This book was written when the world was less complicated than now but still these rat holes of life go on with seemingly no way out of the sewer.

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