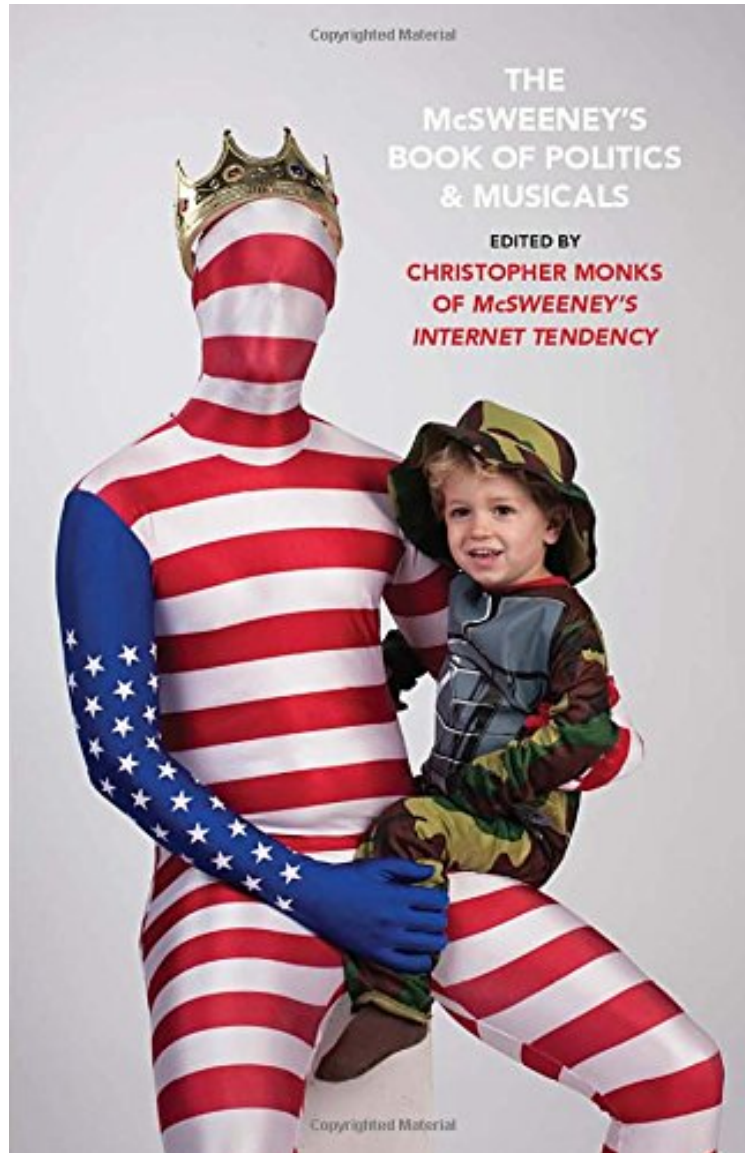


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The McSweeney's Book of Politics and Musicals

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From Vintage : **The McSweeney's Book of Politics and Musicals** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The McSweeney's Book of Politics and Musicals:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Time sensitive but funnyBy E. J. FordThis book made me smile almost continuously. There are some very amusing, if brief bits that satirize everything in need of satirizing. Alas, the material is relevant to a particular time and set of events. Read it now before the humor turns into farce!6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. YesBy Barbra TarkentonThe McSweeney's Book of Politics and Musicals is a

rock-solid collection that would not look out of place in either handsomely-appointed library or gas-station bathroom: this sucker has RANGE. I laughed repeatedly. I did not cry, but I was not expecting to.

Ever since John Hancock broke into song after signing the Declaration of Independence, American politics and musicals have been inextricably linked. From Alexander Hamilton's jazz hands, to Chester A. Arthur's oboe operas, to Newt Gingrich's off-Broadway sexscapade, *You, Me, and My Moon Colony Mistress Makes Three*, government and musical theater have joined forces to document our nation's long history of freedom, partisanship, and dancers on roller skates pretending to be choo choo trains. To celebrate this grand union of entrenched bureaucracy and song, the patriots at McSweeney's Internet Tendency ("The Iowa Caucus of humor websites") offer this riotous collection (peacefully assembled!) of monologues, charts, scripts, lists, diatribes, AND musicals written by the noted fake-musical lyricist, Ben Greenman. On the agenda are . . . Fragments from PALIN! THE MUSICAL Barack Obama's Undersold 2012 Campaign Slogans Atlas Shrugged Updated for the Financial Crisis Your Attempts to Legislate Hunting Man for Sport Reek of Class Warfare A 1980s Teen Sex Comedy Becomes Politically Uncomfortable Donald Rumsfeld Memoir Chapter Title Or German Heavy Metal Song? Noises Political Pundits Would Make If They Were Wild Animals and Not Political Pundits Ron Paul Gives a Guided Tour of His Navajo Art Collection Classic Nursery Rhymes, Updated and Revamped for the Recession, As Told to Me By My Father And much more!

"Only McSweeney's could combine politics and theater in such a strange, amusing way." —Los Angeles Times
"Pokes fun at all manner of political persuasion, often in a tone reminiscent of Mad magazine—that is, mangled lyrics—but minus a tune to follow. . . . Jolly good fun." —Leonard Kniffel, Booklist
About the Author
McSweeney's is a publishing company based in San Francisco. As well as running the daily humor website McSweeney's Internet Tendency, McSweeney's publishes McSweeney's Quarterly Concern, the Believer, Lucky Peach, Wholphin, Grantland Quarterly, and an ever-growing selection of books under various imprints.
Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.
FOREWORD
Wyatt Cenac
If you are reading this, it means that someone just gave you this book as a gift. Congratulations. Whatever you did was more than likely "gift-worthy." You probably had a birthday or a half birthday. Maybe you graduated from an institution of higher learning or you escaped from prison. Or your significant other gave you this book to keep you quiet on a road trip to Oakland. In any case, you accomplished something impressive enough that someone felt this book would be the perfect thing that would speak to your sensibilities, amuse you, and keep you quiet on the 580 freeway. If you bought this book for yourself, then sincerest apologies that nobody likes you enough to buy it for you. But don't give up hope. Not the hope that you will be more likeable. That is out of this book's hands because there may be real reasons why nobody should like you. Reasons that can't be found in the pages of this book. Still read this book, but afterwards find yourself a nice self-help book, like McSweeney's Book of Self-Improvement, Actualization, and Musicals, which will be in bookstores next never. But putting that aside, the point is don't give up hope in its most general sense. It is a truly American ideal. Apple pie is almost as American as hope. Or so it hopes. It was hope that brought the first colonists to this country in search of a better land that would allow them social and religious freedoms that they could then deny others. It was hope that put smallpox in blankets, thereby making this land a bit cheaper to purchase from its original owners. Hope put tea in a harbor, angering and confusing the British as well as today's senior citizens. Hope gave sciatica to a black lady on a bus in Montgomery, inspiring a civil rights movement while encouraging the health benefits of walking at least thirty minutes a day. Hope keeps same-sex partners together, looking toward the day when they, too, can legally get divorced. Hope is the binding agent for political discourse in the United States. As a voter, one hopes their needs are being listened to and addressed. As a politician, one hopes their message gets out while their indiscretions with flight attendants stay hidden, along with that secret love child they had with a wolf. As a political humorist, one hopes that no matter how troubling times may seem from moment to moment, people will always be able to find laughter in the situation. And as a manager of a coffee shop in Brooklyn, one hopes that times will never be so troubled that the political humorist you once foolishly employed as a barista will return looking for their old job again. Obviously, there is more to the American democratic system than just those four individuals. You also have the media, the lobbyists, the protest groups, the unions, the action committees, the think tanks, the activists, the foreign business partners, the intergalactic business partners, the special-interest groups, the skeptics, the financial donors, the blood donors, the senior citizens, the public sector, the private sector, the Nigerian princes, the bureaucrats, the steering committees, Main Street, Wall Street, and ghosts. All with their own needs and the hope that their voices will drown out yours. And for the right price, it can. For as wonderful as America is, it is a country where we still make people vote in November to accommodate farmers from a hundred and fifty years ago who probably still won't make it to the polls in time because they are either dead or vampires. Vampire Farm: coming to the CW next fall. It runs on a political system whose parties are represented by animals that tend to stink up barns and circuses and usually spend most of their time swatting away the filthy gnats that are attracted to them. The same is true of politicians. The floors of the Capitol Building get hosed down every night to keep the senators from getting hoof and mouth. It's a place where the state of Texas is at the bottom of high-school graduation rates, but gets to dictate what goes into the

country's textbooks because the other forty-nine states need its delicious chili recipes. If you are reading this and you graduated from a school in Texas—good job. Next time, try it without sounding the words out loud. It's a country where people are scared to sit next to a Muslim on an airplane, but have no problem if that Muslim drives them home from the airport . . . so long as he avoids the Midtown Tunnel. If you're reading this while in a cab, don't look up! They're probably watching you. It's a country where a football team with a mascot of a Native American man could play a team whose mascot is a colonial soldier in the Super Bowl, and even if they won, afterward they'd still be called the Redskins. But for all of the problems in this country, it's still a country that people love for its hope. It is the hope that we can strive to be better as individuals and as a whole, and, if not, then we can at least afford to import better individuals who will in turn inspire us to be better or marry us for green cards. One of the things that makes this country great is the ability to learn from our mistakes, laugh at them, publish them on the Internet, and then collect them in book form to be sold to rubes. Not you. The person who bought it for you. This book is filled with some of McSweeney's Internet Tendency's finest humor from both regular contributors and guest contributors who decided to slum it in the land of the written word. And it is my hope that you find this book funny. I haven't read it. I'm waiting for someone to gift it to me. I hope I'll enjoy it.