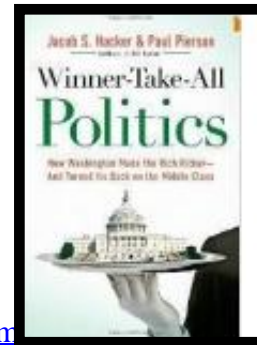


## Winner-Take-All Politics

by Rev. Joe Dirt - Monday, December 27, 2010

<http://www.curmudgeon-alley.com/2257/>

[Winner-Take-All Politics by Hacker & Pierson available at Amazon.com](#)



The book is subtitled: *How Washington Made the Rich Richer – And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class*

This book needs another review like a hole in the head. Typing the full title into Google resulted in close to 30,000 hits. But hey, why not!

First and foremost, while I found the book deeply troubling and depressing, it is an important book to read if you want to really understand what is happening in Washington currently. This book really did not tell me anything that I did not intuitively already know from decades of watching the American political scene. It did reaffirm and document my intuition.

One thing I did take away from the book is a sense that we need fixed our constitution. The Senate, as now composed, guarantees an over-representation of the rural, conservative, lightly populated rural states over the more densely populated, coastal, urban states. This results in the minority dictating to the majority. Can you imagine the mess we would end up in if were to try to change or amend the constitution to correct this?

I've been angry about the growing wealth gap in this country that is only of late getting any real attention. After reading this book I am now not only angry, but seriously depressed. The extent to which our politicians are essentially in the pockets of the big corporations and wealthy, is amazing. The Republicans were there first and are the party most identified and deepest in bed with these players, but the Democrats are not far behind and they are working hard to catch up.

The basic premise of this book is that the big business, especially the financial sector, and the wealth have teamed up to defeat labor and any social guarantees for the vast majority of Americans. The Republicans guiding star for the last 30 years has been to reduce taxes on the wealthy and on businesses. Going hand in hand with this is a belief that any regulation of business is bad, and that market forces can and should be doing this. Any social program is not good because it results in a redistribution of wealth from the rich to poor. This is essentially the 3 plank platform of the Republican Party.

The Democrats are as addicted to the money spread by lobbyist and large donors as the Republicans. Business is unified in its goal of supporting the 3 planks they have given to the Republicans. Where the middle class and labor lose out is their lack of organization and cohesiveness. Business and their bought-and-paid-for politicians speak in one voice. The Democrats and the middle class are increasing a din of unheard voices.

The book details a history of how we got where we are at in this country, politically and economically. It also details example after example of politicians favoring business interests over the interests of the majority of their own constituents. It details how the tax burden has really shifted from the rich to the middle and lower classes. How the income of the wealthy has been growing at a fast pace while the real income of the middle class has been shrinking. Throw in decreasing social nets and it is not a pretty picture.

The book's conclusion was supposed to offer some hope that all is not lost in the inevitable march to the United Corporations of Richistan (Richistan is the author's phrase; I've added the United Corporations). I did not find it hopefully at all. In the best case scenario it painted these things as cyclic and hopefully we will cycle out of this march to a two class society. I am not holding my breath.

### **Share this:**

- [Share](#)

•

### **Like this:**

Like Loading...