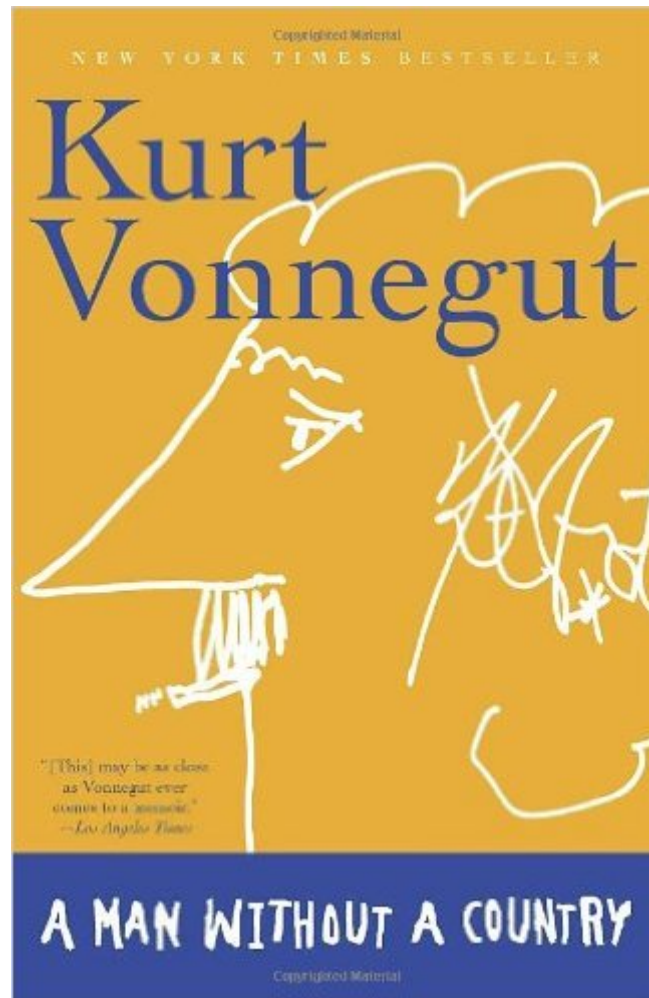


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A Man Without A Country



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERâ €[This] may be as close as Vonnegut ever comes to a memoir.â • â “Los Angeles Timesâ €Like [that of] his literary ancestor Mark Twain, [Kurt Vonnegutâ €s] crankiness is good-humored and sharp-witted. . . . [Reading A Man Without a Country is] like sitting down on the couch for a long chat with an old friend.â • â “The New York Times Book ReviewIn a volume that is penetrating, introspective, incisive, and laugh-out-loud funny, one of the great men of letters of this ageâ “or any ageâ “holds forth on life, art, sex, politics, and the state of Americaâ €s soul. From his coming of age in America, to his formative war experiences, to his life as an artist, this is Vonnegut doing what he does best: Being himself. Whimsically illustrated by the author, A Man Without a Country is intimate, tender, and brimming with the scope of Kurt Vonnegutâ €s passions.â €For all those who have lived with Vonnegut in their imaginations . . . this is what he is like in person.â • â “USA Todayâ €Filled with [Vonnegutâ €s] usual contradictory mix of joy and sorrow, hope and despair, humor and gravity.â • â “Chicago Tribuneâ €Fans will linger on every word . . . as once again [Vonnegut] captures the complexity of the human condition with stunning calligraphic simplicity.â • â “The Australianâ €Thank God, Kurt Vonnegut has broken his promise that he will never write another book. In this wondrous assemblage of mini-memoirs, we discover his familyâ €s legacy and his obstinate, unfashionable humanism.â • â “Studs Terkel

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Customer Reviews

Reviews like the one below by the 23-year-old who never had read Vonnegut before this current volume remind me of Mr. V.'s statement (I paraphrase, perhaps grotesquely) that the cumulative

effect of the Vietnam-war protests and of '60s activism in general was that of a banana-cream pie hurled off a stepladder: here is unquestionably the Greatest of contemporary American novelists, whose work and vision as a whole provide clarity, wisdom, and guidance with humor and love for both the survival of the species and for America--yet he remains largely ignored and neglected by the current American demos, for whom democracy is named, and reviewed by only 24 or so while the latest potboiler gets 345 reviews the very day it's published. Certainly Vonnegut himself is well aware of these vagaries of fame and influence. But let me heartily proclaim the obvious--that we truly should declare Mr. V.'s birthday a new national holiday (strapping it firmly to the one, for some, it already is on 11/11); schoolchildren should compete in Vonnegut Declamation Contests, vying to repeat from memory the longest and most salient passages from his works; we should have Vonnegut Festivals, Seminars, Television sitcoms, toothpaste, bottled water--even a Vonnegut Party in national, state, and local elections, which might well take the place of the corrupt and anemic Democrats.

If you are a humanist, you will probably dig *Man Without A Country*. I've read the reviews, and I'm astounded by people who take offense to Vonnegut's humanistic perspective. One reviewer below suggests that *A Man Without A Country* contains talking points straight from the Democratic National Committee. I checked the DNC website and couldn't identify any lines from Vonnegut's book. So it goes. Yes, Vonnegut draws connections between Bush and Hitler--they both called themselves Christians despite what many "liberal" documentaries suggest about Hitler being a pagan. But being opposed to Bush doesn't make Kurt a Democrat. Read Kurt's words, HE'S A HUMANIST. For those of you that are anti-humanists, there are plenty of sentences to be taken out of context to exploit towards your own divisive agendas. Vonnegut reminds us of a line by Shakespeare: "The Devil will quote scripture for his purpose." When did respecting each other become politically divisive? I've often wondered why respecting science is politically divisive. Kurt sheds some light on these topics among others. Look, if you think the world is all hunky-dory, this won't be your cup of tea. Or, if you dug Vonnegut's earlier work solely for his humor, you may be disappointed with this read. Vonnegut grapples with his grasp on turning out humor, about how other humorists lose their humor as they age. Vonnegut still has his humor, but he is pissed off--many readers haven't known when he has been joking and when he has been serious. For the remedial readers he annotates his jokes by saying, "I'm kidding." Just because Kurt loves humans, he isn't beyond shaking his finger at those who preach love as they drop bombs and enslave little brown folks.

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