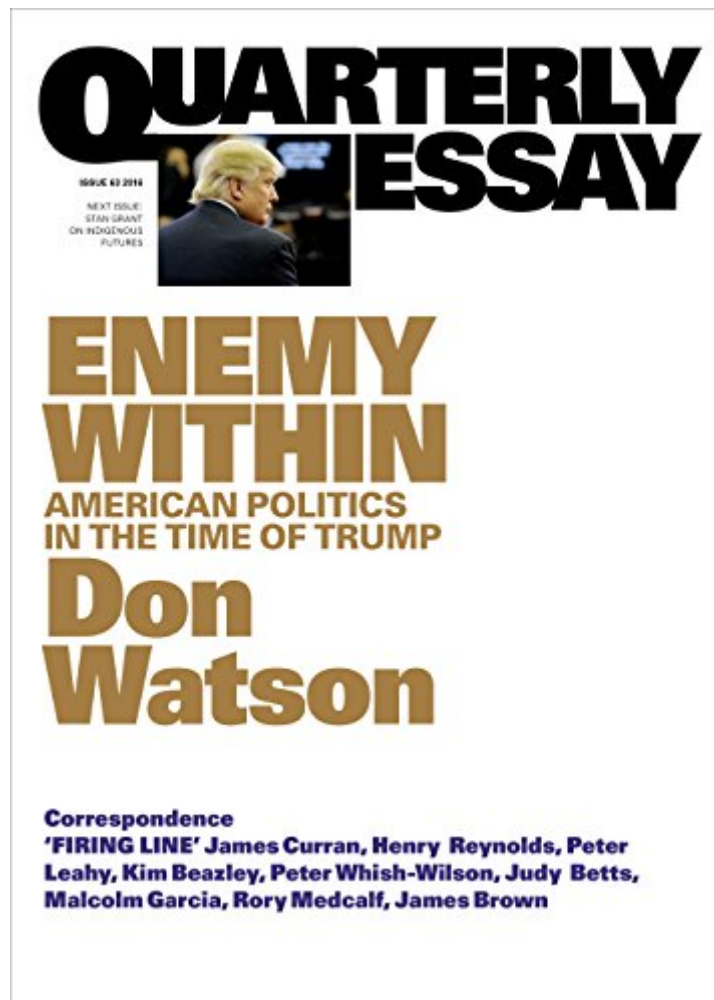




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Quarterly Essay 63 Enemy Within: American Politics In The Time Of Trump



Synopsis

In *Enemy Within*, Don Watson takes a memorable journey into the heart of the United States in the year 2016 – the year of the strangest election campaign that country has seen. Travelling in the Midwest, Watson reflects on the rise of Donald Trump and the “thicket of unreality” that is the American media. Behind this he finds a deeply fearful and divided culture. Watson considers the irresistible pull for Americans of the Dream of exceptionalism, and asks whether this creed is reaching its limit. He explores alternate futures from Trump-style fascism to Sanders-style civic renewal and suggests that a Clinton presidency might see a new American blend of progressivism and militarism. *Enemy Within* is an eloquent, barbed look at the state of the union and the American malaise. “If, as seems likely, Clinton wins, it will not be out of love, or even hope, but rather out of fear. She can win by simply letting her deplorable opponent lose. On the other hand, she’s nothing if not adaptable, and she could yet see the chance to lead the nation’s social and economic regeneration. Call it a New Great Awakening or a New New Deal; it would owe something to both, and to Bernie Sanders as well, but also to her need to be more than the first woman president.”

Don Watson, *Enemy Within*

Don Watson is the author of many acclaimed books, including *Caledonia Australis*, *Recollections of a Bleeding Heart*, *American Journeys* and *The Bush*.

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Customer Reviews

I have always been a fan of the writing of Don Watson. He has been a wonderful commentator on Australian politics. In more recent times, he has also turned his gaze to the United States. Indeed, his most recent essay is an analysis of the great republic during its present election campaign. Can Trump win? Can the republic salve its wounds? In writing this essay, Watson travels through the state of Wisconsin. He uses this as a sample for broader America. There are rural segments, clear portions that are rust bucket such as Milwaukee and some that are insulated from the fluctuations of the economy. The latter is clearly seen in Madison, the state's capital. In fact, there is a line, perhaps apocryphal, that Madison is "thirty square miles surrounded by reality". I have travelled through Wisconsin. Watson has done a fine job describing the place. Can America elect Trump? I think the larger world hopes not. The man is patently a fraud. However, he is also a man of the times. America is a very unequal society. Watson documents this condition well. This inequality and an underlying sense of anger that the working man is being dudded by the preferences of the elites is fuelling the Trump bandwagon. We live in interesting times. Yet for all his fake bellicosity, Trump confronts a flawed opponent. Hillary Clinton is not liked. Her strongest characteristic is that she is not Trump. The US system has produced two weak candidates. The likely outcome? Watson thinks Hillary may fall over the line. However, he wonders whether she can actually make substantive changes. Can inequality be addressed? Can the menace of guns be diminished? On the Memorial Day weekend in Chicago, 69 people were shot and six died. The Second Amendment has failed but will never change. America will progress but it could be so much greater. That is the real shame.

A perceptive and clear analysis of the mood of the American people during the lead up to the 2016 presidential election. Provided me with a good understanding of the negative feelings towards Mrs Clinton and the mood for change that saw Donald Trump elected. Although Mrs Clinton won the popular vote the requirement to focus on the swing states and the electoral college was well elucidated. Proved to be more accurate than many of the polls. Now we await the outcome of the

voice of the people.

The high standard of writing and insights that we have come to expect from Don Watson

Brilliant thoughtful essay. Does not reassure re outcome of US elections.

Essential reading if you want to understand Trump's ascendency

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