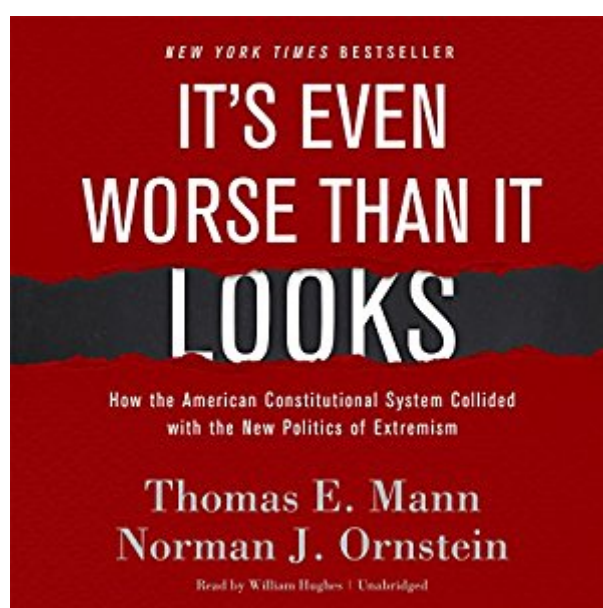


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# It's Even Worse Than It Looks: How The American Constitutional System Collided With The New Politics Of Extremism



## Synopsis

Hyperpartisanship has gridlocked the American government. Congress' approval ratings are at record lows, and both Democrats and Republicans are disgusted by the government's inability to get anything done. In *It's Even Worse Than It Looks*, Congressional scholars Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein present a grim picture of how party polarization and tribal politics have led Congress - and the United States - to the brink of institutional failure. In this revised edition, the authors bring their seminal book up to date in a political environment that is more divided than ever. The underlying dynamics of the situation - extremist Republicans holding government hostage to their own ideological, antigovernment beliefs - have only gotten worse, further bolstering their argument that Republicans are not merely ideologically different from Democrats, but engaged in a unique form of politics that undermines the system itself. Without a fundamental change in the character and course of the Republican Party, we may have a long way to go before we hit rock bottom.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I read the original book several years back and would have given it a 5 star rating. I purchased the revised edition and while the update is helpful, it was not worth the price of a new book. If you haven't read the original, this is an essential book for understanding the state of affairs in American politics. If you have read it, save your money on the new edition.

Yes, it IS even worse than it WAS! For many, these conclusions are highly suspected but when it comes from two who have studied our woe-begone Congress over the last 4 decades, it hits the center of the target. To many of us distanced and disgruntled Americans, the evidence and anecdotes presented here should make us steaming mad and encourage us to the polls. But alas, in far too many cases, it does not and indifference and even apathy reigns. DON'T let it happen to you! Turn aside from Pok mon Go for a moment and read and understand a literary work of far deeper significance.

A great read that updated the original volume. Taken together they give us an accurate description of the internal conflict self inflicted on the political system by the need to win it retain a political office.

I would not have bought this book if I had known it is not a whole new edition to the 2012 original edition. It only adds a new Forward and an Afterword to the original edition. The suggestions how to fix the problem in the original edition have been overrun by even further extremism in the Republican Party. I hoped the new edition would offer new suggestions. It does not. It basically offers the same ideas and says they will be harder to implement.

This careful and concise description of political paralysis is must reading for people in their 20s. Older folks will enjoy the reminders of how Newt Gingrich and others plotted the strategy of paralyzing government in order to prove Reagan's maxim about government being the problem. The book raises the question of why this deliberate strategy of obstruction has been dignified by the media as normal politics, which contributes to the lowering of public opinion of same.

The authors made their case but I expected an approach that was more "fair and balanced". That said, Republicans should read this analysis, accept responsibility for their role in a failed strategy and while remembering that it always takes two to play this game. Democrats shouldn't be patting themselves on the back.

A good if long winded assessment of the starring role today's Republican party takes in the national obstruction drama. "Even Worse" likes the term asymmetrical. Great talking points for Democrats and others who want specific incidents and good detail to use in speeches and appearances on TV

talk shows. The authors' scholarship is unassailable, as are their credentials and their standing as proper critics criticizing properly. They even have some decent suggestions about reforming campaign finance and restoring the Senate to majority rule. But until the American people speak with a more unified voice and a more unified vote there's scarce little chance of any reform of any kind. Bush-2 was a disaster. Obama is a disappointment and no one in the current presidential cage match is prepared with both reasonable solutions and the ability to get them past a congress more attuned to the eleventh century than the 21st.

The arguments the authors make are substantial and well researched. If Americans really want to a time when American politics were robust. you need to know who is responsible for our current mess. This book explains it.

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