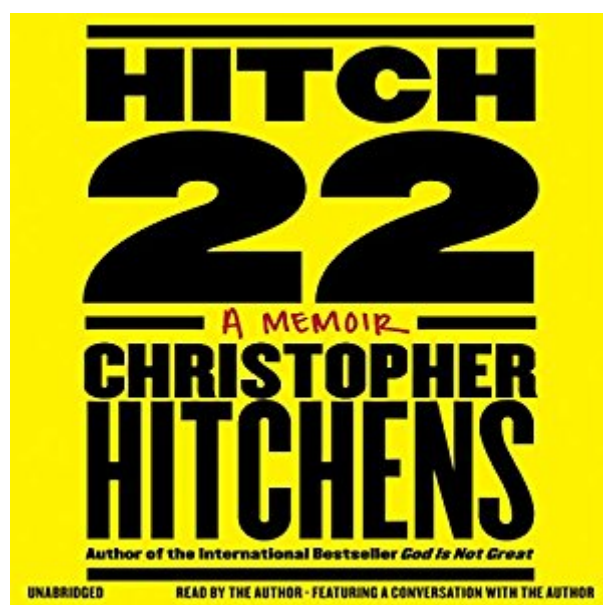


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Hitch-22: A Memoir



Synopsis

Over the course of his 60 years, Christopher Hitchens has been a citizen of both the United States and the United Kingdom. He has been both a socialist opposed to the war in Vietnam and a supporter of the U.S. war against Islamic extremism in Iraq. He has been both a foreign correspondent in some of the world's most dangerous places and a legendary bon vivant with an unquenchable thirst for alcohol and literature. He is a fervent atheist, raised as a Christian, by a mother whose Jewish heritage was not revealed to him until her suicide. In other words, Christopher Hitchens contains multitudes. He sees all sides of an argument. And he believes the personal is political. This is the story of his life, lived large. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Hitch 22" is a memoir, not an autobiography, by Christopher Hitchens, who seems to go out of his way to ensure that everyone in the world has at least one compelling reason to disagree with him. Those well familiar with Hitchens will know what I'm talking about, but for those that only know him from one of his guises, a little perspective. Hitchens works as a book reviewer for "The Atlantic", a political and culture commentator for both "Slate" and "Vanity Fair", a "talking head" on too many news shows to mention, a "semi-professional atheist" ('God is not Great'), an all around activist and speaker for the causes he deems important, and I'm sure a half dozen other roles I'm not aware of. I defy anyone to agree with every single one of the comments below:- Margaret Thatcher is kind of sexy- Communism is good- Pre-Glasnost Russia was bad- Gore Vidal is full of it- God does not

exist- Henry Kissinger is best viewed as a Mass Murderer- George H.W. Bush knew that Iraq would attack Kuwait well beforehand- The USA was justified in attacking both Iraq and Afghanistan post 9-11- Bertie and Wooster are hilarious- Mother Teresa was a sadist- The USA is a great country- British Boarding Schools are twisted Well, we can probably all agree on the last one, but see what I mean? He does indeed "contain volumes", and his views have shifted over time - to the right in many cases, as he admits. His memoir does not "explain" who Hitchens is, nor does he intend to. What he succeeds in doing admirably and engagingly is to give his perspectives on the people he's known, and the experiences he's had, not necessarily in chronological order.

It's really quite fascinating that Christopher Hitchens had as normal a life as he had considering all the events he experienced early in life. He starts his memoir with the suicide-homicide of his mother and her lover in the first chapter, then continues on with his commander dad. His parents alone were quite a contrasting couple that only stayed together because divorce carried such a stigma. Then he experienced boarding schools where bullying was quite common and where boys experimented with their sexuality. His gift of the English language and the accompanying wit were established early on. Hitchens writes as he speaks, with passion and drama that may turn some people, especially those with a weak understanding of advanced English grammar, off. His life unfolds as the post-war wars of England in the 1950s and 1960s, giving this memoir a good example of a personal history of the times. What struck me is the style of his writing. He writes from a deeply psychological perspective, as if everyone or everything around him is not quite in his senses. He maintains a certain distance, an aloofness, from all the events, but perhaps that is from the jobs he has held over the years as fighter for oppressed African states. Other parts, like chapter "Chris or Christopher" (pages 93-109) read like a political thriller in his often colorful and eyebrow-raising verbiage. He didn't like Bill Clinton ("the habitual and professional liar") even in his Oxford days and he certainly had no respect for American politicians during the Vietnam war. It really should come as no surprise that he is an atheist, a left-leaner (International Socialist as he calls himself) after the life he's had; his stories alone carry the explanation. But I don't blame him.

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