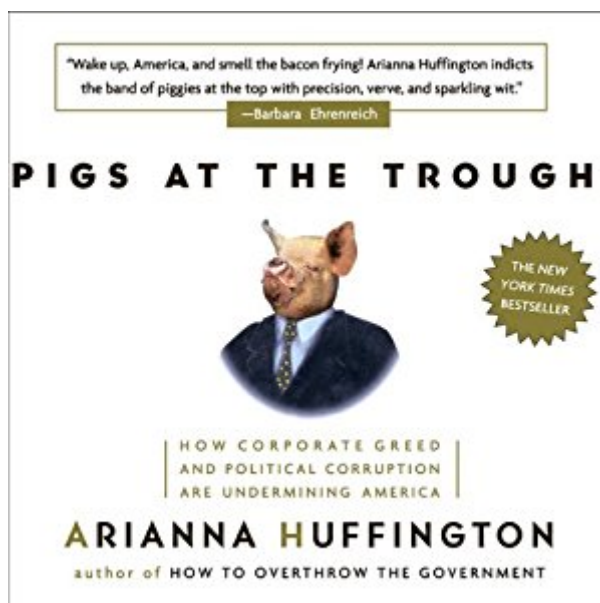


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# Pigs At The Trough: How Corporate Greed And Political Corruption Are Undermining America



## Synopsis

Who filled the trough? Who set the table at the banquet of greed? How has it been possible for corporate pigs to gorge themselves on grossly inflated pay packages and heaping helpings of stock options while the average American struggles to make do with their leftovers? Provocative political commentator Arianna Huffington yanks back the curtain on the unholy alliance of CEOs, politicians, lobbyists, and Wall Street bankers who have shown a brutal disregard for those in the office cubicles and on the factory floors. As she puts it: "The economic game is not supposed to be rigged like some shady ring toss on a carnival midway." Yet it has been, allowing corporate crooks to bilk the public out of trillions of dollars, magically making our pensions and 401(k)s disappear and walking away with astronomical payouts and absurdly lavish perks-for-life. The media have put their fingers on pieces of the sordid puzzle, but *Pigs at the Trough* presents the whole ugly picture of what's really going on for the first time—a blistering, wickedly witty portrait of exactly how and why the worst and the greediest are running American business and government into the ground. Tycoons Dennis Kozlowski, Adelphia's John Rigas, and the Three Horsemen of the Enron Apocalypse—Ken Lay, Jeff Skilling, and Andrew Fastow—are not just a few bad apples. They are manifestations of a megatrend in corporate leadership—the rise of a callous and avaricious mind-set that is wildly out of whack with the core values of the average American. WorldCom, Enron, Adelphia, Tyco, AOL, Xerox, Merrill Lynch, and the other scandals are only the tip of the tip of the corruption iceberg. Making the case that our public watchdogs have become little more than obedient lapdogs, unwilling to bite the corporate hand that feeds them, Arianna Huffington turns the spotlight on the tough reforms we must demand from Washington. We need, she argues, to go way beyond the lame Corporate Responsibility Act if we are to stop the voracious corporate predators from eating away at the very foundations of our democracy. Devastatingly funny and powerfully indicting, *Pigs at the Trough* is a rousing call to arms and a must-read for all those who are outraged by the scandalous state of corporate America. From the Hardcover edition. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It is difficult to believe that some of the reviewers here have actually read "Pigs at the Trough." While they offer personal criticisms of the author herself, they say little about the book she's written. "Pigs at the Trough" does, stylistically, contain some cliché phrases (the counting of clichés having been mentioned by another reviewer, who has obviously taken up the practice as presented by Martin Amis in his excellent book, "The War Against Cliché"). I attribute some of the clichés, however, to the fact that Ms. Huffington's writing is more like journalism than literature, much more about frank criticism than subtle, ironic remarks (of the sort found in papers like "The Guardian," for example). Ms. Huffington's aim in "Pigs at the Trough" is to present the facts (and they are facts) on corporate crimes, and to introduce the reader to those who commit them. "Pigs at the Trough" does not, in my opinion, come across as an attack on all businessmen or on wealthy people. This book is not focused on the fact that these businessmen are wealthy so much as the criminal ways in which they've managed to obtain that wealth. Americans need to be more aware the shamelessly illegal ways in which some businessmen, often CEOs, have obtained (I cannot say "earned") their fortunes. The businessmen mentioned in "Pigs at the Trough" did not accumulate wealth through an honest work ethic, but out of exploitation, fancy accounting, and the circumvention of laws. They go unpunished for it, and Americans let them. Yes, there are - obviously - business people in America who live very comfortably and have accumulated their wealth honestly and did not commit crimes in the name of money.

This was the book that started me reading more and more about politics, and the political influence that afflicts our country. I highly recommend it, and here's why. In a hard-hitting, almost cynical style that I did appreciate, the author attacks companies that have raped the public and their employees because of their own greed. She names them like a litany of indictments that followed their wake: Adelphia, Tyco, Arthur Andersen, Enron, World Com, to name a few. Huffington shows how these once respected companies, their greed, and the relaxation of regulations have allowed them to

virtually alter standard principles of accounting so they can hide money and cheat the government, taxpayers and employees. Unlike one reviewer here who found her style sarcastic, I didn't mind. After all, these greedy little folks who walked away with millions after stranding customers and leaving employees pensionless, can take a little sarcasm their way. However, I agree with him the quizzes got in the way of the pace of the book, and seemed a little childish. (I always carry a highlighter for books like this one anyway.) The most important thing Arianna makes clear is that politicians no longer seem to represent the people who elect them, but the interests of the corporations with the largest contributions. (It's called bribery outside of Congress.) This administration has given their blessing with their silence, and has a huge following of people who still believe their gospel while they are getting their own pockets picked. The repudiation of the pension for United Airlines is a perfect example. What did the administration say? Nothing, not a word!

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