



What We Do Now: Standing Up For Your Values in Trump's America

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“Make yourself a sheep and the wolves will eat you.”—Benjamin Franklin

An inspiring handbook for people troubled by the election of Donald Trump, by some of the biggest names in progressive politics. Meant to give people heart and actual strategies about how to advance a variety of causes.

Bernie Sanders, Gloria Steinem, Elizabeth Warren and others present short, powerful essays on what people can do now to cope with Trump's election, and what they can do going forward to protect their values, their politics and their country.

What We Do Now: Standing Up For Your Values in Trump's America Details

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From Reader Review What We Do Now: Standing Up For Your Values in Trump's America for online ebook

Andy says

Largely skippable. This is not manual for what to do if you are worried about rising fascism. Only a couple of the chapters (e.g. by M. Dove Kent and Robert Reich) feature lists of things ordinary citizens can do. Mostly it's just people whining about Trump's victory and blowing political hot air. Some of the essays are pretty good though, in particular the coda by Dave Eggers.

Robert Wechsler says

There's not a lot of eye-opening material in this collection, and nearly all that there is comes not from the celebrities, but from people like Brittany Packnett, cofounder of Campaign Zero and author of my favorite piece, "White People: What Is Your Plan for the Trump Presidency?" Also notable is the piece by Ilhan Omar, the first Somali-American legislator (MN state rep), and the sermon by Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum. Skip the celebs and it's a really nice, short look at the attitudes we need not just to get through the next four years, but to do something positive.

Rachel León says

This collection of essays isn't by any means perfect, but is still, arguably, essential. I loved how the collection addressed different issues--climate change, LGBTQ rights, transgender rights, immigration, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, the economy, etc. The essays are by heads of national organizations (such as the ACLU, NARAL, the NAACP, etc.) and politicians (Bernie Sanders, etc.). Some essays are stronger and more passionate than others, but it's a nice mix. The overall collection is a call for action and compassion. It's about coming together rather than being divided. The message resonated with me and was the perfect thing for me to read right now as I'm filled with rage and sadness at decisions being made in Washington.

Book Riot Community says

Turning on the news sends my anxiety skyrocketing and my hope plummeting. When I picked up What We Do Now, I didn't expect that hope to be rekindled – yet here we are. What We Do Now is an essay collection from dozens of politically involved people, including the heads of ACLU and various activist organizations, talking not only about what has happened in the political world, but what they're doing to fight it, and what you can do to help. It's incredibly hopeful to see people organized and ready for action with a concrete plan. A must-read for anybody who needs a rekindled spirit.

— Nicole Brinkley

Jenny (Reading Envy) says

There is no way this book of essays about protest and community organization in "Trump's America" wasn't rushed through the publishing process in order to be ready by the inauguration, and it does show a little. The first essay seems to be a repurposed speech by Bernie Sanders, one I found less than inspiring, because it was like pushing the "go" button on the Bernie "kill the banks" robot. It didn't directly address the president, the presidency, racism, protest... I'm not sure why it was there except they wanted to put his name on the cover.

My favorites and most true to the marketing of the book were by David Cole (of the ACLU, not the conservative party planner) Elizabeth Warren, Anthony Romero, Trevor Timm, and Gloria Steinem's "Welcome to the Resistance" essay was uplifting as I head into the women's rally tomorrow (in my city we're having a rally instead of a march, but same umbrella.)

Do I know how to stand up for my values? I'm not sure I really learned that from this book. I definitely felt reaffirmed that I need to, but the path is not yet clear.

I received a review copy of this from the publisher in exchange for an honest review, and then read it at the same time as everyone else!

Barbara (The Bibliophage) says

3.5 stars. I bought this compilation of essays, edited by Dennis Johnson and Valerie Merians, shortly after the 2016 elections. I was wondering just what the title says, "what do we do know?" And, then I put the book on my shelf because I was feeling too many raw emotions. Recently I thought, "I'd better read this before it's obsolete." Well, the good news is, it isn't likely to ever be 100% obsolete.

The editors divide the essays into eleven topics, so it's likely that what matters to you may be here. They range from media to LGBTQ to racial justice, and more. And you should know, this is a book with a liberal perspective. It includes essays from well-known folks like Bernie Sanders, Gloria Steinem, and Elizabeth Warren. And also some others you may not be as familiar with. Every one of the authors has gobs of experience in the realm they write about.

The primary message answers the titular question with, "we fight back." But every essay has its own perspective, some more passionate and others more focused on specific action steps.

My conclusions

My favorite essay on the passionate end of the spectrum, came from the controversial Linda Sarsour. Sarsour is a Muslim-American political activist. She says, "The minute you decide this is normal, this is just how it is, the minute you decide that appointing a white supremacist to one of the highest, most influential positions in the White House (and a long list of them follows, and I don't mean Trump)—that is the minute you give up."

I also appreciated the final essay, by author, publisher and education activist, Dave Eggers. Titled "None of

the Old Rules Apply: Travels Through Post-Election America,” it’s a cogent analysis of why the election went down as it did. And it holds up even two years later.

Some of the essayists’ predictions have come true already, both in the positive and negative. I personally figured out what to do, and worked hard during the midterm elections for a local candidate for Congress. Even though my candidate was defeated, I met some amazing people. And we didn’t stop working for the values we believe are important.

If you’re inclined to read politically, I’d suggest this book. It’s not long and you can pick and choose which essays draw you in. For me, the whole thing was worth my time.

For more reviews of books like this, visit the "Resist" section of my book blog, TheBibliophage.com.

Amanda says

Melville House flash published this book after this election so it's a little light on editing and actionable details but it's a good general guide to organizing and in getting yourself fired up. The essays by George Saunders and Dave Eggers that were more reflections on this moment in American history were by far my favorites.

Ammar says

Thanks for Penguin Random House Canada for a copy of this book for a review.

This collection is very timely, yet it is haste. There are lots of opportunity for an anthology like this; some essays where so on the spot and showed what the authors thought may happen and in many cases it did reflect what happened and happening in the first 100 days of this presidency.

I wish there was more concrete steps in some of those essays like yes some did say we shall go back to grassroots movement or tell the democrats in the house to oppose this legislation or that... but many didn't give the average everyday American information or direct numbers or resources where and how to get help if something happens to them aka if they get deported ... etc

For example in a book called steal this book the author and activist Abbie Hoffman listed all sort of organisations and addresses and phone numbers that could help this Woodstock Nation to survive ... i wish those steps were taken in this anthology.

Gus Sanchez says

#NachtMeinFuhrher

Lisa Vegan says

I might have given this book 5 stars had I read it between November 9, 2016 and the end of 2016, perhaps even until January 19, 2017. But I read it after the inauguration. And all I could think of as I read was What would you all say now?!!! It's so, so much worse than most thought it would be.

So I give it 3 stars. 3 ½ I guess. It was hard to read during this administration because I was so upset. I have been since November 8, 2016 but even my imagination didn't envision all that's happened in the last less than 3 months.

All the contributors are great and there was some solace reading essays from such brilliant and passionate and caring people. They are all experts in their topics and I appreciated that.

Recommended for reading before 1/20/17. Now, it's sadly dated. There are still cogent points and plans and arguments, and hopefully most (including the earth) will survive long enough to find them useful after 2018 and/or 2020.

Most individual essays are really worth 5 or at least 4 stars but reading the book in its entirety at this point I found too depressing to rate it with more than 3 stars.

Rachel says

If you're reading this, you probably already know the things in it. So, read something new :)

Sarah says

It seems like there wasn't a WHOLE lot of actual actionable suggestions beyond "organize"? There weren't even tips on how to do so. It was good for what it was, which was liberals writing essays about determination to stand up to Trump. But as an actual primer for "what to do now," I'd turn elsewhere.

That being said, George Saunders's essay is fantastic.

Carol says

Absolutely what I needed.

Update Feb. 15: full review is up on my blog. <https://bildungsromans.com/book-revie...>

Chris Sienko says

Like many of us, my to-read list for 2017 and beyond changed quite a bit after November 9, and the title of this book rattled through my head in the form of a question, namely "what the fuck do we do now?" As such,

titling a book *What We Do Now* tweaks the same fear-response gland that headlines in *The National Enquirer* do for people wondering why Angelina seems so negligent around her kids. And like the *Enquirer*, the title offers more than the content.

What We Do Now is a collection of short pieces, many of them previously available and if you're even remotely aware of the internet, you've probably read more than a few of these. Interested in reading Elizabeth Warren's speech to the AFL-CIO in print form? Wondering what the ACLU, NARAL Pro-Choice America, the NAACP, and *The Nation* magazine consider their primary goals for the next four years? Here you go. Still wondering where the we in "What WE Do Now" fit in all this? Me too. I've signed up three times to volunteer for the ACLU IL. I had to basically write my contact info in giant letters on a piece of paper at the Chicago Volunteer Fair before the Sierra Club would get back to me about opportunities. There's two different ways the title of this book can be read. What we (activist organizations) do now is use this book to let you know that we're working on it. What my part was in the struggle (other than a repeated, if nebulous, request to "get involved") was unclear. To be sure, I underlined a few nice lines, and noted a few organizations I hadn't heard of before. But selling this book as a path to the new activism in the frightening years to come rang a bit hollow.

Now, if you want to know what WE (the people) do now, download a copy of the *Indivisible* PDF immediately, and then find an Indivisible group in your area, stat. That's what the fuck we do now. If I sit around waiting for the ACLU to deign to call me for an envelope-stuffing fiesta, it'll be 24 hours after the 2018 midterms and I'll be up all night again, wondering how the fuck much worse this can all get.

Allow me to save you \$16: download *Indivisible*, call your congresspeople daily (or at least weekly), join a local Indivisible chapter or other small local group dedicated to specific change, put one foot in front of the other each day, and collaborate with other people in your area doing the big work on a small scale. That's what we do now. That's what we do from now on.

Christina says

I really wanted to love this but I was underwhelmed as a whole- I thought many of the essays offered the same kind of platitudes and reflections that many people also felt and thought after the election, where I was hoping for some real advice on actions that can be taken. There were a few notable exceptions that I've listed below.

"We Are All Emigrants" by Ilhan Omar is easily five stars- it's one of the most striking essays in this collection, beautifully and poignantly written. "None of the Old Rules Apply: Travels through Post-Election America" by Dave Eggers was another five-star piece of writing. It was a perfectly crafted journey into the psyches of real Americans.

"Post Election Sermon" by Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum and "The Brain Dead Megaphone" by George Saunders are equally eloquent, and "Post Election Sermon" especially offers some comfort at what is an incredibly trying time for many.

"We Will Defend the Constitution Against Donald Trump" by Anthony D. Romero, "How to Combat Donald Trump's Dangerous Threats to a Free Press" by Trevor Timm, and "The First 100 Days Resistance Agenda" by Robert Reich stood out to me because they offered concrete, useful advice and information. I learned the most from these three essays.

