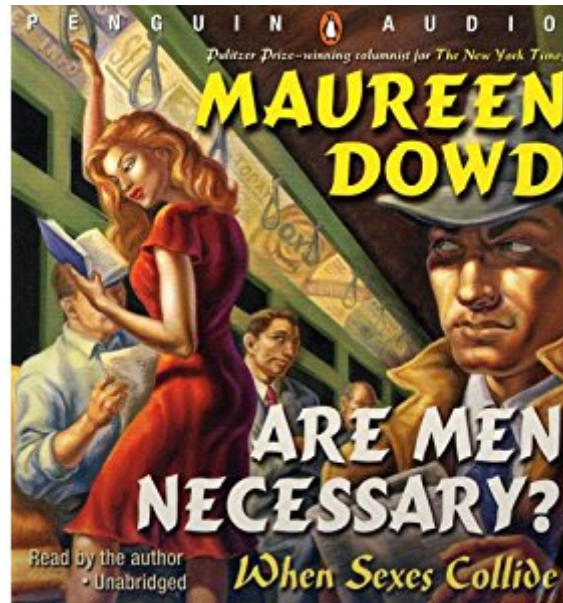


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Are Men Necessary?: When Sexes Collide



Synopsis

Read by the author Fresh from her success with the bestselling *Bushworld*, Maureen Dowd turns her lapidary prose and wicked wit to a topic even more incendiary than presidential politics: sexual politics. Unabridged CDs - 8 hours, 7 CDs --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dowd is a fabulously sarcastic writer. When my opinion synches with hers, I revel in the deliciously wicked way that she expresses herself. It is a good laugh and the writing is truly unique. But when I don't agree, I find her style and opinions irritating and superficial, that is, unwilling to look beneath the surface in either a constructive or a genuinely insightful way. I suppose that is why she is a great columnist - you never have to get beyond about 800 words and you can forget her opinions as you step off the subway. Well, this book in my opinion brings out the worst in her. She masses statistics about why so many talented women remain unattached, and makes an argument that it proves feminism has failed: because men basically want bimbos and women want to "trade up", the most interesting women (like, uh, her) get left without enduring relationships. Behind this funny and elegantly written argument, Dowd utterly fails to ask herself any of the harder questions that require introspection. Why can't she find a good relationship? Why do certain types of men approach her? Etc. It is not she who is deficient or somehow repellant to those who might love her, but men as a category and even society as a whole that come up short. This is OK for a pithy column, but in a book it wears awfully thin after the first chapter. Her lack of introspection is, well, depressingly

relentless on such a personal subject. This is singularly unimpressive. Moreover, what about all the talented women who DO find relationships that work? I am married to one of great talent and intelligence, who challenges me constantly and does not allow the marriage to stand still, even when it hurts. To have it any other way would be boring.

I am a great admirer of Maureen Dowd. Her column in the New York Times is the first thing I turn to after scanning the top stories. Her choice of language is always entertaining, and her insights into the psychological motives of public officials always add new dimensions to my understanding of the news. I was therefore rather distressed when her column disappeared for several months while she was on "book leave". For anyone else who loves her column - rest assured that this book will not disappoint. Dowd is best when glib and entertaining, and most irritating when she affronts our closest held biases. Her critique of Bill Clinton's womanizing rankled my liberal prejudice, but eventually helped me realize how deeply it offended large segments of the public. This volume has large measures of that which will both amuse and challenge your sensibilities. What has most perplexed me is how Dowd seems to fixate on the sexual aspects of our society, and in a way this book is her own exploration of that obsession. She admits in the very first line that she does not understand men - and even that she does not understand what she does not understand about them. While many might confess to this failing from either side of the sexual abyss, most would be content to live with their doubts and use ambiguity to cover up moments of uncertainty. Instead, Maureen Dowd attacks the eternal dance of equivocation head-on. It is difficult to know exactly what playbook she is reading from when it comes to personal relationships.

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