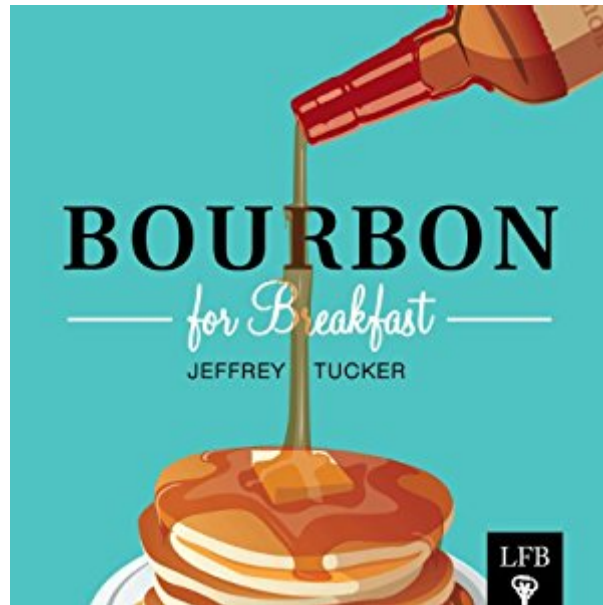


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Bourbon For Breakfast: Living Outside The Statist Quo



Synopsis

The state makes a mess of everything it touches, argues Jeffrey Tucker in *Bourbon for Breakfast*. Perhaps the biggest mess it makes is in our minds. Its pervasive interventions in every sector affect the functioning of society in so many ways, we are likely to intellectually adapt rather than fight. Tucker proposes another path: See how the state has distorted daily life, rethink how things would work without the state, and fight against the intervention in every way that is permitted. Whether that means hacking your showerhead, rejecting prohibitionism, searching for large-tank toilets, declining to use government courts, homeschooling, embracing alternative micro-cultures, watching pro-freedom movies, baking at home, maintaining manners and standards of dress, publishing without copyright, and just living outside what he calls the "statist quo", we should not lose touch with what freedom means, even in these times. The essays in *Bourbon for Breakfast* cover commercial life, digital media, culture, food, literature, religion, music, and a host of other issues - all from the perspective of a Misesian-Rothbardian struggling to get by in a world in which the walls of the state have been closing in. Tucker writes about the glories of commerce, the horrors of jail, and the joy of private life - and he defends a kind of aristocratic radicalism in times of increasingly restricted choices.

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Customer Reviews

I casually read the first few chapters of this book on my computer after downloading the free PDF from the mises.org website, and promptly purchased a hard copy of the book for deeper reading

and study. This was before I read chapter 27 of the book, "Books, Online and Off", in which the opinion is offered that online and offline books serve separate purposes; and by offering books for free online one can increase the interest in, and future sales of, the hard copy book. I am one of many who prove this thesis correct. Chapter 2, "The Turn of the Screw", was so ridiculously simple a concept I chastise myself for not being able to figure this out on my own. After turning up the temperature on our water heater, the water coming out of the kitchen sink is actually hot for once, and many of the benefits outlined in this chapter prove true to me and my family. Chapter 38, "Protectionism and My Stuffy Nose", was another eye opener. To me, Sudafed was a sleeping pill and not a decongestant; for so long it failed me as a decongestant I gave up on that being it's purpose. I admit that in my ignorance I didn't even know there was "the good ole' stuff" behind the counter locked away where only the pharmacist can access it. To treat my most recent cold I visited the nearest Walgreens and browsed the decongestants, not able to find any medicine containing pseudoephedrine, so I asked the pharmacist and she pointed me to a locked case behind her with what looked like boxes of the same decongestants, but of course these were different. After providing ID and signing a form promising not to use the pills for nefarious purposes, I took a dosage and what do you know? It worked like a charm!

Jeffrey Tucker, noted economist, musician, author, manager, publisher, and polymath, has compiled an enriching and energetic book of essays covering a vast amount of information from the philosophical to the practical, all tinged with his own brand of humor, brilliance, and perception. Like a patchwork quilt containing a mosaic of shapes and colors, Bourbon for Breakfast zings along at a fast pace guaranteed to make a reader smile, frown, grow frightened, laugh with joy, and maybe even develop some righteous anger along the way. Beginning with several essays on household topics such as inadequate toilets, over the counter drugs, ceiling fans, and razors, the book slowly and deliberately takes a broader look at how government intervention continually makes things worse regardless of the situation. Fun essays on the Jetsons, getting haircuts, and several musical allusions are balanced with serious references to war, power, politics, and corruption. Among the most educational moments are the topics on various writers from the past and from today including Mark Twain, Murray Rothbard, Garet Garrett, and a nice piece on Rube Goldberg. Packed around these are mention of Ludwig Von Mises, Ayn Rand, Henry Hazlitt, and Leonard Read and several others. Further ideas on publishing, copyright, and free exchange of ideas leave the reader breathless with excitement, imagining a world of open, free market benefits. The writing is smooth, the stories are vastly entertaining, and the higher purpose of the book is accomplished, resulting in

a suspicion of virtually anything connected to government action. Tucker's insights are remarkable and his sense of mission to make the world a better place through individual effort apart from the state is relentless.

Bourbon for Breakfast is a fun introduction to libertarianism that's not a textbook. The book of approximately 350 pages is a compilation of articles from the past couple of years on sundry topics by Jeffrey Tucker, the Editorial Vice-President of the Ludwig von Mises Institute. Articles are arranged by topic and cover the following general subjects:-Water and life-Commerce-Technology-Crime-Health and manners-Food-Books-MoviesThe thread that ties the articles together is the libertarian lens through which the subjects are viewed. Says Tucker, "This book is about seeing that just because government mandates certain things and forbids others does not mean that we must follow or even tolerate the official roadmap for our lives." (p. 7) So whether commerce, crime, food, or other areas of life, Tucker reveals what the world would look like absent government sprawl. And let me say: Tucker has persuaded me (full disclosure: not a libertarian) that the world would be much better off. Whether that persuasion is a function of Tucker's cogency or the glaring incompetence of government, I don't know for sure. A bit of both, I suspect. There is an obvious sense of humor in Tucker's writing and it makes for a fun read. In his article extolling the virtues of the garbage disposal, for example, he says:"For years, I've reveled in it. They still don't have them in Europe, where things seem to have regressed since the Middle Ages when sewage systems became more common. Nowadays, the Euro-people commonly toss their trash in their own yards, and try to cover up for this primitive reality by calling it 'composting.' If you were a New Yorker before 1997, you were guilty of a crime if you used a garbage disposal.

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