

Book Review: Resurrecting Democracy by Robert A. Levine

January 23, 2012 by [JOE GANDELMAN](#), Editor-In-Chief — [0 Comments](#)



In these days of ideology and partisan-based new and old media commentary, it's extremely hard to find a book that lays out solid information, is packed with research that recounts and analyzes current events, is reliable as a valuable reference tool for anyone of any party or ideology, and is written in a style that's lively but as seriously and skillfully as columns by the Washington Post's late David Broder. Now there is a book that does just that. It has gotten less publicity than it deserves since it doesn't have a built ideological constituency — no left or right talk show hosts to promote it and not a bunch of left or right blogs to hype it

(particularly because some blogs won't run posts unless all ideas fit a certain viewpoint).

The book is *Resurrecting Democracy*, by Robert A. Levine (who also writes on TMV as a Guest Voice columnist). And don't let its subtitle, "A Citizens Call for a Centrist Third Party" fool you. No, this is not yet another pie-in-the-sky book written by someone wanting a third party, not one more seeming political intellectual exercise that totally ignores the realities about events and how our system's set up favors the two parties, interest groups and lobbyists. In fact, Levine's genius is that his book comes alive — due to meticulous research about news stories and event and easy to grasp yet not condescending info about the American political system works. He makes his pitch for a third party hard to put down for any political junkie, or anyone even remotely interested in politics.

A Vietnam vet and a Columbia history major who became a medical doctor, Levine tackles the issue of knee-jerk partisanship (which often ends in the emphasis of the second word in that three word phrase), a system corrupted by lobbyists and big money, gridlock — and more. His key argument — skillfully crafted and made — is that it'll take a new centrist party to restore democracy to a more pristine, responsive, effective and productive form. *Resurrecting Democracy* reads like a solid, engrossing newspaper column rather than a dry academic treatise or yet one more book about third parties that isn't grounded in political or institutional reality. Levine enlightens rather than talks down or panders to his readers.

It's a must own for political junkies, political activists of all parties, journalists, partisans but especially for Americans of all kinds who feel our political system has become corrupt and inert and who wonder why and what might be done about it.

If you don't believe me, how about this review on Amazon.com written by Carl Stern (former NBC News correspondent). "It is hard to believe so much useful information is packed into one book. Dr. Levine whom I have known for 50 years has assembled a primer on the sclerotic condition of the American political system and prescribed the therapy it needs to get back on its feet..."

How much do I like *Resurrecting Democracy*? I'm going to gift my copy to a friend — and then order the eBook copy so it'll be on my Kindle, which I carry with me when I travel. It's worth reading, re-reading and using as a reference. I bet Dr. Levine got an "A" in history — and I'm giving it five stars on TMV's scale of five stars (but it deserves a 10).

The book edition: