



No Billionaire Left Behind: Satirical Activism in America

Angelique Haugerud

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Growing economic inequality, corporate influence in politics, an eroding middle class. Many Americans leave it to politicians and the media to debate these topics in the public sphere. Yet other seemingly ordinary Americans have decided to enter the conversation of wealth in America by donning ball gowns, tiaras, tuxedos, and top hats and taking on the imagined roles of wealthy, powerful, and completely fictional characters. Why? In *No Billionaire Left Behind*, Angelique Haugerud, who embedded herself within the "Billionaires" and was granted the name "Ivana Itall," explores the inner workings of these faux billionaires and mines the depths of democracy's relationship to political humor, satire, and irony.

No Billionaire Left Behind is a compelling investigation into how satirical activists tackle two of the most contentious topics in contemporary American political culture: the increasingly profound division of wealth in America, and the role of big money in electoral politics. Anthropologist and author Angelique Haugerud deftly charts the evolution of a group named the Billionaires—a prominent network of satirists and activists who make a mockery of wealth in America—along with other satirical groups and figures to puzzle out their impact on politics and public opinion. In the spirit of popular programs like *The Colbert Report* and *The Daily Show*, the Billionaires demonstrate a sophisticated knowledge of economics and public affairs through the lens of satire and humor. Through participant observation, interviews, and archival research, Haugerud provides the first ethnographic study of the power and limitations of this evolving form of political organizing in this witty exploration of one group's efforts to raise hope and inspire action in America's current political climate.



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