



Clarion Review

Essays

Voiceover...Sanity in the Age of Madness: A Baby Boomer's Look at Today's Culture

John Sponcia

CreateSpace

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Three Stars (out of Five)

John Sponcia, a former Ford Motor Company executive and dealership owner in his sixties, began writing a blog of personal musings in June 2009. Eighteen months later, at the behest of friends and readers, he compiled his posts into an easy-to-read, 250-page book of opinions about contemporary issues and reflections on his parents and their generation.

Sponcia has a keen eye for the ubiquity of incongruity and ironic humor that permeates modern life, and his opinions are probably shared by a large percentage of his peers. His political views are all over the map, and he unequivocally purports a clear dislike for both parties and all politicians, with one exception. Vice President Joe Biden is one of his favorite people, and his respect for Biden's outspokenness is a recurring theme. Conversely, he vehemently dislikes Sarah Palin and Nancy Pelosi.

Sponcia takes issue with literally hundreds of aspects of American society in the twenty-first century, from piercings to airlines to customer service. Unfortunately, much of what he writes about has been lambasted before, and his spin is neither unique nor creative. For example, he writes in a chapter directed at the Facebook community that you should not include private, internal feelings that are incomplete sentences, your plans for the day, complaints about your life, or random comments.

When writing about his life and family, Sponcia is at his best. He writes with feeling about a period of unemployment he endured in the mid 1970s, and his poignant reminiscing about his parents is a joy to read. Sponcia's father, a hard-working Italian American who raised four sons, passed away during the author's blogging period, offering a special poignancy to these posts. Also well done are his posts about patriotism and his travels.

Voiceover... Sanity in the Age of Madness will find a receptive audience among late middle-aged, working-class men with strong feelings about modern life and culture. Students of

sociology might also find it useful as a glimpse into the mind of a fairly typical baby boomer born in the late 1940s.

Patty Sutherland