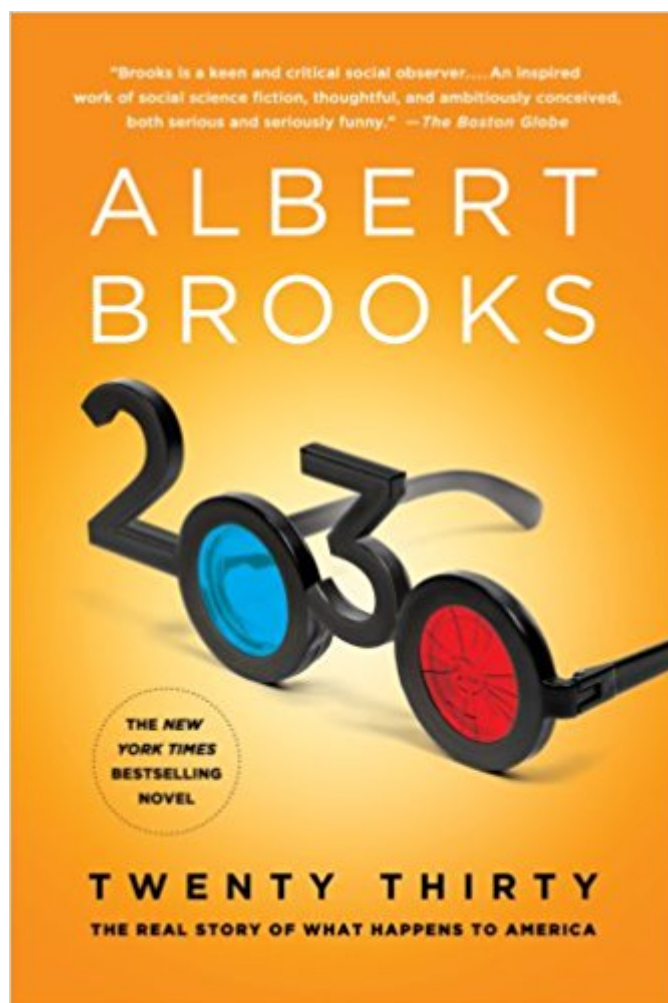


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# 2030: The Real Story Of What Happens To America



## Synopsis

Is this what's in store? June 12, 2030 started out like any other day in memory— and by then, memories were long. Since cancer had been cured fifteen years before, America's population was aging rapidly. That sounds like good news, but consider this: millions of baby boomers, with a big natural predator picked off, were sucking dry benefits and resources that were never meant to hold them into their eighties and beyond. Young people around the country simmered with resentment toward "the olds" and anger at the treadmill they could never get off of just to maintain their parents' entitlement programs. But on that June 12th, everything changed: a massive earthquake devastated Los Angeles, and the government, always teetering on the edge of bankruptcy, was unable to respond. The fallout from the earthquake sets in motion a sweeping novel of ideas that pits national hope for the future against assurances from the past and is peopled by a memorable cast of refugees and billionaires, presidents and revolutionaries, all struggling to find their way. In 2030, Albert Brooks' all-too-believable, dystopian imagining of where today's challenges could lead us tomorrow makes gripping and thought-provoking reading.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Comedian and filmmaker Brooks welcomes the reader to the year 2030 in his smart and surprisingly serious debut. Cancer has been cured, global warming is an acknowledged reality, people have robot companions, and the president is a Jew--and oy vey does he have his hands full with an earthquake-leveled Los Angeles and a growing movement by the young to exterminate the elderly. And when the Chinese offer to rebuild L.A. in exchange for a half-ownership stake in Southern

California, President Bernstein is faced with a decision that will alter the future of America. Brooks's sweeping narrative encompasses a diverse cast of characters, including an 80-year-old Angelino left homeless by the earthquake, a trust fund brat with a grudge against the elderly, and a teenage girl saddled with debt after her father's death, all of whom get brought together just in time for a climactic hostage crisis. Brooks's mordant vision encompasses the future of politics, medicine, entertainment, and daily living, resulting in a novel as entertaining as it is thought provoking, like something from the imagination of a borscht belt H.G. Wells. (May) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“With 2030 Mr. Brooks has made the nervy move of transposing his worrywart sensibility from film to book. Two things are immediately apparent about his debut novel: that it's as purposeful as it is funny, and that Mr. Brooks has immersed himself deeply in its creation.”

“The novel is a revelation, painting a caustic, unsettling and only occasionally comic portrait of a country plumb down on its luck.”

“Los Angeles Times”

“Albert Brooks is a keen and critical social observer...His first novel is an inspired work of social science fiction, thoughtful and ambitiously conceived, both serious and seriously funny.”

“Boston Globe”

“Comedian and filmmaker Brooks welcomes the reader to the year 2030 in his smart and surprisingly serious debut....Brooks's mordant vision encompasses the future of politics, medicine, entertainment, and daily living, resulting in a novel as entertaining as it is thought provoking, like something from the imagination of a borscht belt H.G. Wells.”

“Publishers Weekly”

“An intriguing vision of America's future.”

“Library Journal”

“Required reading!”

“New York Post”

“As a comedian and filmmaker, the very gifted Albert Brooks has specialized for more than 30 years in cooking up quandaries with no ready solution except humiliation. His often ingenious first novel is no exception.”

“New York Times Book Review”

“Brooks's vision of the future is credible and compelling.”

“Booklist”

I have always loved Albert Brooks' humor so I thought I'd buy his debut novel. I was mildly interested in the premise but I ended up being totally blown away by this book. The multiple subplots are fueled by fascinating characters -- from the president of the United States who has a crush on his female Treasury secretary to a brilliant Chinese health care visionary to a young woman saddled with health care debt due to her father's illness and her revolutionary boyfriend who wants justice for the young whom he believes are being taken advantage of by the "olds" (anyone

over 70) -- this book was so engrossing I could not stop reading it. I would even snatch a few paragraphs while waiting for a light to turn green. This book not only makes several profound points about the potential direction of our country, it also is just plain FUN to read. He includes imaginative and ingenuous details about life in the future that make for a fascinating read. But in the end, Brooks' vision of the future is eerily prophetic. This breakout novel does not disappoint!

This is a realistic sci-fi peek at a particular historical timeline involving US history- a convergence of technological & supernatural forces that reshape the United States in a not too distant future. Written in 2011, Brooks takes us on a tour of technological changes that reshape American society- plus a full blown natural catastrophe. The protagonist of the novel is the president of the United States, the tragedy is Los Angeles. Many issues to ponder in this scary, yet humorous book. sample dialogue [no spoilers!]:  
"I see. Are you in love with him?"  
"Am I in love with him?"  
"When you repeat a question it always means no."  
"It means no?"  
"Boy, you really don't like this guy."  
"And they kissed and kissed again and both felt as if they were blessed by God, though neither believed there was one. It's amazing how fast you can turn on someone when he disappoints you so much more...."

After seeing the movie Real Life foretell of the all-pervasive reality television world we live in today by twenty or so years, I was keenly interested in reading Albert Brooks' novel 2030: The Real Story of What Happens to America. I loved this novel for so many reasons. Mr. Brooks has a unique ability to look into the future and see a world that, although slightly "out there," is not at all hard to imagine. It's a world where some of today's current problems are solved, but because those things no longer exist, there are new and perhaps even bigger issues at hand. And it all makes perfect sense. I found it amazing that I could actually hear Albert Brooks saying the words the characters say. The way he makes me laugh out loud in his movies made me laugh out loud when reading the book. But humor aside, it's also an incredibly smart, fascinating, scary, and completely believable. Mr. Brooks has such a unique point of view in movies and clearly that point of view comes through loud and clear (and brilliantly) in this novel. I highly recommend this as a funny, yet thought-provoking read.

Although written as a futuristic novel, this book has a lot of very real connections to today's America. The total destruction a big natural event could cause a city and country, the need for a workable, multi-dimensional healthcare system, the disparity between ages and income, and the need to

remove boundaries between people are just some of these connections. Glad I read it.

It's science fiction, and it deals with the future, but it's not the far future. For most of us it's our future, and we'll be living through it, and it's a perfect storm of all of our tendencies to put off until tomorrow what we could work on today rising up to bite us. Albert Brooks (the writer, actor and director) has come up with an all too realistic vision of the America that's sitting out there only 18 years away. The back cover tells us "its sooner than you think...it isn't what you imagine...it's already started, but you can't feel it yet...it's what happens to America." And it's chilling. Medical costs have skyrocketed, even with universal coverage, but there are deductibles and payments that have to be made. Young people are becoming resentful that they are being asked to shoulder all the burdens, while the "olds," now freed from some of the most deadly diseases, are actively seeking new life prolonging treatments, paid for from the common pool (in most cases by the still-working young). The tax burden is enormous and the anger is not only becoming organized, but it's growing violent, and the slogan "enough is enough" has started to take on a whole new meaning. Powerful lobbyists continue to support the interests of the retired, but begin to realize this road is getting more and more unstable all the time. At a time when things seem not to be able to get any worse, mother nature decides to throw an extremely nasty curve ball that requires funds beyond anything previously seen. A major US city is in shambles, with no funds to restore it, people with nowhere to live, insurance companies defunct, city budgets gone, murder rates are sky rocketing, and to add insult to injury, China slams the door, finally deciding that no more money will be loaned to the US. But...they have a proposal. "people needed money, and those who had any were at risk. And there was just plain crazy behavior. Men getting wildly drunk and fighting to the death. It was as if an entire city had post traumatic stress disorder, and no one was equipped to deal with it." "What now? The old and the young are on a collision course, and it's really ugly out there. The streets are not safe. The money is gone and there's no more to be had. It was pay now or pay later, but later has arrived, and it's hideous. But there IS a solution, one that will change everything we believe we know about what it means to be America. And chances are you won't like it. Brooks brings a real sense of the way folks interact with one another, making him an excellent storyteller. The reader really feels things are happening right now. There are a few places where the future has shifted since the book hit the shelves (always a danger in close-to-current-time science fiction), which are likely to be corrected in the next edition, but by and large, the news seems to flow directly from today into the 2030 scenario seamlessly, and the reader shifts accordingly. 2030 becomes real. Our near-future choices are going to be real-time examples of "living in interesting

times" but most readers aren't going to see this proposed solution coming. It's bound to make even the most confident futurist do a double-take, and for those who want an America true to its roots, but don't want to change how anything is done now, it's a very alarming wake up call.

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