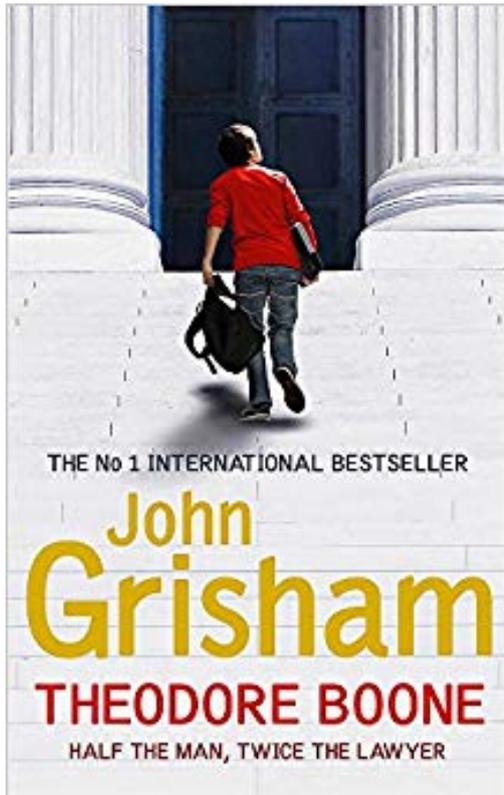


Theodore Boone *by* John Grisham



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Reviews of the [Theodore Boone](#) *by* John Grisham

MilsoN

This book sucks, plain and simple. I could use fancier language, but why bother? Grisham didn't bother so I won't either. He admits in his brief author's note at the end of this dreadful novel that he hates doing research and reserves the right to just make stuff up if he can't get the info he wants with a single phone call. He also claims to have rewritten this book "four times" but if that's the case, why is it so awful? I guess four times just wasn't enough.

His main character is just an excuse for him to spend hundreds of pages explaining to each reader how mass torts work and criticizing the lawyers who engage in it. Criticizing greedy lawyers is as obvious as criticizing genocidal dictators, so he gets no points for that. He should have been capable of creating a main character who made us feel something -- ANYTHING! -- and inspired us to root for him to succeed or root against him and want him to fail. I felt nothing for this man even once, in 470 pages. We learn hardly anything about him except that he's extremely stupid and credulous and greedy as hell. It was obvious that he was in for a fall, and obvious when the fall was coming and how it would happen. The female characters are a joke. He has a girlfriend he's supposed to be so in love with, but we see no evidence (ha ha!) of that anywhere. After he makes it big, he dates a mysterious supermodel about whom we discover nothing. Maybe she's bisexual, maybe she isn't. The main character never even asks her, so if he doesn't care and Grisham doesn't even care, why should we? The tidbit exists for no reason.

Basically, this entire book feels like an outline that Grisham simply added more words to. The main character gets a mysterious offer from a mysterious man, gets rich overnight, breaks up with this girlfriend, rises, falls, gets the girl back, the end. Sorry if I just spoiled it for you, but if you spend -- excuse me, I mean WASTE -- any time reading this, you will quickly realize that there is no more to the story than this. It's pretty much spoiler-proof, because not much actually happens. I read it expecting to at least be entertained (and, I should add, because I was stuck in a situation where I had nothing else to read). There's zero character development for anyone, from the main character on down. In fact, several characters feel like the same cookie-cutters Grisham used in previous novels but with name changes. The main character's dad is a lawyer with a drinking problem who lost his license and is in every other respect pretty much identical to Lucien Wilbanks in *A Time to Kill: A Novel*. (Which is, I might add, a book by John Grisham that is actually quite good. He can clearly write if he puts some effort into it. This book often feels like just an excuse to show off how much time John Grisham has spent vacationing in the Caribbean.)

Oh, you might notice I keep referring to the main character without ever putting in his name. That's because I've already forgotten what it is. That should sum things up for you.

Broadraven

Another Grisham book ticked off my list. I don't remember having read this one before. The author has blended his usual mix of courtroom drama, rich lawyers and powerful companies in this novel. It will have you hooked until the last page.

I actually preferred this novel to *The Street Lawyer* which I also read recently. I didn't like the way that Grisham had focused on charity/benevolent work amongst the homeless almost as a selfish pursuit for the young lawyer to find himself. This novel, however, was different--it is totally secular with no real mention of faith/God or anything similar. Sometimes it is better not to try and mix the spiritual with the secular unless you are going to be accurate and ensure you represent the right principles.

This novel tells the story of Clay, a young lawyer struggling to make a name for himself at a little known firm. He is approached apparently randomly by a man who promises riches and fame if he follows his instructions to the letter. The requirements seem at first to be ethical and Clay is drawn into the web. He becomes a millionaire and the King of Torts leading mass civil litigation where-ever it exists. But it all seems a little too good to be true.....

The biblical principles in this novel are obvious. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. The rich man went away sad when Jesus suggested he should give up his wealth. Another man stored up wealth in barns but was called a fool when God took his life and he wasn't prepared to meet his Maker. We are told not to love the world or anything in the world. There are numerous warnings about those who choose money over God. Even from a less religious perspective we know that absolute power corrupts absolutely....

Most people are chasing money in some form or another. The point that this novel makes is that even when one gains more of it than they know what to do with. They will not be happy. It brings out the consequences in terms of friendships, relationships, health and just generally the emptiness of a life focused on temporary things that will be worthless in eternity.

This is a good book for those who believe that if they get that promotion, that new house, that new car or whatever it might be, it will satisfy. It won't.

There is some bad language and violence but nothing graphic. There are sexual inferences and some lude remarks but again not graphic.

What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world yet loses his own soul.

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