



Poison Tea: How Big Oil and Big Tobacco Invented the Tea Party and Captured the GOP

Jeff Nesbit

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“*Poison Tea* shines a spotlight on the shadowy Koch brother network and reveals hidden connections between the tobacco industry, the reclusive billionaire brothers, and the Tea Party movement. It’s a major story that for too long has been underreported and poorly understood.”—REP. HENRY WAXMAN, a former chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee

How did today’s Tea Party movement really come to be? Did it suddenly appear in 2009 as a spontaneous response to Barack Obama and health-care reform? Or was its true purpose and history something far different. Was it in fact a careful, strategic effort by two of the planet’s wealthiest individuals, the tobacco industry, and other corporate interests to remake the government and seize control of one of our two national parties, ultimately gaining both the White House and Congress?

Jeff Nesbit was in the room at the beginning of the unholy alliance between representatives of the world’s largest private oil company and the planet’s largest public tobacco company. There, they planned for a grassroots national political movement—one that would later be known as the Tea Party—that would promote their own corporate interests and political goals.

Drawing from his own experience as well as from troves of recently released internal tobacco industry documents, Nesbit reveals the long game that these corporate giants have played to become a dominant force in American politics.

Poison Tea: How Big Oil and Big Tobacco Invented the Tea Party and Captured the GOP Details

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From Reader Review Poison Tea: How Big Oil and Big Tobacco Invented the Tea Party and Captured the GOP for online ebook

Alex says

Extremely interesting and important information about big money interests funding the rise of the Tea Party. However, the book is poorly written, lacks overall structure, and is very repetitive.

Chris says

This book just reinforces what many of us already knew, at least to some degree. Thanks to Goodreads for the opportunity to have my eyes further opened.

Susan Paxton says

While many sources still claim that the "tea party" movement started spontaneously from Rick Santelli's infantile rant on CNBC, the fact is that the astroturf foundations had been laid long before - and, surprisingly, laid in part by the tobacco industry during their fight against the regulation of the poison they themselves sold. Nesbit, with years of experience in journalism and some in government (he was, among other things, Vice President Quayle's communications director), is well placed to track the leads and tell the story, which he does in both an accurate and even-tempered manner (I have no clue after reading the book what his political opinions are, not the usual case with a book of this sort). Ironically, in some ways events got ahead of Nesbit; his predictions on the presidential race have proven totally wrongheaded, largely due to the arrival on scene of a wealthy and egomaniac billionaire. He also fails, in my view, to emphasize that a good deal of the current activity of the Koch-controlled organizations behind the "tea party" are now aimed at state and local issues, with increasingly dangerous and noxious results. Good and important reading, with useful footnotes and a detailed bibliography.

Lee Parker says

I received a copy of this for free though Goodreads First Reads.

DNF - I could not finish. I got about half way through and just had to put it down. There is really nothing there to hold your interest if you aren't into the subject.

Crabby McGrouchpants says

This is not a fun book.

Koch Industries is the 2nd largest company in the world, and the "Kochtopus" has been ensnaring its tentacles, through a trial-and-error process, into what we call U.S. Government for the past 30 years+.

What's really hilarious, is that Big Daddy Koch — a failure who wouldn't have succeeded any other way — decided to go into business with Stalin's Russia to make a go of it in the oil biz. Funny thing was though, this Stalin guy was prone to purges, and killed off all Big Daddy Koch's men!

Unfortunately, nobody total B.D. Koch that might happen, or that he might have recourse to action if he had traded with, say, France.

Which wouldn't have made him an oil success.

Or wasn't the other opposing superpower in a nuclear-armageddon stalemate the whole planet was caught up in.

Or would have just *fired* his men, not *killed* them —not that that was Big Daddy's Koch's fault!

Well, you can imagine: being a **Bitch with No Balls™** (people'd who'd seen Big Daddy Koch with his pants down considered it a *medical miracle* he'd sired kids at all!), the fucking coward decided it was "Government's" fault.

No shit.

So.

True to form, his sons grew up and *pissed all over everything!*

They decided they were Libertarians (whatever *that* means, nowadays — usually though, it means "not believing in finite resources or knowing where things come from") and started funding persons, places and things like George Mason University's center for **Fuckwithery**, and other learning institutions, to inculcate **Free-Marketdom** or **Useless Taxationing & Regulatory Dismantling Theory** — usually offered in a "101" course that dares not go any further (or runs out of steam, and therefore *couldn't*).

Nonetheless though, when these boys aren't busy going to court with their other two siblings or fightin' over what Ma's gonna leave to who, they're pretending they know a thing or two, namely everything *but* that Nichola Tesla solved our energy problems a century ago, which would mean free energy for everybody, if it hadn't "escaped his mighty intellect that nobody can make any money from an invention like that."

Instead, they've plunging forthwith into the other direction *away* from "finite-resources beliefs," making good pals like that guy Pence, who's one of three-or-so people who make it into top, closed-door meetings the boys hold with only their most private intimates and confidantes well above the rabble.

Thankfully for Their Team, the House has been locked up 'til 2020 due to redistricting for Republicans, and steps are being taken to gut the census's ability to function in advance of that far-off date.

Huh.

Nesbit does a great job of walking you through it.

'Specially since you though the Tea Party *wasn't* the brainchild of big tobacco and oil — *didn't you?* — a sum-total conception after years and years of accumulated plans & maneuvers, some abandoned, some cannibalized, some working along the way, some not . . . well, as it turns out, *this* one fits the bill.

So . . . who's surprised they're trying to get rid of *Obamacare*, for example?

You goddamn well *shouldn't* be, unless you're a chimpanzee or an orangutan or a buffalo chip, and therefore not sentient.

Don't say you weren't prepared!

For all the fat lot of good it'll do you.

Maybe.

And everybody around you.

Perhaps.

Adam says

An alright book about the collusion of Big Money and politics. A little boring though unless you are a political science major.

Janice says

Very interesting, well researched book, a good read.

Jeanne Mixon says

I don't like conspiracy theories because I don't believe that most people (or governments) are organized enough, focussed enough, rich enough to pursue them so it takes a lot to convince me that a conspiracy theory is true. This book completely convinced me with tremendous research and documentation that there has been (and is) a conspiracy to take over our government by self interested wealthy soulless people and corporations (who are people also apparently).

To start this review over: Who are the Koch brothers and where did they come from and why am I reading about them all the time? What else was Big Tobacco up to besides poisoning all of us with nicotine? Why do all of the proponents of keeping our guns, smoking our baccy and drill baby drilling sound the same? and what is the ultimate goal of the conspiracy?

This book answers all of those questions. Now I want to see his next book: how it all fell apart.

