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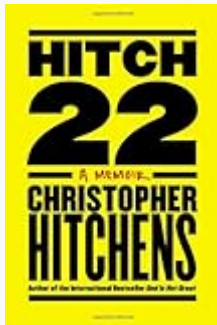
Books June 2010

Two-headed Hitchens

by Christopher Caldwell

A review of *Hitch-22: A Memoir* by Christopher Hitchens

BOOKS IN THIS ARTICLE



Christopher Hitchens

Hitch-22: A Memoir

Twelve, 448 pages, \$26.99

In one of the odder passages in his memoir, *Hitch-22*, the prolific Anglo-American journalist Christopher Hitchens defines a meaningful life as one that includes “friendship, love, irony, humor, parenthood, literature, and music, and the chance to take part in battles for the liberation of others.” This doesn’t add up. Battling for the liberation of others is a vocation for those who are committed, unbending, and (too often) humorless; irony is the mood of the wit, the cynic, the fellow who is putting you on. For four decades, Hitchens has tried both. He writes lapidary, aphoristic, and even hilarious essays on questions that he presents as no laughing matter.

So which is the real Hitchens? The salon wag or the Jeremiah? Should we think of him primarily as a creative writer or as a logic-chopper? These questions became more pressing after Hitchens changed from a Trotskyite supporter of Third World...

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