If Mayors Ruled the World - Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities

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"In the face of the most perilous challenges of our time--climate change, terrorism, poverty, and trafficking of drugs, guns, and people--the nations of the world seem paralyzed. The problems are too big for governments to deal with. Benjamin Barber contends that cities, and the mayors who run them, can do and are doing a better job than nations. He cites the unique qualities cities worldwide share: pragmatism, civic trust, participation, indifference to borders and sovereignty, and a democratic penchant for networking, creativity, innovation, and cooperation. He demonstrates how city mayors, singly and jointly, are responding to transnational problems more effectively than nation-states mired in ideological infighting and sovereign rivalries. The book features profiles of a dozen mayors around the world, making a persuasive case that the city is democracy's best hope in a globalizing world, and that great mayors are already proving that this is so"--

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Can cities solve the biggest problems of the twenty-first century better than nations? Is the city democracy's best hope?"

SUMMARY - If Mayors Ruled The World: Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities By Benjamin R. Barber

* Our summary is short, simple and pragmatic. It allows you to have the essential ideas of a big book in less than 30 minutes. By reading this summary, you will discover the thesis of Benjamin Barber, an American professor of political science. He seeks to demonstrate that a new form of
international governance is possible, based on the example of connected cities that form networks and represented by the mayors who lead them. This "glocal" mode of governance would make it possible to overcome the logic of sovereign competition between nation-states. You will also discover that: Cities are the original level of human organization; Cities can be autonomous and demonstrate their strengths; There are concrete, local solutions to international problems; Cities are bound to evolve greatly as globalization and technological advances occur; "In this book, it is illustrated that "freedom is municipal", as Tocqueville wrote in his portrait of American democracy. It is in cities that we are born, grow up, learn and survive. Most cities are much older than the states in which they exist today. They have many assets, such as promoting creativity, consensus and exchange. On the other hand, it would seem that some of their shortcomings, such as lack of sovereignty and independence, have become the keys to a possible new mode of governance. *Buy now the summary of this book for the modest price of a cup of coffee!

**A Mayor's Life - Governing New York's Gorgeous Mosaic**

How did a scrawny black kid -- the son of a barber and a domestic who grew up in Harlem and Trenton -- become the 106th mayor of New York City? It's a remarkable journey. David Norman Dinkins was born in 1927, joined the Marine Corps in the waning days of World War II, went to Howard University on the G.I. Bill, graduated cum laude with a degree in mathematics in 1950, and married Joyce Burrows, whose father, Daniel Burrows, had been a state assemblyman well-versed in the workings of New York's political machine. It was his father-in-law who suggested the young mathematician might make an even better politician once he also got his law degree. The political career of David Dinkins is set against the backdrop of the rising influence of a broader demographic in New York politics, including far greater segments of the city's "gorgeous mosaic." After a brief stint as a New York assemblyman, Dinkins was nominated as a deputy mayor by Abe Beame in 1973, but ultimately declined because he had not filed his income tax returns on time. Down but not out, he pursued his dedication to public service, first by serving as city clerk. In 1986, Dinkins was elected Manhattan borough president, and in 1989, he defeated Ed Koch and Rudy Giuliani to become mayor of New York City, the largest American city to elect an African American mayor. As the newly-elected mayor of a city in which crime had risen precipitously in the years prior to his taking office, Dinkins vowed to attack the problems and not the victims. Despite facing a budget deficit, he hired thousands of police officers, more than any other mayoral administration in the twentieth century, and launched the "Safe Streets, Safe City" program, which fundamentally changed how police fought crime. For the first time in decades, crime rates began to fall -- a trend that continues to this day. Among his other major successes, Mayor Dinkins brokered a deal that kept the US Open Tennis Championships in New York -- bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to the city annually -- and launched the revitalization of Times Square after decades of decay, all the while deflecting criticism and some outright racism with a seemingly unflappable demeanor. Criticized by some for his handling of the Crown Heights riots in 1991, Dinkins describes in these pages a very different version of events. A Mayor's Life is a revealing look at a devoted public servant and a New Yorker in love with his city, who led that city during tumultuous times.

**Cool Cities - Urban Sovereignty and the Fix for Global Warming**
A pointed argument that cities—not nation-states—can and must take the lead in fighting climate change. Climate change is the most urgent challenge we face in an interdependent world where independent nations have grown increasingly unable to cooperate effectively on sustainability. In this book, renowned political theorist Benjamin R. Barber describes how cities, by assuming important aspects of sovereignty, can take the lead from faltering nation states in fighting climate change. Barber argues that with more than half the world's population now in urban areas, where 80 percent of both GDP and greenhouse gas emissions are generated, cities are the key to the future of democracy and sustainability. In this compelling sequel to If Mayors Ruled the World, Barber assesses both broad principles of urban rights and specific strategies of sustainability such as fracking bans, walkable cities, above-ground mining of precious resources, energy and heating drawn from garbage incineration, downtown wind turbines, and skyscrapers built from wood. He shows how cities working together on climate change, despite their differences in wealth, development, and culture, can find common measures by which to evaluate the radically different policies they pursue. This is a book for a world in which bold cities are collaborating to combat climate change and inspire hope for democracy even as reactionary populists take over national governments in the United States and Europe. It calls for a new social contract among citizens and municipalities to secure not only their sustainability but their survival.

**Jihad vs. McWorld - Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy**

Jihad vs. McWorld is a groundbreaking work, an elegant and illuminating analysis of the central conflict of our times: consumerist capitalism versus religious and tribal fundamentalism. These diametrically opposed but strangely intertwined forces are tearing apart—and bringing together—the world as we know it, undermining democracy and the nation-state on which it depends. On the one hand, consumer capitalism on the global level is rapidly dissolving the social and economic barriers between nations, transforming the world's diverse populations into a blandly uniform market. On the other hand, ethnic, religious, and racial hatreds are fragmenting the political landscape into smaller and smaller tribal units. Jihad vs. McWorld is the term that distinguished writer and political scientist Benjamin R. Barber has coined to describe the powerful and paradoxical interdependence of these forces. In this important new book, he explores the alarming repercussions of this potent dialectic for democracy. A work of persuasive originality and penetrating insight, Jihad vs. McWorld holds up a sharp, clear lens to the dangerous chaos of the post-Cold War world. Critics and political leaders have already heralded Benjamin R. Barber's work for its bold vision and moral courage. Jihad vs. McWorld is an essential text for anyone who wants to understand our troubled present and the crisis threatening our future.

**Strong Democracy - Participatory Politics for a New Age**

"One of the chosen few: an enduring contribution to democratic thought."—Bruce Ackerman, Sterling Professor of Law and Political Science, Yale University

**The Nation City - Why Mayors Are Now Running the World**
Cities are the most ancient political institutions, dating back thousands of years—and they have reemerged as the nation-states of our time. Mayors are accountable to their voters to a greater degree than any other elected officials. Emanuel, himself a two-term mayor of Chicago, illuminates how progressives and centrists alike can best accomplish their goals by focusing their energies on local politics. He provides examples to show how cities are improving education, infrastructure, job conditions, and environmental policy at a local level. -- adapted from jacket

**Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole**

"Powerful and disturbing. No one who cares about the future of our public life can afford to ignore this book." —Jackson Lears A powerful sequel to Benjamin R. Barber's best-selling Jihad vs. McWorld, Consumed offers a vivid portrait of an overproducing global economy that targets children as consumers in a market where there are never enough shoppers and where the primary goal is no longer to manufacture goods but needs. To explain how and why this has come about, Barber brings together extensive empirical research with an original theoretical framework for understanding our contemporary predicament. He asserts that in place of the Protestant ethic once associated with capitalism—encouraging self-restraint, preparing for the future, protecting and self-sacrificing for children and community, and other characteristics of adulthood—we are constantly being seduced into an "infantilist" ethic of consumption.