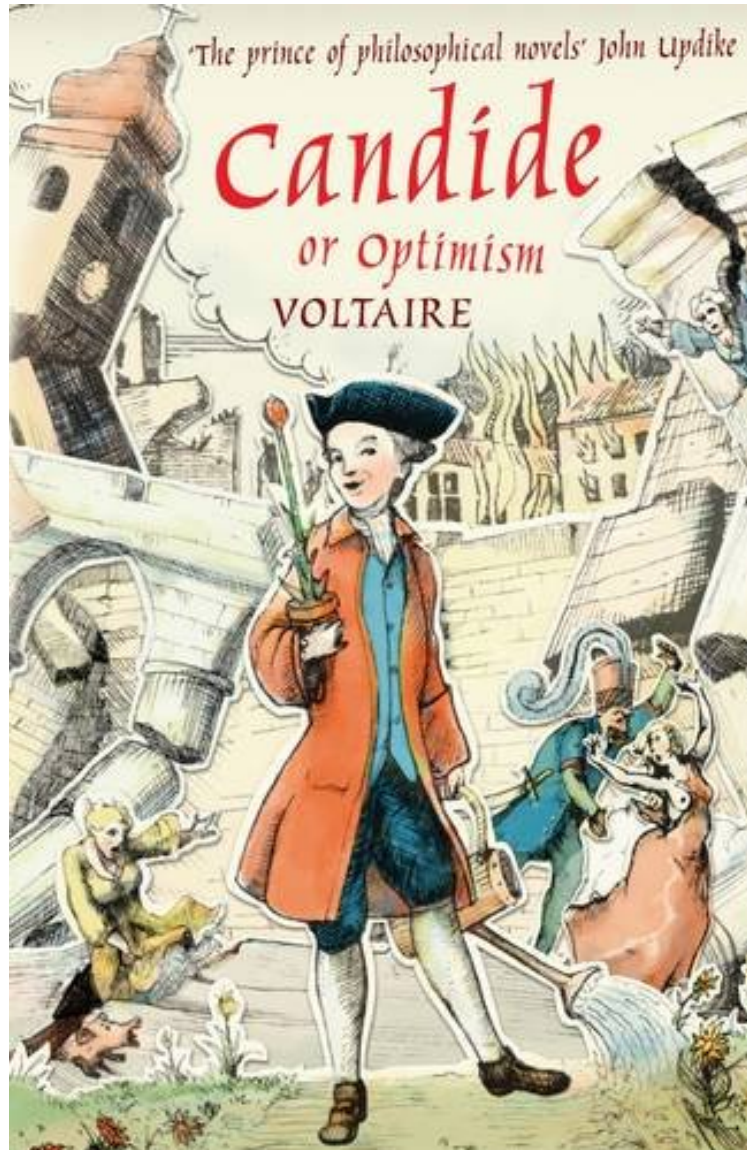


Candide, or Optimism

Voltaire

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Voltaire : Candide, or Optimism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Candide, or Optimism:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. he takes great pains to ridicule the writings of both Milton and ...By CustomerVoltaire had an interesting and sometimes tumultuous relation with "The Church" and religious thought of his time. In Candide, he takes great pains to ridicule the writings of both Milton and Alexander Pope, more specifically the latter in An Essay on Man, in which both writers attempt to "vindicate the ways of God to man". To understand

this, or better, to have read these writings will further illuminate what Voltaire is attempting in *Candide*. *Candide* is the protagonist and is a seemingly good-hearted but rather simple fellow whose mentor, Pangloss, teaches him that no matter what happens it is always for the best. As a note, pay attention to each of the main characters names as they seem to me to have a descriptive quality to them, e.g. Pan, meaning "all" and gloss from the Greek glossa, meaning tongue, to get a name that roughly means "all talk". The story begins with *Candide* and his love interest being suddenly separated and the events of his life from there. What follows in the story is a series of horrible events mixed with some virtuous ones that Pangloss continuously explains to *Candide* that whatever happens is for the best. Even if you have no philosophical interest, the book is both funny and sad, entertaining yet thought provoking with a couple of memorable passages. I consider it a pretty good read and, as a bonus, a quick one. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. was it from seeing me chased from their beautiful castle? And the response he gets is ...By Shane *Candide* is one of my top ten novels due to just how hilarious and sarcastic of a work it is. It is very tongue-in-cheek, and a must read for anyone who enjoys classic/world literature. Voltaire holds back zero punches in this work, and his condemnation of politics, war, religion, and social status drips through the pages. For just an example of also how brutal Voltaire gets within this work, there is a passage where *Candide* asks, But what did she die of...was it from seeing me chased from their beautiful castle? And the response he gets is like a round-house kick to *Candide's* moronic Disney like world view. No...She was disembowelled by Bulgar Soldiers... There is more to the passage, but my point is there are many moments like this through the work where *Candide* has this beautiful idea of how the world is supposed to be, and then his perceptions are shattered in some pretty horrific ways. There are zero dull moments in this work, but it is also a very quick read. All of the horrors, and comedy (this is def a dark comedy) leads to a well thought out point. I wont spoil it here for other readers, but the ending is actually a happy one. Voltaire illustrates superb writing skills within the simple fact that he can write about such insane and gruesome events throughout almost the whole book, but end the whole dark sandwich with a peaceful, almost Zen like calm. I give this little book five out of five stars. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. One of the best satires By tkI have read *Candide* before. Without hesitation, I claim it is one of the two best satires I've read in my life (the other being *A Connecticut Yankee* by Mark Twain). I was looking for more work by Voltaire and once I saw this book on my suggestions only for \$5, I jumped on it. This book not only has *Candide* and *Zadig*, his two major stories, but a lot of shorter satires that are as brilliant as the novels. Voltaire, in 18th century France, was a prolific satirical writer and defender of civil liberties and freedom of thought. Voltaire rips on the aristocracies around the world (not just French!), religion, ignorance and male-dominance; and uplifts liberty, freedom of thought and speech and the scientific method by a "series of unfortunate events" that the protagonist goes through. His subtle wit and satire leave a much stronger mark on the reader than the contemporary empty, loud and goofy comedies. The stories are not just philosophical rants about the author's opinion, rather he exposes the weaker sides of the era's social/religious beliefs, and leaves the interpretation and "moral of the story" to the reader. If you are looking for a hearty laugh, that is also intellectually stimulating, I strongly recommend this book.

Brought up in the household of a powerful Baron, *Candide* is an open-minded young man, whose tutor, Pangloss, has instilled in him the belief that all is for the best'. But when his love for the Baron's rosy-cheeked daughter is discovered, *Candide* is cast out to make his own way in the world. And so he and his various companions begin a breathless tour of Europe, South America and Asia, as an outrageous series of disasters befall them earthquakes, syphilis, a brush with the Inquisition, murder sorely testing the young hero's optimism.

.com Political satire doesn't age well, but occasionally a diatribe contains enough art and universal mirth to survive long after its timeliness has passed. *Candide* is such a book. Penned by that Renaissance man of the Enlightenment, Voltaire, *Candide* is steeped in the political and philosophical controversies of the 1750s. But for the general reader, the novel's driving principle is clear enough: the idea (endemic in Voltaire's day) that we live in the best of all possible worlds, and apparent folly, misery and strife are actually harbingers of a greater good we cannot perceive, is hogwash. Telling the tale of the good-natured but star-crossed *Candide* (think Mr. Magoo armed with deadly force), as he travels the world struggling to be reunited with his love, Lady Cunegonde, the novel smashes such ill-conceived optimism to splinters. *Candide's* tutor, Dr. Pangloss, is steadfast in his philosophical good cheer, in the face of more and more fantastic misfortune; *Candide's* other companions always supply good sense in the nick of time. Still, as he demolishes optimism, Voltaire pays tribute to human resilience, and in doing so gives the book a pleasant indomitability common to farce. Says one character, a princess turned one-buttocked hag by unkind Fate: "I have wanted to kill myself a hundred times, but somehow I am still in love with life. This ridiculous weakness is perhaps one of our most melancholy propensities; for is there anything more stupid than to be eager to go on carrying a burden which one would gladly throw away, to loathe one's very being and yet to hold it fast, to fondle the snake that devours us until it has eaten our hearts away?"--Michael Gerber When we observe such things as the recrudescence of fundamentalism in the United States, the horrors of religious fanaticism in the Middle East, the appalling danger which the stubbornness of political intolerance presents to the whole world, we must surely conclude that we can still profit by the example of

lucidity, the acumen, the intellectual honesty and the moral courage of Voltaire. A. J. Ayer
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