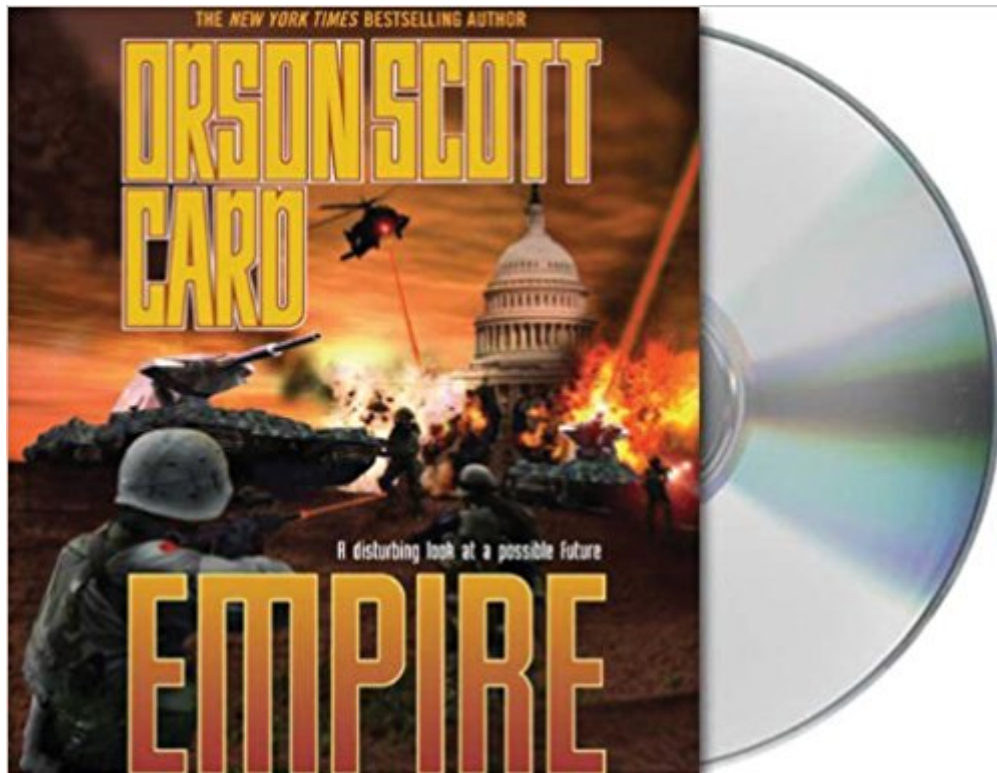




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# Empire



## Synopsis

The American Empire has grown too fast, and the fault lines at home are stressed to the breaking point. The war of words between Right and Left has collapsed into a shooting war, though most people just want to be left alone. The battle rages between the high-technology weapons on one side, and militia foot-soldiers on the other, devastating the cities, and overrunning the countryside. But the vast majority, who only want the killing to stop and the nation to return to more peaceful days, have technology, weapons and strategic geniuses of their own. When the American dream shatters into violence, who can hold the people and the government together? And which side will you be on? Orson Scott Card is a master storyteller, who has earned millions of fans and reams of praise for his previous science fiction and fantasy novels. Now he steps a little closer to the present day with this chilling look at a near future scenario of a new American Civil War.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When the United States stands on the brink of civil war between "blue states" and "red states," Maj. Reuben Malek and Capt. Bartholomew Coleman use their special ops training to maintain the country's unity. With the president and vice president assassinated within minutes of each other, and New York City taken over, the two must figure out who has planned this and how to prevent the growing tension between left and right. Unfortunately, Card's conservative bias seeps into this tale with repeated jabs at "liberal media" and even a guest appearance by Bill O'Reilly helping out the good guys. These juvenile assaults distract from Card's keen storytelling skills. As a co-narrator,

Card sticks mostly to the superfluous job of reading chapter introductions, saving his passion for his afterword, where he lambastes both the left and the right for their extreme and exclusionary acts. Rudnicki makes this audiobook worth attention. His deep sturdy voice provides the rich and engaging narrative that pulls in any listener. He reads the book smoothly, adding energy, characterization and authority to all aspects of the story. Without Rudnicki, this empire crumbles. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Some video-game developers asked Card to write a scenario for "an entertainment franchise . . . about a near-future American civil war." They came to the right man and held off on releasing the game until he completed this relentless thriller, which couldn't be timelier and is, for all its hyperactivity and flip, Hollywoodish one-liners, heartfelt and sobering. Its heroes are two special-ops army officers who keep their oaths to defend the U.S. against all enemies when far too many of their ostensible colleagues have decided to abandon theirs. A rocket hits the west wing of the White House, killing the president, vice-president, and secretary of defense. While those directly responsible are Arabs, the next day, 14-foot-tall, bulletproof, armed globes on mechanical legs, backed by shooters on individual hovercraft, seize New York City by killing anyone in uniform. None of the new attackers looks anything other than American. A "Progressive Restoration" administration is established in the city, and it encourages other cities and states to join it to restore government as it should have been but for the stolen elections of 2000 and 2004. Intriguing plot wrinkles come fore and aft of those basic developments, there are many deftly shaped supporting players, and major shocks explode in a split second (no Stephen King slo-mo for Card!). Moreover, all the action doesn't obscure the author's message about the dangers of extreme political polarization and the need to reassert moderation and mutual citizenship; indeed, it drives it home. Ray OlsonCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I was expecting science fiction from Orson Scott Card. Never having read any of his books before this one, I was curious about him, but since he was very well published I assumed the quality of his work was high. I was not disappointed. It's not what I would call "science fiction" in the classic sense. It's more like political/military fiction, à la Tom Clancy, which is a good thing. I know, from decades of personal experience, that a book is well-written and entertaining if I can see and hear the characters and the scenes in my head, like watching a movie only I can see and hear. I was easily able to do this with "Empire" and its sequel, "Hidden Empire." Considering the current state of

our political system and gearing up for a presidential election roughly a year away, the events depicted in this book are very topical, even though it was written about 9 years ago. If anything, our system is even more polarized now. It's frightening to contemplate hard-liners on both sides taking the law---not to mention, futuristic weaponry--into their own hands to start a second civil war in this country. Glad this was fiction.

As always, Card is spot on with his political assessments. It's almost as if he knew what is going to happen if the extremists don't stop. really liked Cessy and shows that you can be a strong female in a political AND a soft mother. I felt that that the way Card described the settings at the beginning with how the colleges are brainwashing the students is also correct - and not because I saw it on Fox News. I know many college students who have to deal with that politically correct attitude and while looking at colleges for my sons, I'm shocked at how many not only think it is OK to stifle discussion but all out say that if you don't agree, you are wrong. I'm also a huge Ender fan and love the references such as John Paul and the soldiers are Rube's jeesh. I can't wait to see how it expands from there.

Orson Scott Card does nothing if he doesn't thoroughly analyze a topic through his novels. Some may be pure fiction, such as time travel analyzed in Pathfinder and Ruins, stand-ins for the non-fictional such as the Ender series where he analyzes hatred of and hostility towards those who are different (Ender's Game), then dealing with the consequences of how you treat those who are "other", alien or different than you. In Empire and Hidden Empire, Mr. Card reflects on the political chasm of those who are conservative and those who are liberal (red state vs. blue state), a civil war that results from the chasm and a potential leader who views the only solution to that and other global problems is to become a benevolent dictator, albeit one who keeps the form of democracy. For full review: <http://wp.me/p2XCwQ-Yu>

Not what I was expecting after reading the description. The characters are pretty fluid and believable, however the author leaves you guessing who is on what side if at all, even after cementing your opinion of them in the beginning. Too much unbelievable deceptions and a wild conclusions, really takes away from the main story, which is slow to begin and quick to conclude. Interesting idea (I love modern civil war books) but the author just takes it to wildly obscene directions. It was ok, had some good parts, but big picture: meh.

So why did I give it three stars? Because Card, if anything, is readable. In this case the characters were unbelievable and the plot was ridiculous, but it was still readable. I award three stars for anything I enjoy reading while I'm reading it. Far too often I find myself trudging through a poorly written book because I am interested in the plot or characters, but the whole thing seems like a drudge. Card is readable. But this book is poor. It is kind of like when Koontz went off on his Libertarian rants (and I'm Libertarian!) and started weirding out for a while. Now to the specifics. The characters act like no believable persons ever. Period. Ever. Even the protagonist's kids are geniuses. His wife is a liberal genius. He is a conservative genius. Their family is perfect. He has a new co-worker who is a genius, and he trusts implicitly in a matter of a few minutes. Everything about the book is improbable and unlikely. By the time you get to Transformer(tm) robots marching through New York city, flying motorcycles and many of the states (and other countries) casually accepting a hostile takeover of NYC, you will probably start to lose faith in the book. Card needs someone to bounce his ideas off of with enough spine to say, "I don't think that one is your best idea yet." Empire ends up being kind of like someone took Dr. Evil from the Austin Powers series and decided to take him seriously and write a book about his plans to take over the world. There is an element of James Bond in the book, I guess. I am pretty sure that even Robert Ludlum certainly wouldn't even tackle a conspiracy theory this big, though. Ultimately, I am a HUGE OSC fan and have read everything (except the Alvin series, which I couldn't stand) he has written, (fiction) and find much of it to be fascinating and outstanding. But this book let me down. He still has a huge credit balance with me though, and I'll buy his next one without blinking an eye. But I will wonder what I am getting into though...

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