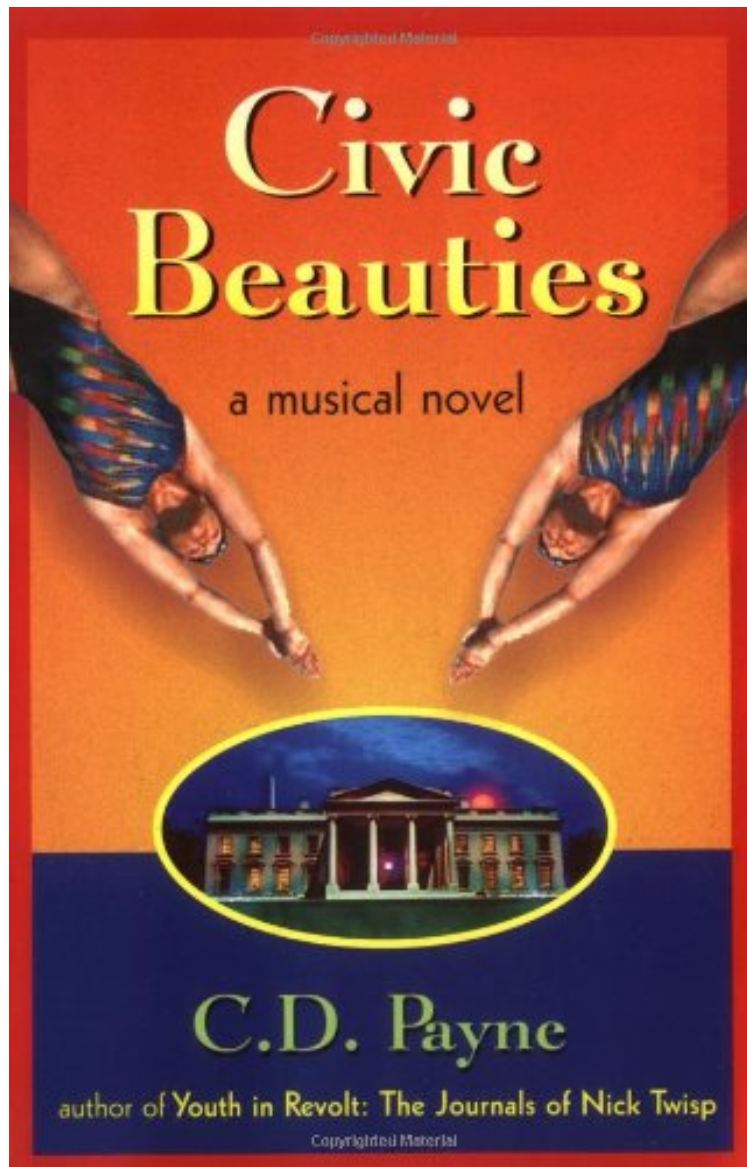


[Free] Civic Beauties

## Civic Beauties

*C. D. Payne*

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**C. D. Payne : Civic Beauties** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Civic Beauties:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. remarkable characters, unique story. By Lola Green Although the background of this story is American politics, one need not know anything, or be interested in politics to enjoy this book. A joyous read for teenagers or adults, though more for the female readers, this book follows twin teenage girls

with contrasting persona's, and their whimsical friends who you either hate or love from the very first introduction. C D Payne is a master at capturing the reader from the starting line of his novels, and never allows any boredom. Some authors go into great detail to describe the exact particular spring morning, this you will not find, and Paynes language is uniquely creative, and mindbogglingly cool but not aimed at visualizing a tree, but at the fantastic characters, and the inside of their idiosyncratic minds, and their absurd surroundings. A terrific read, equally good as Youth in Revolt, a sort of female version of Nick Twisp, and very sexy book too. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is my favorite non-Twisp novel Payne novel By Beatrix Warbucks It takes a minute to get into this novel's odd double 1st person narrative, but when you do, you wont want to leave the world of political intrigue, rarely explored in this fashion. This is my favorite non-Twisp novel Payne novel, fully immersive and entertaining, filled with great settings and interesting characters. Highly recommended! 0 of 4 people found the following review helpful. stay away from twins By Philip Greenspun The Twisp books show us how destructive teenagers can be. Civic Beauties shows up how their destructive power is multiplied with twinship.

Now back in print: The prophetic comic novel of Presidential politics and mischief-making twin daughters. Hailed by Midwest Book Review as "a witty, inventive, unique, engaging, laugh-a-minute novel of pure delight." From the author of the underground cult classic "Youth in Revolt: The Journals of Nick Twisp."

About the Author C.D. Payne is the author of four comic novels, two of which ("Youth in Revolt" and "Frisco Pigeon Mambo") are in development as Hollywood films. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. When I heard my father was being mentioned as a possible candidate for the Republican nomination for Vice President, my first impulse was to slash my wrists. Why shouldn't I take these things personally? How would you like some shadowy Secret Service agent in sunglasses snooping through your underwear drawer and following you around day and night? It would be like having multiple sets of extra parents to cope with. My life was impossible enough when Dad was just pastor of the First Baptist Church and mayor of Rocky Pike, Ohio. Now that he's a United States Senator, my friends look at me like I'm a freak. Of course, my twin sister Carissa (age 15-1/2) is thrilled by the whole thing. She wasn't even disturbed when I pointed out that one consequence of 24-hour-a-day Secret Service protection could be the prolongation of her virginity for four, if not eight more years. Boys, even the really slaggy ones, are only willing to go so far while under government surveillance. As usual, she pretended not to care. Perhaps she's taken to heart Dad's message that all a teen really needs to know about sex can be summarized in five words: Total Abstinence or You Die. I sure hope she's not a lesbian. If by some chance she is, I pray to God she announces it to the press before the convention. I see from the morning Plain Dealer that before leaving for the Republican national convention, Senator Horace B. Mason (Dad) introduced legislation declaring that life begins at the moment of conception and compelling everyone to add nine months to their ages. Helpful in some respects for my sister and me, but it still won't get us into R-rated movies. Damn. Dad takes a somewhat narrower view of the world than our mother. She spent her junior year abroad in Florence, and loves all things Italian, including the names Antonia (that's me) and Carissa. Like Dad, she is of mongrelized WASP extraction; her maiden name was Gloria Drucker. Only in the Midwest is the bestowing of such horrible names still actively encouraged. Dad contributed our freckles and wretched middle names: Esther for Cara and Rachel for me. Once at the Cuyahoga County Fair I had my monogram engraved on a bracelet, and it looked like a brass anatomy label or instructions for where to wear it (ARM). My third marriage (for love) will be an artful alliance with a guy from the "T"s, maybe one of Ted Turner's handsome grandsons. Lately the consensus seems to be that we look like Doris Day, a fellow Buckeye who went to Hollywood and got famous for just saying no to Rock Hudson. I guess maybe it's our freckles and perky noses and Cara's wholesome personality. In any case I'm planning on having my nose fixed; perhaps some disastrous boyfriend choices will selectively darken my sister's persona -- God knows I've tried. The freckles I think will fade or can be chemically erased. Thankfully our figures and all-important bone structure show promise. With a little work, at least one of us could develop into a marginally captivating beauty. Pay attention now, Cara wants to take over the narrative. We're going to swap back and forth, so you have to stay alert. \* \* \* This morning brought rare blue sky and sunshine (nearby Lake Erie is a prodigious generator of clouds). Since we were -- as Toni put it -- "whiter than our stepmother's soul," my sister and I lay on our beach towels in the back yard until Dan the Picketer showed up, when Toni suggested we transfer to the front yard. A dedicated member of the Sierra Club, Dan Wyandot is a forestry major at Cleveland State and quite good-looking. We stretched out our towels on the grass near the tall sycamore tree and chatted up the protester as he marched back and forth with his angry, hand-lettered sign: "God Save Our Forests from Senator Mason." "Is your father home today, Toni?" he asked. "Er, which one of you is Toni?" "I am," replied my sister, sliding her bikini straps down her shoulders like a dissolute Malibu beach-goer. In Ohio straps are worn UP. "He's in there, Dan," she lied. "He hasn't left for the convention yet. He's tremendously embarrassed by your courageous actions." "Well, he should be. He wants to sell off our national forests to timber companies to help retire the national debt. He wants to log Yosemite, for God's sake!" "We're appalled, Dan," replied Toni. "We're on your side. Aren't we, Cara?" "Not entirely," I replied, feeling somewhat self-conscious sprawled in Toni's old red bikini in front of such an extraordinarily cute guy. (He has the most piercing blue eyes that

go through you like a chain saw.) As you might expect, Toni's swimwear left very little to the imagination. Fortunately, Dan, like most of his sex, only had eyes for my sister. "Toni, could you ask your father to come out? I'd like to speak to him." "Oh, he'd never do that, Dan. He hates confrontations with informed constituents. If you'd like, perhaps you and I could go out to lunch sometime to discuss the crisis in our forests. I could make sure your concerns reach my father's attention." "Really, Toni? That'd be great. How about today?" "Perfect! I'll go change." My sister pushed up her straps, picked up her towel, and dashed into the house. Dan looked at me and my body. His looming presence was much scarier without the defensive distraction of my sister. "I can't believe Senator Mason has such intelligent and aware daughters." "He, he can't either," I stammered. "I guess you must be twins." "That's right." "You're quite . . . identical." "Well, you're in a good position to know." Dan reddened and gripped his sign. "Not exactly identical," I continued, nervously blurting out the first thing that came to mind. "I have this scar on my right knee from the time I fell out of a car when I was little." Dan studied my legs sympathetically. "Do you mind if I ask how old you are?" "We're 15." "Boy, you look considerably older." "No, we're . . .uh, somewhat young." "Thanks for mentioning that." "Have a good time, Dan. Keep up the good work." He smiled, convulsing several of my internal organs and causing my right hand to reach up involuntarily to pull down a strap. I intercepted it just in time. \* \* \* Being a twin is rewarding in so many ways. My sister Toni and I have always felt sorry for the unlucky people who don't have a twin. How lonely that must be. We were as alike as two peas in a pod when we were kids, and lots of people still get us confused. (Though these days Toni tends to go a little heavier on the blusher and mascara..) Even our dreams are similar. Recently we compared notes and discovered we'd both had disturbing menstruation dreams in which we hadn't changed our sanitary napkin for three weeks and were beginning to panic. At the age of eight, Toni and I made a joint vow that someday we would marry twin brothers. Our dearest dream was a big double wedding in Father's church with twin bridesmaids and best men. All through grammar school we were active in the Rocky Pike Twins Club, where we met and discreetly evaluated many sets of potential husbands. We eventually concluded our dream wasn't very practical as we always seemed to develop a crush on the same brother, and then had to endure a distressing period of not speaking to each other while the fortunate sister (usually Toni) enjoyed the attentions of the boy in question. It does seem to be generally true among male twins that one brother gets all the personality. (I trust that's not the case for females too.) Toni is the vocalist in the family, but I hope you will bear with me as I attempt this song. Those of you who are musical can make up your own tune. Me, myself, and I -- The world is o'errun by ego; Individuality is the cry From Boise to Oswego. But better far than oneness Is a measure of duality; It verges on the wondrous -- Our state of double reality. How lucky to be a twin, To know this duplication: To have as next of kin Your true self's bifurcation. For she is me and I am her, And that's not silly sophistry; For from the science you'd infer We're just the same genetically. And if an interlude of solitude Permits the mind to flower, Consider the magnitude of the amplitude When two are joined in power. How lucky to be a twin -- An accident of germination; Too bad everyone can't win, But that would swell the population. It's ducky to be a twin -- A consequence of conjugation; How sad that you can't join in, But that was God's determination.