

《(竞选路上)TRAIL FEVER ()》

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内容概要

A wickedly funny and astute chronicle of the 1996 presidential campaign - and how we go about choosing our leaders at the turn of the century.

Beginning with the primaries, Lewis traveled across America - a concerned citizen who happened to ride in candidates' airplanes (as well as rented cars in blinding New Hampshire blizzards) and write about their adventures. Among the contenders he observed: Pat Buchanan, a walking tour of American anger; Lamar Alexander, who appealed to people who pretend to be nice to get ahead; Steve Forbes, frozen in a smile and refusing to answer questions about his father's motorcycles; Alan Keyes, one of the great political speakers of our age, whom no one has ever heard of; Morry Taylor - "the Grizz" - the hugely successful businessman who became the refreshing embodiment of ordinary Americans' appetites and ambitions; Bob Dole, a man who set out to prove he would never be president; and Bill Clinton, the big snow goose who flew too high to be shot out of the sky.

We watch the cliches of this peculiar subculture collide with characters from the real world: a pig farmer in Iowa; an evangelical preacher in Colorado Springs; a homeless person in Manhattan; a prospective illegal immigrant in Mexico.

This book offers a striking look at us and our politics and the mammoth unlikelihood of connection between the inauthentic modern candidate and the voter's passions, needs, and desires.

Michael Lewis, the author of *Liar's Poker*, which Tom Wolfe called "the funniest book on Wall Street I have ever read," now turns his eye to the peculiar method Americans use to choose their president. Beginning with the 1996 New Hampshire primary, Lewis tagged along with players both major and minor. Keeping his eyes open to the nuances of how campaigns are so carefully managed today, Lewis is able to make some insightful, damning, and often hysterically funny observations. The reporting technique is eccentric--who else would spend so much time with Morry Taylor, a rich man who ran for president in what amounted to a vanity campaign--but it works. Lewis has written a very good book that could be shelved under both humor and public affairs.

Journalist Lewis's (*Liar's Poker*, LJ 9/1/89) chronicle of the 1996 presidential campaign examines the battle for the Republican Party nomination and the following general election. It differs from most campaign books in that its perspective is "from the bottom of the political food chain." Lewis argues that the leading candidates were so preoccupied with risk avoidance that they failed to address important concerns of the electorate. This meant that to the extent such matters were addressed at all, it was by the lesser candidates. Therefore, Lewis devotes more attention to such minor Republican candidates as Alan Keyes and Morry Taylor and to Green Party candidate Ralph Nader than to Clinton and Dole. His book is not comprehensive, but it provides a frequently humorous and occasionally insightful look into contemporary electoral politics for lay readers.

Thomas H. Ferrell, Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette

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