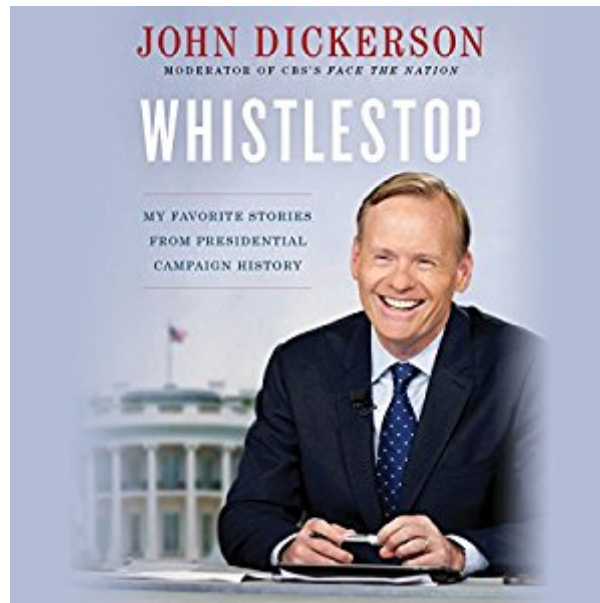




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Whistlestop: Reporting The Stories That Make Campaign History



Synopsis

From Face the Nation moderator and Slate columnist John Dickerson come the stories behind the stories of the most memorable moments in American presidential campaign history. The stakes are high. The characters full of striving and ego. Presidential campaigns are a contest for control of power in the most powerful country on earth. The battle of ideas has a clear end, with winners and losers, and along the way there are sharp turning points-primaries, debates, conventions, and scandals that squeeze candidates into emergency action, frantic grasping, and heroic gambles. As Mike Murphy the political strategist put it, "Campaigns are like war without bullets." Whistlestop tells the human story of nervous gambits hatched in first-floor hotel rooms, failures of will before the microphone, and the cross-country crack-ups of long-planned stratagems. At the bar at the end of a campaign day, these are the stories reporters rehash for themselves and embellish for newcomers. In addition to the familiar tales, Whistlestop also remembers the forgotten stories about the bruising and reckless campaigns of the 19th century when the combatants believed the consequences included the fate of the republic itself. Some of the most modern-feeling elements of the American presidential campaign were born before the roads were paved and electric lights lit the convention halls - if there were convention halls at all. Whistlestop is a ride through the American campaign history with one of its most enthusiastic conductors guiding you through the landmarks along the way.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From Evangeline: From one of the earliest partisan elections in 1800 to more recent ones in the 1960s to 1990s, John Dickerson tells the often-forgotten primary stories of candidates who ran and lost as well as candidates who did achieve the presidency in the end in a straightforward and humorous style of writing that I absolutely loved. (I remember that he made me laugh by saying âœincluding a certain Time correspondent who decided it was a good idea to grow sideburns that year and who hadnâ™t gotten off the road long enough to get a haircutâ•). In all these years that Iâ™ve seen him on TV I never knew about this awesome sense of humor that he has and this book made me think that I would love to get to know this side of him more. More importantly, these stories reaffirm our need to learn history, and at the same time, seeing parallels between this election and past ones. There have been Donald Trump-like candidates in the past (George Wallace and Barry Goldwater) who were against racial integration and appealed to the race-related fears of some white voters in order to generate an audience for their campaigns, but fortunately they werenâ™t ever elected. In some respects, one could even argue that Andrew Jackson campaigned to the presidency in a manner similar to Trump---with emotional messages and rowdy parties. Jackson had a hot temper that many feared would make him unsuited to the presidency, and while he may have done some good things in power the one thing he did that sticks to my mind is pushing the Cherokees from their native land in violation of a treaty in order to satisfy the white settlers who would vote for him, leading to the âœTrail of Tearsâ•.

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