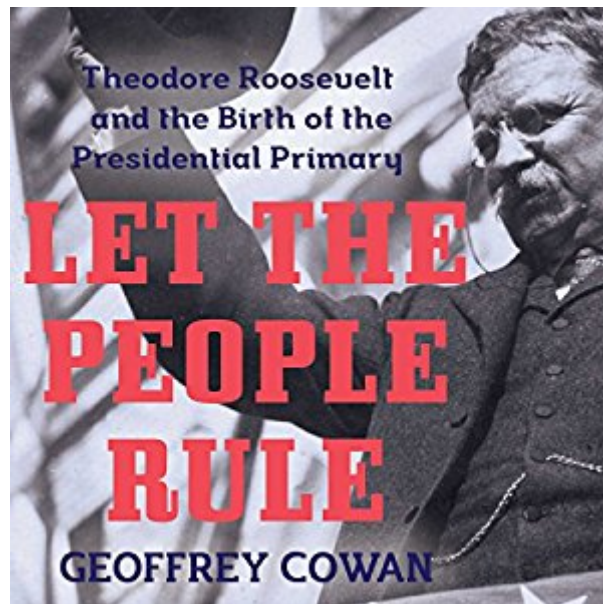


The book was found

Let The People Rule: Theodore Roosevelt And The Birth Of The Presidential Primary



Synopsis

Between February 24, 1912, when TR came out of political retirement to challenge William Howard Taft for the Republican Party's nomination for president, and June 23 of that year, Roosevelt and his supporters created and benefited from 13 new presidential primaries, the first in the nation's history. Stressing the importance of primaries, TR's campaign theme became "the right of the people to rule". Though Roosevelt won about 70 percent of the delegates selected by public vote, it was not enough to overcome the power of party bosses and entrenched interests. He walked out of the convention to create the Bull Moose Party but then shocked many of his strongest supporters by excluding all black delegates from the Deep South.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Geoffrey Cowan's absorbing new book, "Let the People Rule" steers the reader into little known and seldom taught facts of a campaign that through its divisions, help elect Woodrow Wilson to the presidency. It also could be described as a harbinger of things to come. "Let the People Rule" is essentially three books in one. The first is Theodore Roosevelt's desire to become president again and the formation of the primary process. The second is the clamorous Republican convention where either Roosevelt or the incumbent president, William Howard Taft, might have been nominated, given rules, challenges and delegate votes on any particular day. The third is the aftermath of the convention with the adoption of a new political party...the Progressive or "Bull Moose" party....and the new party's sellout to southern blacks. Author Cowan's narrative makes an

intriguing read. While the political process is an overriding foundation of the book, its many layers below unearthen just how Roosevelt and his advisers sought to win the Republican nomination. Bribes were used to encourage southern blacks to bolt from Taft and join T.R. Though this tactic largely failed, Roosevelt continued to have black support through the beginnings of the new Progressive Party. When it was learned that the Progressives now wanted to make the party lily-white in the south but open to blacks in the north, the whole meaning of "progressive" became cast in a dark light. Could Teddy Roosevelt won the 1912 election if there had been no new party and he had gained the Republican nomination? That's not so easy an answer to see, but he certainly took down the Republicans as a third party candidate. How does this bode for today?

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