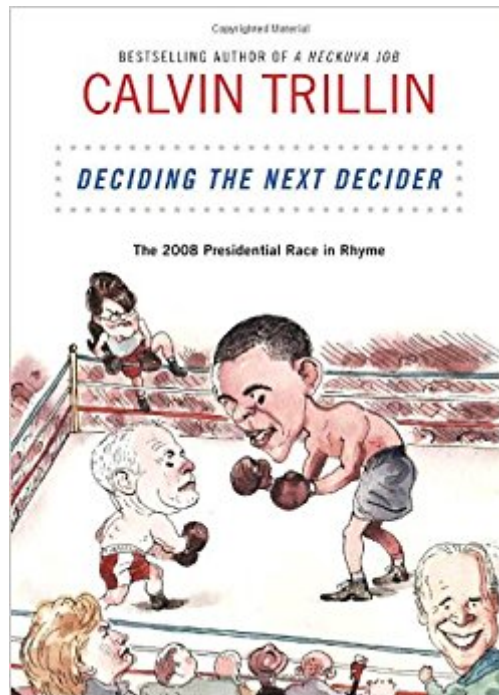


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Deciding The Next Decider: The 2008 Presidential Race In Rhyme



Synopsis

Displaying the form that made bestsellers of *Obliviously On He Sails* and *A Heckuva Job*, tales of the Bush Administration in rhyme, Calvin Trillin trains his verse on the 2008 race for the presidency. *Deciding the Next Decider* is an ongoing campaign narrative in verse interrupted regularly by other poems, such as a country tune about John Edwards called "Yes, I Know He's a Mill Worker's Son, But There's Hollywood in That Hair" and a Sarah Palin song about her foreign policy credentials: "On a Clear Day, I See Vladivostok." It covers Mitt Romney's transformation ("Mitt Romney saying now he should have known / A stem cell's just a human, not quite grown"), the speculation about whether Al Gore was trimming down to run ("Presumably, they looked for photo ops / To see what Gore was stuffing in his chops"), the slow-motion implosion of Hillary Clinton's drive to the White House ("Some pundits wrote that Hil's campaign might fare / A little better if Bill wasn't there"), and the differing responses of Barack Obama and John McCain to the financial crisis ("Though coolness has its limitations, it'll / Prevent comparisons with Chicken Little"). Beginning at the 2006 midterms, *Deciding the Next Decider* resurrects the nonstarters like George Allen ("He fit what's often valued by the Right: / Quite cheerful, Reaganesque, and not too bright") and the low-energy Fred Thompson ("The pros said, 'That's a state he has to take, / And he just might, if he can stay awake'"). And it carries through to the vote that made Barack Obama the forty-fourth president of the United States.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Calvin Trillin, who became *The Nation*'s deadline poet in 1990, has also written verse on the events of the day for *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, and National Public Radio. His political beliefs are so colored by rhyme and meter that he once criticized Hillary Clinton for being "insufficiently iambic" and publicly advised against a presidential run by the governor of Illinois, Rod Blagojevich. He is the author of *Obliviously on He Sails* and *A Heckuva Job*.

This is an enjoyable, quirky work. It features verse about the presidential election, culminating in victory for Barack Obama. The inside dust cover explains: "'Deciding the Next Decider' is an ongoing campaign narrative in verse interrupted regularly by other poems, such as a country tune about John Edwards called 'Yes, I Know He's a Mill Worker's Son, but There's Hollywood in That Hair' and a Sarah Palin song about her foreign policy credentials, 'On a Clear Day, I Can See Vladivostok.'" This is actually an enjoyable read. Trillin is not Shelley or Keats. But he is fun in this volume. In a work like this, I prefer seeing the author skewer candidates of both parties alike. I like that humor can be bi-partisan! The work begins at the beginning--2006. The opening lines (Page 3): "Whatever problems Washington is facing, Campaigning is what gets its blood a-racing. Before the '06 midterm was in, The top consultants began to spin Scenarios about that vote and why. It showed '08 was natural for their guy." Section 2 focuses on Republican Also-Rans, such as George Allen, George Pataki, and Bill Frist. Democratic Also-Rans? "Mark Warner had panache. He had the looks. He also had the cash. . . . And Warner sought a Senate seat instead." Or, "Vilsack joined the race for just a minute. He quit before folks knew he was in it." Don't forget Ron Paul! On Page 24, he gets his due, too: "Just leave us be. Your regs are agony. This is our plea: Just leave us be." Simply put, the libertarian creed Paul advocated. And so on, with verse about John McCain, Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and others. This book is enjoyable. It is good natured and takes shots across the board. Next to last example (Page 57): "Hillary, dillary dock. Hil ran into Barack. So Bill got shrill. Defending Hil. Hillary, dillary dock." Sarah Palin? "They dressed her all up. They could put her in Prada, But what she can say that's of substance is nada." Anyhow, if you want a humorous take at the campaign and its characters, this is a good read.

Humor is the highest form of art and among the most fleeting. Enjoy this while you can (sort of) recall the subject events. I heard recently that Trillin is disappointed that "Sabbath gasbags" failed to attain general usage.

This book is so cleverly written it's still funny even after the election. Really, really funny. Since the

pieces are cadenced (think Edna St. Vincent Millay), try reading it aloud as a group, passing it around. My brother-in-law loved this as a stocking stuffer.

Calvin Trillin is a political humorist. This is a "typical" Trillin book, if you like his style. We do so enjoyed it immensely!!

I didn't get to read it, but paging through it while wrapping as a gift, I want to borrow it back. Looked like a fun, quick read.

Calvin is such an intelligent man
It's hard to rhyme the names
But I've always been a fan!
No poem is ever the same!

Satire is the perfect weapon for bad political behavior in the hands of this genius.

Of Trillin's tomes, this is his third
A "presidente" most absurd.
A retrospective here, as we
Say adios to forty-three.
So many names in Calvin's book
Worth noting with one final look.
Romney, Richardson and Paul...
So many candidates in all.
There's poor McCain whose change of mind
On issues left him far behind.
And as for pickin' Sarah Palin,
He then became Obama-trailin'.
Remember that poor loser Rudy?
(His dimples deep as Howdy Doody)
And there's the nation's chief
abrader Ralph, who saw his Nader's nadir.
But in the end, just one campaign
Can break out bottles of champagne.
Obama won, and if you will,
Outlasted Clintons, Hill and Bill.
Barack and Hill...can he
abide her
And still become the chief decider?
You betcha!!! As for "Dub-ba-yah",
His Elba might be Iowa.

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