



An Empire Wilderness: Travels into America's Future

Robert D. Kaplan

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"Full of surprises and unusual revelations . . . an informed and disturbing portrait of the new American badlands."--*Chicago Tribune*

"[Kaplan is] tireless, curious, and smart. . . . I cannot imagine anyone will concoct a more convincing scenario for the American future." --Thurston Clarke, *The New York Times*

With the same prescience and eye for telling detail that distinguished his bestselling **Balkan Ghosts**, Robert Kaplan now explores his native country, the United States of America. His starting point: the conviction that America is a country not in decline but in transition, slowly but inexorably shedding its identity as a monolithic nation-state and assuming a radically new one.

Everywhere Kaplan travels--from St. Louis, Missouri, to Portland, Oregon, from the forty-ninth parallel to the banks of the Rio Grande--he finds an America ever more fragmented along lines of race, class, education, and geography. An America whose wealthy communities become wealthier and more fortress-like as they become more closely linked to the world's business capitals than to the desolate ghettos next door. An America where the political boundaries between the states--and between the U.S. and Canada and Mexico--are becoming increasingly blurred, betokening a vast open zone for trade, commerce, and cultural interaction, the nexus of tomorrow's transnational world. Never nostalgic or falsely optimistic, bracingly unafraid of change and its consequences, Kaplan paints a startling portrait of post-Cold War America--a great nation entering the final, most uncertain phase of its history. Here is travel writing with the force of prophecy.

"Lively . . . Kaplan has a sharp eye for social truth, and his encounters with a chorus of eloquent citizens of the West keeps the narrative humming." --*Outside*

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