



Inside the Ropes with Jesse Ventura

Tom Hauser

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Jesse Ventura burst into national consciousness -- late-night punch lines -- when the former professional wrestler was unexpectedly elected governor of Minnesota in 1998. An overnight political sensation whose only previous relevant experience was a brief period as mayor of a Minneapolis suburb, Ventura became a lightning rod for the media, combining the bravado of a Navy SEAL, the showmanship of a movie actor, and the blunt speech and bluff humor of a talk radio host with a surprising passion for public policy and legislative reform.

In this revealing chronicle of Jesse Ventura's campaign, election, and first term, political reporter Tom Hauser tells us what he saw as one of the "media jackals" covering the governor for local television station KSTP. In a saga full of drama, hijinks, and controversy, Hauser offers the inside story of the hubbub surrounding Ventura from his triumphal tour of the late-night talk shows upon his election, to his outspoken and outrageous revelations in *Playboy*, to his stints as referee for the World Wrestling Federation and commentator for the failed XFL, to his ongoing battles with the state legislature. Hauser also provides insight into Ventura's popularity, character, and motivations -- his impatience with conventional wisdom, his distrust of traditional politics, and his combative relationship with the media.

Though to many Ventura seemed to come out of nowhere, Hauser has been following him since the day he filed to run for governor, when he was the underdog in a race against two well-established career politicians, both backed by major parties. Hauser offers the only detailed account available of Ventura's amazing rise and reign, providing an evenhanded look at a political story that will leave readers feeling that truth really is stranger than fiction.

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