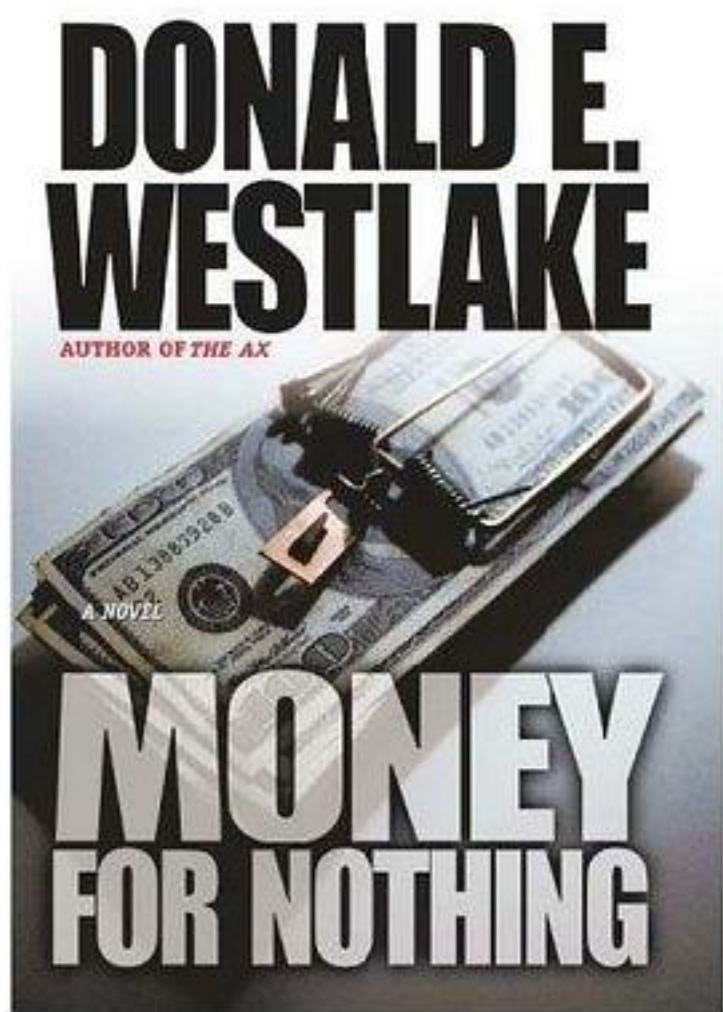


Money for Nothing



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著者:Saul Austerlitz

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With the music video at a historic turning point, caught between its television-fuelled past and a still-unformed Internet future, it is an ideal time to look back at the life of this mutant art form - one that united the two most influential media of the last 50 years.

Money for Nothing begins with the earliest days of the music video, when Hollywood musicals, experimental animated films, Soundies, and Scopitones fused music and image in ways that would presage the eventual form of the MTV clip. By the time *A Hard Day's Night* was released in 1964, the combination of pop music and short films was ready to sweep the world. It didn't take long for other acts to see the possibilities of promotional films - the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, and Bob Dylan had tried their hand at videos by the end of the 60s. The 1970s brought further rapid development. Artists as diverse as Queen, the Residents, Devo, and Elvis Costello all experimented with the form, establishing the boundaries of the nascent genre. By the time MTV debuted in 1981, the music video was ready for the spotlight. There were artists who constructed whole careers around it (Madonna, Duran Duran), some who seemed occasionally flummoxed by it (Prince, U2), and those who did their best to subvert it (the Replacements, the Smiths).

In the 1990s, the music video reached its apogee, with enormous blockbuster clips from acts like Guns N'Roses, Michael Jackson, and Aerosmith marking the last moment of the video's cultural centrality. At the same time, the rise of alternative rock and hip-hop ushered in a renewed golden era of video, with big-name directors like Michel Gondry, Spike Jonze, Hype Williams, and Paul Hunter redefining what a music video could, or should, be.

As MTV and VH1 have morphed into lifestyle channels, the video no longer has the cultural impact it once had, but our era of YouTube and bloggers has revitalized the form, sparking a video resurgence among bands, directors, and fans. Money for Nothing is a smart, informative, and affectionate history that shows artistry and commercialism clashing, fusing, and occasionally creating works of real beauty.

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