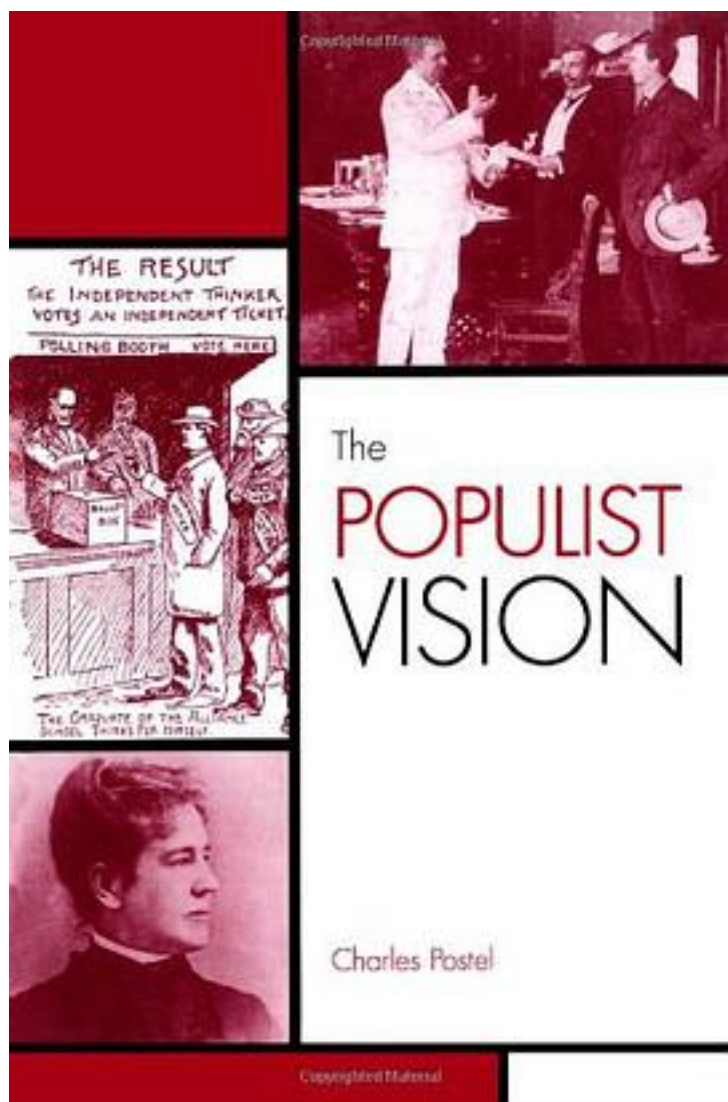


The Populist Vision



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The Populist movement has been both dismissed as an irrational response of backward-looking farmers to modernity and romanticized as a resistance movement of tradition-based communities to modern, commercial society. Now, in a wide-ranging and provocative reassessment, based on a deep reading of archival sources, *The Populist Vision* argues the opposite--that the Populists understood themselves as, and in fact were, modern people, pursuing an alternative vision for modern America. Taking into account the leaders and the led, *The Populist Vision* uses a wide lens--focusing on the farmers, both black and white, men and women--but also looking at wage workers and bohemian urbanites. Ranging from Texas to the Dakotas, from Georgia to California, Charles Postel shows how farmer Populists strove to use the new innovations for their own ends. They sought scientific and technical knowledge, formed highly centralized organizations, launched large-scale cooperative businesses, and pressed for reforms on the model of the nation's most elaborate bureaucracy--the Postal Service. Hundreds of thousands of women joined the movement, too, seeking education, employment in schools and offices, and a more modern life. Miners, railroad workers, and other labor Populists joined with farmers to give impetus to the regulatory state. Activists from Chicago, San Francisco, and other new cities provided Populism with a dynamic urban dimension. The winner of a prestigious Bancroft Prize and the Organization of American Historians' Frederick Jackson Turner Award, this highly original account of the Populist movement is essential reading for anyone interested in the politics, society, and culture of modern America.

作者介绍:

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