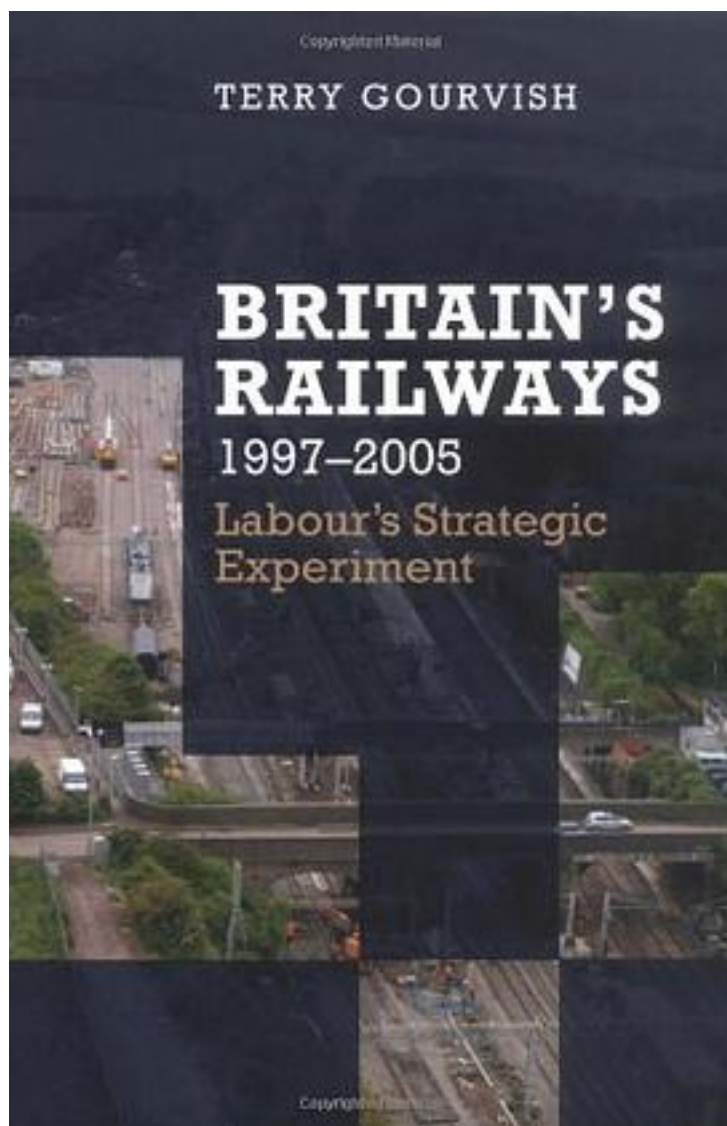


# Britain's Railway, 1997-2005



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Britain's leading railway historian provides a critical examination of the Blair governments' involvement in the rail industry from 1997 as they attempted to deal with the UK's fragmented, privatized railways. The book focuses particularly on the work of the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), and considers the role of individuals - John Prescott, Stephen Byers, Alistair Darling, Sir Alastair Morton, and Richard Bowker - and events - the Hatfield accident (2000), the demise of Railtrack (2001-2), and the funding crisis of 2003-4 - in the shaping of emerging policy. The book was commissioned by the SRA, and written with access to government files. Dr Gourvish argues that the establishment of the SRA as a Non-Departmental Public Board proved largely unsuccessful. It produced tensions with the industry's existing institutions - Railtrack/Network Rail, the operating companies and the economic regulator. There were some gains from the experiment, notably the rescue of the West Coast Main Line project. However, it remains to be seen whether by winding up the SRA and taking responsibility for strategy and funding back into its own hands the Department for Transport has resolved the problem of managing a fragmented industry. This important book is essential reading for those concerned with, and interested in, railway policy, both in the UK and elsewhere in the world.

作者介绍:

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