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In *Pacific Rift*, the best-selling author of *Liar's Poker* aims his skewering wit at the so-called cultural clash between Japan and the United States. The result is a very different kind of book on U.S.-Japanese business relations. In search of answers, Michael Lewis hits the road to report on the travails of two businessmen: one a rollicking American insurance agent who works in Tokyo, the other a Harvard-educated Japanese man employed by Mitsui Real Estate in New York City. From the Ginza hostess bars of Tokyo to the “wine-bottle” gangs of Times Square, Lewis dramatizes tragicomic collisions between the two cultures and the basic misconceptions that Americans and Japanese have about each other.

Pacific Rift: Why Americans and Japanese Don't Understand Each Other Details

Date : Published June 17th 1993 by W. W. Norton Company (first published January 1st 1991)

ISBN : 9780393309867

Author : Michael Lewis

Format : Paperback 128 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Business, Economics, Cultural, Japan, Finance

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Grant says

This is good, illuminating.

Read Fifth risk, and that's much better written and exciting. That was my first Michael Lewis book. But I found the topic of this very interesting and gives me a good feel of the zaibatsu.

Remo says

A finales de los noventa Michael Lewis consiguió convencer a la revista New York Magazine para que le financiara una estancia de cuatro meses en Japón. El autor se fija, en este artículo largo/libro corto, en un norteamericano que triunfó en los negocios en Japón y en un japonés que triunfa en los negocios en EE.UU. Con ellos dos como hilo conductor intenta articular las diferencias en la forma de hacer negocios entre estas dos potencias. Al final queda un ensayo deslavazado, que narra dos biografías pero que no acaba de fundirlas bien en una comparativa clarificadora, como pretende el autor. El estilo de escritura es, como siempre, florido y muy fácil de leer, pero el contenido me ha dejado un poco igual.

Nathan Willard says

So, back in 1990 or so, Michael Lewis scammed New York Magazine into sending him for an extended stay in Japan. The result is an uncanny account of Japanese wealth culture written by Lewis, among the world's experts at documenting excess. Like in Liar's Poker, Lewis in this series of essays captures a distinct moment in time, with all of the buildup and fear that marked it.

A decent companion piece to Fallows's Looking into the Sun, which is a much more comprehensive look at Japan's Asian ascendancy, Pacific Rift can be consumed fairly quickly and with some lasting images that characterize the time.

Patrick says

ok.

Gerald says

Long magazine article in reality

Jeremy Raper says

Don't bother with this; one of Lewis' least readable, and most dated, efforts. Only saving grace is its more a pamphlet than a book, and ends rapidly.

Jon Green says

So it wasn't the worst thing I ever read... there was some interesting stories in I suppose... but it's really not worth your time at this point in the world. The book is 25 years old so much of it is outdated I imagine. The purpose is to kinda give you a surface level basic understanding of Japanese business and their continued impact on American business (and vice versa)... so since you aren't reading a book really meant to stand the test of time it feels like it doesn't. The saving grace is that it's a fairly quick read so if you want to read it for some reason it won't take all that long.

Tim says

Lewis perfectly captures the Japanese US rivalry in 1990 - just about perfectly. As a former resident of Japan I attest to his witty observations of the culture clashes. This is short read and just so damn entertaining. Lots of fun.

Anne Ward says

Pacific Rift, like most of Lewis' work, is reader friendly and entertaining. Unlike some of Lewis' other work though, this book fails to make a conclusive statement. Pacific Rift articulates the difference in U.S. and Japanese business practices, but it never goes beyond story telling.

Two stars: The words flow nicely, but it lacks content and a central idea.

Karen says

very generalized, but still amusing and provides some insights. The book is not as relevant now, since Japan is not the financial powerhouse it was in the '80s. However, the national character of Japan hasn't really changed, so the book still has contemporary value.

Ryan says

An interesting look at the Japanese economy - the mysteriousness of their approach, a brief glimpse at the opening available during the American occupation. Not sure it was all correct or valid, but it was interesting and a good additional perspective if one were reading a bunch of books with the same subject.

Venky says

A typical Michael Lewis fare that blends a trademark concoction of scathing with and profound wisdom. This extraordinarily small work (in terms of pages) provides reams of insights into the cause and consequences of Japanese business dealings with the United States of America. Although much water has flown under the bridge since the time this book came out in print for the first time, the essential principles and the underlying logic still seem to stand unhindered.

Pacific Drift - A cleaving account of US-Japan trade relationships

Ankur Maniar says

More of a magazine article than a book. But still the signature style of Michael Lewis makes this 87 page book an interesting read.

Gruia says

Has a quirky way of looking at financial flows, Lewis. This time it's the why of the Japanese. Like the anecdote of the Native Americans trading in Manhattan for some beads, nowadays the zaibatsu overpaid for some real-estate jewels in the same place. They did it because they were buying status symbols for their world.

Mostly a picture of Japan and its insular economic culture, this very short account is a warning against the islanders keeping to their ways and getting overtaken - again - by the world.

Matt Kelly says

Really only useful as an historical look at the Japanese from the 1990's. Much has changed since then, the most notable change that puts this book into the historical economics section is the deregulation of the insurance market. A useful book, but definitely not something to read if you are looking for an up to date look at Japanese ties to America.
