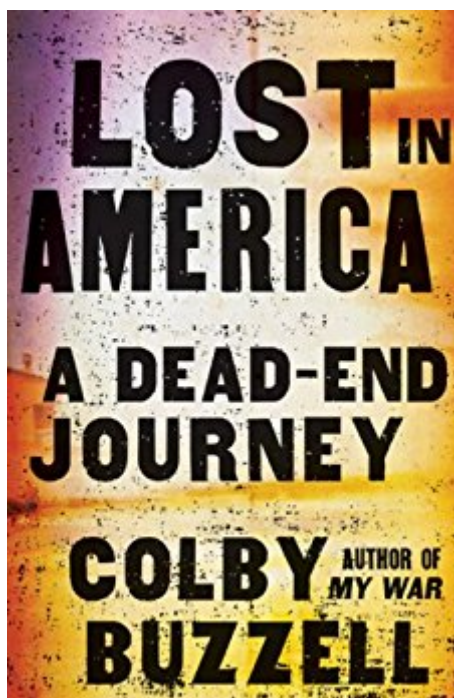


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# Lost In America: A Dead-End Journey



## Synopsis

Colby Buzzell has always been a loner. An autodidact who never went to college, he was dubbed "the voice of a generation" by Robert Kurson for his daring and critically acclaimed book, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*. Half a decade later, overwhelmed by the birth of his son and the death of his mother, Buzzell finds himself rudderless. Desperate to escape the constraints of his postwar existence, he packs his things, gets in the car, and, for five months, drives across America--no map, no destination. In his 1965 Mercury Comet, Buzzell travels through the bowels of a country steeped in economic turmoil and political malaise. With a bottle of whisky in one hand and a pack of cigarettes in the other, he takes us on a tour of big-box stores, grimy gas stations, abandoned warehouses, strip clubs, and flophouses. He captures the distinct voices and vivid stories of a forgotten America--Cheyenne, Omaha, Salt Lake City, Des Moines, Detroit, and San Francisco's Tenderloin. Buzzell unearths America's bones in all their beauty and starkness. And like the veterans of Hemingway's Lost Generation, he struggles to reconcile his wanderlust with his responsibilities as a man and a father. *Lost in America* is a stunning account of the ravages of war on one individual. It also reveals deep truths about a more universal journey: the struggle to find our place in the world--without a map.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Some of the other reviews puzzle me. Some reviewer give this book a lower rating, because they don't like how much the author/persona drinks. How else can a wanderer see the struggling underside of America if he or she doesn't drink, and probably drink to excess. This is a superb book that reveals our common humanity and also shows the evolution of the author or persona. Also the authors of most good travel and wandering writing become their own persona. Paul Theroux is a prime example. If you are the kind of person who dreams of going on the road, this is a superb guide and memoir.

I read this as a follow-on after taking in his Iraq book several years ago. I liked Buzzell's style and skilful use of the first-person narrative in that one, and he had the advantage of a compelling tale to tell. I really wanted to like this new book when I started reading it. Here though, he lacks the fire and urgency of the first, and I fear Buzzell is not a good enough writer (yet perhaps?) to make up for it. It suffers from a lack of direction, any sort of conclusions, characters, even short vignettes that draw the reader in, and the writer into sharper focus. I strongly suspect Buzzell, to his detriment, has read too much Bukowski and Hunter Thompson...and they are better enjoyed than emulated. I hope he keeps writing....but he needs a good editor, some writing classes, and an overall shape-up for his next attempt.

This was not nearly as compelling as his previous book *My War*. He was trying to sound like Kerouac, but instead, he sounded like a drunk loser.

Overall worth reading. I found his adventures in Detroit to be interesting. At the end of the road, it was a little too superficial. It needed another layer of analysis or character observation to make it great.

Very well written, highly recommend anything written by Colby

I don't want to over-praise this. No one can tell how much staying power 'Lost In America' will have. But here's my gut: I grew up on Hunter S. Thompson and Robert Pirsig and some quieter (and

maybe better) books along the same line. This book will be remembered in the same way. Or if it isn't, it'll be like the great, obscure record you tried to get your friends to listen to way back when because you knew how good it was, and 30, 40 years on you discover there were people all across the country who heard the same thing you did. I read the whole thing in a couple of sittings. The central part of the book is about Detroit, and Buzzell writes the city so well I felt like I was there, was in it with him. Only thing is - I didn't want the book to be over so soon. I wanted to know if he went back to Detroit, what else he figured out there. Scott A.

This is powerfully and honestly written - the kind of book Jack Kerouac would have written were he a child of the late 20th century!

I really enjoyed this book, just the same as his others. I might be biased because we have a friend in common. I always enjoy the opinions of real, salt of the earth types. Someone you can sit and have a beer with. I was born and raised in the Detroit area. We are always the butt of someones joke. Detroit has obviously seen better days but it's refreshing to read an outsiders perspective. Colby talked about the sense of pride we Detroiters have (amongst the decay and hardship). It makes me proud to hear that. The average person would not have stayed where he did or explored in that fashion. Obviously there is more to the book than Detroit, I enjoyed all of it. Keep writing Colby...

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