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Standing at the Water's Edge: Bob Straub's Battle for the Soul of Oregon

Charles K. Johnson

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Standing at the Water's Edge chronicles the life of a unique, and perhaps unlikely, political figure in Oregon's history: former Governor Robert W. Straub.

A man of intelligence, drive, creativity, and fascinating contradictions, Straub overcame personal challenges and inevitable comparisons to his charismatic predecessor and friendly Republican rival, Tom McCall, to have a lasting impact on Oregon and the nation. Charles Johnson shares insights into Straub's significant legacy, focusing on his leading role in the state's financial and environmental issues and his influence on McCall. Johnson also reveals much of Straub's warm personal story, along with his secret struggles, including his battle with depression while Governor.

Standing at the Water's Edge offers rich descriptions of other intriguing political figures of the time as well, capturing the flavor of what has been called Oregon's political "golden age" of the sixties and seventies—created in part by the symbiotic relationship between Straub and McCall—and describing how and why it ended.

Standing at the Water's Edge is an essential addition to the literature about Oregon's political leaders for historians, political scientists, and general readers interested in Oregon history.

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