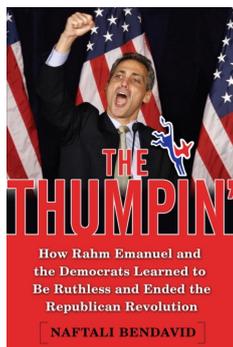


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THE THUMPIN EBOOKS 2019



Author: Naftali Bendavid

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In the 2006 midterm elections, the Democratic party ended twelve years of electoral humiliation by seizing back Congress and putting an end to Republican rule. *The Thumpin'* is the story of that historic victory and the man at the center on whom Democratic hopes hinged: Congressman Rahm Emanuel, head of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC). *The Thumpin'* Chicago Tribune reporter Naftali Bendavid had exclusive access to Emanuel and the DCCC in the year and a half leading up to the elections and ended up with the story of a lifetime, the thrilling blow-by-blow account of how Emanuel remade the campaign in his own ferocious image. Responsible for everything from handpicking Congressional candidates to raising money for attack ads, Emanuel, a talented ballet dancer better known in Washington for his extraordinary intensity and his inexhaustible torrents of profanity, threw out the playbook on the way Democrats run elections. Instead of rallying the base, Rahm sought moderate-to-conservative candidates who could attract more traditional voters. Instead of getting caught in the Democrats' endless arguments about their positions, he went on the attack, personally vilifying Republicans from Tom DeLay to Christopher Shays. And instead of abiding by the gentlemen's agreements of good-old-boy Washington, he broke them, attacking his counterpart in the Republican party and challenging Howard Dean, the chairman of his own party. In 2005, no one believed victory was within the Democrats' grasp. But as the months passed, Republicans were caught in wave after wave of scandal, support for the war in Iraq steadily declined, and the president's poll numbers plummeted. And in Emanuel, the Democrats finally had a killer, a ruthless closer like Karl Rove or Lee Atwater, poised to seize the advantage and deliver what President Bush would call "a thumpin." Taking its cues from classic political page-turners like *Showdown at Gucci Gulch* and documentaries like *The War Room*, *The Thumpin'* takes us inside the key races and the national strategy-making that moved the Democrats from forecasted gains of three seats in 2005 to a sweeping gain of thirty seats when the votes were finally counted. Through this masterful account of Rahm's rout, Bendavid shows how the lessons the Democrats learned in 2006—to fight for every vote, to abandon litmus tests, and to take no prisoners—will be crucial to the party's future electoral success, and shape the political course the nation will take in the twenty-first century.

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