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Sommario/riassunto	Social scientists and campaign strategists approach voting behavior from opposite poles. Reconciling these camps through a merger of statistics and election experience, The American Political Landscape presents a full-scale analysis of U.S. electoral politics over the last quarter-century. It explains how factors not usually considered hard data, such as personal attitudes and preferences, interact to produce an indisputably solid result: the final tally of votes. While pundits boil down elections to a stark choice between Democrat and Republican, Byron Shafer and Richard Spady explore the further significance of not voting at all. Voters can and do form coalitions around specific issues,

so that simple party identification does not determine voter turnout or ballot choices. Deploying a method that maps political attitudes from 1984 to 2008, the authors describe an electorate in flux. As an old order organized around economic values ceded ground to a new one in which cultural values enjoy equal prominence, persisting links between social backgrounds and political values have tended to empty the ideological center while increasing the clout of the ideologically committed.
