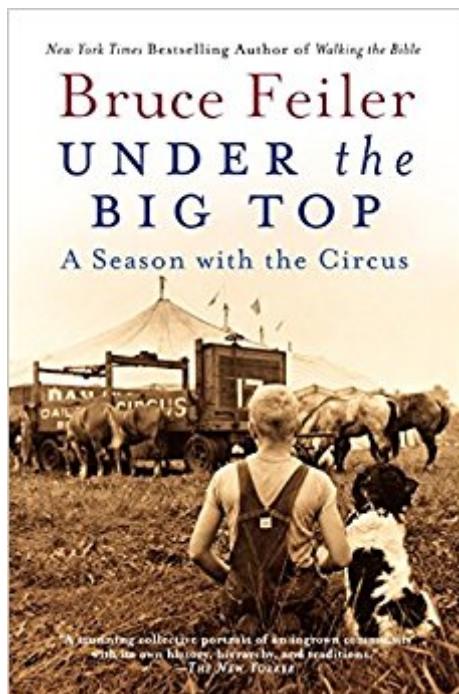


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Under The Big Top: A Season With The Circus



Synopsis

Both a great American adventure and a rare entry into a sheltered world, *Under the Big Top* describes one man's pursuit of every child's fantasy: running away to join the circus. Bruce Feiler's unforgettable year as a clown will forever change your view of one of the world's oldest art forms and remind you of how dreams can go horribly wrong -- and then miraculously come true.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After several years of work and travel abroad, Feiler (Learning to Bow) decided that joining the circus would be a good way to study America, as well as live a long-deferred childhood dream. He was accepted as a clown and spent the eight-month 1993 season with the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus, which plays the South and Northeast. With performers from more than a dozen countries, this troupe was truly a melting pot, though most had picked up some of the racism they encountered here. Far from conforming to the image of degenerates, the circus people the author met led rather conventional lives within their restricted world. Feiler admits the humor of clowns is "silly," and few readers are likely to share his admiration for acts like that of a young woman who juggles while hanging by her hair. Generally, however, this warm and affectionate memoir is pleasantly entertaining. Author tour. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Praise for *UNDER THE BIG TOP* â œA stunning collective portrait of an ingrown community with its

own history, hierarchy, and traditions. • (The New Yorker) *Inspirational.* • (New York Times) *Bruce Feiler is a keen and thoughtful observer...he forces circus goers to see the familiar spectacles anew.* • (New York Times Book Review) *A colorful, sometimes unsettling, pageant of circus life.* • (Entertainment Weekly) *As irresistible as cotton candy, as attention-grabbing as the death-defying trapeze act.* • (Indianapolis Star) *A gritty, haunting story.* • (People) *Sure-handed...dark-hued...extraordinary.* • (Christian Science Monitor) *Startling...romantic...seductive.* • (Denver Post) *Spellbinding...captivating...truly touching.* • (Princeton Times) *A mud and sweat-filled, but ultimately loving portrait of the circus.* • (New York Post) *Incredible...exciting...unbelievable...* • (Chattanooga Free Press) *Writing beautifully...Bruce Feiler penetrates the heart and soul of circus life with such stark clarity.* • (Douglas Brinkley, author of *The Majic Bus: An American Odyssey*) *A three ring triumph...the best book ever written about the circus.* • (Jim Foster, editor of *The White Tops*)

As a child of the 50's, the circus and the county fair were two things I looked forward to every year. Bruce Feiler brought the circus to life from the performers point of view with an entertaining account of the year he worked as a circus clown.

Topic and content is 5 stars. Writing held me down to a 4 stars rating, HOWEVER this is to be expected from a new author doing an excellent job. While reading this I would say it is important to remember that it is ONE person's account of ONE circus during ONE season. The author appears to give an accurate account of his experiences. His book is neither sugary towards the circus nor is he cynical. He portrays the performers as being normal people during something that is unusual. I now have more respect than ever for the circus and it's performers and other workers. I am now interested in reading other accounts in order to get a better understanding of the whole circus. peter soldan

Good story and book came in excellent condition. Great way to learn all about what really goes on in the circus.

Great book of life behind the big top....close up stories of the performers and people of the traveling show. a fun quick read book.

This would have to be one of the best books I've ever read. I love every word of it, and I had to stop

using my kindle highlight function because I was underlining the whole book. I own it in paperback and kindle formats, and have read it several times. Bruce is a master at getting under the skin and right to the heart of things in an incredibly short space of time. He brings the whole circus family, history and lifestyle to vivid life and his incredible character sketches and acute observations are enhanced by his beautiful turn of phrase. He only spent a year with the circus, but he performed with them every day, and the depth of knowledge he gained would take others a lifetime to uncover. This book takes you through the emotional highs and lows, the trauma and tragedy and joy of a way of life not many of us will have access to. Even if you aren't interested in the circus (really?), you will not be able to put this book down.

this is a nice book that tells you first hand about the "inside" of a circus. The author participates "for real" and tells you about his experience. Being a writer helps to get a very readable and enjoyable story that is not over romanticized nor over dramatic or over.... . If you like the circus world, you will really enjoy this !

this is a good book on many levels,,, the vanishing circus, the circus as a cultural phenomenon, the circus as a vanishing way of life, the circus as a business.....read it

An up close and personal account of a year on the road from a townie turned clown. Glazing over the sawdust and mud, Feiler's focus on the social events makes his memoir warm and accessible, and he tells it with excellently understated humor.

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