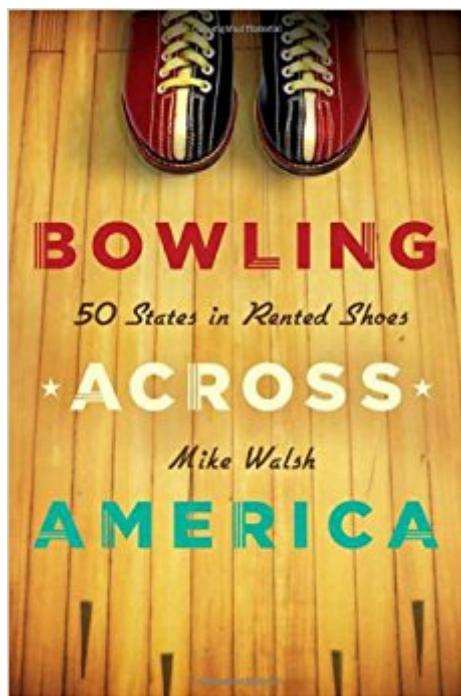


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# Bowling Across America: 50 States In Rented Shoes



## **Synopsis**

Inspired by his father's unexpected passing, Mike Walsh, a 27 year-old Chicago advertising executive, quits his job to embark on a one-of-a-kind quest. The destination: bowling alleys in each of the 50 states. Though dubbed "career suicide" by colleagues, the endeavor soon touches a nerve among many people—from frustrated middle managers to radio talk show hosts to a woman who merely identifies herself as "Bowling Spice" in an innuendo-laden email. Conversations and adventures with the people he finds in bowling alleys at all hours of the day and night—retired Maine lobsters, saucy European nannies, recovering addicts, former bowling champions, college students, World War II vets and lingerie saleswomen, to name a few—combine to form a picture of what America looks like while standing in a pair of rented shoes. Hilarious, insightful and at times moving, **BOWLING ACROSS AMERICA** is an epic journey that will enthrall readers everywhere.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

After Walsh's father dies in the middle of a handball game, the young advertising executive quits his job to follow a variant on one of the old man's dreams by bowling at least once in all 50 states. (Walsh tried to add the District of Columbia to the list, but the White House wasn't keen on letting him roll in its basement lanes.) Walsh's story has a string of amusing moments—he loses a game against a blind man, has failed romantic encounters in three different states and almost misses his last game because of a stubborn car rental clerk—but lacks dramatic tension. From the moment he sets out in the car his mother lends him, Walsh's ability to complete his mission is never in doubt; as soon as he mentions the possibility of a sponsorship from a beer

company, readers can safely assume he'll close the deal— which simply means he spends most of the trip drinking their beer. It's a clever enough story, but apart from some self-deprecating quips about how women (like his ex-girlfriend) don't really go for unemployed nomads, readers looking for a transformative life lesson will have to look elsewhere. (Oct. 30) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

When his father died, the author, an advertising executive, made a decision that, on its surface, seems, well . . . foolish. His father, you see, always had this dream of playing handball in all 50 states, and Walsh wanted to honor the man by embarking on his own quest, to bowl his way from one state to another. So he quit his job, borrowed his mother's car, and set out on the road, full of enthusiasm but lacking any real idea of how he was going to support himself. This very entertaining book tells two stories, both of them about the same man: the story of an adventurous guy who just wants to have some fun, and the story of a tireless self-promoter who talks his way onto radio and television shows, newspaper interviews, and major-league sponsorships. Along the way he meets a variety of people, each of whom offers a distinctive slice of life, and (of course) he discovers a few surprising things about himself. Charming, funny, and sometimes heartwarming.

--David Pitt

To straight out say that this book is interesting would be a lie. Mike Walsh does cover a lot of territory, at least geographically. The problem lies in the way he regards bowling. He never delves into bowling from a serious perspective, it's more of a random activity he chose to mark off 50 states. Many times in the book he visits just a random bowling alley, bowls a quick game and off it is to the next state. It would have been far more interesting to seek out historic alleys in each state and delve into their histories and the people, he meets. Don't get me wrong he does tell some stories but more of them are about where he spent the night and his quest to get laid. So if you want a book about bowling in fifty states this might not be the one. A better read is 'Bowling for the mob' the Bob Perry story.

Item was sent in timely manner. Thanks! Looks like an interesting read... . Was given as a gift to a 16 year old bowler. He seemed appreciative.

AAA

Most other book club members did not waste their time finishing this book, but I did. I expected at least a small epiphany but it was the same dreary story till the end. At first there was some humor, but after awhile, the drunken nights and cheap bowling alleys took their toll on me. The writing was boring as well. I did like the Buckin' Beaver bar story!

I can across this book when I was searching for bowling shoes. I really enjoyed this book and am still trying to find something I can try to accomplish in all 50 states.

A book about bowling and travel? How could it miss?That's the story presented by Mike Walsh in "Bowling Across America." He's one of the few people to bowl in all 50 states, and lived to write a book about it.Walsh was a little frustrated at his job and a little down about the death of his father, who had an unofficial and unattained goal of playing handball in 50 states when he died. Eventually son Mike quit his job, "borrowed" his mother's car, and hit the road. He even picked up a sponsor shortly after he started, living the High Life along the way. Indeed, it wouldn't be bowling for some without beer, and Walsh did his part.There are some stories about media interviews as well as personal relationships. But basically this comes down to travel and bowling. Walsh sees the part of America that is still hanging out at the local lanes, and proves to be good at chatting them up. It's an interesting subculture if you'll pardon the academic tone. And it's a big country, although the author/driver/bowler doesn't do a great deal of sightseeing. Those looking for deep themes about fathers and sons probably can find better books on that area elsewhere. No matter.By the way, Walsh went on the trip in 2002-03, I believe, and didn't get it published until 2008. Still, it's nice that it doesn't really date 11 years or so after the trip. Bowling, it seems remains timeless in some ways.This all reminded me of the book, "The Great Typo Hunt." Two friends sailed through the interstates in search of typographical errors. "Bowling Across America" goes by quite quickly, as Walsh proves to be good company. Those with something of an interest in the two themes will find this, ahem, right up their alley.

I just finished reading Mike Walsh's "Bowling Across America". I was on "California" when I interrupted. So I went to my local Bolwing Alley: "Lava Lanes", in Bend Oregon., to finish the chapter. I quietly found a seat, opened my book, and not only finished, "California" but continue on through (my home state) Oregon and then onto Washington. I would look up from my book, to see, like in Walsh's book, a "Senior League" starting up. I felt a "kinship" with Walsh. Not knowing if this happened to Mike Walsh; but I was getting looks like I was invading their HOME! I guess I should

have put down my book and picked up a ball! Thanks to Mr. Walsh, Bowling is Sexy! OhÃƒÂ¢ÃÂ| and Mr. Walsh; FYIÃƒÂ¢ÃÂ| The Hollywood Lanes, you bold in, while in Portland, Oregon (ANd got your BEST interview to date..) Is now on the demolition block :( You like bowling, you like to travel or you just like the idea of quitting your job and hitting the road! You'll LOVE "Bowling 50 States In Rented Shoes Across America"!

This is a delightful memoir about a young man's journey of self-discovery. Walsh embarks on what seems like a silly quest to bowl in all fifty states and takes the reader places we've never been. The anecdotes about the people he meets along the way, the personal memories of his late father, who inspired him to undertake this journey and the general good-humored approach to the sport of bowling makes this a nice vicarious experience.Ã  Bowling Across America: 50 States in Rented Shoes

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