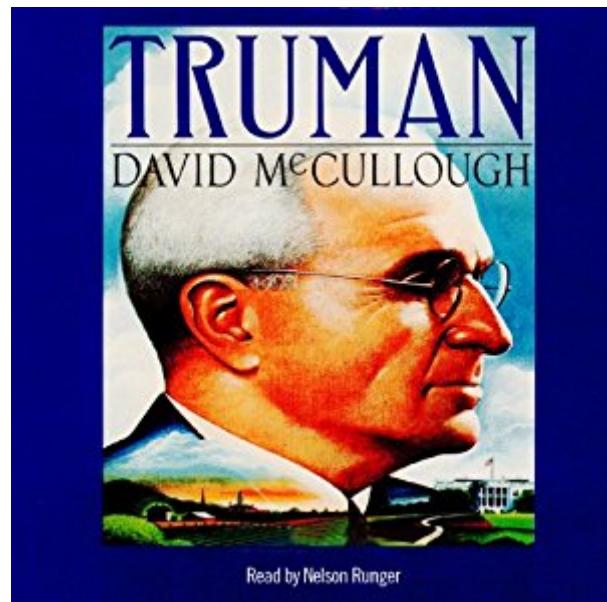


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# Truman



## Synopsis

Pulitzer Prize, Biography/Autobiography, 1993 Hailed by critics as an American masterpiece, David McCullough's sweeping biography of Harry S. Truman captured the heart of the nation. The life and times of the 33rd president of the United States, Truman provides a deeply moving look at an extraordinary, singular American. From Truman's small-town, turn-of-the-century boyhood and his transforming experience in the face of war in 1918, to his political beginnings in the powerful Pendergast machine and his rapid rise to prominence in the U.S. Senate, McCullough shows a man of uncommon vitality and strength of character. Here too is a telling account of Truman's momentous decision to use the atomic bomb and the weighty responsibilities that he was forced to confront on the dawning of a new age. Distinguished historian and Pulitzer-Prize-winning author David McCullough tells one of the greatest American stories in this stirring audio adaptation of Truman - a compelling, classic portrait of a life that shaped history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've been on a big presidential kick lately with the 2016 Presidential Election around a month away. So with that in mind, I will offer my thoughts on Truman. On the positive, I think he did a magnificent job covering Harry Truman as far as giving the reader the broad experience of his life before, during, and after the presidency. For my money, you can't get any better than the sections on the events leading up to the firing of Douglas MacArthur and his defeat of Thomas Dewey in 1948. I felt like while it was a well-written

biography that kept me engaged through 1000 pages, I felt like it reinforced the popular image of Harry Truman as a plain spoken man of principles who knew how to make the tough decisions and made them. While there is certainly nothing wrong with it, it felt like anything that didn't compete was glossed over like his association with the Pendergast Machine in Missouri or the depth of his feelings for FDR, I thought this could've added a little more depth because many people already understand the popular perception of Harry Truman. Well written, but largely reinforcing the "popular" image of Harry Truman.

I have read many of David McCullough's books, only two more to go, but this one was the absolute best. He brought Truman to life for me. He made that whole era, WWI into the Korean War come alive. Every character, every scene, was like I knew exactly what he was talking about. His love of Bess and then his daughter...his protection of the privacy of his family....his loyalty...this was the best read for me and, believe me, I loved The Great Bridge and the story of the Panama Canal...Path Between the Seas....but Truman was so very special. If you have a love of history you will enjoy this book from beginning to end and don't let the length of it discourage you from starting it because it just flies by. When I finished it I felt that I had laid to rest my very best friend. I hope you all enjoy it as much as I did.

I knew little about Truman and this book has been fascinating. Beyond the facts themselves, it's very well written and I've read it quickly, with sustained pleasure. As a result, it would have been more logical to give it 5 stars, instead of 4. The only reason why I didn't, is that it is a bit too much of an hagiography. If I can understand his use of the atomic bombs against Japan, I think that his decision to go beyond the 38th parallel in Korea in October 1950, was a major mistake (since then, we have seen other American presidents getting embroiled in similar wars they cannot control...). McCullough puts the main blame on MacArthur, but this is disingenuous: it is Truman who gave the green light. How many American soldiers died for, basically, nothing?

Within the first 100 pages or so, I could immediately see why McCullough was celebrated for this humane and vivid portrait of a dogged man who was so underrated in his time. The writing sparkles and Truman, in all his complexity (a decent man backed by the Democratic machine, a simple man guiding the most complex foreign policy decisions of our times) comes across as an Everyman:Forrest Gump, a testament to the cream rising to the top. I think the one quibble I would

have is that McCullough doesn't feel like he takes a strong view on either the man or the decisions he made, but rather is there simply as the most perceptive of observers

Thoroughly enjoyed reading yet another of David McCullough's biographies. This book was almost enough to make me turn Democrat, but for the realization that the party today is a long way from what it was in Truman's time. The book seemed to bring Truman to life. Although certainly not the perfect man, he was an extraordinarily fine example of a great man from a modest background but a solid upbringing. My big question after finishing the book was whether or not the animosity Truman felt for Eisenhower was justified. In the case of Joe McCarthy, I'm sure it was. Have now added to my bucket list visiting his library in Independence.

Compared to his daughter's adoring biography of HST, David McCullough has really unearthed some remarkable stories and anecdotes about the KC Pendergast machine, the reformer Lloyd Stark of apple growing fame, and the generally honorable way HST conducted himself as a county commissioner, supervisor and senator. FDR and HST were from different worlds, but the latter appears to have been a wise choice given events that followed his predecessor's passing. Still have 500 pages or so to go, but if you enjoy American history as our nation ascended, this book will not disappoint. McCullough is an avidly apolitical researcher and writer who calls them as he learns of their facts. Glad I started this informative book. Looking forward to tackling the first of Robert Caro's five volume set on poor old LBJ. For a real treat in presidential bios, though, check out Lord Conrad Black's amazing FDR. It's a whopper! Good reading American history aficionados!

This is the 4th book of his I have read on my kindle. Each one is better than the last. Truman gave me a look at the man who was President when she was born. I was too young to know much about him but this book makes me want to learn more. Parts of the book reminded me of the political place we are in now with a leader who doesn't know what he is doing or how things should be done. Truman understood what a president should be but was followed by someone who wasn't.

David McCullough has always been a very good storyteller, and his book about Harry Truman is no exception. However, he spends far too much time on Truman's ancestry. The book does not get interesting until Harry is an adult and goes off to war. Once Harry assumes the presidency, the rationale of his decisions regarding the world still resonate today. His description of Joseph McCarthy and the "fake news" is very similar to what is happening today ("I have a list of 81

members of the Communist Party that are working in the State Department!").

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