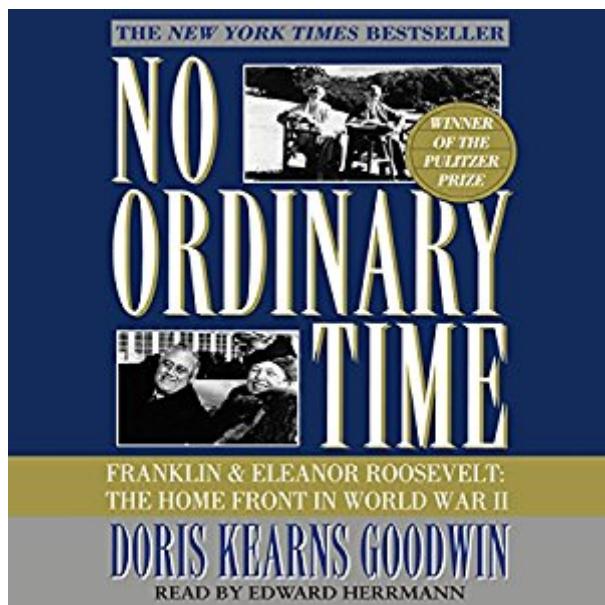


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No Ordinary Time: Franklin And Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front In World War II



Synopsis

Pulitzer Prize Winner, History, 1995 No Ordinary Time describes how the isolationist and divided United States of 1940 was unified under the extraordinary leadership of Franklin Roosevelt to become the preeminent economic and military power in the world. Using diaries, interviews, and White House records of the president's and first lady's comings and goings, Goodwin paints an intimate portrait of the daily conduct of the presidency during wartime and the Roosevelts' extraordinary constellation of friends, advisers, and family. Bringing to bear the tools of both history and biography, No Ordinary Time relates the unique story of how Franklin Roosevelt led the nation to victory against seemingly insurmountable odds and, with Eleanor's essential help, forever changed the fabric of American society.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the finest books I have ever read about America's involvement in World War II. Not only has Goodwin thoroughly researched her subject, but she knows how to tell it in an easily readable, "can't put it down" manner. Writing an informative, wonderfully illustrative book about the home front during mankind's biggest, deadliest war is a feat, but making readers feel as if they are actually living and experiencing that time is another accomplishment altogether. Goodwin does this in a book that will be read hundreds of years from now. Anyone who wishes to get the feel for what it was like during this tumultuous time should buy this book, read it, and then read it again. Many people of FDR's inner circle are profiled and narrated, including Lucy Mercer, the woman FDR fell in

love with and nearly divorced Eleanor over; Missy LeHand, FDR's personal assistant whom many referred to as his "real" wife; as well as Ikes, Morgenthau, Stimson and most importantly, Harry Hopkins. Goodwin also debunks some myths about the FDR presidency, both good and bad. Some World War II "Did You Know" tidbits covered: 1. Nearly 105,000 refugees from Nazism reached the U.S., more than any other country. Palestine was second with 55,000. No one disputes that the number should have been much, much higher, but today's attitudes would lead people to believe that we turned everyone away. Footnote - during FDR's presidency, only 3 percent of the population was Jewish - but 15 percent of his appointments were Jewish. Our greatest wartime president was no Anti-Semite. 2. The journey of the St. Louis. The author gives adequate attention to one of the great tragedies of the war, and an enormous stain on FDR's legacy. 3.

Of the making of books on Franklin Delano and Eleanor Roosevelt there is not end. By any standard they remain two of the most remarkable people to have inhabited the White House, he as one of greatest presidents ever and she as without any serious competition the greatest first lady. Together, they forged a partnership without parallel in the nation's history. In a sense, the book is deceptively delimited. Goodwin ostensibly deals with the Roosevelts and the Home Front during WW II, but in fact this is more like a joint biography of the two. She freely shifts the narrative from the years of 1939-45 to any point in the lives of the two, whether to dwell on their first meeting, to the time in which Franklin was afflicted with polio and his attempted recovery, to Eleanor's upbringing and the sufferings she experienced with alcoholics, to Franklin's adulterous affair that effectively ended his and Eleanor's marriage if not their partnership. So the book ends up as a wide-ranging exploration of the lives of the two main characters, as well the major figures in their lives, whether in the war years or not. Franklin emerges in the book as what he certainly was: one of the truly great presidents in American history (even his detractors need recall that Ronald Reagan called him the greatest president). Virtually every poll of scholars since his lifetime has placed him among our three greatest presidents, but even that can overlook the fact that no president in our history faced more challenges than did Roosevelt, and few dealt with them so successfully. Goodwin is brilliant at showing both Franklin's great strengths as both president and a human being, as well as his weaknesses.

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