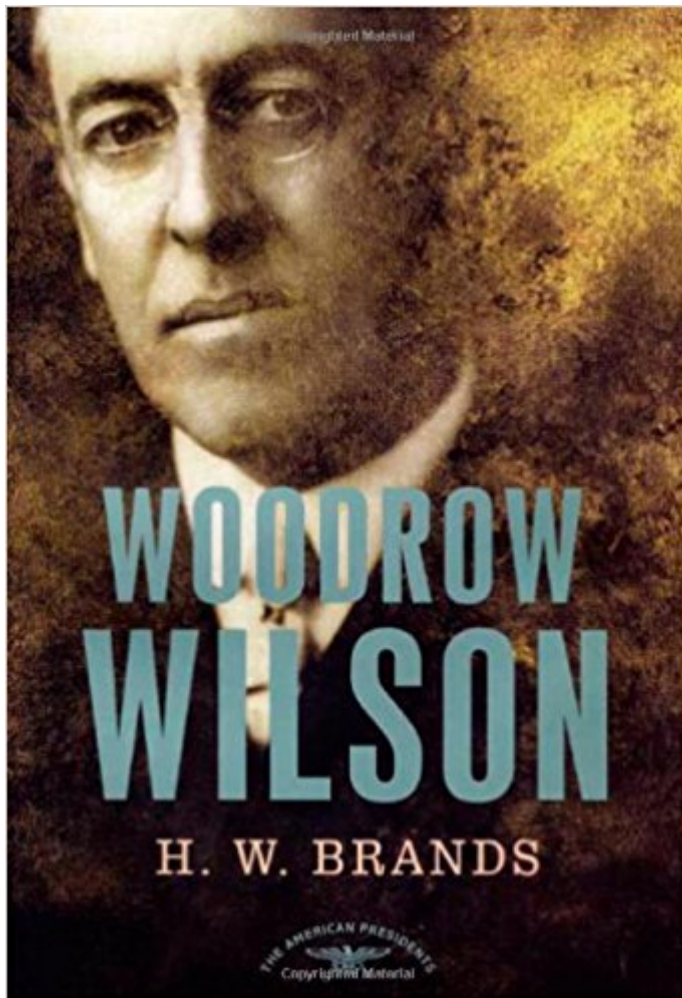


The book was found

Woodrow Wilson



Synopsis

A comprehensive account of the rise and fall of one of the major shapers of American foreign policy. On the eve of his inauguration as President, Woodrow Wilson commented, "It would be the irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs." As America was drawn into the Great War in Europe, Wilson used his scholarship, his principles, and the political savvy of his advisers to overcome his ignorance of world affairs and lead the country out of isolationism. The product of his efforts—his vision of the United States as a nation uniquely suited for moral leadership by virtue of its democratic tradition—is a view of foreign policy that is still in place today. Acclaimed historian and Pulitzer Prize finalist H. W. Brands offers a clear, well-informed, and timely account of Wilson's unusual route to the White House, his campaign against corporate interests, his struggles with rivals at home and allies abroad, and his decline in popularity and health following the rejection by Congress of his League of Nations. Wilson emerges as a fascinating man of great oratorical power, depth of thought, and purity of intention.

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Customer Reviews

At a time when U.S. foreign policy and the country's role in the world are very much at issue, what could be more appropriate than to revisit the president who set U.S. foreign policy on its course in the 20th century? Brands, best-selling author and Pulitzer finalist for *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*, gives a sober portrait of a president dedicated to peace yet compelled to enter a brutal war. Yet more than his actions, Brands says, it is Wilson's words that

remain with us: "The world must be made safe for democracy." Brands writes elegiacally of Wilson's "beautiful words, soaring words, words moved a nation and enthralled a world, words that for a wonderful moment were more powerful than armies." Though recent events cast doubt on Brands's statement that Wilson's views ("idealism is sometimes the highest form of realism") have triumphed and that the U.S. concedes the U.N.'s "role at the center of world affairs," his contribution to the American Presidents series, edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, is a stirring reminder of the ideals that underlie American policy. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Libraries unable to afford Arthur Link's multivolume biography of Wilson should consider this digestible precis from Brands, a proven success in popular-history writing over the past decade. He shows why Wilson is one of the most significant of American presidents, albeit one with a fluctuating reputation, through an efficient recitation of his governing acts that capped the Progressive Era. Generally accepted reforms such as the income tax or the Federal Reserve, however, are not what buffet Wilson's name; it was his induction of the U.S. into World War I and the transcendental rhetoric by which he did so. Whether naive or visionary, Wilson's idealism bespoke his character, which Brands lays before his reader: Wilson possessed inflexible fiber born of his religious convictions, although Brands counts him more flexible than ordinarily thought. Wilson failed in his aspiration to set international affairs on a foundation of principle rather than power. However, Brands ably underscores Wilson's ultimate success through his eloquence and his ideas in steering thought about foreign affairs toward a liberal alternative to Realpolitik. Gilbert TaylorCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

A fine biography, by a very fluent author, on a fascinating subject! I much appreciate the indepth knowledge I know have of Woodrow Wilson; a man way ahead of the rest of Humanity on Spiritual Principles. I also enjoyed that it was written by H,W. Brands, as he is a Professor at The University of Texas, and I am a migrated Austinite. Brands has quite a vocabulary; kept my dictionary app very busy... ;o)

First, I would not recommend this book if one wishes to learn even a sketch of Wilson's life and/or presidency. So much of what he accomplished is not mentioned at all. This was one in this series I most looked forward to reading and was profoundly disappointed. There is simply not much else to say which is in keeping with how I felt when I discovered I had come to the end only to be left hanging with the desire for more.

H.W.Brands has the capacity to write an insightful and interesting book. This effort contains a few pages of impressive work; most fall far short of what he can do. Obviously, I don't know the parameters of his contract to be a part of the President Series. "They" were, or should have been, lucky to get his participation. Too bad the product was for me, unfulfilling.

Excellent for a first-timer on Wilson. Maybe even others would like to learn about this not-so-famous president.

You must guard your expectations on a biography (especially of a two term president) that only reads 138 pages. However, I thought that H.W. Brands could add his typical free flowing style and story-telling ability to make a completely satisfying short-read. Unfortunately, Brands delivers his least inspired performance in telling the story of Wilson. Obviously, the context of the project (a short "taste" on the life of Wilson) curtailed Brands style, which I found to be my biggest disappointment. As a whole - the life of Wilson is fascinating - a great turning point in the life of "liberals" (While Wilson would certainly not be considered a "liberal" by today's standards). Wilson implemented the 8 hour work day, the FTC, and stiffened anti-trust laws.... not to mention a monstrous epidemic of the flu... and oh yeah.... World War I. Unfortunately - most of these issues are just briefly touched on (The flu epidemic was not even mentioned). As a whole - I found this to be a fair brief glimpse into the life of Wilson. However, I would have love to read one of Brand's standard 400 pagers on the life of Wilson.

This series on the American Presidents is not meant to supply a fully in depth examination of each individual. This is clearly stated in the foreword. However, this installment by H.W. Brands really is a very entertaining review of the presidency of Woodrow Wilson. As I noticed on Brands's "Benjamin Franklin: The First American", his narrative effectively captures your attention and before you realize it, you have consumed most of the text.

Not too detailed. A great start for studying the roots of progressivism in the Democratic Party, and the issues that divide us to this day.

Book was generally good. It was light on certain serious issues such as the affect Wilson's personal racist views had on the country both during his time and in the future.

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