

Theodore Roosevelt: The American Presidents Series: The 26th President, 1901-1909

By Louis Auchincloss

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An intimate portrait of the first president of the 20th century

The American century opened with the election of that quintessentially American adventurer, Theodore Roosevelt. Louis Auchincloss's warm and knowing biography introduces us to the man behind the many myths of Theodore Roosevelt. From his early involvement in the politics of New York City and then New York State, we trace his celebrated military career and finally his ascent to the national political stage. Caricatured through history as the "bull moose," Roosevelt was in fact a man of extraordinary discipline whose refined and literate tastes actually helped spawn his fascination with the rough-and-ready worlds of war and wilderness.

Bringing all his novelist's skills to the task, Auchincloss briskly recounts the significant contributions of Roosevelt's career and administration. This biography is as thorough as it is readable, as clear-eyed as it is touching and personal.

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- Rank: #259227 in eBooks
- Published on: 2013-11-12
- Released on: 2013-11-12
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Theodore Roosevelt was a man of contradictions: a warrior who won the Nobel Peace prize, a wealthy man who battled corporate greed, a thinker who prized action more than words (but who wrote fine books himself).

He was also, writes Louis Auchincloss in this lucid biography, an extraordinary leader, "a political idealist who had the wisdom to know that only by astute and well-considered compromise in our legislative process could he hope to see enacted even a fraction of the social and military programs that he deemed ... essential to the welfare of his nation." Compromise he did, of course, though in the end the war hero and trustbuster could not bring the right wing of the Republican Party to see the wisdom of his reformist ways. The result, Auchincloss chronicles, was a terrible split, bringing about the defection of liberals from that once-liberal institution and the birth of a political war that still rages.

With a keen eye for political nuance and a clear appreciation for Teddy Roosevelt as a one-of-a-kind, self-made man, Auchincloss offers an engaging view of a great American president. --*Gregory McNamee*

From Publishers Weekly
The statement "radical... action must be taken to do away with the effects of arrogant and selfish greed on the part of the capitalist" might sound like Karl Marx or Eugene V. Debs, but it comes from Theodore Roosevelt. Yet this president was "neither by birth, upbringing, or mature inclination in the least bit a radical," according to eminent novelist Auchincloss (The Atonement, etc.). TR (1858-1919), he says, embodied numerous contradictions for which he has been periodically pilloried by liberals and conservatives alike. Responsible for much progressive legislation he passed the Pure Food and Drug Act, created federal forest lands and obtained antitrust legislation he was also an aristocrat who was against monopolies because they were not gentlemanly, invaded Panama to build the canal and casually exhibited racism during the Spanish-American War. Born into a wealthy New York family, Roosevelt overcame bad health in childhood to embody an image of manliness (losing an eye in a boxing match against a "younger and stronger" man) and bluster that defined his era. He also avidly read Dickens, Thackeray and Greek drama. Though acknowledging Roosevelt's many contradictions, Auchincloss sidesteps most serious criticism of his subject. He paints a vivid portrait and almost treats the president as a quirky character in one of his own novels of upper-class America. More ruminative essay than close historical study, Auchincloss's narrative wanders in chronological disarray. Nonetheless, it is a compelling, novelistic approach to history. Readers curious about Roosevelt but intimidated by Edmund Morris's multi-volume bio can wet their toes in this slim text, the first title in the American Presidents series, edited by eminent historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and clearly modeled on the successful Penguin Lives series of short biographies by notable writers.

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From Library Journal
"The American Presidents," a new series with Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. as its general editor, is one of several recent series of little books on big topics. The series leads off, at under 150 pages, with novelist Auchincloss's biography of Theodore Roosevelt. Despite the brevity, Auchincloss offers frequent blocks of quotation from Edmund Morris and other full-length biographers, as well as from the prolific Roosevelt

himself, and readers may suspect that the brief format did not call forth the author's best effort. The book offers none of the virtues of its parts, since either a full-scale biography or an Auchincloss novel would give more pleasure, and a good encyclopedia article would say as much about TR while taking up even less of the reader's time. Auchincloss is the author of another brief presidential life, Woodrow Wilson (LJ 4/15/00), in the "Penguin Lives" series. Not recommended. Robert F. Nardini, Chichester, NH
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lisa Gonzales:

Now a day people who Living in the era everywhere everything reachable by talk with the internet and the resources in it can be true or not call for people to be aware of each details they get. How a lot more to be smart in acquiring any information nowadays? Of course the answer then is reading a book. Reading a book can help people out of this uncertainty Information particularly this Theodore Roosevelt: The American Presidents Series: The 26th President, 1901-1909 book because book offers you rich facts and knowledge. Of course the information in this book hundred % guarantees there is no doubt in it you probably know this.

Patricia Thomas:

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Jeffrey Haller:

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Louis Hartford:

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still revise. Let's try to choose suitable ways for you.

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