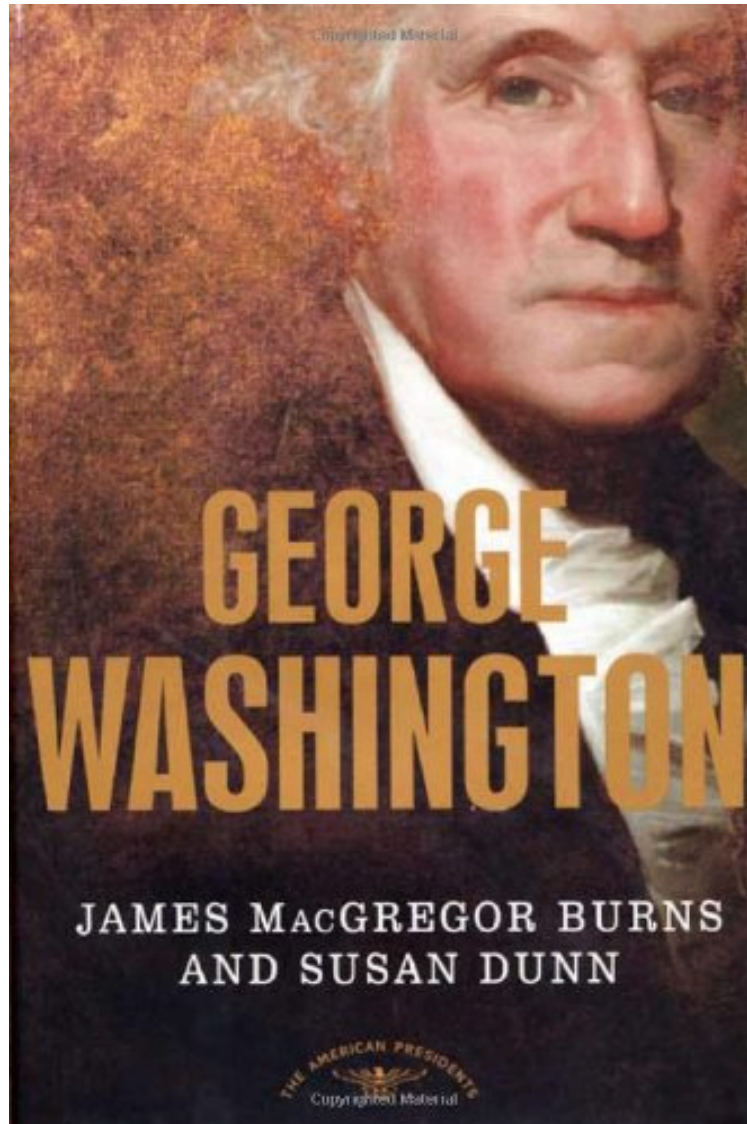


[Read free ebook] George Washington (The American Presidents Series)

George Washington (The American Presidents Series)

James MacGregor Burns, Susan Dunn
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James MacGregor Burns, Susan Dunn : George Washington (The American Presidents Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised George Washington (The American Presidents Series):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent introduction to the first eight years of the American PresidencyBy Daniel PutmanIf you are looking for a detailed biography of Washington, this is not it. There is very little here about Washington's childhood and early life and equally little about his role in the Revolution. But, given the size of the books in the American Presidents series and the goal of focusing on the Presidency itself, the book is solid.

Burns and Dunn emphasize Washington's main goal as President, especially in his first term forging the unity of the country. They point out several times how Washington could have taken the country toward being a modified monarchy but resisted despite enormous pressure to do so. They also clearly delineate the strengths of Washington's initial choices for his cabinet and how he dealt with the fact that the President's actual powers are minimally spelled out in the Constitution. Burns and Dunn also do a fine job of clarifying how parties developed and how Washington found himself, especially in his second term, defending a centralized form of government that emphasized commerce and ties to the wealthy versus the views of his former close friends Madison and Jefferson. Burns and Dunn claim with good evidence that in his second term Washington often confused the unity of the country with his own policies and could not understand how his opponents could be what he viewed as dangerously divisive. Washington began his Presidency as the virtually unanimous hero of the people and left it being attacked by one opponent as the man who is the source of all the misfortunes of our country. The world of American politics was born. This is an excellent introduction to the years of the first President. I would not recommend it as a biography, but, if the reader is interested in Washington's Presidential years themselves, this is hard to beat. And that is the goal of the American Presidents series.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Many reviews have stated that this is interesting in its ...By CLOCKMAN60 Many reviews have stated that this is interesting in its presentation and style. I probably wouldn't classify it as exciting reading, but rather would say it was informative, but very dry. If you do not possess a huge vocabulary, you may need a dictionary at your side. The author goes out of his way to use ridiculously obscure words when simpler, more direct terms would have made the reading more satisfying and understandable. Quotes of Washington are sometimes tough enough to follow without the author complicating the situation. While I do have a master's in mathematics from I.U., I'm not an avid reader with a large vocabulary. If you do, this read might be more enjoyable.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. George Washington By Kindle Customer An inspiring biography of a man and a revealing portrait of an era. A very good beginning to a series.

A premier leadership scholar and an eighteenth-century expert define the special contributions and qualifications of our first president Revolutionary hero, founding president, and first citizen of the young republic, George Washington was the most illustrious public man of his time, a man whose image today is the result of the careful grooming of his public persona to include the themes of character, self-sacrifice, and destiny. As Washington sought to interpret the Constitution's assignment of powers to the executive branch and to establish precedent for future leaders, he relied on his key advisers and looked to form consensus as the guiding principle of government. His is a legacy of a successful experiment in collective leadership, great initiatives in establishing a strong executive branch, and the formulation of innovative and lasting economic and foreign policies. James MacGregor Burns and Susan Dunn also trace the arc of Washington's increasing dissatisfaction with public life and the seeds of dissent and political parties that, ironically, grew from his insistence on consensus. In this compelling and balanced biography, Burns and Dunn give us a rich portrait of the man behind the carefully crafted mythology.

From Publishers Weekly Like other volumes in the American Presidents series, edited by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., this biographical essay focuses on a handful of themes through which to examine Washington's life before and during his presidency. The book's first half examines how Washington, "ferociously ambitious" and "fiercely protective of his own reputation," meticulously crafted his public image, even years before the American Revolution, to emphasize the virtues of self-sacrifice and dignity. While acknowledging the extent to which Washington craved esteem from others, the authors are basically sympathetic, framing his ambition within the context of his role in defining the young nation's political institutions. In fact, Washington is somewhat invisible during passages depicting the power struggles among subordinates in the first administration. This allows Burns (a Pulitzer winner for *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*) and Dunn (also Burns's coauthor on *The Three Roosevelts*) to build on the former's theories about "transforming leadership" (which he presented in a book of that title) and to praise Washington's creation of a collective leadership, rather than establishing a solitary ruling authority, as an achievement "never to be surpassed in American presidential history." The authors also offer a frank appraisal of how Washington inadvertently sowed the seeds of political discord even as he developed national unity. This compact appraisal won't radically alter anybody's perspective on Washington. But its points are made briefly without sacrificing substance. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist The excellently crafted American Presidents series, edited by Arthur Schlesinger, continues with a top-notch biography of Washington. In similar fashion to the other entries in this series, the authors concern themselves primarily with their subject as a political animal. According to Burns and Dunn, Washington was not only the first president but also set an enduring precedent for his successors by meticulously crafting and promoting his own sterling public image. Though historically viewed as a strong individual leader, Washington also excelled at forging a consensus among his allies and advisors. Where he failed, perhaps, was in his misguided endeavor to quash any dissenting points of view--an endeavor that had the contrary effect of polarizing and strengthening opposing political parties. This scholarly analysis of the inaugural presidency provides an enlightening new slant on a timeless subject. Margaret Flanagan Copyright American Library Association. All rights

reserved "A remarkable example of narrative and biographical history at its best."