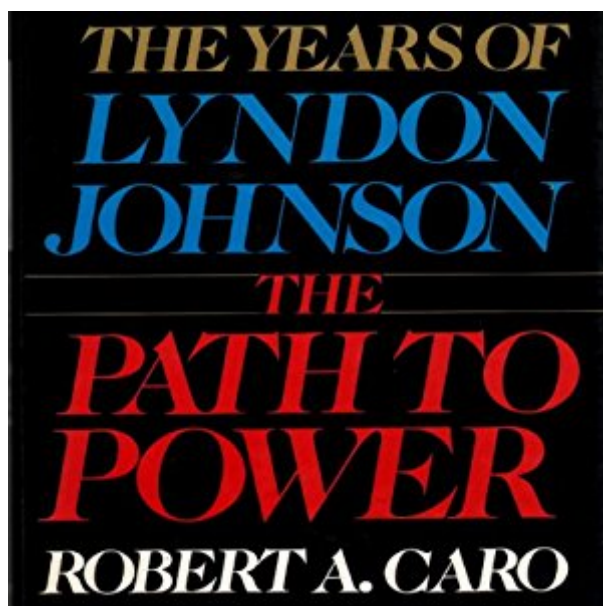


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The Path To Power: The Years Of Lyndon Johnson



Synopsis

This is the story of the rise to national power of a desperately poor young man from the Texas Hill Country. The Path to Power reveals in extraordinary detail the genesis of the almost superhuman drive, energy, and ambition that set LBJ apart. It follows him from the Hill Country to New Deal Washington, from his boyhood through the years of the Depression to his debut as Congressman, his heartbreaking defeat in his first race for the Senate, and his attainment, nonetheless, at age 31, of the national power for which he hungered. In this book, we are brought as close as we have ever been to a true perception of political genius and the American political process. Means of Ascent, Book Two of The Years of Lyndon Johnson, was a number-one national best seller and, like The Path to Power, received the National Book Critics Circle Award.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book about the first years of LBJ's political life is nothing if not thorough. A lot of pages and a lot of interesting information about a man who while certainly flawed in many ways ended up doing a lot of good as President. Caro's research is exhaustive. In fact, maybe too much. I found myself skimming a bit when he repeated several times stories to illustrate a point. I bought the second volume when I bought this first volume, but don't plan to begin the second volume any time soon. A break is needed. That said, I do plan to continue the 4 volume series and certainly recommend the book to anyone who enjoys biographies in general, but political bios in particular.

Hard to put down, which given it is a detailed history of LBJ and Texas is amazing. And terrifying of why the little people like me, get smashed by the financially powerful. Having done time in a 1960s Houston middle and high schools (in the days when the schools educated), I was given a solid history education. This book has expanded it to understand whence LBJ came, and why populism will rise again. As I read the chapters on electricity on the farm from my home in the city of Chicago that looks out on Soldier Field, I now understand why the major company that sells our neighborhood Internet service refuses to install fiber optics. Good old copper cable good enough for us they said, with its max 13.6 MBPS.

I have recently completed the first four volumes of *They Years of Lyndon Johnson*. They are all excellent; however I wanted to write a review for *Means Of Ascent*, because it is my favorite (thus far). Caro was right; the story told in this book deserved far more than a mere chapter in volume 2 (his original plan). This was a story that needed to be told, and Caro did it masterfully. The drama of the 1948 Democratic Senate primary far exceeded my expectations. It wasn't just the stolen election itself; everything before and after election day was high drama. From LBJ's kidney stones to Coke Stevenson's showdown to find Box 13, I couldn't get enough. Just like his chapters on Al Smith in *The Power Broker*, Caro writes a great biography on Stevenson, providing such a stark contrast between LBJ and Stevenson that we as the reader aren't sure who to root for. Or what the outcome might be. Caro's ability to make wonder what will happen next even though I know how it ends is my favorite part of this series in general, and this volume in particular.

A great read. The author goes into minute detail about much more than Johnson, which accounts for the thickness of the book. The author takes you into the past, before Johnson was born and gives great detail about his ancestors, the Texas landscape around where Johnson was born and raised and adds in a great deal about Texas politics during that time. Once Johnson is born, he shares far more detail than most books (which I found fascinating), about Johnson, his family and again, the political scene during this time, both locally and nationally. I felt as though I was reading about several topics all in one book, but I loved this aspect of Caro's writing; he certainly is very detailed. If you love history and want details, details, details, then I feel you will enjoy this book. I highly recommend it for someone who wants more than just a quick-moving summary of Johnson.

This book is for my husband--he is reading the whole series and loves each one. He delights in

telling me what he has read, not only about Johnson, but about how the government worked when he was in it. He has found it very educational and certainly interesting, to say the least! He thinks it is very well written and the amount of research the author did is phenomenal.

MUCH history in these volumes about politics and history of Texas and about depression era...information not included in newspapers. Learned so much. Kept interest even with the detail. Fast delivery. Well packaged

Caro's work is monumental. I single out this volume because Caro researched the famous 1948 Texas Senatorial race so expertly bringing to life the testimonies given in court by the individuals who conspired with LBJ to steal the election by using his influence and personal knowledge of local politicians and their weaker points and future aspirations. There was much at stake in the lower Rio Grande Valley in this election with the Bentsen family and other locals wanting to transform the area into a major agricultural entity for much personal gain. In 1948, the lower Rio Grande Valley was a collection of many small agricultural villages and a few major towns. The place is now transformed into a smaller version of Houston with similar freeways and traffic patterns and Bentsen and others' properties increased in value by a hundred times or more. All this accomplished through coercion, lost ballot boxes, and much more hideous acts. Caro exposes corruption practiced as a high art by LBJ and his minions.

The books covers the roots of LBJ concerning when and where he came from. To fully understand someone, you have to know about where they come from and what influenced them.

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