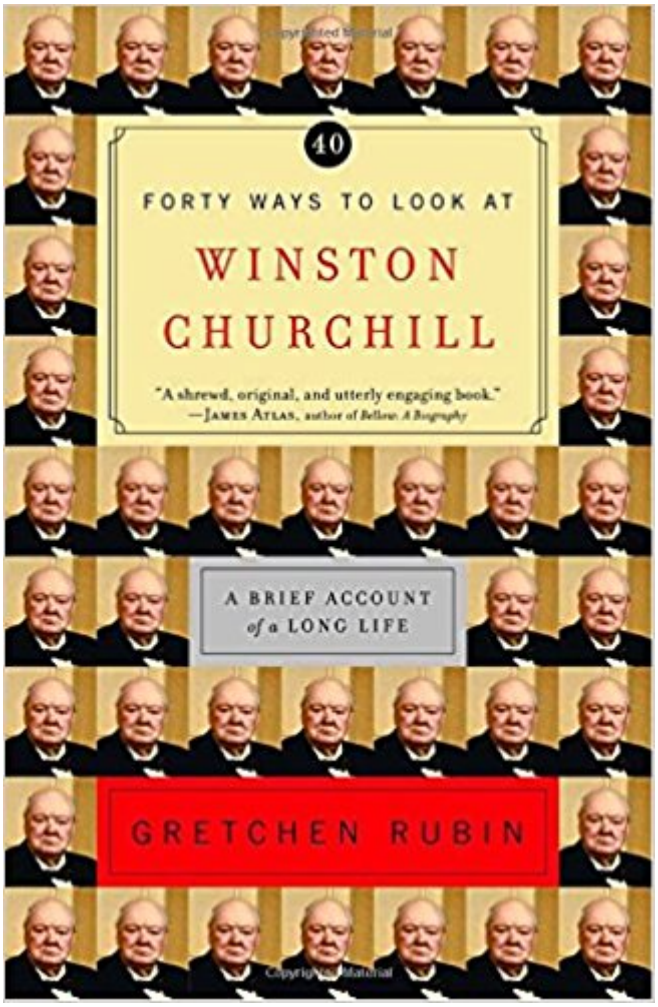
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Forty Ways To Look At Winston Churchill: A Brief Account Of A Long Life



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Synopsis

A WALL STREET JOURNAL SUMMER PICKA WASHINGTON POST BESTSELLERWarrior and writer, genius and crank, rider in the British cavalryÃ¢â ¬â„¢s last great charge and inventor of the tank, Winston Churchill led Britain to fight alone against Nazi Germany in the fateful year of 1940 and set the standard for leading a democracy at war. With penetrating insight and vivid anecdotes, Gretchen Rubin makes Churchill accessible and meaningful to twenty-first-century readers by analyzing the many contrasting views of the man: he was an alcoholic, he was not; he was an anachronism, he was a visionary; he was a racist, he was a humanitarian; he was the most quotable man in the history of the English language, he was a bore.Like no other portrait of its famous subject, Forty Ways to Look at Winston Churchill is a dazzling display of facts more improbable than fiction. It brings to full realization the depiction of a man too fabulous for any novelist to construct, too complex for even the longest narrative to describe, and too significant ever to be forgotten.

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Customer Reviews

Eschewing the linear, chronological approach of most biographies, Yale Law School professor and Churchill devotee Rubin (Power Money Fame Sex: A User's Guide) has written 40 brief chapters looking at the British prime minister from multiple angles: Churchill as son, father, husband, orator, painter, historian, enemy of Hitler and many other roles. Rubin's unique approach works surprisingly well, bringing fresh insight to an exhaustively covered subject. Writing on Churchill as son, for instance, Rubin hammers home the point that he spent his life trying to measure up to an imagined,

idealized father. Churchill’s real father, Rubin makes clear, thought his son was destined for mediocrity and told him so. When she discusses Churchill’s famous gifts as an orator, Rubin contends that his speeches were sometimes overblown, overly heroic and often ignored. She agrees with David Cannadine (In Churchill’s Shadow) that Churchill’s oratory was most effective when matched by times that required heroic action, such as the spring and summer of 1940. In a chapter devoted to Churchill’s legendary drinking, Rubin provocatively presents arguments from both sides: that the drinking was harmless and that it was a major problem. In the end, Rubin sees "her" Churchill as a tragic hero. His life’s goal was to preserve the British Empire, yet his greatest achievement, the defeat of Hitler, hastened the empire’s end. While Rubin’s account clearly isn’t comprehensive and belabors a rather obvious point-that different, even opposing, perspectives on one life are possible-it is an excellent introduction to one of the most written about men in history. Photos. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Adult/High School-In this fast-paced, fragmented account, each of the 40 short chapters examines one topic: Churchill as leader, father, in tears, etc. Some are no more than lists, one is a simple chronology, and another a compilation of quotes. But taken together, they capture some truths about him, chiefly the many contradictions and complexities of his life and career. Moreover, there are valuable lessons here concerning the difficulties of examining the great lives of history. Rubin has almost as much to say about biography as a subject as she has about Churchill-a good thing for readers relatively new to the genre. And a further lesson lies in her extensive notes and bibliography. It is instructive to witness how much research is necessary to support even a brief account of a long life. Average-quality, black-and-white photos have been thoughtfully chosen. Rubin has much to offer teens, especially those with only vague notions of the great man.Robert Saunderson, Berkeley Public Library, CACopyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

for one who loves anything military and loves to read accounts of ones life.a good choice for a hard person to buy a gift for.

One of the best biographies I have read. The author provides insight of many different facets of Churchill`s character. I came away with an appreciation of the human being rather than the one-sidedness of so many biographies both good and bad. Very readable.

Gretchen Rubin is such a fantastic writer and I loved this book.

The chronological narrative form of biography, in use orally long before man put quill to papyrus, is a fun and satisfying way to consider a life, but Rubin demonstrates that a new format can be more illuminating, and even pleasurable.For ever, the greatest biographers have been slaves to their thesis and the dramatic arc of their story. Released from the traditional constraints, though, Rubin is able to explore certain interesting aspects of Churchill's life and their meanings more objectively and from many more angles than any other biography could do.For better and for worse, her new format is of our time. It allows the reader to skip around and focus on only the topic of special interest. Read the chapter on Churchill as father, and it is complete in a way that an excerpt from Manchester cannot be. Even the tone and writing style of each section varies widely, in accordance to the feature she is exploring.Rubin's "40 Ways" structure will no doubt be mimicked, perhaps by her, certainly by others, for many years to come.

Very interesting comments about various aspects of Churchill's life - some more believable than others that seemed slightly contrived, but still worth thinking about.

A thought provoking and unique update analysis of the career of Churchill ! r Well worth the reading !

I thought it was a very good description of the man.

Very interesting look at Churchill's life .Probably an overview more the point .Compares different assessments by historians of his life,many of which I didn't know.Thoroughly entertaining.

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