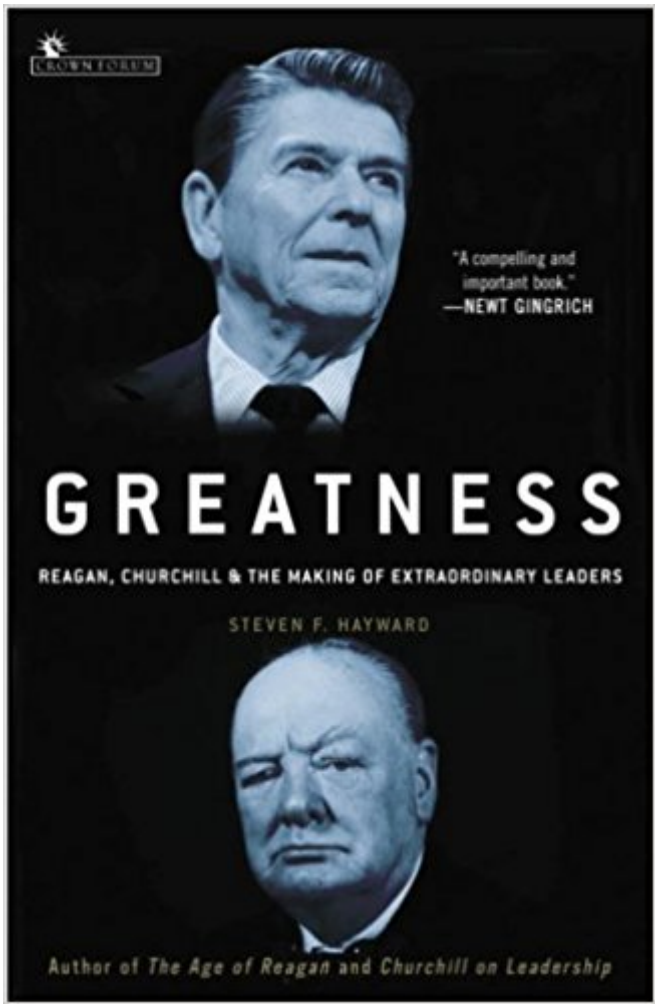
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Greatness: Reagan, Churchill, And The Making Of Extraordinary Leaders



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Synopsis

The Unexplored Connections Between Two of HistoryÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Greatest Leaders Ronald Reagan and Winston Churchill were true giants of the twentieth century, but somehow historians have failed to notice the many similarities between these extraordinary leaders. Until now. In Greatness, Steven F. HaywardÃ¢â ¬â œwho has written acclaimed studies of both Reagan and ChurchillÃ¢â ¬â œgoes beneath superficial differences to uncover the remarkable parallels between the two statesmen. In exploring these connections, Hayward shines a light on the nature of political genius and the timeless aspects of statesmanshipÃ¢â ¬â œcritical lessons in this or any age.

Book Information

Paperback: 210 pages

Publisher: Crown Forum (October 24, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0307237192

ISBN-13: 978-0307237194

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 27 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #867,067 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #74 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Presidents & Heads of State > U.K. Prime Ministers #1366 inÃ Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > United States > Executive Branch #1843 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Great Britain

Customer Reviews

Ronald Reagan was just a B-list actor when Winston Churchill assumed control over Europe’s fate. Even as president, Reagan remained at heart a California rancher with Midwestern roots, while Churchill was a British aristocrat groomed for the political stage from a young age. Despite these obvious differences, American Enterprise Institute fellow Hayward (The Age of Reagan; Churchill on Leadership) argues that the two icons possessed the same essential ingredients for the making of political greatness: boundless vision and imagination; a capacity for strength and optimism, even humor, in the face of crisis; an iron will; and a denunciation of evil, embodied most famously in Churchill’s Iron Curtain speech and Reagan’s "evil empire" and "tear down this wall" counterparts. While the two were essentially conservative figures, Hayward’s analysis is not innately political but

is, rather, marked by balanced insightfulness. Finally, the author argues, with an optimism worthy of his subjects, that political greatness in the 21st centuryÃ¢â ¬â •an ostensible oxymoron at timesÃ¢â ¬â •is not only necessary but possible. This is a useful primer for students of political science, not to mention politicians, in the essential qualities of truly great leaders. (Oct. 11) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hayward compares and contrasts two stalwarts of conservatives' twentieth-century pantheon. Sympathetic to Reaganism, Hayward finds similarities between Winston Churchill and Ronald Reagan and strives to generalize them as generic attributes of political greatness. Perhaps that will expand his audience; in any case, admirers of his two subjects will be reinforced in their views by Hayward's observations. These typically reflect off the criticisms made of Churchill and Reagan by contemporaries, such as their fear of wielding power. This attitude was not the preserve of socialist or liberal opponents but existed in the men's own parties. Consequently, both men experienced a "wilderness" period before events moved toward their way of thinking, a validation in their own minds, in Hayward's argument, that providence had marked them for a special historical mission. Imagination was also behind their conservatism, which was instinctual rather than intellectual, Reagan characteristically explaining his policies anecdotally. Concluding with their repugnance for the Soviet system--which each believed, against the grain of realpolitik, was destined for collapse--Hayward's essay previews his forthcoming history of the Reagan presidency. Gilbert TaylorCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a great introduction to Reagan and Churchill with brief biographical insights into both leaders and the common traits between them.

This is a short, fascinating, and thought-provoking read -- something that's always hard to find!Fascinating, even eerie parallels between Churchill and Reagan: well, everyone will have his own favorites. Here are mine.First, public speaking. They both wrote their own speeches and slaved over them. Churchill wrote on 4" x 8" paper, Reagan on 4" x 6" cards. They both practiced their speeches almost to the point of memorization, with the same result: they sounded spontaneous and convincing to their audiences. They both made speeches which changed men's minds. Carter, Johnson, and Nixon were incapable of such a thing.Second, their marriages. Churchill's first

marriage, Reagan’s second -- both were Total Love Relationships, with absolute loyalty on both sides, the kind of love Walt Disney teaches us to dream about.There are many other fascinating parallels (and non-parallels) between these two great leaders, but I’ll leave them for you to discover as you read this VERY stimulating book!

The author did not make his point.He talked about how similar Churchill and Reagan was and then points out how different they were.He talked about how similar, not on the surface, the two men were, but takes a chapter to talk about the surface similarities.He has obvious knowledge about the two men, and maybe there were massive similarities but he failed to make the connection in my opinion.Churchill wrote his own speeches. Reagan wrote some of his speeches and others were written for him that he edited. Not a similarity in my book. Any public speaker will tell you that when a speech is written for you, that you will need to review, practice and edit it.Sorry. No joy here.

Can greatness among human beings really be spoken of in modern times? Perhaps it is a politically incorrect, anachronistic idea in our egalitarian age. Indeed, regarding both these men, Churchill and Reagan, the media appears to have downplayed their legacies for just this reason. For example, Time magazine in 1950 named Winston Churchill "Man of the Half-Century" but passed him over at century’s end for "Person of the Century", explaining that "...Churchill turned out to be a romantic refugee from a previous era who ended up on the wrong side of history." And Reagan? The news media, which had consistently downplayed him during his presidency, was astonished by the outpouring of public sentiment at his death in 2004 as this showed in spades the esteem in which he was held. Certainly the verdict of history is not passed immediately on the legacy of statesman; it takes time. Who would have thought in the 1980’s, that the name of Ronald Reagan would be uttered in the same sentence as that of Winston Churchill, less than twenty years after the former had left public office? The idea that Churchill was a great man, though not agreed upon by everybody, still seems to be more easily embraced than the idea that Reagan was. But our response to Reagan’s death, one of looking back and re-assessing his legacy, surprises us at the warmth we found ourselves feeling for the man. I don’t need to read an essay to feel it in my bones that there was something special about Ronald Reagan. Steven Hayward (the author) gives some insights into explaining what many of us already believe to be true. He spends most of the 170 page book comparing both men, demonstrating the surprising number of similarities that they had, from their childhoods, to their early liberal inclinations, to their switch to conservative political views, and to how they were perceived at the time. Certainly a common perception of Reagan during his

presidency was that he was "uninformed, even ignorant, and relied on simplistic platitudes to get by." But some of Churchill's top aides said the same thing, that Churchill "has only half the picture in his mind, talks absurdities, and makes my blood boil to listen to his nonsense" (Field Marshall Alanbrooke). This is just one of many, many parallels that are listed. We remember that Reagan was charged with being a warmonger. So was Churchill. He alienated himself from many in his own party during the 1930s for his strident warnings of German fascism. In fact, Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech in 1946 was not received very well and his own government made a point of distancing itself from it. Forty years later, Reagan's "tear down this wall" speech at the Berlin Wall had his own aides fearing that he would only embarrass himself. Even after Reagan's presidency, when the Berlin Wall had in fact come down, and the Soviet Union was no more, some felt that the credit belonged to Gorbachev. Time magazine, in fact, named Gorbachev "person of the decade" in 1990. But I think it is appropriate to ask for Gorbachev's assessment, since his early opinion of Reagan was far from flattering. His presence at Reagan's funeral in 2004, seated next to Margaret Thatcher reinforced his words in 2002 that "I am not sure what happened would have happened had he (Reagan) not been there." In his Iron Curtain speech Churchill said that World War II could have been prevented "without the firing of a single shot." According to Margaret Thatcher, Reagan brought the cold war to an end "without firing a single shot." Both men believed in peace through strength. Both men doggedly spoke their minds and followed convictions that had not only their political adversaries, but also those in their own party, scratching their heads. Especially regarding what they considered the evil of communism, both men stood alone at times, but history has vindicated them. They were far from perfect, but how many great men are? Arriving at a conclusion of greatness is made even more difficult when the concept of greatness itself in the modern world is called into question. Steven Hayward has done a masterful job of not only allowing us the possibility of considering greatness abstractly, but of applying it to these two remarkable men.

I found this book to be quite interesting but not at all what I had anticipated. Based on the title, I expected to see an erudite tome analyzing the lives of Ronald Reagan and Winston Churchill culminating in a discussion of how great leaders, such as these, are "made." I was, of course, being rather naÃƒÆ'Ã Â ve, for if anyone knew how great leaders are produced they wouldn't be so rare in human history. What I found, instead, was a side-by-side comparison of two great men with emphasis on the parallels in their careers; the manner in which they were viewed by their contemporaries and the media in their own times; their visionary natures; the constancy of their actions; and the many connections between them which can be drawn when their characters,

actions, writings, speeches, and strangely enough their educations are closely examined.This latter point, their educations, may have come the closest to telling us how great leaders are created. Both men, it would seem, were rather poor students in their early years, but both men spent most of the remainder of their lifetimes reading and writing and, in effect, educating themselves without any presumed experts to tell them that this or that theory or manner of thinking was incorrect. In their solitude, much like Abraham Lincoln, they were left to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong. As a consequence, neither Reagan nor Churchill ended up conforming to the conventional wisdom of his time, with the result that neither one was fully understood nor appreciated during his political lifetime.This is an excellent book filled with little known, or at least little remembered, facts, anecdotes, quotes, and excerpts concerning two great statesmen. The comparisons are many, with surprising similarities that do both men great honor. Bottom line - This is a book well worth reading. I highly recommend it, but don’t expect what the title offers but the book fails to deliver.

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