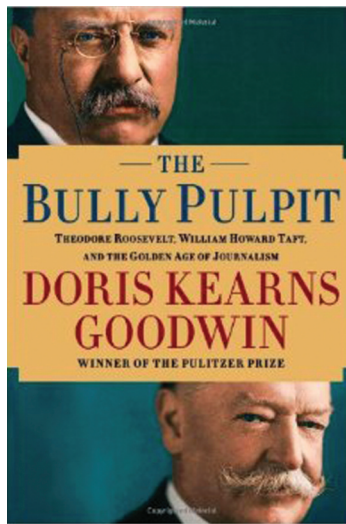


Literary Speaking

The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and the Golden Age of Journalism

By Doris Kearns Goodwin

Reviewed by Amy Nelson, Yankton City Manager



example, led the national effort to preserve and protect some of our country's most valuable natural landscapes. Roosevelt triumphed over personal tragedy by constantly improving himself both physically and mentally. Taft, however, turned personal disappointment inward, never felt wholly accepted, and instead of feeding his ego with attention, fed himself with food.

While Goodwin focuses more on Roosevelt's story, you will find yourself as a reader wanting her to do just that and will become endeared to the man who really became more like a phenomenon or force of

nature than a President. Certainly, through each chapter the author articulates how a nation fell in love with Roosevelt. As you read, you too will fall in love with the President that understood the power of social networking when the only means of connectivity available were railroads, telegraphs and a pensive but supporting press. He was a tenacious "right-finder" that understood upholding the constitution meant that first we must uphold our moral principles. He was a husband, father, and veteran who welcomed every challenge, faced each fear and did so tirelessly for the nation he felt so privileged to lead.

The Bully Pulpit is a lengthy book, perfect for the cool fall nights and snowy days that will soon be upon us. Grab a good cup of coffee, cuddle up and nestle into your favorite nook for this page-turner. If you strive to lead, have ever loved or lost a true friend, or have an interest in how the media has shaped American life, this book is an essential for your reading list.

Don't wait for this book to show up on the silver screen (Goodwin's last book set the stage for Daniel Day Lewis' Academy Award winning performance as Abraham Lincoln). Visit the Yankton Community Library and check it out today.

Page after page of Doris Kearns Goodwin's *The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and the Golden Age of Journalism* is a beautifully written, inspiring story and how-to manual on the qualities of leadership, friendship, and the responsibilities thereof. Told through the contrasting stories of two American Presidents, the book causes the reader to draw comparisons between this delicate time in our country's history and the interesting times we live in today.

The Bully Pulpit recollects a time when America found herself in a state of stark socio-economic dichotomy. In the years preceding World War I, industrial tycoons, railroad executives and real estate barons were robust with enormous wealth. While this created an era of prosperity never before experienced in our country, it was shadowed by poor working conditions, tenement housing, unsafe conditions, and unsanitary goods for the general public.

Roosevelt's progressive nature and love of his fellow countrymen drove him to see himself as a moral crusader as well as a politician, characteristics that served him well through his years of public service. In comparison, while President Taft was a gentle giant, literally and figuratively, he shied away from the public eye and cringed at having to deal with controversy. This damaged his political life and fractured the strong bond of friendship between him and Roosevelt. The situation left Roosevelt sad and betrayed since he had been a close confidant of Taft's and had basically hand-picked Taft to be his predecessor.

Goodwin demonstrates how Roosevelt and Taft's childhoods, college experiences, and romantic relationships shaped their personalities and presidencies. Roosevelt's love of nature and hunting, for