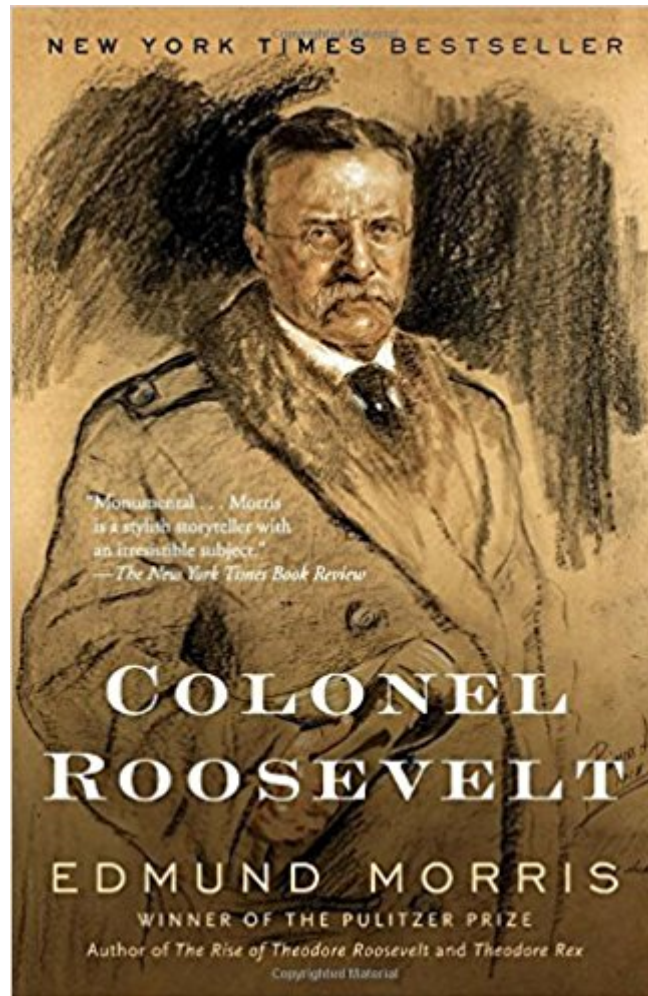




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Colonel Roosevelt



Synopsis

This biography by Edmund Morris, the Pulitzer Prize-winning and National Book Award-winning author of *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* and *Theodore Rex*, marks the completion of a trilogy sure to stand as definitive. Of all our great presidents, Theodore Roosevelt is the only one whose greatness increased out of office. What other president has written forty books, hunted lions, founded a third political party, survived an assassin's bullet, and explored an unknown river longer than the Rhine? Packed with more adventure, variety, drama, humor, and tragedy than a big novel, yet documented down to the smallest fact, this masterwork recounts the last decade of perhaps the most amazing life in American history.

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Customer Reviews

“Now with *Colonel Roosevelt*, Morris announced the New York Times, “the magnum opus is complete. Morris’s balanced examination of the final years of Roosevelt’s life highlights the slow but inexorable waning of his political and, ultimately, physical power. Equally adept at political explication and recounting adventure tales, Morris injects new life, and even suspense, into some familiar stories with his wry, minimalist prose perfectly suited to his subject’s volatile personality and an abundance of rich detail grounded in meticulous research. Although the Wall Street Journal took issue with Morris’s political analysis, that critic still considered *Colonel Roosevelt* a poignant and factual account of the 26th President’s post-White House years. A

tour de force befitting its seismic subject, Colonel Roosevelt brings this extraordinary trilogy to a triumphant end. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review Morris completes his fully detailed, correlatively dynamic triptych of the restless, energetic, on-the-move first President Roosevelt, following *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (1979), the title self-explanatory in terms of its coverage of TR's life, and *Theodore Rex* (2001), about his presidency. Now the author presents *Colonel Roosevelt*, the title by which Roosevelt chose to be called during his postpresidential years (in reference, of course, to his military position during the Spanish-American War). This is the sad part of TR's life; this is the stage of his life story in which it is most difficult to accept his self-absorption, self-importance, and self-righteousness, but it is the talent of the author, who has shown an immaculate understanding of his subject, to make Roosevelt of continued fascination to his readers. In essence, this volume tells the story of TR's path of disenchantment with his chosen successor in the White House, William Taft, and his attempt to resecure the presidency for himself. The important theme of TR's concomitant decline in health is also a part of the narrative. We are made aware most of all that of all retired presidents, TR was the least likely to fade into the background. --Brad Hooper

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the 3rd and last of the bios of TR by Mr. Morris. While I liked "Theodore Rex" better. This book is still an excellent book about one of Americas best Presidents and his time after leaving the White House. Bottom line - the time left to him (1908-19) was not spent laying around and writings his memoirs. Not this guy! While I shall not bore with the long list of stuff that he did to keep busy. Let us say that most real men would be extremely happy to have done half the stuff in their entire life. Which T.R. did in those few years left to him. He really was a steamroller in Trousers. I myself would like to have what one man said about his death. "Roosevelt must of been asleep when he died. Or there would of been a fight."

Edmund Morris' final volume in his biographical trilogy of Theodore Roosevelt, *Colonel Roosevelt*, is a fantastic conclusion about this colossus in American history. Morris' writing is an easy read and his research top notch thus making this a wonderful book for students of history of any age. Though like the previous volume of this trilogy, *Theodore Rex*, the book seems to be stylistically divided in two with the first stronger than the second. Beginning with a wonderful prologue describing T.R.'s African safari, the first half *Colonel Roosevelt* shows Roosevelt seemingly having all the power and

prestige of the Presidency without being in office. His 1910 tour of Europe, including being the U.S. special ambassador at Edward VII's funeral, looks like a victory tour even now like it seemed to be then. However, upon his return home Roosevelt starts to become disillusioned with this chosen successor William Howard Taft. This disillusionment turned into disgust and Roosevelt aimed to unseat Taft only for the Republican establishment to prevent his nomination in 1912 resulting in a party split. Even acknowledging defeat Roosevelt campaigned hard to score the best showing every by a third party candidate, showing up Taft in the process. After 1912 not only does Roosevelt seemed to decline, but so Morris stylistic prose. The second half of the book begins with the South American expedition that almost cost him his life, however it relating what happened Morris seems to give the reader an overview of what it about to happen to his subject and the style of the book starts to feel melancholy. While Morris shows Roosevelt's resolve to prepare the country for entry into The Great War, he also shows how Roosevelt was losing is once famous balancing between extremes. The death of Quentin heavily foreshadowed almost in league with the stylistic change, Roosevelt's own death. The epilogue of Roosevelt's funeral followed by the course of his place in history along with short biographies on his wife and family, is welcome stylistic change as Morris looks over the course of nearly 90 years to see how Roosevelt's 60 year life is viewed and did so in great effect. After the first two volumes of this trilogy it was hard for me to give this book only 4 stars, however the second half of Colonel Roosevelt saw seemed so much of a disconnected with the first half and the epilogue that it was jarring. This stylist change could have been all in my own head as I knew where Roosevelt's journey was taking him, but there did seem to be change especially in comparing the second half to the epilogue. However, as I stated in the opening paragraph Morris writing and his research are first rate and I can not recommend this final volume of his T.R. trilogy enough.

Edmund Morris continues to amaze me. Roosevelt was a difficult subject, not at all the Great American Without Blemish that I was brought up to revere. And yet, despite his monumental flaws, which Morris does not paper over, his basic goodness and vision fill the volume. The second volume, Theodore Rex, shows TR to indeed be a hero. The first volume is plainly scary. This last volume follows the man, his best attributes as well as his thunderous flaws, down the slope of life.

Going into this read, I was fully expecting it to be my least favorite of the now famous Edmund Morris trilogy on Theodore Roosevelt. How much more could be written about this great man following his formative years and presidency? As it turns out, I was slightly off in my original

hypothesis. It is in fact my second favorite of the trilogy, with "The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt" as my favorite, and "Theodore Rex" as the third place finisher in my opinion. However, "Colonel Roosevelt" is nearly just as good as "Rise"...much to my surprise and pleasure. As it turns out, the final decade of Theodore Roosevelt's life was an amazing epoch in his life. Morris does a fantastic job of describing this final period, in exquisite yet entertaining detail. The two most engaging tales from this period are no doubt the Colonel's expeditions to Africa and South America. These chapters will keep you on the edge of your seat amazed at the adventures of a former President of the United States. His section on his travels to Europe in 1910, meeting with an array of leaders and monarchs who would play out so many dramas in the coming years, was also quite interesting. I also found the description of the Roosevelt sons in their various war efforts to be engaging. Finally, the lead up to and aftermath of Roosevelt's death was quite heart wrenching and compelling. It brought the whole trilogy to a nice finale. Highly recommended!

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