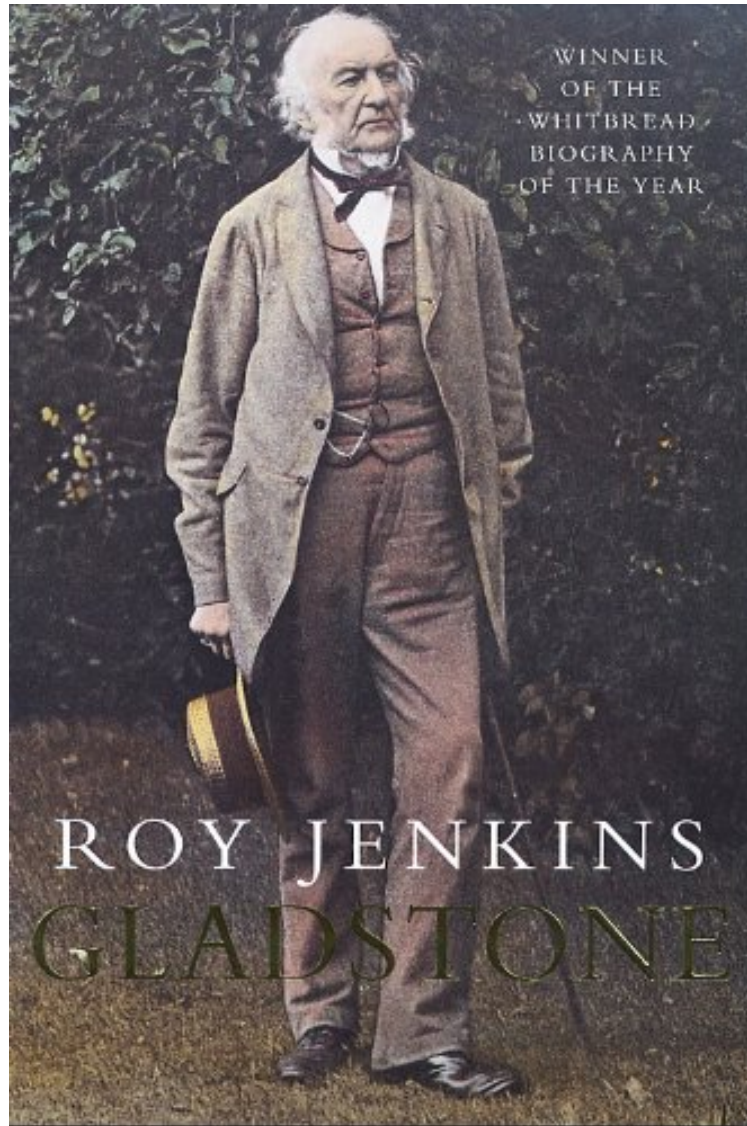


(Read and download) Gladstone (English Edition)

Gladstone (English Edition)

Von Roy Jenkins

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Von Roy Jenkins : Gladstone (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gladstone (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Admirably tackles an incredibly dense subject...Von medellianaI am not a student of the Victorian era, but I knew enough about it to be surprised that ANYONE would attempt a biography of William Ewart Gladstone. To communicate the weight of this particular object of study, I cite Galdstone's wife, who once said something to the

effect of "You know, William, if you weren't prime minister you'd be a very boring man." So why, one asks, would you write a biography of Gladstone, one of history's most active but bland figures? Once you're trying to fit all the thousands and thousands of events that his long life encompasses between two covers, how in heaven do you make it interesting? The key it seems, is a vigorous and unquenchable interest on the author's part, and Roy Jenkins has it in spades. And let's not forget there are a variety of parallels between the two men, Jenkins being a formidable British political figure himself. But returning to Gladstone for the moment, it is important to remember that while the man may have been dry and puritanical, it may only have been a reaction to the times, which were vital and ever-changing, with political events which still have an effect today. Through everything, Gladstone was at the center, eventually supporting reform and even Irish Home Rule. Reading about Gladstone is like a chronicle of every important event of Queen Victoria's reign, and thus interesting as a history in and of itself. As a biography, it shines new light on a figure who is often given short shrift in comparison with his contemporary and opponent, the flamboyant and attention-seeking Disraeli. Jenkins infects the reader with his enthusiasm for Gladstone, and has an immensely readable style. (Unlike some, I liked the peppering of British humor.) My only warning to the casual reader would be that this is, above all, not the easiest read. It is illuminating, but there is an *incredible* amount of material, so much that even the most voracious reader would find quite a challenge. It is, however, much worth it, and leaves you with almost a sense of accomplishment. What's more, Jenkins makes Gladstone *palatable* which is more than you can say for just about anyone else. When I was done, I was left with a full mind (as opposed to a full stomach, which can really pack on the pounds).

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Gladstone Book is almost as long and tedious as his speeches

Von Ein Kunde

The recent book by Roy Jenkins on William Gladstone, one of the premier figures of 19th century British Politics has received strongly positive reviews from multiple sources. After reading the book, or as much of it as I could before I decided to try a different book on the topic, I am wondering about the reviewers. This book lacks the heart and soul of a good biography. It gives a lot of minute details about aspects of his life without ever tying them together into a bigger picture. While the book talks about Gladstone's religion and refers at times to his own repressed sexuality, the book never provides a theory on why he starts spending so much time reforming prostitutes. Repeatedly, Jenkins refers to his walks and tells a little about the woman, but the psychology of Gladstone is not better understood due to his writing. More important, Jenkins never provides enough context to understand where a bill or action is coming from. I mean this on both a personal and macro level. So Gladstone wanted justice for Ireland. Why? Also, what was the big picture that made this such an important part of 19th Century British Politics? One final criticism, Jenkins may have delved into Gladstone, but he fails to draw clear images of the surrounding cast. A good biography should provide knowledge of the time, but I learned little about Peel, Palmerston, Disraeli, Victoria or Albert. I learned less about the great diplomatic and political issues of the time. For these reasons, my rating of a three might be generous. For a better understanding of this man and his time, I strongly suggest books on Disraeli, which, like their main character, are written with more flair and pinache. Also books on Victorians by Gertrude Himmelfarb and Asa Briggs provide more knowledge than Roy Jenkins' book. One final thought, are the good reviews this book has received due to the political popularity of Jenkins, the dearth of good books on Gladstone, or to use Moynihan's theme, the defining down of historical writing in recent times?

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An arduous slog for little reward

Von Ein Kunde

There are two opposite poles in the writing of biographies: "let's explain the man by including everything he did" or "let's explain the man by stringing together the highlights of his life." Roy Jenkins has opted for the first choice in a big way. This book is a massive catalog of what Gladstone did, said and thought throughout his long and impressively productive life. But somewhere along the line Jenkins forgot the part about explaining the man's life. After battling my way through this monster, I was left saying "So what?" If you're hoping for some sort of insight into the man and his achievements, prepare to be disappointed. What you get is a massive laundry list of speeches made and not made, books purchased, walks taken - a tidal wave of minutiae that utterly obscures the larger picture. Good heavens, after 700+ pages I expect some insight into the man and his importance. Jenkins certainly receives an A for effort, but he barely attempts any sort of analysis - what was so important about Gladstone? What were his finest achievements? In short, why does he matter? I'll take my share of the blame. I know my ignorance of Victorian British history hurt my enjoyment of this book. But you know what? I read a lot of books about subjects about which I know very little. And many of those books are very good. I am baffled by the excellent reviews this book received. Good biographies - and good history - leave you with a sense of who a person was, what he or she thought, and why we should care about that person. This book has precious little of that. It reads like a synopsis of Gladstone's multi-volume diaries. If you want to know how many miles Gladstone walked on such-and-such a day, read this book. If you want to know who Gladstone the man was, or why you should care about him, keep waiting.

Kurzbeschreibung Originally published in 1995, this is a biography of William Ewart Gladstone (1809-98), which charts the political career and personal life of the only person who saw four terms as the British Prime Minister and

who left behind a long and successful line of legislation. Roy Jenkins examines the manifold activities of Gladstone's life and uses it to relate the political rhythms, travel patterns and religious assumptions of Victorian England to the modern day. From Booklist A solid life of the great Liberal Party reformer of Victorian Britain benefits from the author's own political experience as a key Labour minister in the 1960s. Given the massive accumulation of source material on Gladstone, Jenkins has produced a remarkably compact, readable synthesis, with original insights into Gladstone's political achievements, failures, and personal eccentricities, such as his private crusade to turn prostitutes from their trade. In politics, which an inheritance enabled the young Gladstone to enter in 1839 as a Tory, he was also a complicated but imposing figure. One of the most orotund orators in parliamentary history, Gladstone emerged from the party splits of the 1850s as the chief of the new Liberal Party, which won the 1868 election. Jenkins is at his best tracing the major issues Gladstone attempted to ameliorate in his four premierships--extending the franchise, giving home rule to Ireland, and opposing imperialism. The results were mixed, but Jenkins' narrative of them is an unadulterated success: it will be the general interest biography for a long time. Gilbert Taylor From Kirkus s A definitive, celebratory biography of the greatest 19th-century British political leader, by a distinguished 20th-century British politician. Despite living in different centuries, Roy Jenkins (Lord Jenkins of Hillhead) and William Gladstone (1809-1898) share many characteristics. Both men held powerful political positions. (Gladstone served four terms as prime minister of Britain.) Both men used their influence to split their own parties and drive them into the political wilderness. Both men published book after book while active in public life, a feat that appears to be beyond the ability of American politicians. (Imagine our surprise if, say, Bob Dole were to write a major biography of Teddy Roosevelt.) Like Gladstone, Jenkins (*A Life at the Center*, 1993, etc.) believes in the centrality of politics to the life of the nation. An excellent introduction to the political history of Britain, his biography also contains a judicious examination of Gladstone's deep religious commitments and his complex obsession with prostitutes, pornography, and moral reform. Gladstone recorded the details of his life in a massive diary, dividing every day into quarter-hour intervals, and Jenkins uses this magnificent source--recently edited and published--to delve into the secrets of Gladstone's enormous productivity. The key, it appears, was sheer energy. It drove him to put in 18-hour days and fueled his zealous pursuits. Although very good at political narrative, Jenkins rarely looks beneath the surface of politics to the people who sustained Gladstone's position. He mentions that Gladstone's inherited wealth was generated by the labor of generations of African slaves in the West Indies, but makes little of the fact. Politics appear to occur mainly in Parliament, and readers might miss the fact that Britain ruled over India. Still, Jenkins, who loves politics and admires politicians, has produced an authoritative life of one of his heroes. -- Copyright 1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.