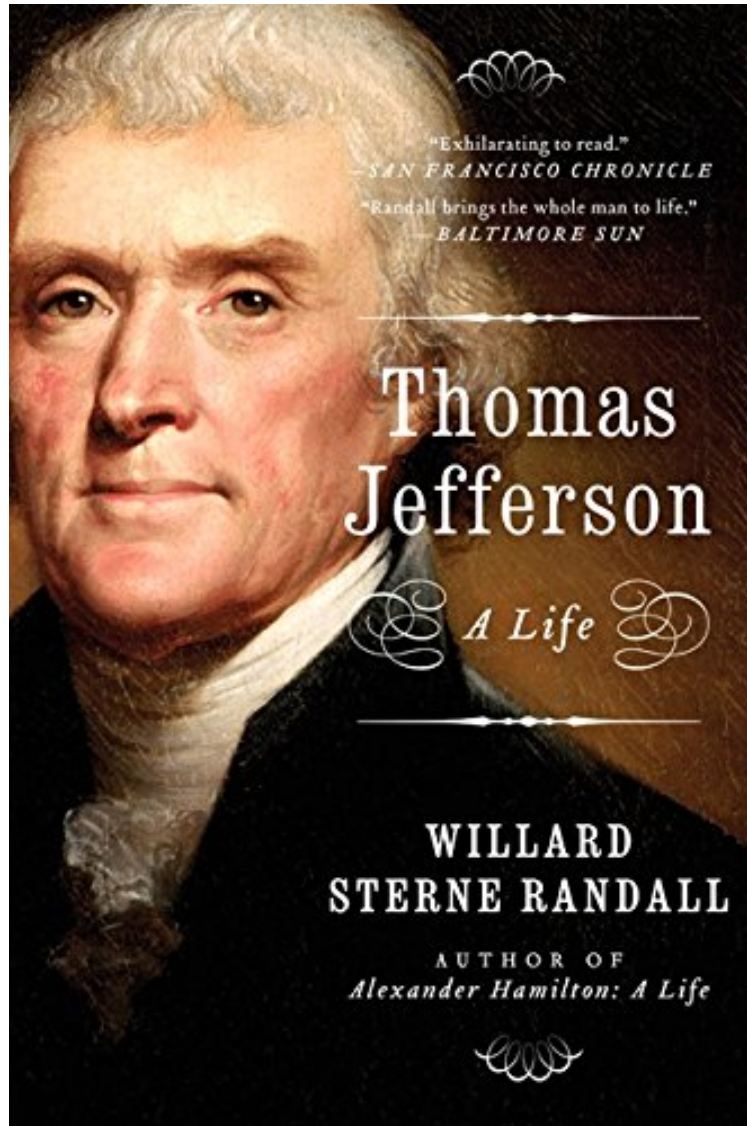


[FREE] Thomas Jefferson: A Life

Thomas Jefferson: A Life

Willard Sterne Randall
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Willard Sterne Randall : Thomas Jefferson: A Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thomas Jefferson: A Life:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The information in the book is good. There's extensive coverage of Jefferson's youth and time ...By Since 1998The information in the book is good. There's extensive coverage of Jefferson's youth and time in France. The coverage of his post-presidency seems a bit short. The book seemed to drag on at times. I found myself looking forward to the death of one of our Founding Fathers so I could go on to other subjects.The Kindle translation of this work has problems. There are frequent typos throughout the book. My

impression is that the Kindle version was generated from a scan of the printed book and the OCR software wasn't as good as it should have been. This should have been caught by a proofreader. Examples: "I he" should have been "The" and "stoned I., death" should have been "stoned to death". There are many occurrences of this throughout the book. You can figure out what it means, but it seems shoddy for what should be an academic work. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Monumental...in size and scope! By M. Neels I have been familiar with the works of Willard Sterne Randall for some time now. He is best known for his biographies of the notorious Benedict Arnold, and Benjamin Franklin. But he has also written a couple of books about George Washington and Alexander Hamilton. However, I have stared across the room at his monumental life of Thomas Jefferson sitting unread on my bookshelf for several years now. In the doldrums of the winter months of 2013, however, I finally decided to see what the colonial author had to say about the third president of the United States. I soon found out just how much he had to say! This is one of the most thorough treatments of Jefferson's early life that I have personally encountered. Yet, I was compelled to take umbrage with several glaring problems. Firstly, Randall's blatant denial of any romantic relationship between Jefferson and his slave, Sally Hemings, simply cannot go unchallenged. Of course, given the fact that the author wrote this biography in the early 1990s (publication date is 1993)--several years prior to the release of DNA testing that undeniably linked Jefferson's offspring with those of Hemings--this misstatement can be forgiven. Still, unlike Joseph Ellis, who corrected his misstatements about the Jefferson-Hemings relationship in a subsequent edition of his "American Sphynx" published after the DNA results, I have been unable to locate any retraction made by Randall. Another problem with this biography is the uneven amount of time spent on Jefferson's early years as a Virginia lawyer (a profession he is supposed to have hated), and his time as minister to France in the mid-1780s. Both sections of the book offer very in-depth analysis of the life of a Virginian fighting to build a new world through the use of law and reason, as well as the vantage point of an American witness to the end of monarchical France and the start of the French Republic. But, both sections also take up several hundred pages between the two of them, leaving very little room for discussion of Jefferson's terms as Secretary of State, Vice President, and President of the United States. In fact, the later two positions are covered in less than a hundred pages! Lastly--and this is more a fault of the printer than the author--the book suffers from an extremely miniscule font that makes it intensely difficult to maintain focus! All-in-all, I was pleased with the time I spent with Mr. Randall and Mr. Jefferson; especially since Randall spends some time refuting the analysis of Fawn K. Brodie, one of the first authors on Jefferson I ever read. But, while I heartily recommend it to the Jeffersonian enthusiast, I must warn the reader who wishes only a cursory introduction to Jefferson to consider one of the lesser dense biographies--perhaps Bernstein's short introduction. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Editing ruined a good book. By Brian M. McGowan I'm no historian, I didn't know that Benedict Arnold invaded Virginia in an attempt to capture Jefferson after he turned traitor, so I'm not the best judge of this book. But as an avid reader I liked it, though as one other reviewer stated that, it tended to be repetitive. The editing was the problem with this book and why I gave it only got 4 stars. An intern using Word could have corrected 95% of the spelling errors if they had taken the time. It's the old story with these Kindle editions, they let a computer copy the book and it sees words like "the" and translates it into "I m" leaving you to translate. The one I liked best was when they called the colonies "the American Colonics." I'm not a spelling or grammar Nazi, but with the difference in word use between then and now, it's often hard to figure out whether the quote is the real quote or a misspelling.

Combining firsthand scholarship and material drawn from the Jefferson Papers, Willard Sterne Randall calls on his skills as an investigative journalist to challenge long-held assumptions about the reasoning, motives, and works of this sage, philosopher, politician, and romantic. Exploring both Jefferson's interior and public struggles, Randall sheds important light on Jefferson's thoughts on slavery and his relationship with the slave Sally Hemmings, as well as Revolutionary and diplomatic intrigues.