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Hardcover]** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised
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742 of 764 people found the following review helpful. A Washington For Our TimeBy Eileen PollockWhy do we need another biography of George Washington? The four volume Flexner biography was published 40 years ago, and since then 60 newly edited volumes of Washington letters and diaries have been published, which Chernow has read closely. He has combed the important multi-volume biographies and reviewed the shorter more recent books. The bibliography is many pages, the text meticulously footnoted. Chernow brings keen psychological insight to this magisterial work. His preamble sets forth his purpose: to bring Washington to life, to get behind the grave, somber image so the reader will have a true appreciation of the man. Moreover, Chernow's writing is superb. The book - over 800 pages of text alone - never drags and one's interest never flags. You can open it anywhere and receive enlightenment. On

Washington's leadership in the Revolutionary War: "His fortitude in keeping the impoverished Continental Army intact was a major historic accomplishment... He was that rare general who was great between battles and not just during them." On Washington's early charisma: "Long before he achieved great fame or renown, something about Washington's bearing and presence bedazzled people." It is a tribute to Chernow that he "remembers the ladies", with colorful descriptions of Martha Washington and her circle: "It is a testimony to Martha's social versatility that she won over women who were far more intellectual than she." On celebrity: "For all of Washington's professions of modesty, the thought of his high destined niche in history was never far from his mind." On religious tolerance, Chernow quotes a letter from Washington to a Jewish congregation in Newport: "'All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship...'" I approached this book with some trepidation - so long, so detailed, another Washington biography? Why read it? To find out how Washington did it. To study his character. To be inspired. To understand the virtue in moderation and self control. To feel, far beyond the cliché, proud to be an American.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Goes behind the face on the dollar bill

By Robert A. Moss MDI have only read part of it so far. But it is very well written, clear and compelling. The problem with Washington is that he is viewed as a rather stolid, unexciting personality. His portraits as on the dollar bill portray little emotion. His personal history is much more exciting, starting when he was a young man engaged by the British on a crucial, difficult and dangerous mission instrumental in the start of the French and Indian War. He became the most respected man in America by the time of the American Revolution. Probably most importantly he gave up the Presidency after just 2 terms, setting the precedent of smooth, consistent transition of government in the United States that we take for granted and other countries admire.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. If you're interested in the birth of America, this book's for you...

By A Haynes Let me start by saying that while I'm a voracious reader, I read few biographies. This is probably my first one in over a decade. That being said, this one is really good for a historical perspective of the father of the US--warts and all, which I really appreciated. All men have faults, and the founding fathers were no exception. I was engaged with the book, and my thoughts turned to it even when not reading it. I found myself making parallels to the goings on in Philadelphia in 1791 to the US in 2016. It's impossible not to. That being said, the book isn't perfect. Chernow strings together events beautifully, but frequently opines on the meaning of the events without actual supporting documentation. Also, he offers contradictory positions on Washington--was he modest, or was he vain? In one sentence, he will discuss his severe modesty, and in the next, his heightened vanity. I think every human swings between both, but the descriptions of Washington either say he's wholly one way, but then is wholly the opposite the next. It's those kinds of contradictions that have made me question Chernow's perspectives. Still, the book is totally worth it, and gives a great lens through which to see the birth of the United States, and subsequent growing pains.

In *Washington: A Life*, celebrated biographer Ron Chernow provides a richly nuanced portrait of the father of our nation. With a breadth and depth matched by no other one-volume life of Washington, this crisply paced narrative carries the reader through his troubled boyhood, his precocious feats in the French and Indian War, his creation of Mount Vernon, his heroic exploits with the Continental Army, his presiding over the Constitutional Convention, and his magnificent performance as America's first president.