Article Preview:


Few books have been as anxiously awaited by presidential scholars as Edmund Morris' biography of Ronald Reagan. After winning the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1980 for writing The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt, Morris was recruited by Nancy Reagan and Michael Deaver to pen an authorized biography of Ronald Reagan. Based on his reputation and on his being the first biographer ever to be granted such access to an incumbent president, Morris was able to negotiate a $3 million advance from Random House for the Reagan manuscript.

Conservatives undoubtedly hoped that Morris' book would elevate Reagan's status to that of a great president on par with FDR and worthy of a place on Mount Rushmore. This book will not accomplish that goal. Reviewers have inevitably spent more time discussing Morris and his fictional technique than anything he may have written about Reagan's domestic and foreign policy achievements. The reason is simple: Morris did not write a biography of Reagan or an in-depth study of his presidency; he wrote a memoir of his fictional and real self observing Reagan.

How can this be explained? First, the foreign-born Morris is not a scholar. He worked as an advertising copywriter in London before immigrating to the United States in 1968. His project on Theodore Roosevelt was originally a screenplay titled "The Dude from New York." Only after it was rejected as a screenplay did Morris turn it into a biography. His interests lie in literature, music, and foreign language; in...
But the book is written in the form of a memoir; a memoir by a fictional person who seems to have been given enough entry into the personal and private life of its subject that he is qualified to write that person's memoir. In this sense, the entire narrative body of work is a form of imagery designed to visualize in the mind of the reader the abstract idea that this is a book written by an actual historical person even though it is clearly delineated upfront that such a person does not exist. Gavin. After you claim a section you'll have 24 hours to send in a draft. An editor will review the submission and either publish your submission or provide feedback. Next Section Literary Elements. Previous Section Irony. Study Guide for Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan. Dutch: A memoir of Ronald has been added to your Basket. Add to Basket. Buy Now. And however Ronald Reagan conducted himself before and during his presidency this book makes it patently clear that his cardboard image was not the real Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan had a mastery about him and he had to work hard for it, for America and of course for himself. Although the book is long, in my mind it's not long enough. There are several gaps in time, the Vietnam years and during the Carter era being examples. I wanted a blow by blow account of what Reagan was up to during these periods and what he might be thinking. All right then, was the book enjoyable? Ronald Reagan, the politician, has been enshrined as a heroic visionary by the right, celebrated for ending the cold war and reducing the size of government, and invoked as a touchstone for all things conservative. At the same time, he's been caricatured by the left as the dunderheaded godfather of a red-state America, promoting lower taxes for the rich, higher deficits and a more fragile social safety net. Ronald Reagan, the man, has meanwhile eluded capture, described over the years in an assortment of metaphors and images that make him out to be more symbol than human being: "the perfect Sc You can write a book review and share your experiences. Other readers will always be interested in your opinion of the books you've read. Whether you've loved the book or not, if you give your honest and detailed thoughts then people will find new books that are right for them. Publisher's note. The publication of the original hardback edition of Edmund Morris's Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan in the fall of 1999 caused one of the biggest literary sensations in years. Even before The New York Times, in a front-page scoop, trumpeted advance details of its method, the book had become the subject of intense anticipation. Dutch book. Read 144 reviews from the world's largest community for readers. This book, the only biography ever authorized by a sitting President--yet w... When Ronald Reagan moved into the White House in 1981, one of his first literary guests was Edmund Morris, the Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer of Theodore Roosevelt. Morris developed a fas "This book, the only biography ever authorized by a sitting President--yet written with complete interpretive freedom--is as revolutionary in method as it is formidable in scholarship. When Ronald Reagan moved into the White House in 1981, one of his first literary guests was Edmund Morris, the Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer of Theodore Roosevelt.