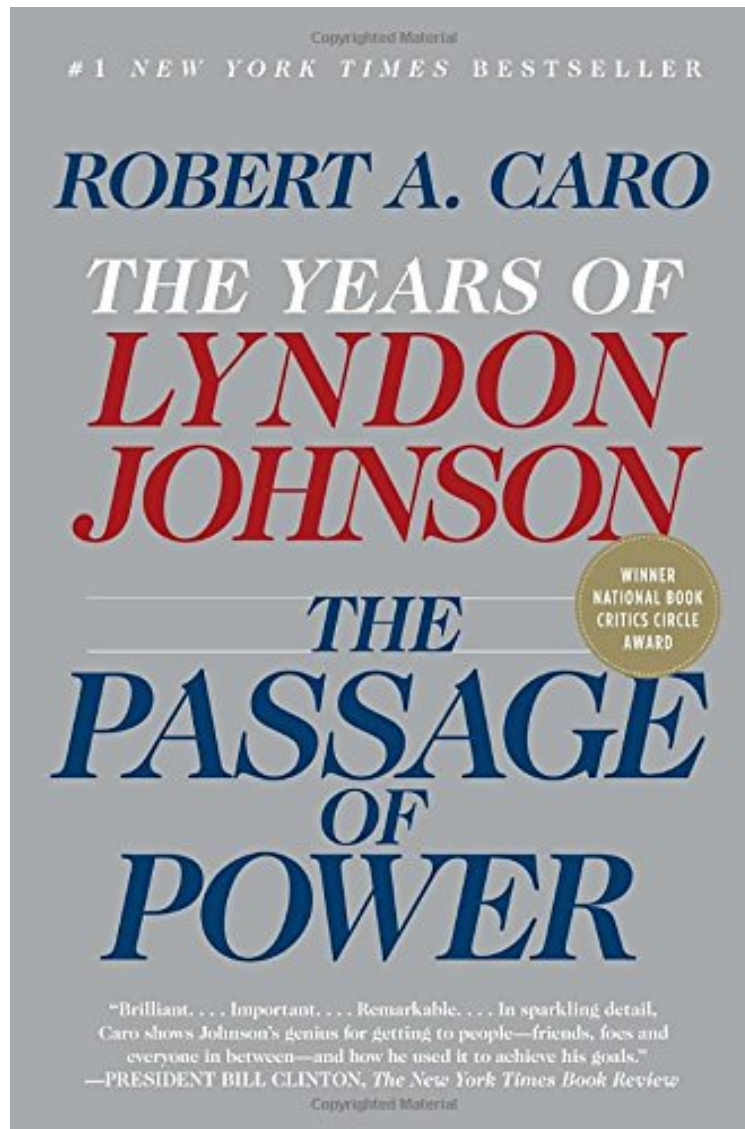


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The Passage of Power: The Years of Lyndon Johnson, Vol. IV

Robert A. Caro

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Robert A. Caro : The Passage of Power: The Years of Lyndon Johnson, Vol. IV before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Passage of Power: The Years of Lyndon Johnson, Vol. IV:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent!!By Lisa NelExtremely well researched and even more extremely unbiased. Mr Caro goes into great detail to outline Johnson's apotheosis from tyrant senate majority leader to the humiliation of his almost forced acceptance of vice presidential candidate and ultimately to the position which

he coveted for his whole life. The presidency. What he didn't anticipate as no one could, his ascension to power would be under the most attenuated circumstances as any Vice President in history. The ways in which Johnson manipulated the Kennedy administration after JFK's assassination; not so much as to secure for the historical record his personal ascent to power, as to suggest his determination to send a clear global message that American democracy has the strength to withstand the most extraordinary and unpredictable occurrences.

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. LBJ's Political Zenith? By Andrew Desmond The Passage of Power, the fourth volume of five of Robert Caro's biography of Lyndon Baines Johnson, is simply marvellous. It is a joy to read and places the reader in the position of looking forward to the final and concluding volume of this towering figure in modern American history. This fourth volume covers a very narrow period of time from the late 1950s until late 1964. However, in this period, much happened. LBJ went from being a leader of the senate to the Vice President under JFK. Arguably, in this role, he was far from happy. Whereas he formerly wielded considerable power, now he was confined to a minor role. US Vice Presidents, despite being a heartbeat from the Presidency, are often given only ceremonial tasks. This was the case with LBJ. Of course, when that heartbeat stopped with the assassination of JFK on that fateful day in Dallas, Johnson was thrust into a new role that he could never have really expected. He faced a critical task of binding the nations wounds whilst stepping into the shoes of a martyr. Johnson performed this task better than almost anyone could have imagined. It was undoubtedly Johnson's shining career moment; the very zenith of his life. Johnson morphed from an often grubby politician into a statesman. He negotiated his budget through Congress and then nursed civil rights legislation into place. He undid decades of Jim Crow racism in the United States. He changed the country massively. To any student of American history, this book is a masterpiece. Robert Caro has produced a work for the ages. I am eager to read his final volume. I trust this will come soon.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Becoming Lyndon Johnson By Michael Griswold While some people believe that the fourth volume The Passage of Power covers the Presidency of Lyndon Johnson, it actually covers roughly 1958-63 with the majority of time spent on the 1960 election and its aftermath, his time as Kennedy's Vice President, and the transition following his assassination. I would argue that the most pointed part of this book is the viscous feud between LBJ and Bobby Kennedy. Much to many readers relief, this book is about 400 pages shorter than Master of the Senate and does not lose any of Caro's detail. Because this is part of a series, if one has read the first three books, they will experience some overlap. Caro probably does this to ensure that one does not necessarily have to read the first three volumes. Although I wasn't particularly bothered by this, it was a little jarring, but this could be because I read the previous three one after another. Eagerly awaiting Volume Five.

WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK PRIZE, THE MARK LYNTON HISTORY PRIZE, THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY AMERICAN HISTORY BOOK PRIZE ONE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR The Economist * Time * Newsweek * Foreign Policy * Business Week * The Week * The Christian Science Monitor * Newsday The Passage of Power follows Lyndon Johnson through both the most frustrating and most triumphant period of his career 1958 to 1964. An unparalleled account of the battle between Johnson and John Kennedy for the 1960 presidential nomination, of the machinations behind Kennedy's decision to offer Johnson the vice presidency, and of Johnson's powerlessness and humiliation in that role. With the superlative skills of a master storyteller, Caro exposes the savage animosity between Johnson and Robert Kennedy, portraying one of America's great political feuds. In Caro's description of the Kennedy assassination, which The New York Times called "the most riveting ever," we see the events of November 22, 1963, for the first time through Lyndon Johnson's eyes. And we watch as his political genius enables him to grasp the reins of the presidency with total command, and, within weeks, make it wholly his own, surmounting unprecedented obstacles in order to fulfill the highest purpose of the office. It is an epic story, displaying all the narrative energy and illuminating insight that led the Times of London to acclaim The Years of Lyndon Johnson as one of the truly great political biographies of the modern age.

.com Best Books of the Month, May 2012: In the fourth volume of Caro's ambitious, decades-long biographic exploration, Lyndon Johnson finally reaches the White House. At 600-plus pages, it's a brick of a book, but it reads at times like a novel, and a thriller, and a Greek tragedy. Caro's version of JFK's assassination is especially chilling, and the characters not just LBJ, but the Kennedys and the power brokers of Washington -- are downright Shakespearean. -- Neal Thompson From Bookforum Lyndon Johnson was a figure of immense gifts and horrendous flaws, and I doubt any writer will ever capture the arc of his triumphant and ultimately tragic life so well again. Michael Kazin Brilliant . . . Important . . . Remarkable . . . In sparkling detail, Caro shows Johnson's genius for getting to people, friends, foes, and everyone in between and how he used it to achieve his goals . . . With this fascinating and meticulous account Robert Caro has once again done America a great service. President Bill Clinton, The New York Times Book (front cover) By writing the best presidential biography the country has ever seen, Caro has forever changed the way we think, and read, American history . . . Although the amount of research Caro has done for these books is staggering, it's his immense talent as a writer that has made his biography of Johnson one of America's most amazing literary

achievements . . . Caros chronicle is as absorbing as a political thriller. . . There is not a wasted word, not a needless anecdote . . . Most impressively, Caro comes closer than any other historian could to explaining the famously complex LBJ . . . Caros portrayal of the president is as scrupulously fair as it is passionate and deeply felt . . . The series is a masterpiece, unlike any other work of American history published in the past. Its true that there will never be another Lyndon B. Johnson, but there will never be another Robert A. Caro, either. Michael Schaub, NPRA breathtakingly dramatic story about a pivotal moment in United States history [told] with consummate artistry and ardor. . . It showcases Mr. Caros masterly gifts as a writer: his propulsive sense of narrative, his talent for enabling readers to see and feel history in the making and his ability to situate his subjects actions within the context of their times. . . Caro manages to lend even much-chronicled events a punch of tactile immediacy . . . Johnson emerges as both a larger-than-life, Shakespearean personage with epic ambition and epic flaws and a more human-scale puzzle . . . Mr. Caro uses his storytelling gifts to turn seemingly arcane legislative maneuvers into action-movie suspense, and he gives us unparalleled understanding of how Johnson used a crisis and his own political acumen to implement his agenda with stunning speed. Taken together the installments of Mr. Caros monumental life of Johnson form a revealing prism by which to view the better part of a century in American life and politics. Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times* A great work of history . . . A great biography . . . Caro has summoned Lyndon Johnson to vivid, intimate life. Newsweek Making ordinary politics and policymaking riveting and revealing is what makes Caro a genius. Combined with his penetrating insight and fanatical research, Caros Churchill-like prose elevates the life of a fairly influential president to stuff worthy of Shakespeare . . . Reading Caros books can feel like encountering the life of an American president for the first time . . . Caros judgment is solid, his prose inspiring, and his research breathtaking . . . Robert Caro stands alone as the unquestioned master of the contemporary American political biography. Jordan Michael Smith, *The Boston Globe* A meditation on power as profound as Machiavellis. Lara Marlowe, *Irish Times* One of the most compelling political narratives of the past half-century . . . A vivid picture of how political power worked in the US during the middle of the 20th century at local, state and national level. . . This extraordinary work will remain essential reading for decades to come. Richard Lambert, *Financial Times* Unrivaled . . . Caro does not merely recount. He beckons. Single sentences turn into winding, brimming paragraphs, clauses upon clauses tugging at the reader, layering the scenery with character intrigue and the plot with historical import. The result is irresistible . . . Passage covers with all the artistry and intrigue of a great novel events that are seared in the nations memory. In an era defined by fragmented media markets, instantaneous communication, gadflies and chattering suits, Caro stands not merely apart, but alone. William Howell, *San Francisco Chronicle* The greatest political biography ever written . . . The most sweeping historical tour de force since Gibbons Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. . . Caro has imprinted himself into history. His work is now the benchmark of political biography. Paul Sheehan, *Sydney Morning Herald* Riveting . . . Masterful . . . An insightful account of what it means and what it takes to occupy the Oval Office. Steve Paul, *The Kansas City Star* Robert Caro is the essential chronicler of these times: And these times should never be forgotten. Joel Connelly, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Caros masterpiece of biography . . . His strength as a biographer is his ability to probe Johnsons mind and motivations . . . Riveting . . . A roller-coaster tale. *The Economist* The latest in what is almost without question the greatest political biography in modern times . . . Nobody goes deeper, works harder or produces more penetrating insights than [Caro]. Patrick Beach, *Austin American-Statesman* The politicians political book of choice . . . An encyclopedia of dirty tricks that would make Machiavelli seem naive. Michael Burleigh, *London Literary Majestic* . . . The reporting is copious, the writing elegant and energetic, the sentences frequently rushing forward themselves like mighty rivers. Four books, and nearly four decades, into this vast project, Caros commitment to excellence has not wavered or even slackened; the reader can feel the sheer force of his effort on every page. Ronald Brownstein, *Democracy* By dramatizing the capacities and limitations of the most talented politician of the postwar era, Caro aims to make readers shrewder citizens . . . As a student of power, Caro is a Machiavelli for democrats, who instead of addressing the prince, addresses the people. Thomas Meaney, *The Nation* Astonishing and unprecedented . . . a work of real literature, among the best nonfiction works ever . . . His books . . . argue that things happen because certain people with power want them to happen . . . It is not inconceivable to think that, without the presence of LBJ and the influence on him of his character and his experiences, none [of the civil rights bills] would have won Congressional approval . . . More than operatic, Caros Johnson books deserve another adjective, one that matches his genius, his sensitivity and his ambition: Shakespearean. Patrick T. Reardon The best biography Ive ever read . . . Incredibly well-written, with the tension and drama of a compulsive thriller, and the style of an elegant novel. Caros books arent just about politics, or just about Lyndon Johnson. His books are about America, its culture, its history, and its society. Above all, Caros books are about power, how to achieve it and make it multiply; how to use power and how to lose it. Michael Crick, *UK Channel 4 News* My book of the year, by a landslide majority, was *The Passage of Power*. The adjective Shakespearean is overused and mostly undeserved but not in this case. LBJ emerges from this biography as a fully rounded tragic hero: cowardly and brave, petty and magnificent, vindictive and noble, a man of vaunting ambition and profound insecurities. Caro marries profound psychological insight with a brilliant eye for the drama of the times. Robert Harris, *The Guardian* (London) Caro is a genius at delineating character, and not just that of the deliciously complicated LBJ. He investigates, among other larger-than-

life figures, the Kennedy brothers, the powerful and unbending Harry Byrd of Virginia, and the clownlike but devoted Bobby Baker . . . Caros use of strong image and repetition, almost hypnotic in combination, is breathtakingly effective. Caro is a great historian, but if the purpose of art is to stimulate thought and arouse emotion, he is also a great artist. Rosemary Michaud,Charleston Post and CourierA portrait of executive leadership so evocative as to be tactile.Robert Draper, Wall Street JournalThe only superstar biographer in the world . . . Caros [books] transform biography into something new, a tour de force of structured political opinion writing . . . A single theme emerges: the insidious ways that clever politicians can gather and abuse powersometimes for good, sometimes for evilin a modern democratic society. Levi Asher, Literary KicksOne of the greatest biographies in the history of American letters.Bob Hoover,Cleveland Plain DealerAs riveting as a thriller . . . The next book will crown an achievement in presidential biography unmatched among presidential histories.David Hendricks,Houston ChronicleEvery page [of The Years of Lyndon Johnson] is compelling. For many politicians it is the finest book on politics . . . The ultimate political story.Daniel Finkelstein,London TimesLong live Robert Caro . . . Truly epic political history and character study . . . Riveting . . . It elevates Caros tale to Shakespearean drama, as the coldhearted, Machiavellian maneuvering and hot-blooded rivalries of supremely ambitious men play out with the fate of the free world at stake.Dan DeLuca,The Philadelphia InquirerBrilliant . . . A masterclass in political management . . . Caro not only re-creates one of the giants of modern politics, he tells a giant tale about power and about life itself.Andrew Adonis,New StatesmanA masterly how-to manual, showing Johnsons knowledge of governing, his peerless congressional maneuvering and effective deal-making.The Years of Lyndon Johnsonis a compact library: brilliant biography, gripping history, searing political drama and an incomparable study of power. Its also a great read . . . And, after thousands of pages spent with Lyndon Johnson, one of Caros singular achievements is that you want more. Peter Gianotti,NewsdayThe Years of Lyndon Johnson, when completed, will rank as Americas most ambitiously conceived, assiduously researched and compulsively readable political biography . . . When Caros fifth volume arrives, readers gratitude will be exceeded only by their regret that there will not be a sixth. George F. WillThis book shows the mastery of Johnson in politics, and also the mastery of Caro in biography.David M. Shribman,Bloomberg BusinessWeekEpic . . . A searing account of ambition derailed by personal demons . . . a triumphant drama of political genius in action . . . Caro combines the skills of a historian, an investigative reporter and a novelist in this searching study of the transformative effect of power. Wendy Smith,Los Angeles TimesAn addictive read, written in glorious prose that suggests the worlds most diligent beat reporter channeling William Faulkner.Passageis an essential document of a turning point in American history.Its also an incisive portrait of one great, terrible, fascinating man suddenly given the chance to reinvent the country in his image. Darren Franich,Entertainment WeeklyRiveting . . . Shakespearean . . . Its a roller-coaster narrative as Johnson plummets from the powerful Senate majority leader post to vice-presidential irrelevance, hated and humiliated by the Kennedy brothers, then surges to presidential authority with the crack of Lee Harvey Oswalds rifle and forces a revolutionary civil rights act through a recalcitrant Congress . . . Caros tormented, heroic Johnson makes an apt embodiment of an America struggling toward epochal change, one with a fascinating resonance in our era of gridlocked government. Publishers Weekly(Boxed, Starred)The fourth volume of one of the most anticipated English-language biographies of the past 30 years . . . A compelling narrative . . . that will thrill those who care about American politics, the foundations of power, or both . . . Before beginning the Johnson biography, Caro published a life of Robert Moses,The Power Broker(1974), a book many scholars consider a watershed in contemporary biography. The Johnson project deserves equal praise. Kirkus s(Starred)A major event in biography, history, even publishing itself . . . Caro has once more combined prodigious research and a literary gift to mount a stage for his Shakespearean figures: LBJ, JFK, and LBJs nemesis Robert F. Kennedy.Library Journal(Starred)Brilliant . . . Riveting reading from beginning to end . . . The real tour de force in this stunning mix of political and psychological analysis comes in the account of the transition between administrations, from November 23, 1963 to January 8, 1964 . . . An utterly fascinating character study, brimming with delicious insider stories . . . Political wonks, of course, will dive into this book with unbridled passion, but its focus on a larger-than-life, flawed but fascinating individualthe kind of character who drives epic fictionshould extend its reach much, much further. Unquestionably, one of the truly big books of the year. Booklist(Starred)