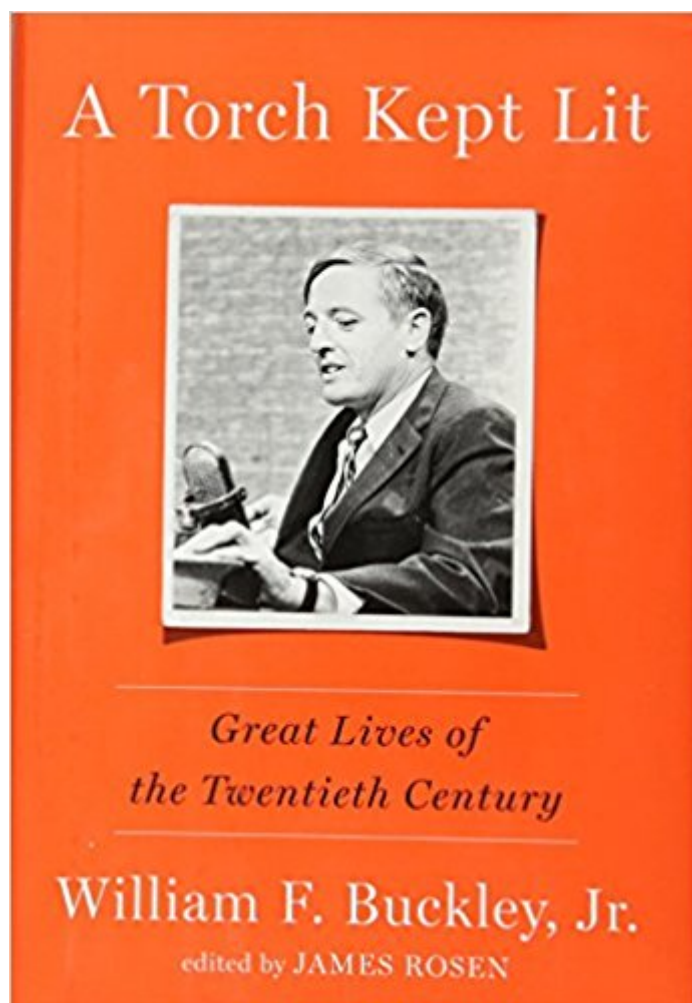


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# A Torch Kept Lit: Great Lives Of The Twentieth Century



## Synopsis

The New York Times Bestseller William F. Buckley, Jr. remembers — as only he could — the towering figures of the twentieth century in a brilliant and emotionally powerful collection, compiled by acclaimed Fox News correspondent James Rosen. In a half century on the national stage, William F. Buckley, Jr. achieved unique stature as a writer, a celebrity, and the undisputed godfather of modern American conservatism. He kept company with the best and brightest, the sultry and powerful. Ronald Reagan pronounced WFB — “perhaps the most influential journalist and intellectual in our era, — and his jet-setting life was a who’s who of high society, fame, and fortune. Among all his distinctions, which include founding the conservative magazine National Review and hosting the long-running talk show Firing Line, Buckley was also a master of that most elusive art form: the eulogy. He drew on his unrivaled gifts to mourn, celebrate, or seek mercy for the men and women who touched his life and the nation. Now, for the first time, WFB’s sweeping judgments of the great figures of his time — presidents and prime ministers, celebrities and scoundrels, intellectuals and guitar gods — are collected in one place. A Torch Kept Lit presents more than fifty of Buckley’s best eulogies, drawing on his personal memories and private correspondences and using a novelist’s touch to conjure his subjects as he knew them. We are reintroduced, through Buckley’s eyes, to the likes of Winston Churchill and Ronald Reagan, Elvis Presley and John Lennon, Truman Capote and Martin Luther King, Jr. Curated by Fox News chief Washington correspondent James Rosen, a Buckley protégé and frequent contributor to National Review, this volume sheds light on a tumultuous period in American history — from World War II to Watergate, the — “death — of God to the Grateful Dead — as told in the inimitable voice of one of our most elegant literary stylists. William F. Buckley, Jr. is back — just when we need him most.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Mr. Rosen has mined this abandoned shaft of Buckley prose, excavating glittering ore: 52 obituaries devoted to luminaries from various walks of life—politics, the military, espionage, the world of arts and letters—as well as less prominent but cherished family members and friends. To each profile Mr. Rosen appends his own nicely measured introduction... Mr. Rosen's selections capture Buckley's wit and combativeness, as well as his humanity." —The Wall Street Journal  
"Rarely is a writer's greatest book published nearly a decade after his death. Buckley's writing was a torch that illuminated many things—a keen sense of politics, a passion for the arts, a love of friends and family, an unwavering Catholic faith. In editing this anthology, Rosen has guaranteed it will be kept lit for the next generation." —National Review Online  
"A Torch Kept Lit chronicles the writings of conservative icon William F. Buckley. So if you're looking for some political definition for yourself, this is the book for you." —Bill O'Reilly, The O'Reilly Factor  
"William F. Buckley, Jr. was a master of many things. This collection of obituaries and eulogies that he wrote over the course of his extraordinary career, admirably curated and eloquently introduced by James Rosen, may well establish WFB as the modern master of this literary form. I have read every single one of my father's 60-odd books. I do not exaggerate to propose that this may prove to be William F. Buckley's finest book ever." —Christopher Buckley  
"William F. Buckley was both an ideological warrior and a bon vivant with a talent for friendship. He understood that a well-lived life should be simultaneously serious and fun, and that a death calls for a summing up, both measured and elegant. This volume gathers some of Buckley's best eulogies, deftly placed in context by James Rosen. It is a timely gift to a nation much in need of a reminder that one can be fervently engaged in public controversies without being coarse or unforgiving." —George F. Will  
"Compiling the best eulogies written by William F. Buckley is so inspired a concept that many political writers, myself included, will kick ourselves for not having thought of it first. But the idea was James Rosen's, and he has executed it with skill and affection—and a great

reporter's nose for the story. The result is a work of literary art." •Carl M. Cannon, Executive Editor, RealClearPolitics "Acclaimed journalist, author, and Buckleyphile James Rosen has done a masterful job collecting, and contextualizing, these testaments to epic lives of the Twentieth Century by William F. Buckley, Jr. œ a figure who indisputably deserves to be counted among them." •Jonah Goldberg, author, columnist and senior editor, National Review "William F. Buckley's sketches and vignettes of the prominent people of his time are absolute gems, and so are the introductions by James Rosen. A book to own, to read œ and read again." •Brit Hume, Senior Political Analyst, Fox News Channel "Colorful|deliciously acerbic|Buckley's descriptions are succinct, often scathing, sometimes disarmingly tender." •Boston Globe "Rosen has done a first-rate job of compiling, selecting, and editing Buckley's recollections and tributes to the noteworthy deceased. Most impressive, however, are Rosen's comments setting the stage for each entry. Buckley was an important mentor to young Rosen, as he had been for me a half-generation earlier. Rosen's personal relationship with Buckley helped him to write with perspective and affection. Some quotes and anecdotes are surely transcriptions of their conversations." •City Journal "The book is a great trip through the last half of the 20th century, riding first class with William Buckley." •The Readers Exchange

As chief Washington correspondent for Fox News, James Rosen has covered the White House and State Department beats and reported from Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, the Supreme Court, nearly all fifty states, and forty foreign countries across five continents. Rosen's articles and essays have appeared in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, Harper's, The Atlantic, National Review, and Playboy, among many other periodicals. He is the author of *The Strong Man: John Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate* and *Cheney One on One*. National Review is a semimonthly magazine founded by author William F. Buckley, JR. in 1955 and is based in New York City. It is America's most widely read and influential magazine and website for conservative news, commentary, and opinion.

If the most attractive quality in a man is erudite eloquence, I lost my chance when William F Buckley Jr. passed...but my favorite journalist, James Rosen, a devout WFB devotee, has resurrected 50 powerful eulogies written by WFB on renowned, powerful and culturally interesting people who passed in the latter part of the 20th century. I thoroughly enjoyed this book while lamenting that people with the range and talent like WFB are few and far between.

As noted by Christopher Buckley on the dust jacket, "I do not exaggerate to propose that this may prove to be William F. Buckley's finest book ever." A nice tribute to its editor, James Rosen, who selected from voluminous material vignettes and commentary -- some eulogizing the departed, some not -- by one of the great wordsmith's of the 20th century. Rosen's deft touch adds just enough context to remind the reader of Buckley's own role and relationship to the society he sought to influence. Buckley's ability to find humanity and even comedy in the midst of pathos is inspiring. Buy This book!

Reading the obits and columns from Mr. Buckley really gave me an insight into his intellect. Mr. Rosen's intro for each is well written and, where needed, explanatory. I would recommend this to any one interested in the proper use of the English language in written form. Aloha.

It would be difficult for me to overstate how much I enjoyed this book. This book is a series of obituaries composed by William F. Buckley for National Review. The editor is James Rosen who compiled this collection of William F. Buckley's writings. Mr. Rosen wrote a introduction to each obituary that I also found both well written and most helpful. I purchased both the book on Kindle and the audiobook. I read the book and listened at the same time. The narration was really excellent and added to my reading experience. This book was both entertaining and educational. I learned about persons I did not really know about. When I came upon such a person, I researched their life. Of course I also learned what William F. Buckley thought about these individuals. I also ended up purchasing a novel authored by William F. Buckley as I had never read any of his fiction. I am really glad that Mr. Rosen took the time to assemble this excellent work. I am most grateful to have read it. Thank You...

James Rosen has assembled an amazing set of obituaries written by Bill Buckley. Mr. Rosen's introductions set the stage for understanding the context of the person and time. For history buffs with a bit of nostalgia in them you are able to immerse yourself in a world where Buckley's well researched, carefully considered and strongly held opinions are all evident. Mr. Rosen's gift for language rivals Mr. Buckley. If you want to turn your head from the crude shallowness of today's debate (if only for a brief time) you couldn't do better the A Torch Kept Lit. It may even help your sanity. If PBS could ever overcome its political correctness, it would have a hit reprising Firing Line with James Rosen as the Alistar Cooke of political debate. Come on PBS, hide your left wing

agenda for a bit and rerun Firing Line with Mr. Rosen as host!

William Buckley, Jr. is considered to be the “undisputed godfather of modern American conservatism.” He was on the national stage for 50 years as the founder and publisher of the “National Review” which is published semi-monthly; and also as the TV host who had the longest-running public affairs show, “Firing Line” (33 years; 1504 episodes) in television history. The program featured influential public figures in the United States who were from the fields of politics, religion, literature and academia. They were interviewed about the ideas and issues of the day. The views of Buckley’s guests could sharply contrast or be in strong agreement with Buckley’s. James Rosen, author of “A Torch Kept Lit” was a Buckley fellow and frequent contributor to “The National Review.” He is known mostly today as the chief Washington correspondent for FOX News. Rosen has covered the White House, the State Department and reported from Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, the supreme court, nearly all 50 states and 40 foreign countries across five continents. “A Torch Kept Lit”, Rosen’s third book was preceded by “Strongman John Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate” and “Cheney One-On-One”. This book using eulogies written for the “National Review” by Buckley provides insights on the period from World War II to Watergate. Buckley, a keen observer of people and mannerisms, as well as their role in events uses eulogies to reveal hidden sides, to herald greatness if warranted, and to remind us of why certain people should be remembered as “abject failures or worse still, people.” Rosen has chosen fifty (out of 250) of what he considers to be the best of Buckley’s eulogies. They cover the great figures of his time – presidents and prime ministers, celebrities and scoundrels, intellectuals and guitar gods – as well as close friends and family. Those eulogies which may be of most interest include: Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Reagan; From Arts and Letters Truman Capote, Johnny Carson, Alastair Cook, Milton Friedman, Jerry Garcia, Vladimir Horowitz, John Lennon, Norman Mailer, Elvis Presley, and A. M. Rosenthal; Generals, spies and statesmen Winston Churchill, William Colby, Princess Diana, Allen Dulles, Barry Goldwater, Richard Helms, E. Howard Hunt, Martin Luther King, John Mitchell, Jacqueline Onassis. Friends

Whittaker Chambers, John Kenneth Galbraith, Hume, David Niven, Nemeses Algier Hiss, John Lindsay, Ayn Rand, Nelson Rockefeller, Eleanor Roosevelt, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. Rosen prefaces each eulogy with background information specific to each subject's nature and their relationship to Buckley. "A Torch Kept Lit" was a good read. Rosen, through Buckley's eulogies, provides satisfying insights into the times and people who led us through the late 20th Century.

James Rosen has done a terrific job of selecting and presenting these memorials by WFB. For one who grew up watching Firing Line and whose political and social thought were significantly influenced by National Review, this was a very enjoyable and even profound trip back through insights and memories. Mr. Rosen's introductions were perfect, just enough to set the stage but not to intrude. I can heartily recommend this for all Buckley fans, and for all who don't know Buckley but value good writing and insightful commentary.

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