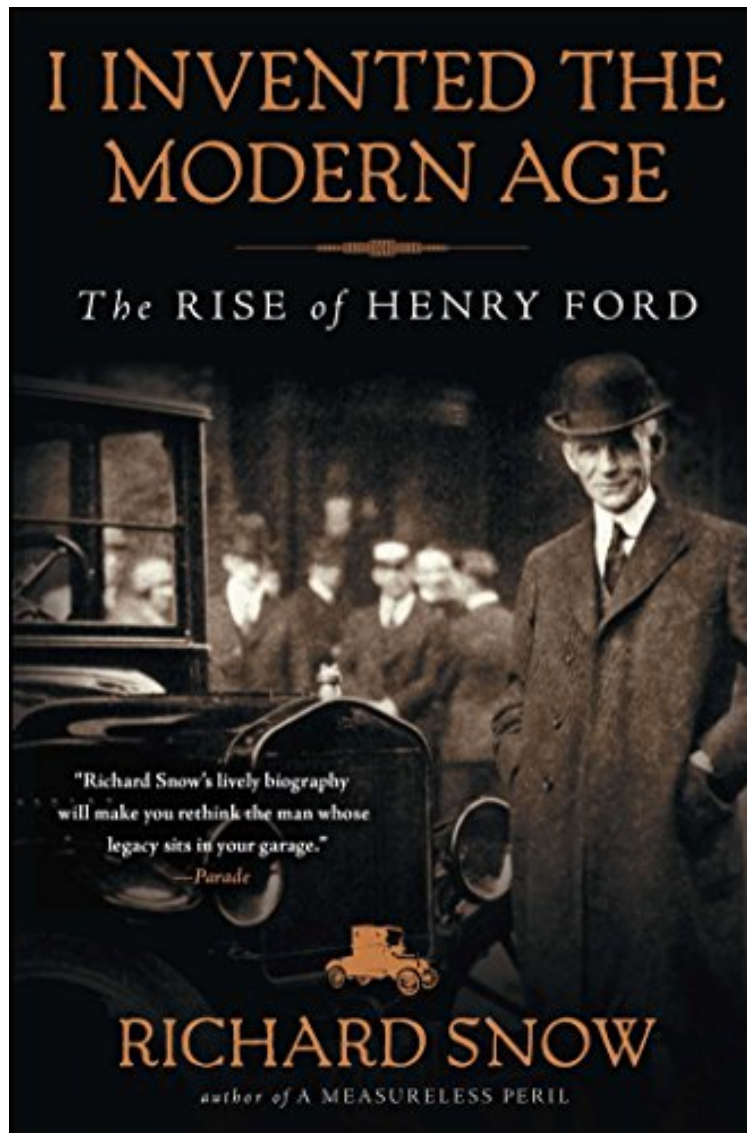


(Mobile library) I Invented the Modern Age: The Rise of Henry Ford

I Invented the Modern Age: The Rise of Henry Ford

Richard Snow

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Richard Snow : I Invented the Modern Age: The Rise of Henry Ford before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Invented the Modern Age: The Rise of Henry Ford:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. This is far more than a book about a man and a car By Carol Peckham This wonderful book pulls Henry Ford into the present by presenting us with his deep revealing shadow. Richard Snow has chosen to create a picture of Ford that starts in his early life and leads ineluctably to the development of the Model T, which Snow describes convincingly as having invented the modern age. This isn't a new idea of course but what this book does is not only evoke a vivid picture of genius at its peak but it provides the essence

of what we gained and lost through Ford's bizarre twists of character. We gained, of course, mass production and the automobile as a transformative force. And with Ford doubling the working man's salary, we also gained a middle class. (The book goes on to report on the brutality Ford later used against his workers, but that early support of the worker was an almost heartbreaking reminder of what is now being lost --US manufacturing and the working middle class.) And we probably also lost the possibility of a global organization right after WWI. The book doesn't shy away from Ford's very weird and destructive anti-Semitism, his ruthless treatment of men who had been indispensable in his rise, nor his damaging and tragic relationship with his son. However, throughout this brilliant book I was periodically reminded of two other men, Steve Jobs and Robert Moses, who were also initially motivated by the desire to change lives for good. All three achieved monstrous changes in the fabric of society by building tangible stuff and overcoming extreme obstacles to do so. In the process, however, all three also underwent crippling psychological changes that made them, somehow, monstrous. To make this point, the important biographers of Jobs and Moses wrote very long books. Snow elegantly and kindly reveals this in far fewer pages. And it reads like a novel. (I hope some smart producer notices that the Selden patent case by itself has enough drama and character to fill a mini-series.) Snow even manages to make machinery thrilling, and this for a reader who doesn't know the difference between a monkey wrench and a monkey. I recommend buying it on the Kindle because at the end you can expand the picture of Henry Ford's face and place your finger on each side of it. You'll know what I mean when you buy this book.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable Read
By timothy sho donahue
If you like history, the automobile and manufacturing you will enjoy this book. It is a great history about the path Henry took to invent a car, build it and get it into mass production. He made mistakes along the way and also took some big risks on big ideas. The part I found most interesting is that his son was actually better qualified to run the business but never allowed to spread his wings. Henry was not the best father and in many respects, not a good man to work for if you had your own ideas.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. com and thought it was very good. I have absolutely no knowledge of automobiles and ...
By suzebo
I listened to this on Audible.com and thought it was very good. I have absolutely no knowledge of automobiles and what makes them run (the internal combustion engine remains a total mystery) but found the author's descriptions of the early engines to be quite accessible and not at all intimidating. The account of the development of the 1st autos and of the early auto industry was fascinating, as was the portrait presented of Henry Ford. The discussion of how Ford's innovations forever changed social history, effectively destroying a way of life that Ford held dear, was also very interesting. So, a book that should not have appealed to me turned out to be a good read; I even recommended it to my sister-in-law as a gift for her husband, who does know a lot about engines and what makes them work.

A fresh, meticulous, and entertaining account of Henry Ford, the Model-T, and the invention of the American car industry in the early twentieth century that will make you rethink the man whose legacy sits in your garage (Parade). From the acclaimed popular historian Richard Snow, who writes with verve and a keen eye (The New York Times Book Review), comes a fresh and entertaining account of Henry Ford and his invention of the Model T, the ugly, cranky, invincible machine that defined twentieth-century America. Every century or so, our republic has been remade by a new technology: 170 years ago the railroad changed Americans' conception of space and time; in our era, the microprocessor revolutionized how humans communicate. But in the early twentieth century the agent of creative destruction was the gasoline engine, as put to work by an unknown and relentlessly industrious young man named Henry Ford. Born the same year as the battle of Gettysburg, Ford died two years after the atomic bombs fell, and his life personified the tremendous technological changes achieved in that span. Growing up as a Michigan farm boy with a bone-deep loathing of farming, Ford intuitively saw the advantages of internal combustion. Resourceful and fearless, he built his first gasoline engine out of scavenged industrial scraps. It was the size of a sewing machine. From there, scene by scene, Richard Snow vividly shows Ford using his innate mechanical abilities, hard work, and radical imagination as he transformed American industry. In many ways, of course, Ford's story is well known; in many more ways, it is not. Richard Snow masterfully weaves together a fascinating narrative of Ford's rise to fame through his greatest invention, the Model T. When Ford first unveiled this car, it took twelve and a half hours to build one. A little more than a decade later, it took exactly one minute. In making his car so quickly and so cheaply that his own workers could easily afford it, Ford created the cycle of consumerism that we still inhabit. Our country changed in a mere decade, and Ford became a national hero. But then he soured, and the benevolent side of his character went into an ever-deepening eclipse, even as the America he had remade evolved beyond all imagining into a global power capable of producing on a vast scale not only cars, but airplanes, ships, machinery, and an infinity of household devices. A highly pleasurable read, filled with scenes and incidents from Ford's life, particularly during the intense phase of his secretive competition with other early car manufacturers, *I Invented the Modern Age* shows Richard Snow at the height of his powers as a popular historian and reclaims from history Henry Ford, the remarkable man who, indeed, invented the modern world as we know it.

From Booklist
Automobile mogul Henry Ford changed drastically during the years his Model T was produced. When

in 1927 a funereal-looking Ford personally steered the 15 millionth T out of the factory, few remained of his associates who were present at the creation of the first T in 1908. Gone, too, was Fords reputation as a progressive industrialist. Opinion about The Peoples Tycoon (title of Steven Watts 2005 biography) had nose-dived, and many thought he was an anti-Semite, a woolly-headed pacifist, and an authoritarian businessman, whose iconic car appeared antique-like compared to the competition. To track Fords metamorphosis, Snow agilely follows Fords relationship with the mechanical love of his life. During Fords years of tinkering, which culminated in the Model T, a gregarious, long-limbed Ford lopes through Snows pages, but he hunches over in ensuing ones, rejecting proposals to change the T en route to becoming an egotistic crank. Snow displays excellent storytelling skill as, stiffening by the years, Fords character develops through anecdotes and events in a lively narrative sequence that will engross readers curious about Ford and the Model T. --Gilbert Taylor Snow gets to the meat of a biographers task demonstrating how psychology and circumstances blend to create a life Snows supple and informative effort reminds us that although weve bought the automobiles and the assembly line, we continue to wrestle with the issues that concerned their creator.

(Harper's)Highly readable. (Publishers Weekly)Richard Snows lively biography will make you rethink the man whose legacy sits in your garage. (Parade)"Snow displays excellent storytelling skill as, stiffening by the years, Fords character develops through anecdotes and events in a lively narrative sequence that will engross readers."

(Booklist)"The 'T' itself is a protagonist in Mr. Snow's often lyrical book." (Wall Street Journal)Stylistically, Snow mimics the marvelously folksy, protean temperament of his subject, dwelling on Fords early mechanical inventions rather than his latter problematic prickliness, and everywhere portraying a compelling character. (Kirkus)"Richard Snow skilfully evokes everything from patenting battles to internal-combustion dramas and his bullheaded subject, who set out to remake America, and succeeded." (Nature Magazine)I Invented the Modern Age is the amazing story of an amazing man, told with wit, insight, style, and zest. Richard Snow makes the invention of the automobile intelligible and fascinating even to car ignoramuses such as myself. His story of Ford theman is simply riveting. This is history as it should always be told. (Kevin Baker author of Strivers Row)"Richard Snow presents a biography of a brilliant, difficult and strange man, a technological thriller about the most important machine he made, and a social history of the country it transformed. You live in the world Henry Ford made; here is how it happened. I Invented the Modern Age is clear, amusing, stern and poignant." (Richard Brookhiser author of James Madison)"No one has told the story of Henry Fords incredible rise and achievements better than Richard Snow in this book." (Steve Forbes Forbes Magazine)About the AuthorRichard Snow was born in New York City and he graduated with a B.A. from Columbia College. He worked at American Heritage magazine for nearly four decades and was its editor-in-chief for seventeen years. He is the author of several books, including two novels and a volume of poetry. Snow has served as a consultant for historical motion picturesamong them Gloryand has written for documentaries, including the Burns brothers Civil War, and Ric Burnss PBS film Coney Island. Most recently, he served as a consultant on Ken Burnss World War II series, The War.