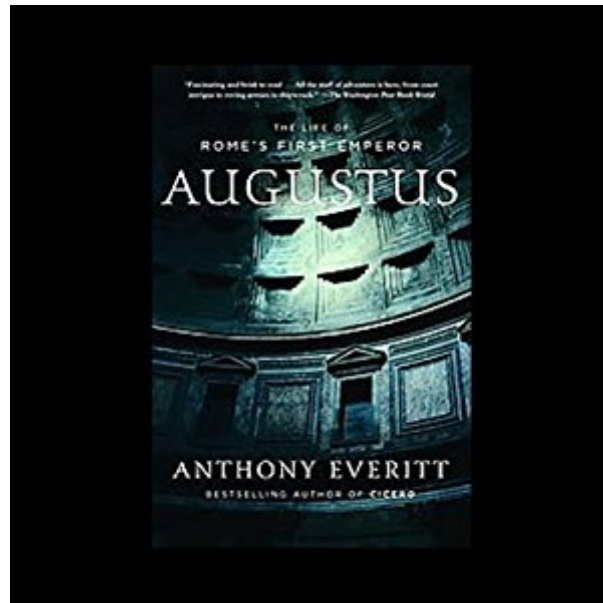


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Augustus: The Life Of Rome's First Emperor



Synopsis

He found Rome made of clay and left it made of marble. As Rome's first emperor, Augustus transformed the unruly Republic into the greatest empire the world had ever seen. His consolidation and expansion of Roman power two thousand years ago laid the foundations, for all of Western history to follow. Yet, despite Augustus's accomplishments, very few biographers have concentrated on the man himself, instead choosing to chronicle the age in which he lived. Here, Anthony Everitt, the bestselling author of *Cicero*, gives a spellbinding and intimate account of his illustrious subject. Augustus began his career as an inexperienced teenager plucked from his studies to take center stage in the drama of Roman politics, assisted by two school friends, Agrippa and Maecenas. Augustus's rise to power began with the assassination of his great-uncle and adoptive father, Julius Caesar, and culminated in the titanic duel with Mark Antony and Cleopatra. The world that made Augustus "and that he himself later remade" was driven by intrigue, sex, ceremony, violence, scandal, and naked ambition. Everitt has taken some of the household names of history "Caesar, Brutus, Cassius, Antony, Cleopatra" "whom few know the full truth about, and turned them into flesh-and-blood human beings. At a time when many consider America an empire, this stunning portrait of the greatest emperor who ever lived makes for enlightening and engrossing reading. Everitt brings to life the world of a giant, rendered faithfully and sympathetically in human scale. A study of power and political genius, *Augustus* is a vivid, compelling biography of one of the most important rulers in history. From the Hardcover edition.

--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For a man whose achievement in terms of altering Roman history, Augustus Caesar has always stood (literally from the get-go) in the shadow of his magnificent great Uncle, Julius Caesar. There's a sort of magnificence to Caesar that Augustus simply couldn't match; where Caesar was a protean talent, equally at home in rhetoric, literature, art, ambition, or military genius, Augustus' talents were on a far more normal scale. That said, as was remarked by a grieving friend of Caesar's after the Ides of March, "If Caesar could find no way out, who can?"? And it was the 18-year-old Octavius who, over a 45-year-career, found that way out. Augustus' achievement was to ruthlessly pursue supreme personal power in Rome for 20 years, and to spend the next 40 years turning that power into a functioning system that prolonged the Roman Empire for at least 200 years, arguably until its demise, and provided the peaceful environment for some of its greatest Roman art and literature. When he was born, Rome was, as it had been for centuries, firmly in the political grip of an incredibly small, wealthy elite of Senators who essentially ran the Republic as their own personal preserve. When he died, men from all over the Empire were now actively involved in its administration, the grip of the "old boys club" on power politics was broken forever, and he managed to harness the incredible competitiveness of Roman politics to solve most, if not all, of the old Republic's problems while taming the aristocracy. He did this through a constant, thoughtful, trial-and-error process that managed - just! - not to offend the hypersensitive reactionary elements in the Republic while accommodating them to a new world in which Roman power, and Roman talent, had to be harnessed world-wide.

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