



# Theodore Roosevelt: Champion of the American Spirit

By Betsy Harvey Kraft

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**Theodore Roosevelt: Champion of the American Spirit** By Betsy Harvey Kraft

People often associate Theodore Roosevelt with the Rough Riders, the volunteer cavalry regiment that he led to victory in 1898 in the Spanish-American War. But the list of accomplishments of the 26th president of the United States is long: besides holding office as vice president, governor of New York State, and police commissioner of New York City, he was a writer, cowboy, historian, conservationist, and soldier. Above all, he ushered the United States into the ranks of the world's great powers. His incredible exuberance and strength continue to inspire, and his progressive views on government and corporate corruption, labor laws, and feminism are still relevant today.

Award-winning author Betsy Harvey Kraft has written a sweeping biography that draws from diverse sources, including Theodore Roosevelt's journals, correspondence, and autobiography, as well as the memoirs of family and friends and newspaper reports of the time. This excellent book also features archival photographs, political cartoons, and drawings by Roosevelt himself. Endnotes, bibliography, index.

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## **Theodore Roosevelt: Champion of the American Spirit** By Betsy Harvey Kraft Bibliography

- Rank: #2241690 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Clarion Books
- Published on: 2003-06-23
- Released on: 2003-06-23
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.00" h x .12" w x 8.00" l, 2.15 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 192 pages

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8-Roosevelt emerges from the pages of this biography as an exuberant, energetic, larger-than-life personality, making it easy to understand his daughter Alice's description of her father as a man who "always had to be the bride at every wedding and the corpse at every funeral." Kraft captures his complex character, which encompassed many seemingly contradictory aspects. Although he came from an aristocratic, wealthy background, Roosevelt was determined to make big business abandon corrupt practices and obey the law. He was an avid big-game hunter as well as an ardent conservationist. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for his diplomatic efforts during the Russo-Japanese War, but held a firm belief in U.S. military preparedness. A popular president, a champion of women's and working-class rights, and a devoted husband and father, Roosevelt claimed near the end of his life that "No man has had a happier life than I have led." Richly illustrated with period photos, political cartoons, engravings, and many of Roosevelt's own drawings from letters to his children, this handsome book provides a fascinating glimpse into the public and private life and the wide range of accomplishments of a major figure in American history.

*Ginny Gustin, Sonoma County Library System, Santa Rosa, CA*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5-9. In this handsome biography, Kraft presents the life and career of Theodore Roosevelt. A shy, asthmatic child, Roosevelt decided to build himself up through exercises and physical challenges. Later, as president, the same spirit of determination led him to take on cause after cause with energy and drive: wilderness preservation, the Panama Canal, irrigation projects, trust busting, and reforms in the railway, meat-packing, and other industries. Despite his enduring image as the leader of the Rough Riders, he was the first American to win a Nobel Peace Prize or, indeed, any Nobel Prize. Kraft has a knack for beginning chapters with a storyteller's flair, drawing readers in to hear what Roosevelt will do next. Interwoven with the well-told story of Roosevelt's public activities is Kraft's vivid portrayal of his personal life, laced with anecdotes and quotations (mainly from letters) that help bring the famous figure to life. The spacious layout and the many black-and-white reproductions of photos, drawings, and prints add to the book's appeal. Appendixes include source notes for quotations, a bibliography, a recommended Web site, and a short list of videos. An informative and entertaining introduction to one of America's most dynamic presidents. *Carolyn Phelan*

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Review

"colorful biography...carefully chosen details...reproductions of Roosevelt's illustrated letters are particularly captivating...a lively portrait of an American hero." PUBLISHERS WEEKLY Publishers Weekly

"an excellent job of portraying...Roosevelt's larger-than-life persona...captured in both the text and...many period photographs...highly recommended" VOYA (VOICE OF YOUTH ADVOCATES) VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

"Kraft 'talks history' to her readers...strong narrative...paint[s] a picture of both character and temperament...adroitly includes historical background" THE HORN BOOK Horn Book

"handsome biography...Kraft has a knack for beginning chapters with a storyteller's flair, drawing readers in...vivid portrayal...informative... entertaining" BOOKLIST Booklist, ALA

"Richly illustrated . . . this handsome book provides a fascinating glimpse into . . . a major figure in American history."--School Library Journal, starred.  
School Library Journal, Starred

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#### **Hattie Leclair:**

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#### **Elizabeth Jamerson:**

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