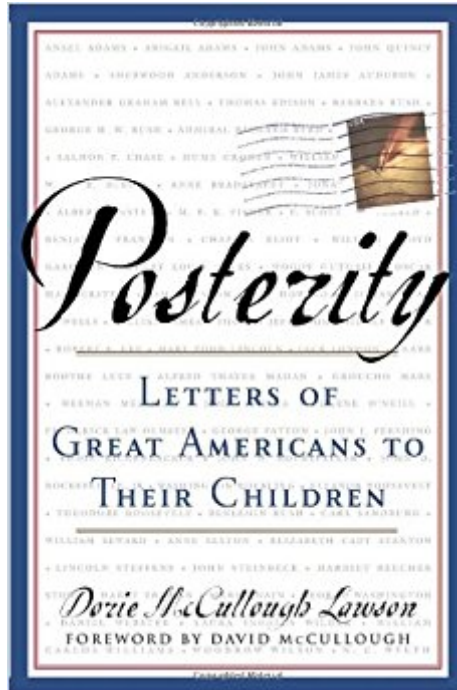


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Posterity: Letters Of Great Americans To Their Children



Synopsis

An elegantly designed, beautifully composed volume of personal letters from famous American men and women that celebrates the American Experience and illuminates the rich history of some of America's most storied families. Posterity is at once an epistolary chronicle of America and a fascinating glimpse into the hearts and minds of some of history's most admired figures. Spanning more than three centuries, these letters contain enduring lessons in life and love, character and compassion that will surprise and enlighten. Included here are letters from Thomas Jefferson to his daughter, warning her of the evils of debt; General Patton on D-Day to his son, a cadet at West Point, about what it means to be a good soldier; W.E.B. DuBois to his daughter about character beneath the color of skin; Oscar Hammerstein about why, after all his success, he doesn't stop working; Woody Guthrie from a New Jersey asylum to nine-year-old Arlo about universal human frailty; sixty-five-year-old Laura Ingalls Wilder's train of thought about her pioneer childhood; Eleanor Roosevelt chastising her grown son for his Christmas plans; and Groucho Marx as a dog to his twenty-five-year-old son. With letters that span more than three centuries of American history, Posterity is a fascinating glimpse into the thoughts, wisdom, and family lives of those whose public accomplishments have touched us all. Here are renowned Americans in their own words and in their own times, seen as they were seen by their children. Here are our great Americans as mothers and fathers.

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Customer Reviews

This wonderful book spans more than three centuries and gives the reader insights into the thoughts of many great Americans as they wrote to their children. This treasury of short letters also provides some background for each one. The research needed to discover these personal letters is documented. I love this collection and the way all the letters are presented. To quote from the author's father, David McCullough, "This is a book to pick up and read at almost any page, a book to keep close at hand, to return to for nourishment and guidance, yes, but also for reassurance and pure pleasure". I couldn't have said it any better! This quotation says exactly how I feel. I want to purchase several copies to give as gifts and as a parent, I even feel compelled to write to my own children! All the letters provide wonderful insights into the minds of the parents, and I have several favorites; Eleanor Roosevelt wrote one to one of her sons who wanted to skip Christmas and it is so touching! As Dorie M. Lawson reminds us, letter writing is generally a thoughtful art - it cannot compare to e-mail writing. These personal letters from parent to child are arranged thematically and within each section, they are in chronological order and printed in their entirety just as they were composed. It is thrilling to read them, especially the really old ones and all of them were written by a parent who made worthwhile contributions to America. Here are a few of the parents whose letters are included: Thomas Jefferson to his daughter Patsy, Harry Truman to his daughter Margaret, General Patton to his son, Oscar Hammerstein to his son, and so many more from all walks of life. All of us who have children and even those who do not, will benefit from reading this rare collection of parents expressing their thoughts. Thank you Dorie McCullough Lawson and please continue writing!

Dorie McCullough Lawson has compiled a touching and inspiring array of letters from the famous and infamous to their children. Spanning centuries, this compilation proves that the concerns and joys of parenting are timeless and universal - from love to finances to courage to character, the authors sought to impart the same lessons to their offspring that parents struggle to teach today. Even non-parents will enjoy the glimpse into the authors' private lives - that which took place offstage, so to speak. In most cases, the parents understood their place in history and the letters reflect that fact - Elizabeth Cady Stanton writes that she is "making the path smoother" for her daughters and "all the other girls". She describes the scene of her latest speech, allowing the girls to understand the sacrifices that their family is making for posterity. Through these letters we see that their lives weren't so different from our own - the triumphs we read about in history books came with tremendous compromises and the legends we know from television news make often painful choices between their destinies and their families. This is a wonderful book full of insight and comfort

and deserves space on every nursery bookshelf.

I'm not a big fan of the genre of letters literature, but this book completely surprised and enthralled me. The obvious hook is the eclectic group of thinkers, from Thomas Edison and Jack London to Moe Howard from the Three Stooges and Woody Guthrie. Each writer reveals a profound love of family, children, sense of humor and warmth that is collectively astonishing and heartbreaking. (...)

To often, we think of historical figures as cardboard characters, names in a textbook. In this wonderful book, they come alive as thinking, feeling human beings, sharing their innermost thoughts with their children. No matter the era, or the fame of the writer, the humanity is what one remembers. Perhaps the greatest tribute I can give Dorie McCullough Lawson is the fact that I have since read, or am reading, biographies of N.C. Wyeth, Theodore Roosevelt, John J. Pershing, and Harriet Beecher Stowe...all because of what I learned about them from her book, and the letters therein. "Posterity..." is a book to treasure.

I've stopped giving redundant, briefly used, baby items to new parents. Instead, I buy them *Posterity: Letters of Great Americans to Their Children*. The connection to the commonality of parenthood, that feels so unique and precious to many who've encountered it, resonates throughout this collection. Except for Jack London's contribution, you'll smile as you read most of the letters that editor Dorie McCullough Lawson has included in this peerless treasury.

I belong to the "Living Your Best Life" study group at the Oshkosh Senior Center, and we are all delighted with this book. We read and discuss a section each week, and have enjoyed the first 3 very much. The book introduces several "Great Americans" that few of our members were familiar with, which has sent several of us to the local library to read some Sherwood Anderson, for instance. I would have given a fifth star if more great women were included--Elizabeth Cady Stanton's letter to her daughter was my favorite thus far, but most sections have only one woman, 3 have none, and two have two. I realize this reflects the relative absence of women from mainstream history texts, but I had hoped the past several decades of research in women's history had reached a wider audience.

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