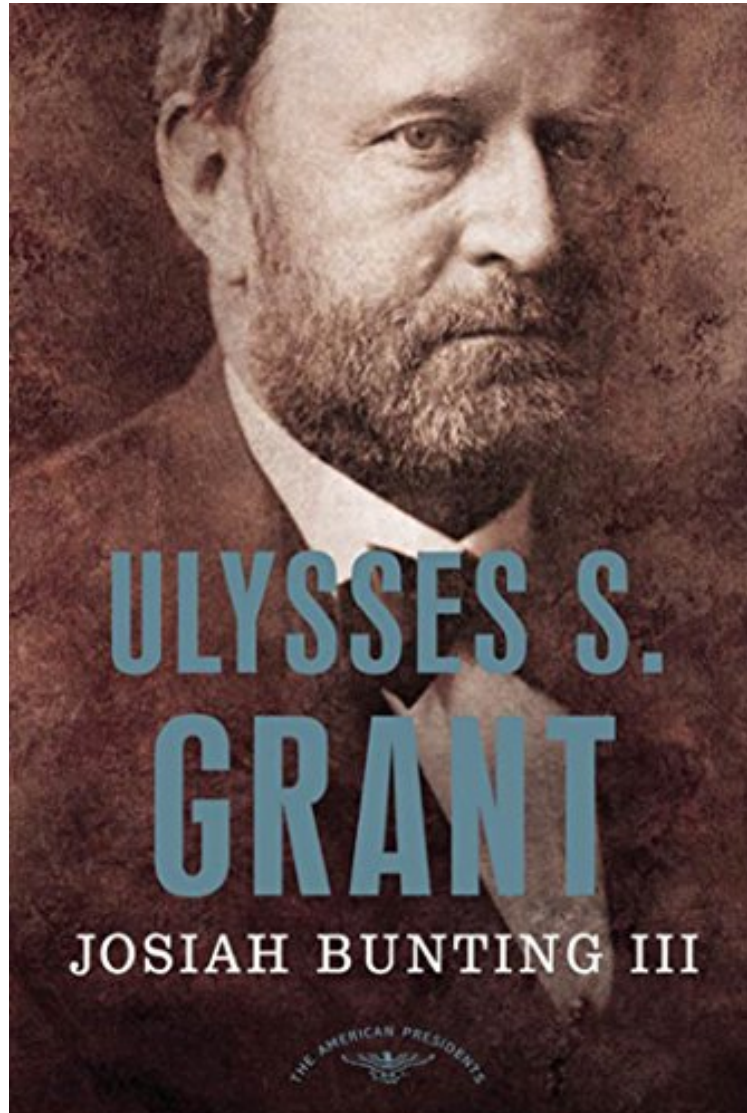


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## Ulysses S. Grant: The American Presidents Series: The 18th President, 1869-1877

Von Josiah Bunting III  
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yourself with one of America's great heroes.

**Kurzbeschreibung**The underappreciated presidency of the military man who won the Civil War and then had to win the peace as wellAs a general, Ulysses S. Grant is routinely described in glowing terms-the man who turned the tide of the Civil War, who accepted Lee's surrender at Appomattox, and who had the stomach to see the war through to final victory. But his presidency is another matter-the most common word used to characterize it is "scandal." Grant is routinely portrayed as a man out of his depth, whose trusting nature and hands-off management style opened the federal coffers to unprecedented plunder. But that caricature does not do justice to the realities of Grant's term in office, as Josiah Bunting III shows in this provocative assessment of our eighteenth president. Grant came to Washington in 1869 to lead a capital and a country still bitterly divided by four years of civil war. His predecessor, Andrew Johnson, had been impeached and nearly driven from office, and the radical Republicans in Congress were intent on imposing harsh conditions on the Southern states before allowing them back into the Union. Grant made it his priority to forge the states into a single nation, and Bunting shows that despite the troubles that characterized Grant's terms in office, he was able to accomplish this most important task-very often through the skillful use of his own popularity with the American people. Grant was indeed a military man of the highest order, and he was a better president than he is often given credit for. From Booklist Like John Dean's Warren G. Harding [BKL Ja 1 15 04], Bunting's Grant rehabilitates a reputation commonly besmirched with scandal, and also, in Grant's case, with drunkenness and military butchery. Grant did drink too much--almost exclusively, however, when, after the Mexican War, he was stationed on the West Coast, far from his family. Grant waged war with unstinting force, which Bunting says was necessary against an enemy fighting on their home ground; this led to increased Union losses, but Confederate casualty rates were greater. Finally, neither Grant nor most of his officials were involved in any contemporary scandals, some of the biggest of which were congressional or entirely extragovernmental. He was a gifted, fearless soldier; a politician more dedicated to black citizenship and welfare than any other in the wake of Lincoln; a fiscal conservative; a humanitarian toward the Indians; the author of the finest memoirs by a public figure in American literature; and, at home and abroad, the most beloved American of his time. A richly written blow against ill-informed historical cynicism. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved From School Library Journal Adult/High School While these books are roughly the same length and both provide an easy read, they focus on different aspects of the subject. Bunting's goal is a re-examination of one of the most vilified presidents in American history. Though the author discusses the man's life before and after his presidency, he looks more closely at Grant's record and discovers more in it than has generally been credited. At the end, it must be said that Grant's intentions and character are more praiseworthy than his accomplishments, but one cannot gainsay the successes that he oversaw in foreign policy and in his determined enforcement of civil rights for freedmen in the South. Korda's volume is interested in investigating the psychology of one of the great Americans of the 19th century. He examines Grant's successes and failures and shows the parts of his character that are evident in both. In doing so, he produces a gripping study of the man, operating successfully under the stresses of war, enduring failure in the stresses of peace, and coping with his fatal cancer. It is a broad, sweeping view of the man's life and naturally tends to focus more on his military than on his political career. Neither book tells the whole story; together, though, they provide an admirable introduction to one of the great men of American history. Ted Westervelt, Library of Congress, Washington, DC Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.