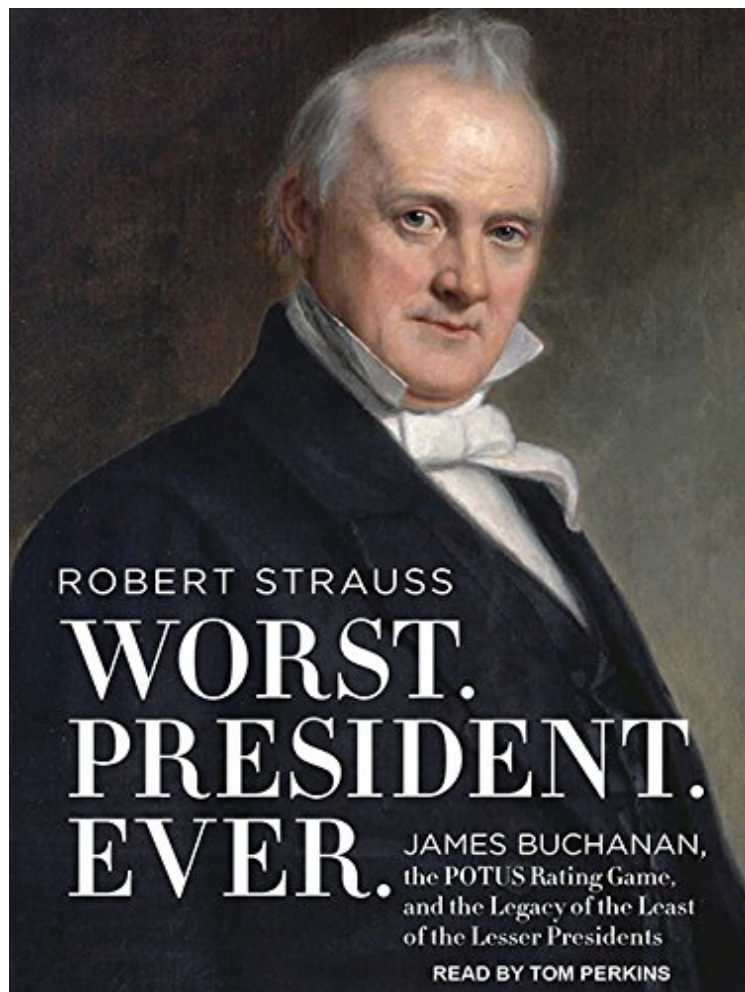


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Worst. President. Ever.: James Buchanan, the POTUS Rating Game, and the Legacy of the Least of the Lesser Presidents

Robert Strauss

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Robert Strauss : Worst. President. Ever.: James Buchanan, the POTUS Rating Game, and the Legacy of the Least of the Lesser Presidents before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Worst. President. Ever.: James Buchanan, the POTUS Rating Game, and the Legacy of the Least of the Lesser Presidents:

21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. An Unconventional Biography By Lev Raphael The author has always been fascinated by presidential history and so the book's partly an entertaining memoir about his adventures in studying that history, visiting some of the out of the way homes of almost forgotten presidents. It also assesses the whole industry of rating our presidents, which is probably the least compelling part and could have been shortened or

left out. The nasty early 19th century politics Strauss describes in detail are a good reminder that things haven't changed much in American political life, just the media reporting them. Buchanan comes across as anything but boring, no matter how terrible a president he was, and his adventures in Russia are fascinating. But the book needed much better editing. I'm talking about line editing, because there are too many sentences that seem clunky and awkward. And then there's editing for facts. FDR did not bring up "infamy" and "fear" in his Fireside Chats, but the former was famously in his declaration of war on Japan and the latter in his First Inaugural Address. The author should have known that, ditto his copy editor--so I wonder what else is wrong here that real historians might catch. And why does he rely on a historian to tell him that the word "homosexual" in regard to Buchanan would probably not have been used in the early 1800s? He could have done some quick research himself to learn that it didn't exist in the English language until 1892. Strauss repeats himself about Buchanan's sexuality and other things in a book that is pretty short as it is. I wanted to like the biography more, and would have if the writing had matched the author's enthusiasm for his subject. Too often, though, I couldn't figure out what sort of book he wanted to write: sometimes it was chatty and slangy; sometimes it was overly formal and convoluted.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. into the life of an intelligent man and seasoned politician to give definition to one ...By Jill Petris Lamparella

Robert Strauss takes the reader on a historical journey back in time, into the life of an intelligent man and seasoned politician to give definition to one of the lesser known, unpopular Presidents of another era and perhaps of all time. The story of James Buchanan's life is written with humor and weaves a tale of the eccentricities that propels this gentleman into the top leadership role of a young country. Even though President Buchanan may have been characterized as "the worst President ever", his behavior was that of a gentleman, which stands out to me in light of today's standards of leadership. Although Buchanan's decisions may not have been historically successful, I can't help wondering if he may have been a better President at another time in history.

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Interesting and somewhat amusing. Needs an historian fact-checker. ...By B Barnes

Interesting and somewhat amusing. Needs an historian fact-checker. In 1830, Illinois was a state not a territory. The political party founded by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison was called Republican and sometimes Democratic-Republican not Democrat or Democratic.

Worst. President. Ever. flips the great presidential biography on its head, offering an enlightening-and highly entertaining-account of poor James Buchanan's presidency to prove once and for all that, well, few leaders could have done worse. But author Robert Strauss does much more, leading listeners out of Buchanan's terrible term in office--meddling in the Dred Scott Supreme Court decision, exacerbating the Panic of 1857, helping foment the John Brown uprisings and "Bloody Kansas," virtually inviting a half-dozen states to secede from the Union as a lame duck, and on and on--to explore with insight and humor his own obsession with presidents, and ultimately the entire notion of ranking our presidents. He guides us through the POTUS rating game of historians and others who have made their own Mount Rushmores-or Marianas Trenches-of presidential achievement, showing why Buchanan easily loses to any of the others, but also offering insights into presidential history buffs like himself, the forgotten "lesser" presidential sites, sex and the presidency, the presidency itself, and how and why it can often take the best measures out of even the most dedicated men.

"Strauss maintains a light tone, but doesn't sacrifice substance in offering solid historic detail and insights into American politics as the country careened toward Civil War." ---Publishers Weekly

Daddy's Little Goalie breaks the mold...delightful, a breeze to read, and filled with the kind of love that will have you crying and laughing. (Buzz Bissinger)

Daddy's Little Goalie is a love letter of sorts, but without the syrup and sap. And the tears. What separates it from the well-worn genre of fathers and offspring bonding is gender. (The Philadelphia Inquirer)

About the Author

Robert Strauss has been a staffer at Sports Illustrated and the Philadelphia Daily News and has written extensively for the New York Times. He is an adjunct professor of writing in the English department at the University of Pennsylvania.

An award-winning audio engineer for over forty years, Tom Perkins has expanded his skills to narrating and has more than sixty titles to his credit. He learned by working with the world's best voice talent during his career, and he continues to engineer a variety of projects.