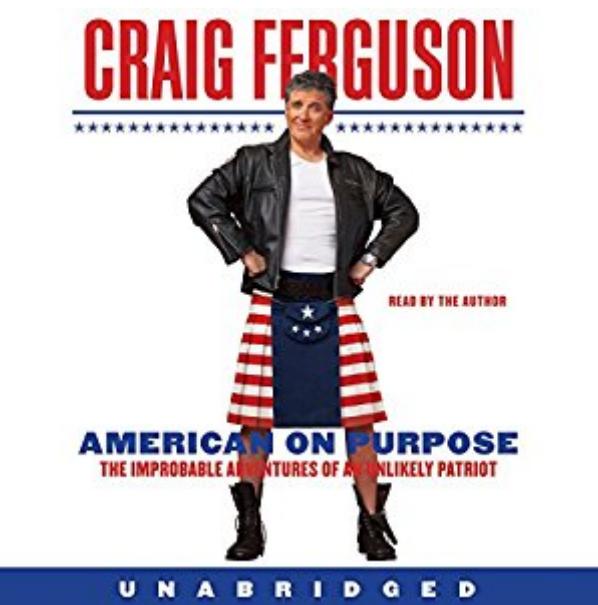


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American On Purpose: The Improbable Adventures Of An Unlikely Patriot



Synopsis

In his memoir *American on Purpose*, Craig Ferguson, host of *The Late, Late Show*, traces his journey from working-class Glasgow to the comedic limelight of Hollywood and American citizenship. Moving and achingly funny, *American on Purpose* moves from Ferguson's early life as an alcoholic to his stint on *The Drew Carey Show* to his decision to become a U.S. citizen in its unique and honest look at his version of the American dream. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

I've always enjoyed watching Craig on TV so I was excited about reading this bio. It's been rather a disappointment overall. What I didn't like or expect was SO much emphasis on his childhood antics in this book, with a lot of detail about experiences during his early years that he shared with pals. Rather boring and predictable. Yes, of course a bio should include a person's childhood years but this seemed like too much emphasis on those years. I found myself skimming a lot in this part of the book and that's never a good sign. I read a lot of biographies and this is not one of the memorable ones. And yes, as some other reviewers have mentioned, give this a miss unless you are a solid Craig fan. It would be of no interest to anyone else.

I was sad when Craig Ferguson's *Late Late Show* went off the air. I only watched it sporadically b/c of the time it was on but I did enjoy his monologue. (He raved about *Project Runway* so much I

decided to check it out, which I never would have, & now it's one of my favorite shows.) I really enjoyed his sense of humor, as I do so many British comics, so when I saw his book I thought it would be funny. It's not, in fact a lot of it is downright painful to read but I had to keep reading. I don't think it is self pitying in any way, it seems to me like an honest look at what a wreck he & his life were. It is amazing what he was able to overcome. I knew he had been thru some rough times but had no idea the extent of it all. It's a wonder he is alive to tell about it. Thank goodness he is! I did see several of his shows leading up to then finally becoming an American citizen & was very moved by how excited he was--as a lot of Brits are who have become citizens. I thought the end of the book where he talks about what America & being American means to him was very touching, in fact I got a bit teary reading it. & I loved that he doesn't feel like he has to disown being Scottish in order to be American. That's the spirit of an immigrant to be admired & what Americans really are! So, in a way I am disappointed b/c I thought this would be funny, maybe along the lines of *Angela's Ashes*, which is as funny as it is tragic, about a young boy growing up in poverty in Ireland. But instead it's the raw story of a seriously messed up kid trying to find his way, making the worst mistakes & decisions anyone could make but finally having an incredible turn around & opportunity that turns out great for him in the end. I am emotionally impacted by this book, kind of like when a friend reveals some horrendous things they experienced that you had no idea about & you are almost overcome w/ compassion for them. I don't know what Craig is doing now, I don't know if his show in the History Channel was a success or not or if it is even still on, but I hope he stays clean & sober & that he will have the good life he deserves from here on out. I wish him the best.

I heard somewhere once that many people become comedians in order to hide their inner demons. Think about all of the brilliant comedians out there who have died from suicide or substance abuse over the years. Andy Kaufmann, John Belushi, Richard Jenni. Richard Pryor set himself on fire during a heroin binge, for Christ's sake! Craig Ferguson could have ended up this way as well. His inner demons were drug and alcohol addiction. While Craig's checkered past gives him some funny material to draw on for his act, this incredible honest autobiography follows the role substances played in his life including how he almost killed himself. Aside from his sordid past, *American On Purpose* follows Craig on his journey from working-class Glasgow to a millionaire citizen of the United States. It truly is a modern "American Dream" tale. From the time he was a little kid watching the first moon landing, Craig dreamed of coming to the United States the land of possibilities. As an American myself, I sometimes take those possibilities for granted. While the

book isn't all "Kum-bi-yah" and the U.S. is perfect (it isn't all that), it does serve as a reminder of our country's good qualities. In America, a C student can become President and a tacky chick from the Jersey Shore can become a household name. The possibilities that exist for us are virtually limitless. Of course, most of us are not rich or powerful or famous but that's not the point. The point is that the possibilities feed our dreams and with dedication and hard work, those dreams might become real. Okay, back to the book. It wasn't the most brilliantly written book I've ever read, but it was touching and funny and honest. What more can one expect from an autobiography? Overall, I give *American On Purpose* 4 stars. It includes 3 bookmarks (Follows Craig's life) and 4 photo bookmarks (You might wonder how I am able to judge a book's honesty. Let me just say I know it when I read it. Craig did not pull any punches when discussing his past.)

Craig Ferguson's autobiography is heartfelt, candid, insightful, and quite funny. He is brutally honest about his shortcomings and alcoholism and what it takes to manage it on a day to day basis. He describes many painful scenes from his life, starting with early childhood in Scotland, and continuing through the many twists and turns his life has taken since as a drummer, stand up comedian, actor, and late night tv show host. His choice between lamenting the pain or finding a way to laugh about it is what has allowed him to "continue to fail until he succeeded."

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