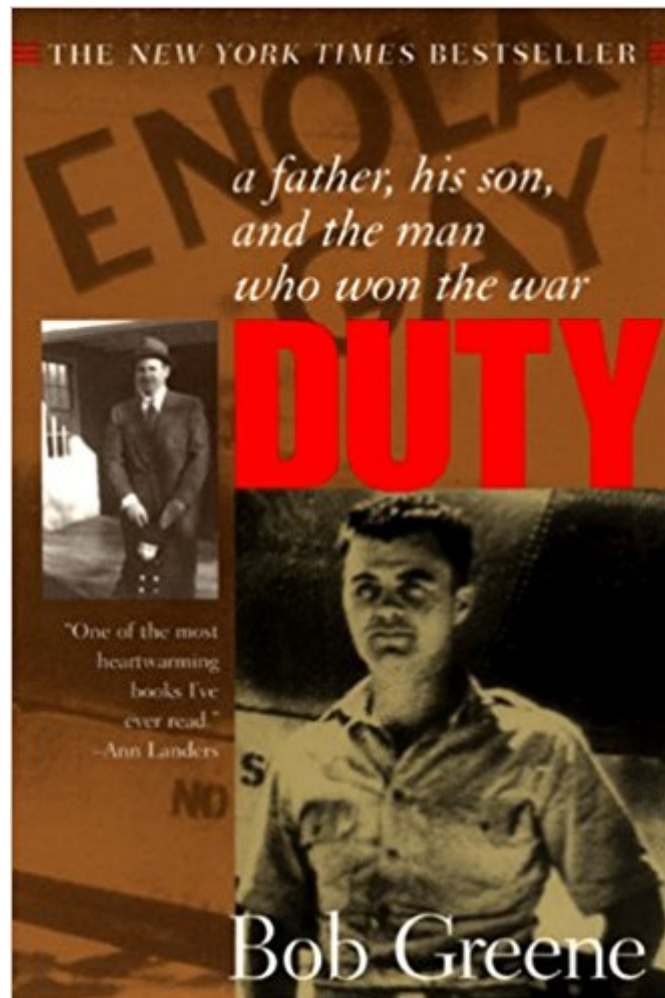




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# Duty: A Father, His Son, And The Man Who Won The War



## Synopsis

When Bob Greene went home to central Ohio to be with his dying father, it set off a chain of events that led him to knowing his dad in a way he never had before—a thanks to a quiet man who lived just a few miles away, a man who had changed the history of the world. Greene's father—a soldier with an infantry division in World War II—often spoke of seeing the man around town. All but anonymous even in his own city, carefully maintaining his privacy, this man, Greene's father would point out to him, had "won the war." He was Paul Tibbets. At the age of twenty-nine, at the request of his country, Tibbets assembled a secret team of 1,800 American soldiers to carry out the single most violent act in the history of mankind. In 1945 Tibbets piloted a plane—which he called Enola Gay, after his mother—to the Japanese city of Hiroshima, where he dropped the atomic bomb. On the morning after the last meal he ever ate with his father, Greene went to meet Tibbets. What developed was an unlikely friendship that allowed Greene to discover things about his father, and his father's generation of soldiers, that he never fully understood before. *Duty* is the story of three lives connected by history, proximity, and blood; indeed, it is many stories, intimate and achingly personal as well as deeply historic. In one soldier's memory of a mission that transformed the world—and in a son's last attempt to grasp his father's ingrained sense of honor and duty—lies a powerful tribute to the ordinary heroes of an extraordinary time in American life. What Greene came away with is found history and found poetry—a profoundly moving work that offers a vividly new perspective on responsibility, empathy, and love. It is an exploration of and response to the concept of duty as it once was and always should be: quiet and from the heart. On every page you can hear the whisper of a generation and its children bidding each other farewell.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Riding the same wave of nostalgia and admiration that Tom Brokaw surfed in his acclaimed *The Greatest Generation* (1998), Chicago Tribune columnist Greene (*Chevrolet Summers*, *Dairy Queen Nights*) delivers a heartfelt tribute to his father's generation in this triangulated memoir. Called back to his hometown (Columbus, Ohio) to say good-bye to his dying father, Greene decides to seek out his father's longtime hero. An 83-year-old fellow WWII vet and Ohioan named Paul Tibbets. Tibbets was the man who, as a 29-year-old lieutenant colonel, piloted the *Enola Gay*, the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Combining excerpts from his father's wartime journals, interviews with Tibbets and his own personal recollections, Greene pays homage to the ideals of his father and conveys successfully what WWII meant to men of that generation. Meanwhile, through his conversations with Tibbets, Greene comes to better understand his late father. Like the aging pilot, Greene realizes, his father felt that the freedoms these men had fought for in the war are unappreciated by today's younger generations, and, like Tibbets, his father was angry about postwar cultural changes. Regrettably, what is occasionally a touching salute by a grieving son is marred by credulousness and overly dramatic prose. Greene's admiration and respect for the pilot of the *Enola Gay* even manages to get in the way of his well-honed investigative skills. For example, he accepts with little follow-up Tibbets's assertion that he never had any regrets whatsoever about dropping the bomb. And Greene's relentlessly uncritical depictions of Tibbets's seemingly unreflective, unemotional and gruff persona as well as his nostalgia for traditional values wears thin. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

According to Greene (*Be True to Your School*), the man who won World War II was Col. Paul Tibbets, pilot of the *Enola Gay*--the B-29 bomber that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan in August 1945. Greene, a syndicated columnist for the Chicago Tribune, has created a powerful and poignant tale of his personal relationship with Tibbets from their first meeting in 1998. With the skill and sensitivity of an accomplished journalist, Greene tells of Tibbets's involvement with the planning, training for, and execution of that fateful flight to commit the most violent act in history. More importantly, Greene relates how Tibbets and the surviving members of the aircrew have adjusted to their unwanted notoriety in peacetime. In addition, this book is a heart-wrenching

story of Greene's relationship with his dying father, also a World War II veteran. Through Tibbets (who lived near Greene's father), Greene finally comes to understand how his father and the World War II generation came to embrace the true meanings of patriotism, courage, and duty. Strongly recommended for all public libraries.---William D. Bushnell, formerly with USMC, Seabrook, NH Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very good book on the life of Paul Tibbets... Do not confuse the name of this book with a more recent book of the same name written by Robert Gates, Retired Secretary of Defense,... also a very good book...Paul Tibbets was a gentleman of the first order and took the responsibility of the biggest war stopper in history.

Born in 1948 to parents who lived through the war, my father served in the army in Germany, I found this book to be especially important and helpful in finally gaining some understanding of their lives before, during and after the war. Equally as valuable are the questions posed and the answers Bob Greene receives. It is both worldly and deeply personal at the same time and I would say a must-read for anyone wanting to understand a veteran parent's perspectives.

Remarkable insight into the reality of WWII. The incident that has touched so many of our lives. I am amazed at the number of my friends whose lives are directly affected by this act of Duty. The courage and dedication of those who did their Duty in the darkest of times. Also, a great story of relationships in an American family. I give copies of this book to my relatives and friends. A good companion read to this is "Enola Gay", General Tibbets own story of his life and career. A great American hero!

I had the honor of meeting with then General Tibbets, with two grandsons, a couple of years before his death. One of those grandsons told me about this book by Bob Greene and thought I would like reading the book Duty. I couldn't put it down and have had several others read it and they felt the same way. Most of the ones I loaned the book to were older and greatly enjoyed the book, but I was most happy that my 30 year old Grandson was as appreciative of the great mission of Colonel Tibbets and his great crew of the Enola Gay as we were. My hope is that the Grandson will be able to pass on the truth of the mission to his children so some will know the truth before it is lost to the ages. THANK YOU PRESIDENT TRUMAN - GREAT DECISION. and THANK YOU COLONEL

## TIBBETS - GREAT MISSION!!!!

Very nice item.

I chose this book because I'd read one of Bob Greene's book "Once Upon a Town," about the North Platte, NE Canteen during WWII. "Duty" was another excellent book about that war, it's heroes (including his father), and both books are written so well. Bob Greene does his homework, yet weaves his own experiences in his books. I WILL read more of his books!

Bob Green is a TOP NOTCH author and he knocked this one out of the park!! This book gives me much greater insight into my own World War II Dad's views and behavior! I am SO grateful to Mr. Green for this incredible literary masterpiece! Can't recommend it enough!

This is an incredible insight into the life of Paul Tibbets, Cmdr of the Enola Gay and Hiroshima mission, told through the eyes of Bob Greene's father. It is a simply astonishing look at what made the greatest generation the greatest generation. Men doing their duty and living their lives after they gave us ours. I think it would be a better world if everyone read this book. We owe Bob Greene a debt for writing it and we owe the men of WWII a debt that can never be repaid except in the honoring of their memory. The greatest generation was just that.

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