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The Big Rich Rise And

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Recounts how Texas oil transformed wealth and power in America through the stories of the state's four most influential oil families, tracing how they rose from modest backgrounds, shaped the government, and bankrolled the rise of modern conservatism.

Recounts how Texas oil transformed wealth and power in America through the stories of the state's four most influential oil families, tracing how they rose from modest backgrounds, shaped the government, and bankrolled the rise of modern conservatism.

"What's not to enjoy about a book full of monstrous egos, unimaginable sums of money, and the punishment of greed and shortsightedness?" —The Economist Phenomenal reviews and sales greeted the hardcover publication of *The Big Rich*, New York Times bestselling author Bryan Burrough's spellbinding chronicle of Texas oil. Weaving together the multigenerational sagas of the industry's four wealthiest families, Burrough brings to life the men known in their day as the Big Four: Roy Cullen, H. L. Hunt, Clint Murchison, and Sid Richardson, all swaggering Texas oil tycoons who owned sprawling ranches and mingled with presidents and Hollywood stars. Seamlessly charting their collective rise and fall, *The Big Rich* is a hugely

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entertaining account that only a writer with Burrough's abilities-and Texas upbringing-could have written.

This is a reprint of a previously published work. It deals with the life of H.L. Hunt, the oil tycoon, and his family.

As the twentieth century began, oil in Texas was easy to find, but the quantities were too small to attract industrial capital and production. Then, on January 10, 1901, the Spindletop gusher blew in. Over the next fifty years, oil transformed Texas, creating a booming economy that built cities, attracted out-of-state workers and companies, funded schools and universities, and generated wealth that raised the overall standard of living—even for blue-collar workers. No other twentieth-century development had a more profound effect upon the state. In this book, Roger M. Olien and Diana Davids Hinton chronicle the explosive growth of the Texas oil industry from the first commercial production at Corsicana in the 1890s through the vital role of Texas oil in World War II. Using both archival records and oral histories, they follow the wildcatters and the gushers as the oil industry spread into almost every region of the state. The authors trace the development of many branches of the petroleum industry—pipelines, refining, petrochemicals, and natural gas. They also explore how overproduction and volatile prices led to increasing regulation and gave broad regulatory powers to the Texas Railroad Commission.

As Americans, we have been taught to be obsessed with money and the people who have it. We are curious about what they buy, where they vacation, and what separates them from the

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rest of us. Rich puts the American obsession with all things money into much-needed perspective and context, exposing the origins of the upper class. The book traces the history of the American rich from 1920 up to today, examining the who, what, when, where, and why of the wealthy elite. With its hundreds of compelling, real-life stories, Rich offers a fascinating window into this world few ever see. Samuel delves into the secrets about the rich and famous: Who were the Gateses, Bransons, and Trumps (and even Paris Hiltons) of the past? How did the rich show off their status? What did they splurge on and how did they scrimp when times got tough? Rich also explores the rise of the first mass affluent class in America and the virtual demise of old money as we knew it. Enlightening and often surprising, Rich gives us a deeper understanding of our country's wealthiest and most enigmatic class.

The saga of H. L. Hunt and the family feud which began with his death focuses on the fortune he made in the oil business and his adventures as a health crank, propagandist, and eccentric patriarch

The Weathermen. The Symbionese Liberation Army. The FALN. The Black Liberation Army. The names seem quaint now, when not forgotten altogether. But there was a stretch of time in America, roughly between 1968 and 1975, when there was on average more than one significant terrorist act in this country every week, and the FBI combated these groups and others as nodes in a single revolutionary underground, dedicated to the violent overthrow of the American government. The FBI's response to the leftist revolutionary counterculture has not been treated kindly by history, and it is true that in hindsight many of its efforts seem

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almost comically ineffectual, if not criminal in themselves. But one aim of Bryan Burrough's book is to temper those easy judgments with an understanding of just how deranged these times were, how charged with menace. Burrough re-creates an atmosphere that seems almost unbelievable just forty years later, conjuring a time of native-born radicals, most of them "nice middle-class kids," smuggling bombs into skyscrapers and detonating them inside the Pentagon and the U.S. Capitol, at a courthouse in Boston, at a Wall Street restaurant packed with lunchtime diners. Radicals who robbed dozens of banks and assassinated policemen in New York, San Francisco, Atlanta. The FBI's fevered response included the formation of a secret task force called Squad 47, dedicated to hunting the groups down and rolling them up. But Squad 47 itself was not overly squeamish about legal niceties, and its efforts ultimately ended in fiasco. Benefiting from the extraordinary number of people from the underground and the FBI who speak about their experiences for the first time, *Days of Rage* is filled with important revelations and fresh details about the major revolutionaries and their connections and about the FBI and its desperate efforts to make the bombings stop.

"Think of it as a Texas version of Hillbilly Elegy." — Bryan Burrough, New York Times bestselling author of *THE BIG RICH* and *BARBARIANS AT THE GATE* "Bryan Mealer has given us a brilliant, and brilliantly entertaining, portrayal of family, and a bursting-at-the-seams chunk of America in the bargain." — Ben Fountain, bestselling author of *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* A saga of family, fortune, faith in Texas, where blood is bond and oil is king... In 1892, Bryan Mealer's great-grandfather leaves the Georgia mountains and heads west into Texas, looking for wealth and adventure in the raw and open country. But his luck soon runs

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out. Beset by drought, the family loses their farm just as the dead pastures around them give way to one of the biggest oil booms in American history. They eventually settle in the small town of Big Spring, where fast fortunes are being made from its own reserves of oil. For the next two generations, the Mealers live on the margins of poverty, laboring in the cotton fields and on the drilling rigs that sprout along the flatland, weathering dust and wind, booms and busts, and tragedies that scatter them like tumbleweed. After embracing Pentecostalism during the Great Depression, they rely heavily on their faith to steel them against hardship and despair. But for young Bobby Mealer, the author's father, religion is only an agent for rebellion. In the winter of 1981, when the author is seven years old, Bobby receives a call from an old friend with a simple question, "How'd you like to be a millionaire?" Twenty-six, and with a wife and three kids, Bobby had left his hometown to seek a life removed from the blowing dust and oil fields, and to find spiritual peace. But now Big Spring's streets are flooded again with roughnecks, money, and sin. Boom chasers pour in from the busted factory towns in the north. Drilling rigs rise like timber along the pastures, and poor men become millionaires overnight. Grady Cunningham, Bobby's friend, is one of the newly-minted kings of Big Spring. Loud and flamboyant, with a penchant for floor-length fur coats, Grady pulls Bobby and his young wife into his glamorous orbit. While drilling wells for Grady's oil company, they fly around on private jets and embrace the honky-tonk high life of Texas oilmen. But beneath the Rolexes and Rolls Royce cars is a reality as dark as the crude itself. As Bobby soon discovers, his return to Big Spring is a backslider's journey into a spiritual wilderness, and one that could cost him his life. A masterwork of memoir and narrative history, *The Kings of Big Spring* is an indelible portrait of fortune and ruin as big as Texas itself. And in telling the story of four generations of his

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family, Mealer also tells the story of America came to be.

The Great Gatsby is a 1925 novel written by American author F. Scott Fitzgerald that follows a cast of characters living in the fictional town of West and East Egg on prosperous Long Island in the summer of 1922. The story primarily concerns the young and mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby and his quixotic passion and obsession for the beautiful former debutante Daisy Buchanan. The Great Gatsby explores themes of decadence, idealism, resistance to change, social upheaval, and excess, creating a portrait of the Jazz Age or the Roaring Twenties that has been described as a cautionary tale regarding the American Dream. Set on the prosperous Long Island of 1922, The Great Gatsby provides a critical social history of America during the Roaring Twenties within its fictional narrative. That era, known for profound economic prosperity, the development of jazz music flapper culture, new technologies in communication (motion pictures, broadcast radio, recorded music) forging a genuine mass culture; and bootlegging, along with other criminal activity, is plausibly depicted in Fitzgerald's novel. Fitzgerald uses many of these societal developments of the 1920s that were to build Gatsby's stories from many of the simple details like automobiles to broader themes like Fitzgerald's discreet allusions to the organized crime culture which was the source of Gatsby's fortune. Fitzgerald depicts the garish society of the Roaring Twenties by placing the book's plotline within the historical context of the era.