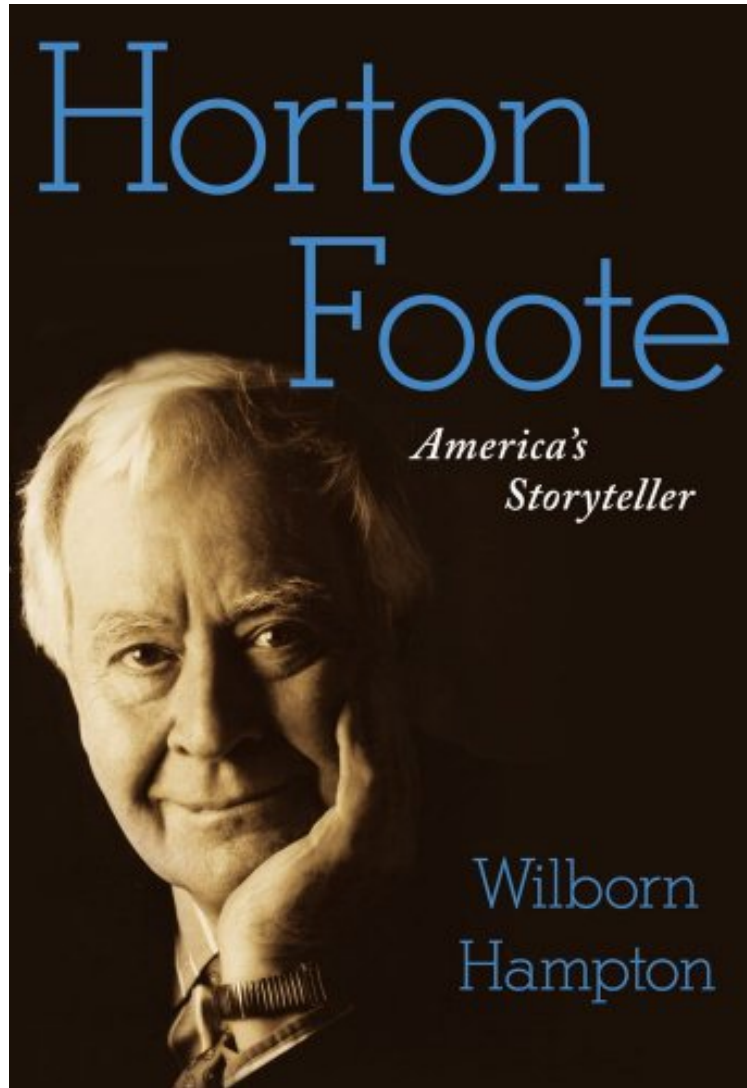


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Horton Foote: America's Storyteller

Wilborn Hampton

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Wilborn Hampton : Horton Foote: America's Storyteller before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Horton Foote: America's Storyteller:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed it very muchBy CustomerI enjoyed it very much, I was surprised that I had not been that familiar with Foote before reading biography.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Rainy dayA fascinating biography of an accomplished storyteller both verbal, on the stage and in movies

No playwright in the history of the American theater has captured the soul of the nation more incisively than Horton Foote. From his Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *The Young Man From Atlanta*, to his film adaptation of *To Kill a*

Mockingbird, which received an Oscar, millions of people have been touched by Foote's work. He has long been regarded by other playwrights and screenwriters, actors, and cognoscenti of the theater and cinema as America's master storyteller; critics compared him to William Faulkner and Anton Chekhov. Yet Horton Foote's compelling character and rich life remain largely unknown to the general public. His is the story of an artist who refused to compromise his talents for the sake of fame or money, or just to keep working -- who insisted on writing what he regarded as truth, even when for many years almost no one would listen. In the first comprehensive biography of this remarkable writer, Wilborn Hampton introduces Foote to countless Americans who have admired his work. Hampton, a theater critic for The New York Times, offers a colorful, compulsively readable account of a life and career that spanned seven decades. As a child in the small town of Wharton, Texas, Foote's favorite pastime was to listen to the stories his elders told -- about themselves, their families, their neighbors -- around the dinner table or sitting on the front porch. As he once explained: "One thing I was given in life is a deep desire to listen. I've spent my life listening. These stories have haunted me all my life." The stories also served as an inspiration for Foote's life work as he chronicled America's wistful odyssey through the twentieth century, mostly from the perspective of a small town in Texas. Beginning in the Golden Age of Television with dramas such as *The Trip to Bountiful*, through Broadway and Off-Broadway successes, to the mark he made in films such as *Tender Mercies*, and right up through a staging of his complete nine-play opus *The Orphans' Home Cycle*, he documented the struggle of ordinary people to maintain their dignity in the face of hardship and change that the erosion of time inevitably brings. It is a theme Horton Foote lived. Yet the paradox that shines through his work is that while the externals of life alter over the years -- wealth may be gained or squandered, love may be won or lost, friends and relations die -- people themselves do not. Like Eugene O'Neill, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams, Horton Foote's portraits of American life are iconic and true. His stories have helped shape the way Americans see themselves -- indeed, they have become part of the nation's psyche, and they will speak to many generations to come.

From Publishers Weekly
Playwright and screenwriter Horton Foote's illustrious career was capped shortly before his death in 2009 with the highly acclaimed play *Dividing the Estate*, which like so much of his work, reflects Foote's smalltown Texas origins and draws on the stories he heard from his wealthy grandmother, black neighbors and servants. In this authorized biography, Hampton, Foote's friend and a New York Times theater critic, reviews the life and career of the man who also won Oscars for his screenplays for *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Tender Mercies* and a Pulitzer for his play *The Young Man from Atlanta*. Born in 1916 in Wharton, Tex., Foote shifted gears from an unsuccessful acting career when, in 1939, choreographer Agnes de Mille suggested he write a play. According to Hampton, the 1980s was Foote's most satisfying professionally, with the huge success of the film *Trip to Bountiful*, and the attention of New York Times theater critic Frank Rich, which helped bring Foote back to Broadway. Charting the highs and lows of Foote's remarkable career, this respectful and genial biography will best be appreciated by Foote's devoted fans, theater enthusiasts and budding playwrights and screenwriters. (Sept. 8) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
About the Author
Wilborn Hampton is a theater critic for The New York Times. Throughout a journalistic career that began in Dallas as a cub reporter covering the assassination of President Kennedy, and later carried him to London, Rome, and the Middle East as a foreign correspondent, his abiding passion for the theater remained constant. After joining The New York Times as an editor, that lifelong love led him into a position as a theater critic and feature writer, reviewing plays and conducting interviews on a freelance basis for the paper. Over the course of the past 20 years, he has reviewed more than 500 stage productions for The Times, and although he left his editorial position on the paper in 2006, he continues to review plays and write articles on the theater on a regular basis. Hampton has published several Young Adult nonfiction books: *Kennedy Assassinated: The World Mourns*; *Meltdown: A Race Against Nuclear Disaster at Three Mile Island* and *September 11, 2001: Attack on New York City*, *War in the Middle East: A Reporter's Story* (those 4 were published by Candlewick Press), and a biography of Elvis Presley published by Viking Children's Books as part of their "Close Up" series.