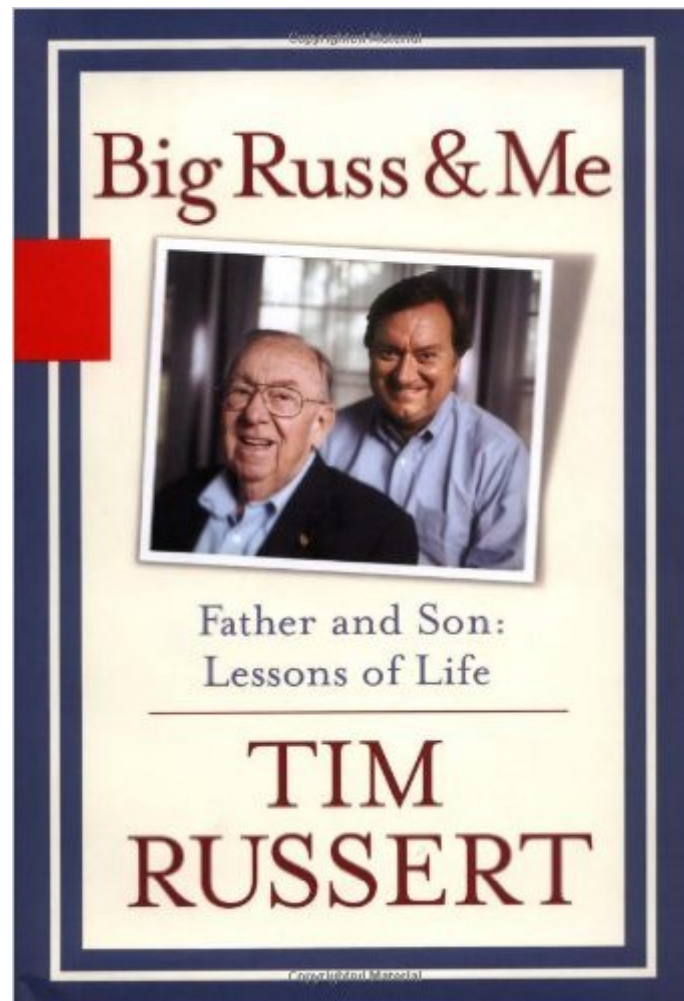


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Big Russ And Me, Father And Son: Lessons Of Life



Synopsis

"The older I get, the smarter my father seems to get. Hardly a day goes by when I don't remember something that Big Russ taught me." Over the last two decades, Tim Russert has become one of the most trusted and admired figures in American television journalism. Throughout his career he has spent time with presidents and popes, world leaders and newsmakers, celebrities and sports heroes, but one person stands out from the rest in terms of his strength of character, modest grace, and simple decency; Russert's dad, Big Russ. In this warm, engaging memoir, Russert casts a fond look back to the 1950s Buffalo neighborhood of his youth. In the close-knit Irish-Catholic community where he grew up, doors were left unlocked at night; backyard ponds became makeshift ice hockey rinks in winter; and streets were commandeered as touch football fields in the fall. And he recalls the extraordinary example of his father, a WWII veteran who worked two jobs without complaint for thirty years and taught his children to appreciate the values of self-discipline, of respect, of loyalty to friends. *Big Russ and Me*, written in Russert's easygoing, straight-talking style, offers an irresistible collection of personal memories. Russert recalls the dedicated teachers who stimulated his imagination and intellect, sparking a lifelong passion for politics and journalism, and inspired a career that took him from editor of his elementary school newspaper to moderator of *Meet the Press*. It has been an eventful and deeply satisfying journey, but no matter where his career has taken him, Russert's fundamental values still spring from that small house on Woodside Avenue and the special bond he shares with his father; a bond he enjoys now with his own son. As Tim Russert celebrates the indelible connection between fathers and sons, readers everywhere will laugh, cry, and identify with the lessons of life taught by the indomitable Big Russ.

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Customer Reviews

Edit: Tim Russert died unexpectedly on Friday, June 13, 2008. He was beloved by many and respected by many. He was one of the few political reporters that I believe gave us both sides of the story. He always spoke with eloquence and intelligence, and when he spoke, we listened. "People do not die for us immediately, but remain bathed in a sort of aura of life which bears no relation to true immortality but through which they continue to occupy our thoughts in the same way as when they were alive. It is as though they were traveling abroad." ~Marcel Proust We all know Tim Russert as the moderator of "Meet the Press", and now we meet Tim Russert, son of Big Russ. Tim Russert tells the story of growing up in Buffalo, and how he grew to be the man he is today has much to do with the father he idolizes. His father is his hero. This is a story of love, family love, religious love, love of sports, love of people and love of life. Much of this book has to do with the lessons learned at the knee of Big Russ. Big Russ was a hard worker- he loved his family, a wife and four children. Big Russ learned his love of life in the Army. He was in World War II and was badly injured in a plane accident. Big Russ learned valuable lessons that day- he was saved from certain death by another soldier who threw caution to the wind to save his brother soldier. Big Russ is a reticent man who does not talk much about his experiences, as is common with WWII soldiers. It took Tim Russert many years to learn about his dad and about his experiences in the Army. Tim Russert once said the person he most wanted to interview was his own dad! Tim Russert had an idyllic childhood, but it was not an easy life. He worked hard at school and hard at home.

This is a heartwarming, uplifting book. Tim Russert's "Big Russ & Me" encompasses both his own life story and the story of his father ("Big Russ.") The senior Russert grew up in a working class family in South Buffalo, New York and went off to play his part in World War II as a member of the Army Air Force. Big Russ came home after the war, married, raised four children and worked two jobs for thirty years without complaint. In the way he's lived his life and the lessons he's taught his son, he's been an exemplar of the values Americans have treasured: honesty, hard work, loyalty, self-discipline. The author also spins a warmly entertaining chronicle of his youth, where the adults in his Irish-Catholic neighborhood served as an extended family; where the parochial schools he attended did as much to shape his character as build his intellect; and where, in the presidential

campaign of John F. Kennedy, his own passion for politics was first awakened. Russert paints a rich, loving portrait of his first boss, New York Senator Pat Moynihan; remembers some highlights of his briefer tenure on the staff of New York Governor Mario Cuomo; and paints a lively portrait of his years at NBC News, first as a behind-the-scenes executive, and since 1991, host of Meet the Press. Along the way, he married and became a father of a son, Luke. Russert is a natural-born storyteller. Recalling his feelings of inadequacy when he moved from Moynihan's Buffalo office to Washington, D.C. and found himself surrounded with Ivy League graduates, the senator warmly reassured him that he could learn what the others knew, but they would never have what he did.

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