

David Brooks

Bestselling Author, *How to Know a Person*, *The Second Mountain*, *The Road to Character*, and *The Social Animal*

Keen observer of American life and politics



Biography

David Brooks is a bestselling author, Yale's Jackson School of Global Affairs first presidential senior fellow, a contributing writer at *The Atlantic* and recurring commentator on PBS NewsHour. With decades of experience as an op-ed columnist for the *New York Times*, Brooks is an insightful observer of the American way of life and a savvy analyst of present-day politics and foreign affairs whose columns are among the most read in the nation.

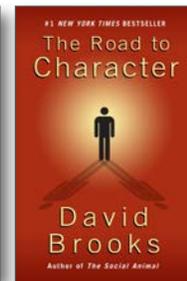
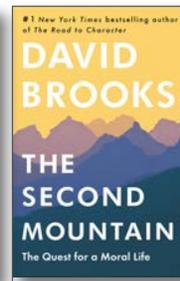
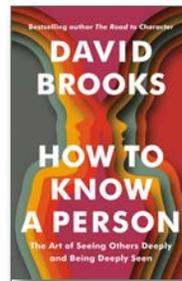
The author of six books with many bestsellers among them, Brooks seeks to share and encourage intellectual curiosity and emotional wisdom, emphasizing the value of community and the importance of nourishing both the inner self and the social self in our journeys to live fulfilling lives.

[more ▶](#)

Topics & Books

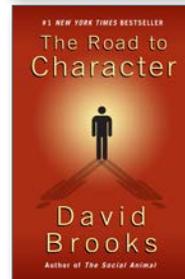
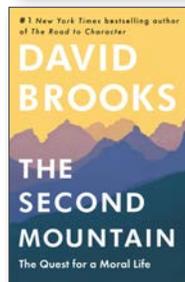
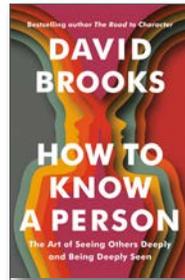
Politics

The Big Picture



His latest release, *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*, debuted on the *New York Times* and Amazon bestseller lists and has maintained spots on both for many weeks. It was deemed both “a hands-on guide to making meaningful human connections” and “yet another inspirational roadmap to building strong moral character and achieving authentic self-actualization” by Kirkus. Brooks makes the case that at the center of any healthy and thriving business, organization, community, or nation is the crucial skill of being able to see and value other people. Written to speak to audiences of all kinds, *How to Know a Person* is his attempt to repair America’s torn social fabric by giving us the tools we need to move beyond division and polarization and connect with others on an innately human level.

In *The Second Mountain*, he makes the case that a life of meaning and purpose is built on four major commitments: to a spouse and family, to a vocation, to a philosophy or faith, and to a community. He argues that to repair the societal damage done by hyper-individuality, we must embrace interdependence and put commitment at the center of our lives. *The Road to Character* is a soul-searching account that speaks to the necessity of cultivating our deepest inner lives rather than focusing solely on success and external achievement, distinguishing between what Brooks calls résumé virtues and eulogy virtues. Backed by multidisciplinary research from neuroscience, psychology, and sociology, the #1 bestseller *The Social Animal* rejects society’s overemphasis on rationalism and individuality and drives home the idea that our minds, emotions, and social context have a more profound impact on our beliefs, decisions, and actions than we’d like to accept. When we adopt this more nuanced view of human behavior, we can better understand politics and culture and ultimately lead more meaningful lives.



Brooks’s earlier books cemented his style of “comic sociology,” offering observations on how we live and “the water we swim in” that are as witty and entertaining as they are revealing and insightful. *Bobos in Paradise*, his first bestseller, is a comedic yet sincere reflection on the budding class of “bobos”—a generation of elites at the intersection of bourgeois capitalism and bohemian counterculture. *On Paradise Drive* explores what Brooks sees as a uniquely American “future-mindedness” that drives our frenzied work ethic and inability to relax.

In an effort to practice what he preaches in his writing, Brooks founded and currently chairs Weave: The Social Fabric Project at the Aspen Institute. Weave explores what it means to build connection and weave a rich social fabric in our schools, workplaces, and every other part of life. Weave’s mission is to invite everyone to start living like a weaver and shift our culture from one that values achievement and individual success to one that finds value in deep relationships and community success.

David Brooks has also been featured on NPR’s *All Things Considered* and NBC’s *Meet the Press*, as well as in the *New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, and *Forbes*, to name a few. Prior to joining the *Times* in 2003, he held positions at *Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic*, *Newsweek*, and *The Weekly Standard*. He has been awarded more than 30 honorary degrees from American colleges and universities, was a Jackson Senior Fellow at Yale, and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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