



Prof: Alan Turing Decoded

Dermot Turing

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Following hot on the heels of *The Imitation Game*, this is the first modern biography of Alan Turing by a member of the family—Alan's nephew, Sir Dermot Turing

Alan Turing was an extraordinary man who crammed into a life of only 42 years the careers of mathematician, codebreaker, computer scientist, and biologist. He is widely regarded as a war hero grossly mistreated by his unappreciative country and it has become hard to disentangle the real man from the story. It is easy to cast him as a misfit, the stereotypical professor. But actually Alan Turing was never a professor, and his nickname "Prof" was given by his codebreaking friends at Bletchley Park. Now, Alan Turing's nephew, Dermot Turing, has taken a fresh look at the influences on Alan Turing's life and creativity, and the later creation of a legend. Dermot's vibrant and entertaining approach to the life and work of a true genius makes this a fascinating read. This unique family perspective features insights from secret documents only recently released to the UK National Archives and other sources not tapped by previous biographers, looks into the truth behind Alan's conviction for gross indecency, and includes previously unpublished photographs from the Turing family album.

Prof: Alan Turing Decoded Details

Date : Published December 1st 2015 by The History Press (first published September 15th 2015)

ISBN : 9781841656434

Author : Dermot Turing

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Biography, History, Science, Nonfiction, Lgbt, War, Autobiography

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Bennett Price says

Excellent, Mr. Turing account was both informative and chilling, this man's personal journey into greatness, always challenged by his peers and society, succumbed to the radicalism of the era. A true patriot of his time, should never be forgotten.

Michelle Olms says

Great book

Stephen says

I won this book on Goodreads!

A very well-written look at the man. I read this after seeing the film, "The Imitation Game".

I learned so much more about Mr. Turing reading this.

Very good.

Gretchen says

Very technical, but worth the read to understand the man. I've read several books on Turing and i can't help but think that he did NOT commit suicide. I think it was an accident on his part.

I've been to Bletchley Park twice, 2010 and 2015, and I recommend that anyone interested in WWII and the code breakers should visit. On my first visit I was fortunate to have one of the original code breakers conduct the tour.

There have been many books written about Alan Turing and this one, written by his nephew, and the one written by his mother Sara should be on every history buff's to read' list.

Debbie says

A very informative book about Alan Turing.

I did find some of the technical details went over my head, but this didn't affect my overall enjoyment and interest in this book.

Amy says

I started this book and only made it a few chapters in. I understand that Dermot Turing's goal was to provide

more information about his famous uncle, but I felt this was written more from a family history perspective than for the general public. That said, the book did include many great photographs and images of relevant documents and I enjoyed flipping through the pages to look at these. There were also many excerpts from letters and other writings throughout. While I have stopped reading for now, I have been meaning to read *Alan Turing: The Enigma* and that may help me understand this book further so I may revisit *Prof* after reading that. After all, in his introduction even Dermot Turing admitted to relying heavily on that book when researching this one.

I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway.

S. Shelton says

I'm sorely disappointed with this biography of Alan Turing, one of the 20th century's greatest mathematicians. He was the lead cryptographer at Bletchley Park and helped break the German's Enigma codes, significantly hastening the end of the War in Europe. To this end, his intellect led to the development of the digital computer.

Within this manuscript is a plethora of eminent persons, important places, and critical events. The failure to include an index is unforgivable. Accordingly, this dereliction negates this work as a reference book.

The author jumps about chronically, fails to complete scenes—leaving us hanging, wanders off on tangents, and stuffs the text with copies of notes, scribbles, letters, memos, and telegrams, documents (official and other). Except for a few, he could have summarized those of major import and placed others of significance in Addenda.

So much of Turing's life could have been brought forth with this biography to make it soar and do honor to this extraordinary man. Rather, the book is unremarkable in all measures and minimizes the memory of Alan Turing to a faretheewell. There is a surfeit of information available about Turing that the author should have explored.

To this day, we do not know definitively why Alan Turing committed suicide at the young age of forty-two in 1954. Some suggest that his *felo-de-se* resulted from his conviction in an English court of homosexual behavior. Others postured that he was murdered—for reasons unknown.

Unfortunately, the author bogged the text in incoherence and squandered far too much of the manuscript on irrelevance. For example, the first seventy pages discuss Turing's early life in agonizing detail. Three pages would do. Alternately, he gives little mention of Turing's accomplishments at Bletchley Park. Here was a golden opportunity to highlight the details of Alan's endeavor and discoveries in this super-secret, code-breaking operation.

Emily says

Disclaimer: I received this book free via Goodreads.

This biography of Turing by his nephew is good little introduction to Turing and his impressive work.

Doyle says

A good historical and academic read from Turing's nephew. Very well cited. I would consider it more of a "Cliff" or "Sparks" version of Hodge's piece, which the author credits and references. I did appreciate a family members incite into Turing and the family as well.

Vickie says

A bit long winded, but more intimate biography of Alan Turing. Lots of references and quotes from family, friends and coworkers about Turing and his work pre , during and post-Bletchley Park.

Trish says

Much more accessible than the standard Hodges biography, to which Dermot Turing acknowledges his debt, this book has the advantage of being written by Alan's nephew, John's son, and access to newer documents released as time passes, from the secret files of government, and interviews with people who knew his uncle. Attitudes towards LGBT+ people have evolved since Hodges wrote his biography, so this newer account doesn't have the occasional "ouch" that Hodges evokes.

I think it's important that we realise that the 1950s were years of repression, of largely USA-originating fear of anything unconventional, possibly liberal or left-wing, of intellectuals, possibly strengthened by the defection of Burgess and Maclean, both Cambridge graduates, like Alan, but only one gay.

It is very clear from both biographies that Alan Turing was "neurodiverse", an unusual but not abnormal person who could have been summarised in the shorthand as having Asperger syndrome, or "on the (autistic) spectrum" as defined by "neurotypicals".

Thus, his social naivety and honesty contributed to his downfall; he KNEW he'd done nothing wrong when he reported the theft from his house, but nevertheless he ended up with the most severe penalty, the two young men of robbing mind, the real villains, got off lightly.

Dermot Turing's book also has humour- Alan was invited to join the Ratio Club, "like the Apostles, without the aesthetes, spies and pretentiousness!!"

Dermot's father, John, and his grandmother, Sara, both wrote early accounts of Alan's life, but neither were able to accept his life, achievements, sexuality and death as we understand it so far, so in some ways, I see Dermot Turing's biography as a memorial for all the family

Heather says

This is my favorite of the Alan Turing books i have read, and who better to have written it than Alan's nephew?

The book is concise, often comical, at times heart-rending.

Abigail says

Very interesting biography of Dr. Turing, written by his nephew. Written in an easy to read style. It contained a lot of facts I did not know about Turing yet (for instance, he almost qualified for the marathon of the 1948 London Olympics). Highly recommended.
