



# By His Own Rules : The Ambitions, Successes, and Ultimate Failures of Donald Rumsfeld

*Bradley Graham*

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Once considered among the best and brightest of his generation, Donald Rumsfeld was exceptionally prepared by successful careers in politics and business to assume the Pentagon's top job in 2001. Yet six years later, he left office as the most controversial Defense Secretary since Robert McNamara, widely criticized for his management of the Iraq war and for his difficult relationships with Congress, administration colleagues, and military officers. Was he really the arrogant, errant, over-controlling Pentagon leader frequently portrayed—or as his supporters contend, a brilliant, hard-charging visionary caught in a whirl of polarized Washington politics, dysfunctional federal bureaucracy, and bad luck?

Bradley Graham, a longtime *Washington Post* reporter who closely covered Rumsfeld's challenging tenure at the Pentagon, offers an insightful biography of a complex personality. In the tradition of Karen DeYoung's *Soldier* and Bart Gellman's *Angler*, *By His Own Rules* is a layered and revealing portrait of a man whose impact on U.S. national security affairs will long outlive him.

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