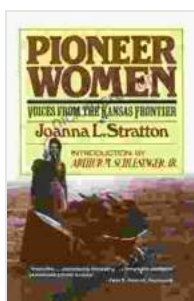


# Pioneer Women: Will Durant, Historian and Philosopher

In the annals of intellectual history, Will Durant stands as a colossal figure whose contributions to the fields of history, philosophy, and literature continue to inspire and educate generations. His groundbreaking work, "The Story of Civilization," remains an unparalleled compendium of the human experience, exploring the rise and fall of civilizations across the ages. As a pioneer among women, Will Durant played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of 20th-century scholarship and thought.

## Early Life and Education

Mary Will Durant was born on November 5, 1885, in Forest Grove, Oregon. Her father, Edwin Reginald Durant, was a Presbyterian minister, and her mother, Harriet Brayton Sperry Durant, was a devout Christian Science practitioner. From a young age, Will displayed an insatiable thirst for knowledge, voraciously consuming books and engaging in intellectual discussions.



### Pioneer Women by Will Durant

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 60132 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 493 pages

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In 1901, she enrolled at Stanford University, where she excelled in her studies. It was during this time that she met William James Durant, a brilliant young philosopher and writer. The two fell deeply in love and married in 1913.

## **Literary Collaborations**

Upon their marriage, Will and William Durant embarked on a remarkable literary partnership that would span decades. Together, they wrote numerous books, including "The Story of Philosophy" (1926) and "The Story of Civilization" (1935-1975). Will Durant's contributions to these works were significant, particularly her keen insights into the role of women in history and her exploration of the human condition through the lens of different cultures.

"The Story of Philosophy" became an instant bestseller, introducing millions of readers to the ideas of the world's greatest thinkers. Will Durant's lively and engaging writing style made philosophy accessible to a wide audience, fostering a renewed interest in the subject.

## **Pioneering Women in Academia**

At a time when women were largely excluded from the upper echelons of academia, Will Durant faced numerous challenges. Despite her brilliance and qualifications, she was denied tenure at Columbia University due to her gender. Undeterred, she continued to pursue her research and writing, eventually earning international acclaim as a historian and philosopher.

Her unwavering determination inspired other women to pursue their intellectual ambitions. She became a role model for generations of female

scholars, demonstrating that women were just as capable as men in the realm of thought and scholarship.

## **The Story of Civilization**

"The Story of Civilization" is perhaps Will Durant's most enduring legacy. This monumental work, consisting of eleven volumes, explores the entire sweep of human history from its beginnings to the modern era. Will Durant's comprehensive approach considered not only political and military events but also the social, economic, and cultural aspects of different civilizations.

Through her engaging prose, she brought to life the lives of ordinary people and the extraordinary events that shaped their world. "The Story of Civilization" remains a foundational work in the study of history, providing a panoramic view of the human journey across time and cultures.

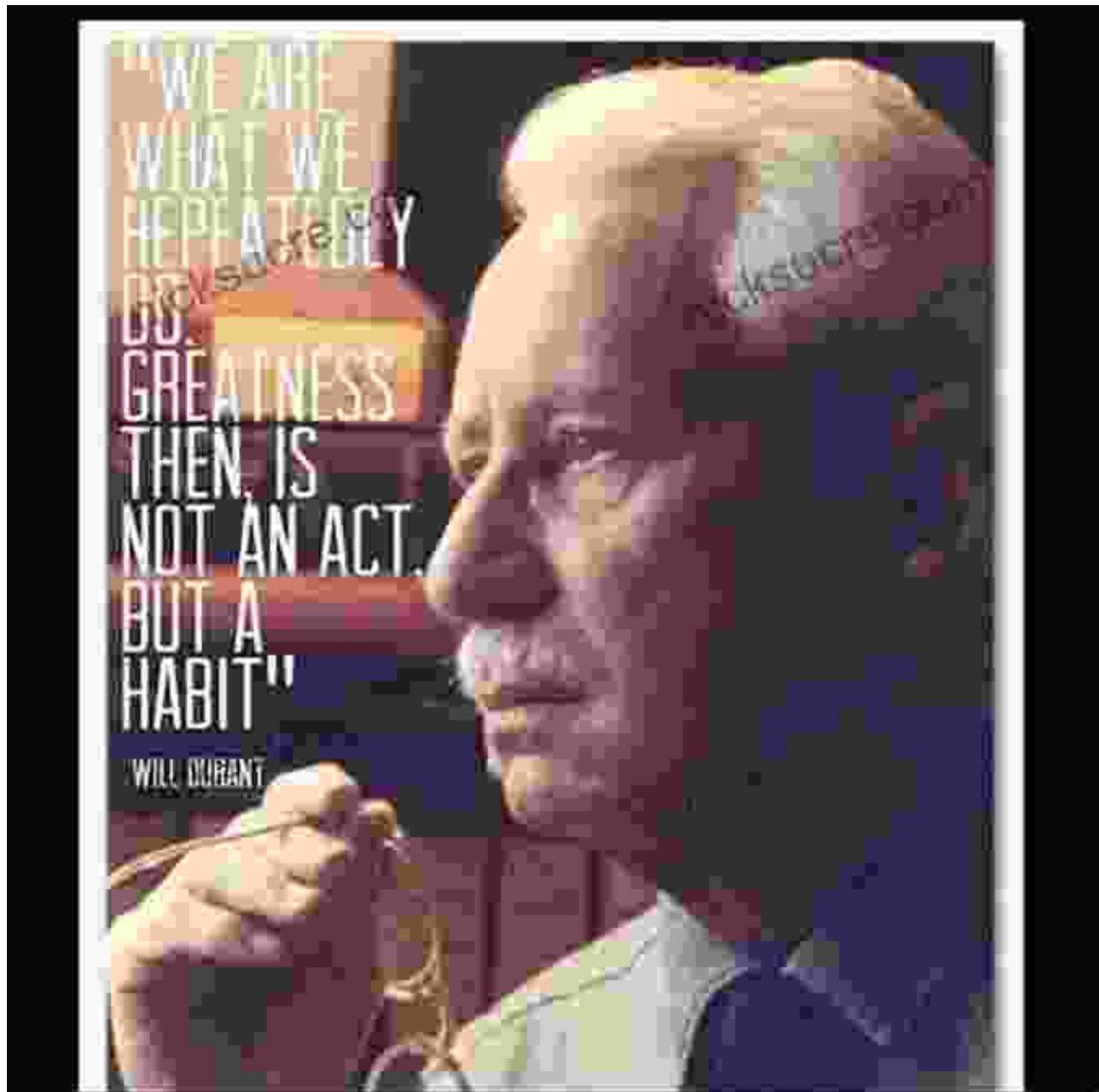
## **Personal Life and Legacy**

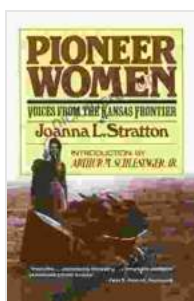
Will and William Durant had three children, but their marriage was marked by periods of turmoil. They divorced in 1935 but remained close collaborators on their writing projects. Will Durant continued to write and publish prolifically until her death in 1981.

Her legacy as a pioneer woman and a brilliant scholar is firmly established. She played a crucial role in making philosophy and history accessible to a broader audience, and her tireless advocacy for women's equality in academia paved the way for future generations.

Will Durant's contributions to the fields of history, philosophy, and literature are immeasurable. Her groundbreaking work, "The Story of Civilization,"

stands as a towering achievement, providing generations of readers with a profound understanding of the human experience. As a pioneer among women, she shattered barriers and inspired countless others to pursue their intellectual dreams. Will Durant's legacy as a scholar, writer, and feminist visionary continues to resonate today, shaping our understanding of the past and inspiring us to embrace the possibilities of the future.





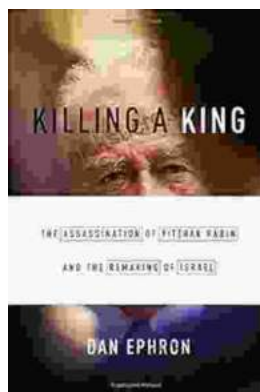
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