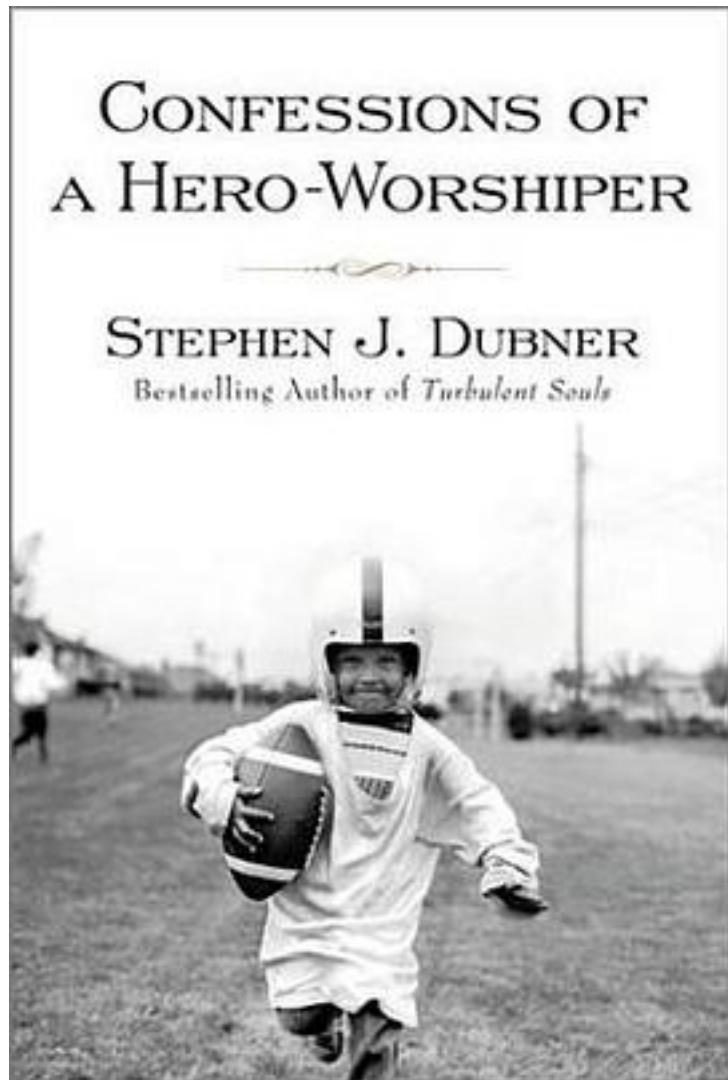


Confessions of a Hero-Worshiper



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In its review of *Turbulent Souls*, the New York Times wrote: "While it is clearly better for Stephen Dubner if his turbulent soul stays quiet, I think readers of this wonderful book will rather hope that a continued measure of unsettlement inspires him to write more."</p>

Now Stephen J. Dubner has returned with the brilliant *Confessions of a Hero-Worshiper*, a true story that reads like the wisest of novels. Dubner embarks on the kind of search that tantalizes every one of us -- the search for a long-forgotten childhood hero -- and in so doing, plumbs the secrets to his own survival.</p>

When he was a boy, Dubner developed a fierce attachment to a football player, Franco Harris, the famed and mysterious running back for the Pittsburgh Steelers. When Dubner's father died, this attachment became an obsession. He dreamed of his hero every night; he signed his school papers "Franco Dubner." Though they never met, it was Franco Harris who shepherded Dubner through a fatherless boyhood.</p>

Fast-forward twenty years. Dubner, by now an accomplished writer, happens to catch sight of Harris, now a businessman, on a magazine cover. His long-dormant obsession comes roaring back. He is driven to journey to Pittsburgh and even move there if necessary. He is certain that Harris will embrace him. He is convinced that he will wrest from his old hero the mysteries of the universe. And he is ... well, wrong.</p>

Told with the grit of a journalist and the grace of a memoirist, *Confessions of a Hero-Worshiper* is a breathtaking, heartbreaking, and often humorous story of astonishing developments. It is also a sparkling meditation on the nature of hero worship -- which, like religion and love, tells us as much about ourselves as about the object of our desire. Dubner also manages to discuss the perils of celebrity, the psychology of nudity, and the vast difference between Jewish and Christian ideas about hero worship.</p>

Confessions of a Hero-Worshiper is a must-read for anyone who has ever had a hero or wanted one; for anyone who considers football, as the Trappist monk Thomas Merton once wrote, "one of the really valid and deep American rituals"; and especially for those who read about others to find the truth in themselves.</p>

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