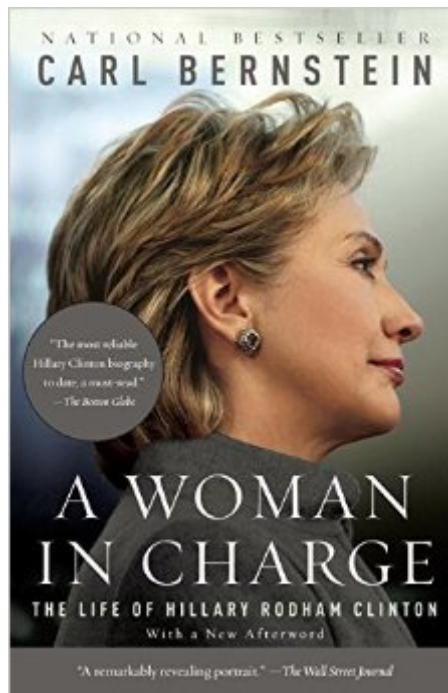


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A WOMAN IN CHARGE: The Life Of Hillary Rodham Clinton



Synopsis

The nuanced, definitive biography of one of the most controversial and widely misunderstood figures of our time: the woman running a historic campaign as the 2016 Democratic presidential nominee—Hillary Rodham Clinton. Drawing on hundreds of interviews with colleagues and friends and with unique access to campaign records, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and bestselling author Carl Bernstein has given us a book that enables us, at last, to address the questions Americans are insistently—even obsessively—asking: Who is she? What is her character? What is her political philosophy? And, what can we expect from Hillary if we elect her President of the United States?

Book Information

Paperback: 638 pages

Publisher: Vintage Books; 1st edition (January 8, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0307388557

ISBN-13: 978-0307388551

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 1.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (176 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

In this 2016 election, it is very important to read this book, "A Woman in Charge..." by Carl Bernstein, especially if your vision of Hillary Clinton is colored by 40 years of political attacks from Clinton enemies. All of Hillary's adult life, she has fought for civil rights, children's rights and women's rights. Even in the southern state of Arkansas in the 70's, she was instrumental in getting the first rape crisis center in Fayetteville and the first legal aid center at the University of Arkansas. She and her husband had a vision for the Democratic Party, to have it be inclusive of all Americans, no matter social status, race, ethnicity, religion, etc. And they realized that vision. From that time on, any time Bill ran for office, the Clinton enemy attack machine was in full force, and a large focus of that attack was on Hillary: she's too liberal, she's too aggressive, she's a radical feminist, she's a

corporate sellout.... What she is and what she's learned is that her goals have to be tempered with practicality and pragmatism. She reads the landscape: seeing the obstacles, recognizing which ones are malevolent and taking expedient action accordingly. Bernstein's book lays it all out, dirty laundry and all. To me, the biggest mistakes she (and Bill) have made were in "circling the wagons", protecting self instead of trying to be forthcoming. And that led to political mountains made out of molehills and a tarnished perception of Hillary Clinton. Bernstein has written a must read book if one wants to try to understand Hillary Clinton.

Comprehensive, detailed and surprisingly easy to read, this biography of Hillary Clinton should be read by anyone who has a vote in any of the upcoming Democratic primaries and, if she wins that party's nomination, anyone planning to vote in 2008. Sure, many people claim to already know all they need to about Mrs. Clinton, but reading this book you really start to understand her. And whether you love her or hate her, your opinion just might be changed. An amazingly interesting book, "A Woman in Charge" is divided into three sections. The first 70 pages cover Clinton's childhood in Chicago and college years. The next 100 recount her years in Arkansas. The remaining 350 focus on Hillary's experience as First Lady, with just a few devoted to her time as a senator. From a young child's love of earning Girl Scout merit badges, to a 14-year-old Goldwater Girl's trip to see Martin Luther King, to a modern senator's remarkably unique reason for voting for authorized force against Iraq (she said it would make "war less likely"), there's never a dull moment. And thanks to interviews with more than 200 Clinton associates and more than 500 footnotes, every sentence rings true. The book doesn't offer any juicy gossip, but does have lots of intimate behind-the-scenes detail. Hillary's first college boyfriend supplies Bernstein with the letters she wrote to him (what a jerk!), in which the 18-year-old freshman describes herself as "a progressive, an ethical Christian and a political activist" who is nevertheless "outrageous... as outrageous as a moral Methodist can get." Later on, Bernstein reveals that Bill Clinton asked Hillary to marry him many times before she finally said yes, and that once in Arkansas he told her he had fallen in love with another woman and wanted a divorce, which she refused. Toward the end of the book, the author recounts a moment during the peak of the Lewinsky crisis, when Stevie Wonder met Hillary at a White House dinner and insisted on taking her to a private room to perform a song he had written for her -- about forgiveness. What impressed me most about "A Woman in Charge" is how well it is written. Though every chapter is meticulously well documented, each explains its often-complex story in a clear and engaging style. You can picture yourself in the Yale dorm room when, in 1968, the politically active junior hears of Martin Luther King's assassination and pounds

the wall, screaming "I can't stand it anymore! I can't take it!" And you can't help but cringe when you read of Hillary's first meeting with Virginia Cassidy Blythe Clinton Dwire -- Bill's mom -- after the charismatic woman with the "white-striped hair and fondness for fast men, fast horses, red lipstick and false eyelashes" had driven up to New Haven from Arkansas in 1972: "Virginia thought Hillary was a fright," Bernstein writes, "her hair badly cut (she had chopped it herself that semester, to save money), no makeup, and jeans, her preferred posture tending toward a hippie slouch." Equally compelling are the White House chapters, as Bernstein explains how Hillary's own overzealous promotion of her 1993 health-care plan ironically caused it to fail, but how her similar devotion to defending Bill against impeachment charges caused that fight to succeed. "A Woman in Charge" includes eight pages of black-and-white photos, mostly from Clinton's years as First Lady. Under the book jacket is a plain gray cover. All in all, what emerges is a sympathetic portrait of an extremely bright and talented American woman who has overcome a lot to get where she is -- but can nevertheless be cold, calculating and, worst of all, sometimes completely clueless on how to get things done. Bernstein shows how Hillary has learned from many of her mistakes and excelled in the Senate, but in the process has formed such a "protective shell" around her true character that she may, or may not, have what it takes to win the nomination, get elected, and be a great President.

Carl Bernstein, top-notch investigative reporter and prolific writer in our time, has tackled many tough subjects in his time, starting with bringing down an American president. His new subject, Senator Hillary Clinton, is yet another tough subject that he attempts, not to bring down, to bring "to light" in his new biography "A Woman in Charge". The overall result is entertaining and enlightening. Need I bother to try to introduce one of the most controversial figures in American History, at least in the 20th and 21st centuries? Many people have their well-formed (if not well informed) opinions about Hillary, based on her history, her time in the White House as First Lady, and her life after. Certainly, this book is not going to sway those that support her, and those that hate her, into a new direction. I don't believe that Bernstein's intended audience was either group. I believe, with this book, he was aiming for those Americans (and there are many) who claim not to know much about the illusive senator from New York. And now that she's put her face out there as a possible candidate for election, I believe this population will benefit the most from reading this book. Bernstein's coverage of her life is complete, and focuses mainly on the time in the 90's as she became her most controversial. The Hillary that emerges from this book is certainly a complex woman, but one of strong opinion and certain mind. I was intrigued by her internal strength of

character, as portrayed by Bernstein, after the entire Monica affair swept the White House. Of course, that may be the part of the book that most interests us, a greedy public hungry for the inside scoop of what really went on. You won't find that here, but you'll find a resolute Hillary, battered by the news, and yet surprisingly resilient. I can't imagine anyone doing anything else during that tumultuous time than what she did. In short, Bernstein's Hillary has added to my depth of knowledge of Hillary, and provided an slight insight into her persona. While I do believe it impossible for one person to truly grasp the content of anyone's character in just one book (look at how many books are written about Lincoln, still today!), I believe Bernstein got close to the real Hillary, or the Hillary that I prefer to see. I would recommend before you make any judgements on anyone's character, you spend a little time reading about that person before you make your informed opinion. A Woman in Charge would be a good addition to your bank of knowledge.

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