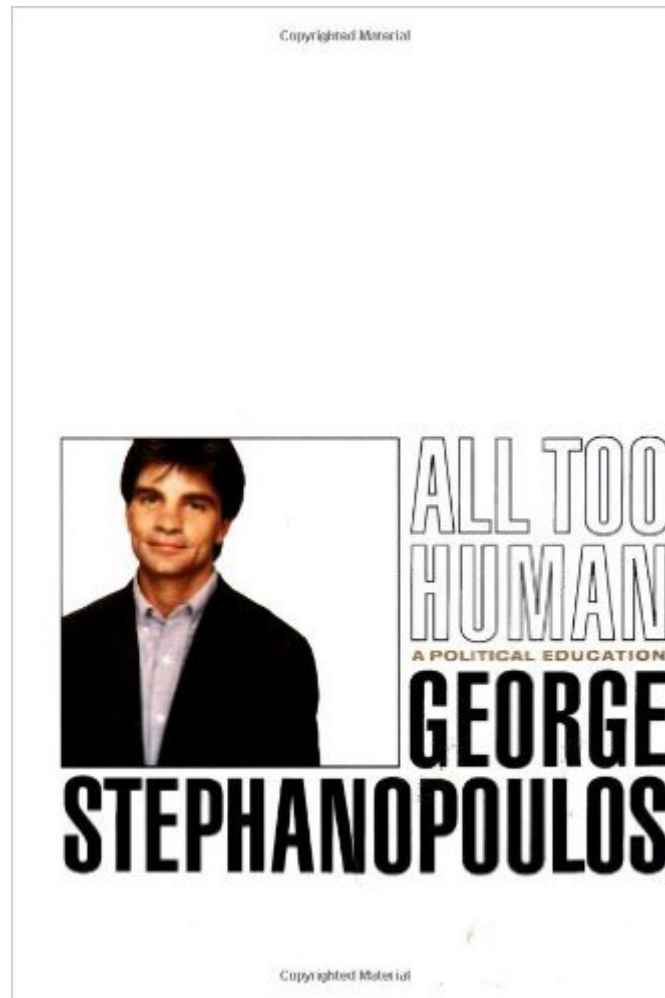


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All Too Human: A Political Education



Synopsis

All Too Human is a new-generation political memoir, written from the refreshing perspective of one who got his hands on the levers of awesome power at an early age. At thirty, the author was at Bill Clinton's side during the presidential campaign of 1992, & for the next five years he was rarely more than a step away from the president & his other advisers at every important moment of the first term. What Liar's Poker did to Wall Street, this book will do to politics. It is an irreverent & intimate portrait of how the nation's weighty business is conducted by people whose egos & idiosyncrasies are no sturdier than anyone else's. Including sharp portraits of the Clintons, Al Gore, Dick Morris, Colin Powell, & scores of others, as well as candid & revelatory accounts of the famous debacles & triumphs of an administration that constantly went over the top, All Too Human is, like its author, a brilliant combination of pragmatic insight & idealism. It is destined to be the most important & enduring book to come out of the Clinton administration.

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Customer Reviews

I think some readers and reviewers are missing the point of All too Human. In writing this memoir, Mr. Stephanopoulos is NOT attempting to give his audience an all-access look at the private lives of Bill and Hillary. He is offering us a look at HIS life and times (of which the Clintons, obviously, were an integral part) and he does so with candor and class. This tome is honest, forthright, and the author doesn't hedge on his true thoughts and opinions of his past situations, performance, peers, and boss (qualities many of the principles highlighted in the book are famous for not possessing). I

praise his frank recounting of how he was working for himself as well as for the president and his agenda. Those who chide Stephanoulos for striving for personal success, and telling us how he pursued it, need to reevaluate their own career motives before they pass judgement. This book is strongly recommended to any young person eager to see what it takes to make it in DC politics and still have a conscience. And, as you read this, bear in mind that I'M A REPUBLICAN! Kudos to George for a job well done.

I will make a bold statement: this is the best book by a political insider that has ever been written. First, Mr. Stephanopoulos should seriously consider a second career as a novelist. His writing is lucid; his physical descriptions vivid; and his self-analysis revealing. Second, Stephanopoulos perfectly captures what it was like to work in the Clinton White House. His public visibility gives his words great credibility and his willingness to admit mistakes and shortcomings is laudable. You feel as if you are personally traveling with George through a maze of political difficulties and rewards. You'll also feel closer to Bill Clinton, understanding him better as a person and appreciating his flaws and achievements as a president. All in all, the best political book of the year.

George Stephanopoulos certainly saw it all firsthand. A Rhodes Scholar who worked for the Dukakis campaign and for Richard Gephardt, Stephanopoulos joined Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign because Clinton seemed to have it all. As his time progressed and life in the White House became an exciting but difficult reality, depression and other problems set in. In this very in-depth book, Stephanopoulos gives the reader a view inside the Clinton White House that could only come from one with such close access. He writes of both the Clinton Administration's best and worst moments, and pulls no punches when they made mistakes. One particular highlight is his contentious and venomous relationship with former Clinton aide Dick Morris, whose ideas always seemed to conflict with Stephanopoulos. He also manages to present his story in a "just the facts" style; there's no coaching the reader to believe the author's own ideology, so readers of all political viewpoints can read it. If you are a fan of Bill Clinton, this book will remind you of what went both right and wrong. If you hate him, this may remind you of Clinton's worst attributes. Either way, *All Too Human* is an important study of life in the White House with all of both its positive and negative aspects.

I've noted in a number of other reviews a common complaint with the book; where is the detail on Clinton, or Hilary, Gore or other aides? This is a biography of Stephanopoulos, not a story of Clinton. It's George's perspective about the whole experience, not just about Clinton. You will learn

what George thought about Clinton, what impressed him, and what disappointed him about his boss. This book gives you a great feel for what George lived through during the 2 election campaigns and Clinton's first term. He is honest about his vying for position with the President against other advisors, about things he did well, and times that he blew it. You come away feeling what it might really be like to work on the inside of the greatest office in the world, the glamour, the ad hoc scrambling to push positions through Congress, the constant damage control sessions, the full-time job to spin facts into the desired public perception (George is the Rumpelstiltskin of the White House in that regard). It confirmed what I'd felt reading newspapers about the Clinton administration during the first term; the White House and Congress are not all working together in the best interests of the US. Rather, each faction, whether Repub, Demo, Special Interest, etc. is only trying to maximize their own interests at the expense of anyone else's. (Sounds like a good application for Nash's game theory). Sure, this account is not an objective overview of anything; this is what George saw, felt, did, how he failed and succeeded. Anyone wanting to work in politics will find it interesting. Anyone affected by politics (that's all of us citizens) will cringe at realizing it's all on the job training each time a new administration comes in to office. I really enjoyed the read.

This book is a fascinating, and sometimes horrifying, view of the Clinton campaign, the Clinton White House, and Clinton himself. If you've ever wondered why, and then how, a principled person slowly loses principles, Stephanopoulos explains to us how he explained it to himself.

Stephanopoulos has been wrongly charged with being too angst-ridden. It's not angst; it's introspection, which his former boss apparently does not engage in. Clinton has probably not examined why he surrendered his principles; he probably doesn't even recognize that he has done so. Was it betrayal for Stephanopoulos to write this book? No, not especially when compared to Clinton's numerous and massive betrayals. This book is valuable today, because it helps us understand the current president. It will be valuable tomorrow as a political memoir.

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