



The First Family Detail: Secret Service Agents Reveal the Hidden Lives of the Presidents

Ronald Kessler

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As in a play, presidents, vice presidents, and presidential candidates perform on stage for the public and the media. What the nation's leaders are really like and what goes on behind the scenes remains hidden. Secret Service agents have a front row seat on their private lives and those of their wives and children.

Crammed with new, headline-making revelations, **THE FIRST FAMILY DETAIL: Secret Service Agents Reveal the Hidden Lives of the Presidents** by Ronald Kessler tells that eye-opening, uncensored story.

Since publication of his *New York Times* bestselling book *In the President's Secret Service*, award-winning investigative reporter Ronald Kessler has continued to penetrate the wall of secrecy that surrounds the U.S. Secret Service, breaking the story that Secret Service agents who were to protect President Obama hired prostitutes in Cartagena, Colombia and revealing that the Secret Service allowed a third uninvited guest to crash a White House state dinner.

Now Kessler presents far bigger and more consequential stories about our nation's leaders and the agency sworn to protect them. Kessler widens his scope to include presidential candidates, former presidents after they leave the White House, and the presidents' relationships to their first ladies and children.

From observing Vice President Joe Biden's reckless behavior that jeopardizes the country's safety, to escorting Bill Clinton's mistress at Chappaqua, to overhearing First Lady Michelle Obama's admonitions to the president, to witnessing President Nixon's friends bring him a nude stripper, to seeing their own agency take risks that could result in an assassination, Secret Service agents know a secret world that Ronald Kessler exposes in breathtaking detail.

THE FIRST FAMILY DETAIL reveals:

- Vice President Joe Biden regularly orders the Secret Service to keep his military aide with the nuclear football a mile behind his motorcade, potentially leaving the country unable to retaliate in the event of a nuclear attack.
- Secret Service agents discovered that former president Bill Clinton has a blond mistress who lives near the Clintons' home in Chappaqua, New York. Within minutes of Hillary Clinton's leaving, the woman—codenamed Energizer by agents—shows up to be with Bill and stays every day while the likely future presidential candidate is away.
- Secret Service agents have been dismayed to overhear Michelle Obama push her husband to be more aggressive in attacking Republicans and to side with blacks in racial controversies.
- Because Hillary Clinton is so nasty to agents, being assigned to her protective detail is considered a form of punishment and the worst assignment in the Secret Service.
- Vice President Joe Biden spends millions of taxpayer dollars flying to and from his home in Delaware on

Air Force Two. His office tried to cover up the costs of the personal trips.

· Because the Secret Service refused to provide enough magnetometers at his campaign events, Mitt Romney regularly left himself open to assassination by giving speeches to unscreened crowds.

The First Family Detail: Secret Service Agents Reveal the Hidden Lives of the Presidents Details

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From Reader Review The First Family Detail: Secret Service Agents Reveal the Hidden Lives of the Presidents for online ebook

Bonnie Samuel says

If you accept this book for what it is, it's a mildly entertaining read. It's really nothing but a trashy tabloid in book form, filled with known falsehoods, sensational accusations and re-hashings of old debunked scandals. The author attacks Hillary Clinton with both guns blazing and goes so far as to claim that Kenneth Starr's investigation found her officially responsible for a staffer's suicide because she yelled at him in a meeting. Of course, Mr. Kessler has the inside scoop on this unverifiable tidbit, because, as he says, this "official" finding "disappeared" from the final, public version of the report. How convenient for Mr. Kessler.

I was amused by the few pages devoted to the "football", the suitcase that lets the president launch nuclear war from anywhere at anytime. The author tells us that information about what's in the suitcase is so classified that everything that has been published about it so far is wrong, then goes on to tell us what's "really" inside. So either he published top-secret information or he's being less than honest in his reporting of the "facts".

If you're careful not to accept anything in this book as truth and just read it for pure entertainment value, it's pretty light, easy fare that can be finished in a few hours. Don't pick this one up if you have a serious interest in the Secret Service and how they operate. It won't be worth your time.

Bill Powers says

Kessler's book gives detailed accounting of how many of the powerful in Washington behave when they no one is looking and how they treat the "powerless". It also serves as a warning that Americans should take elections, and the character of those they elect, much more seriously rather than treat them as giant popularity contests.

Linda says

Ronald Kessler's books are always interesting. I've read several of his behind the scenes in Washington accounts. This one either dovetails or steals from another of his books In the President's Secret Service: Behind the Scenes with Agents in the Line of Fire and the Presidents They Protect.

What is the most profound thought I take from this book? Perhaps before we vote for someone, we should be allowed to discover how s/he treats others who, although may be considered insignificant, have eye-opening observations of behind closed door antics.

I ended up thinking better of some and shaking my head "how could they?" at others.

Karen says

This book is the National Enquirer, no I think the Star, of presidential books. Gossipy, malicious with a clear

agenda. I grew suspicious after Mr. Kessler basically blames Vince Foster's suicide on Hilary Clinton because she yelled at him. I looked him up and he is editor of a right-wing news outlet NewsMax. Poor critical thinking skills (his leap from "Dick Cheney was nice to us" to his determination that he is of stellar character would earn him an F on a high school paper), poor writing and shockingly free with details about people, places and situations that should be kept secret (hence the name Secret Service). I am sorry I wasted my time.

Keith says

You may need to take a shower after reading this book before you feel clean again.

I wasn't prepared for the TMZ-like nature of this crummy book. I was interested in the history and operations of the Secret Service, and to my knowledge I hadn't read a Kessler work before. He only has about 5 points in the entire book, and two of them are Democrats are evil and Republicans are saints. To give you a clue where Kessler is coming from, he complains in a chapter on the Clintons (he has several) that the biggest problem with Kenneth Starr is that he wasn't aggressive enough.

I probably could have overlooked the blatant partisanship and low-brow tone - but the dishonesty with which Kessler approaches the work makes it hard to take anything he says at face value. The number of misleading "facts" were piling up before I got to Chapter One.

Kessler spends a lot of time rehashing some of the worst of "journalistic" sleaze from the Clinton years, and cherry-picking his way through many other years of tawdry dirty laundry and political mud. Even for what it is - a partisan right-wing hack job of a look at First Family Secret Service details - it is lousy, thin, and rather poorly written.

I'm heading for that shower.

Marca says

Book is almost laughable in its lack of objectivity. Alternate titles: "Republicans Good; Democrats Bad" or "Hillary Clinton is an Evil Bitch." The most repeated phrase is: "Hillary flew into a rage." I actually got the feeling at times that Kessler wrote the book solely to exact some kind of revenge on Hillary. That said, the book is like catnip with lots of juicy gossip tidbits about the peccadillos and personal quirks/flaws and outright outlandish behavior of our country's leaders and their families from the inside view of their Secret Service protectors. We also get the history of the Secret Service and how it operates, and how it can be undermined by the very people it protects. The Secret Service itself has been in the news lately for letting security slide, but the reader gets some perspective how this happens - it's a slippery slope. Despite the heavy-handed depiction of the Democrats, I don't necessarily disbelieve Kessler's reports. There have been other stories and books over the years that generally support his assertions. I also agree with Kessler that how our leaders treat "common folk" behind closed doors is very telling; women know not to go on a second date with a guy who treats the wait-staff badly at a restaurant. I admit to being a Democrat, and it gives me pause when I read these stories. However, I've read the same kind of stories over the years about various elected officials from both parties, some from the GOP side equaling what Kessler writes about Hillary.

Rob Bailer says

This book comes off as whiny, self serving, and disorganized (especially the first few chapters.) The author exudes many characteristics of a disgruntled employee by discussing poor leadership in the secret service, stating that tools and training are not adequate for agents, and complaining about customers (the presidents and their families.) At the same time the book is a series of random snippets about first families acting in unbecoming ways. The author frequently jumps from one snippet to the next and often times several paragraphs in a row do not logically follow one another. What's worse is that most of the book is centered around information that in one way or another violates confidentiality agreements the agents have signed. Although there are some interesting stories in the book, I have a hard time recommending it to other people due to the unorganized and rant-style writing within.

Sharlene says

I was hoping for more of a historical perspective and feel like I got the TMZ version of life with the President's and their over worked security. It seemed that there was also a political bias in the writing because most of the Republicans were good to work with and the Democrats were awful. It is also clear that this author is a Hillary hater, as it seemed a lot of print was used to disparage her. There was also a reference or two to "women" agents who were "not fit" and or over weight. Funny how there was no mention of similar descriptions for the male agents. Very disappointed in this book and would not recommend it to anyone.

Rick says

I think Ronald Kessler has written a better book but it's still weak. I like Mr. Kessler's books because he examines those powerful but somewhat secretive government agencies. Where he falls down is that he often focuses too much on the salacious gossip at the expense of true reporting. His expose about the use of Secret Service agents protecting civilians at the expense of the President. The book could have used much more of that and much less of how Hillary Clinton is a nasty person and Bill Clinton was having an affair. (GASP) The cronyism and politics of the management of the Secret Service is truly disturbing and that could be a earth changing book but he never goes far down that road.

This is a decent book which chooses not to be great. For that reason I can't recommend it.

Christine says

Well that was...interesting? It's disturbing to no end the staggering amount of corruption within our government, both within the leadership and the departments. That's certainly not ground breaking news though so I will leave a couple lasting impressions I had from the book, one I was surprised by and one not so much.

Second, I hope to dear heaven that our country NEVER, NEVER, NEVER allows a Clinton to live in the White House ever again. Hillary is the most evil and vile person to ever hold a government position. If even half the stories reported about her contain even a shred of truth then she is evil enough to give the devil himself a run for his money and that's saying something.

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Ryan Dejonghe says

This book is so, so good. Not only does it offer the sordid and egregious details of some of our recent presidents, but it shows the tender moments, too. Author Ronald Kessler knows his stuff! In this, **THE FIRST FAMILY DETAIL**, he blends all his research and interviews together to make an interesting, page-turning book. I could NOT put it down!

What kept me pulled into this book was Kessler's gradual introduction into another world. Chapter-by-chapter he would present new terms (such as "the beast", "the jackal", and all the presidents' code names: Timberwolf, Eagle, Searchlight, Passkey, Renegade, etc.) and he would describe security protocol (how many people are required to travel internationally, the fade-away tape used in processions, the actual protocol for "the football", etc.).

All the outrageous moments from the back of the book are here: actor Bradley Cooper getting a "free pass" through security, Biden's \$12,406 gulf trips, and Clinton's current mistress (code named Energizer). There are plenty of other outrageous moments: which presidents slept around, which ones peed in the open in front of press and staff, which ones shunned security.

I appreciated seeing the kind moments, too. Like Barbara Bush ensuring a 40-year-old agent had a hat while on the cold beach. Or, the Obamas serving agents chili during the Super Bowl. It all comes together to paint an interesting, inside-scoop picture of the presidency and their protection.

Kessler doesn't appear politically aimed in any of this writing. We see both sides of Republicans and Democrats alike. Sure, there may be some noticeable patterns, but both parties have their heroes and their heretics.

No matter how you cut it, this book is a highly entertaining and interesting read.

Thank you to Crown Forum for sending me this book through Blogging for Books for review.

Albert W Tu says

I knew going in this book would be pulp but it still managed to disappoint. It is really a quickly slapped together compilation of gossip, which isn't by default a bad thing, but the book lacks any narrative structure or flow. We read insider accounts to better understand the humanity of the players, and yes to see scores settled. This seems to dwell on the score settling to an unhealthy and unsatisfactory degree.

Still, it is fascinating to read how differently the Presidents, VPs and their wives have treated those that are there to serve and defend them, and how differently they are scorned or beloved by their protectors. [Summary: Mr and Mrs Bush 41 and 43 tops, Mr and Mrs Obama, as well. Others...not so much.]

Chris Aylott says

It's hard to know what to make of this. Kessler has strong qualifications as an investigative reporter, but the book reads as a partisan hatchet job. The public information he reports can be verified, and the information about Secret Service procedure is both interesting and well-sourced. But the salacious bits that everyone will read the book for comes almost entirely from anonymous sources with unknown agendas. There's some reason to believe that Kessler got a lot of agents to talk out of school, and that what they said is mostly accurate. It's also entirely possible that Kessler is scoring points and sales with highly selective quotes from a few biased sources. It's just impossible to tell.

Kessler does not help his credibility with his hand-to-cheek, "Oh my, those awful (mostly Democratic) politicians!" The man's been reporting on Washington since 1970 -- he knows how the town works. He's clearly playing to the tell-all crowd here, not trying to write serious journalism about public policy. There's nothing wrong with a juicy tell-all book, but any revelations need to be taken with copious amounts of salt.

Ingrid457 says

Too bad Kessler came to his material with a clear prejudice: I noticed all Democrats were terrible people, all Republicans the salt of the earth.
