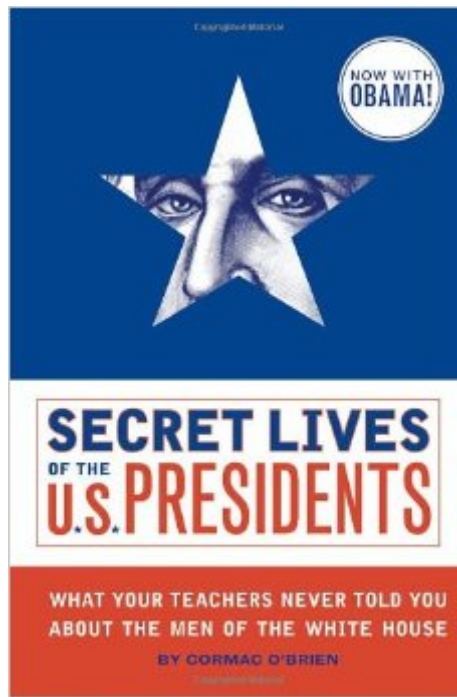


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Secret Lives Of The U.S. Presidents



Synopsis

Murder, Adultery, Gambling, UFOs - And the White House?!? You high school history teachers never gave you a book like this one! Secret Lives of the U.S. Presidents features outrageous and uncensored profiles of the men in the White House "complete with hundreds of little-known, politically incorrect, and downright wacko facts. You'll discover that: George Washington spent a whopping 7% of his salary on booze John Quincy Adams loved to skinny-dip in the Potomac River Gerald Ford once worked as a Cosmopolitan magazine cover model Warren G. Harding gambled with White House china when he ran low on cash Jimmy Carter reported a UFO sighting in Georgia And Richard Nixon . . . sheesh, don't get us started on Nixon! With chapters on everyone from George Washington to Barack Obama, Secret Lives of the U.S. Presidents tackles all the tough questions that other history books are afraid to ask: How many of these guys were cheating on their wives? Are there really secret tunnels underneath the White House? And what was Nancy Reagan thinking when she appeared on *Different Strokes*? American history was never this much fun in school!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had expected that lurking secretly behind a provocative title and cover design was yet another witless compilation of oft-related and tiresome Presidential yarns. You know the kind of drab

anecdotal volume that you can't help but read with a dishwatery David McCullough narration in your head. However, I was pleasantly surprised, after reading the first few pages of Mr. O'Brien's book, to have been quickly disabused of this notion. In short: This ain't your Daddy's history of the Presidents. In *Secret Lives of the U.S. Presidents*, O'Brien doles out the juicy Presidential dope in a witty, concise and hilariously irreverent style that is informative, yet exceptionally entertaining. From G.W. to G.W. Bush - with illuminating factoids and amusing anecdotes - *Secret Lives* paints a colorful picture of our nation's great (and not-so-great) leaders as being abundantly human and all too fallible. It's enough to make Mount Rushmore blush. Well written, and beautifully (if not comically) illustrated, this book is a must for even a casual fan of American history. I highly recommend it to all!

Nearly as interesting as this charming book was a read through its reviews. While *SECRET LIVES* is certainly praised herein, it's also lambasted for being too partisan left, or partisan right, or for not being titillating enough. Yeesh. It must be hard to read a book when one's knee is jerking involuntarily. One of the most critical (and currently highlighted) reader reviews takes issue with author O'Brien's research, citing the controversy of Thomas Jefferson siring children with his slave, Sally Hemmings. There is no controversy about this any longer; in 1998, geneticists proved a DNA link between Jefferson's and Hemmings' descendants. While other male members of the Jefferson family might have accounted for this, an impressively extensive report done by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation found that "it is VERY UNLIKELY that Randolph Jefferson or any Jefferson other than Thomas Jefferson was the father of [Hemmings'] children." (Capitalization mine.) Sorry to be so specific; in a more general vein, I found this book to be a perfect nighttime read, very funny, and a great refresher course on our presidents. Equal space is given to all, and as that allows obscure leaders like Franklin Pierce the spotlight, I was all for it.

I found this book to be a very entertaining read about the men who have served our country as President. If you are looking for a serious history book, this is not it. But if you are looking to learn something about the men who have held the highest office in the land, and at the same time be entertained - this is a great book. I found it very interesting that several reviewers thought the author had an "agenda" or was "partisan". The amusing thing about these claims is that half the claims are from reviewers who think the author leaned to the left, and the other half from reviewers who thought he leaned to the right! How can the author be biased in BOTH directions?!? I can only assume that the reviewers who claimed bias in one way or the other are those that are either

extremists to the right or left, and have a very biased opinion themselves. For instance, one reviewer writes that he "found this book to be biased toward the right, with nothing bad to say about George W. Bush's Iraq War" and "makes unproven, unsubstantiated claims about Bill Clinton..." Then another reviewer states that the "bias in regard to Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush begs for clarification or at least a recognition of the author's preference for left of center politics." I could list example after example. If you are an extreme righty or lefty, maybe you shouldn't read this book if you will get your feelings hurt. Otherwise, for the majority of the electorate that does not have blinders on and realizes that there is good and bad in everyone, including the Presidents, I highly recommend this book.

Short, sweet synopsis about each president. As a history teacher, having these little stories are great to teach beyond what's in the textbook and create something of a nugget to takeaway from learning. Little tidbits are always great to file in the back of your head and this book is great for that foundation. I suggested this book to my Washington DC tour guide. Saw her the following year and she totally loved it.

While I wouldn't recommend any student referencing this book in a formal history paper, this is an excellent book for all those history buffs out there. I picked this book out on a whim to entertain myself on a long bus ride, and was so enthralled that I had it halfway finished the night before I left! I found it extremely enjoyable to read a political book about all 43 US Presidents without seeming biased for or against any of them. I tend to avoid political books for just that reason; I want to be able to form my own opinions based on non-judgemental facts. The only opinion Cormac O'Brien forces on the reader is this: all of the men who have held the presidency are simply human.

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