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Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography

Von Adam Clymer

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EDWARD M. KENNEDY


"A thorough, careful account of a passionately interesting man and politician."


—*New York Times Book Review*



a biography

A D A M C L Y M E R

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Produktinformation Veröffentlicht am: 2015-07-14 Erscheinungsdatum: 2015-07-14 File Name:
B00WELVQV0 | File size: 78.Mb

Von Adam Clymer : Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Edward M. Kennedy: A Biography:

Kurzbeschreibung Edward M. Kennedy is one of the most influential senators in Congress. For the last 35 years, hes

played a major role in events ranging from the Vietnam War to Supreme Court confirmations. Hes also been closely associated with issues such as health care, civil rights and campaign finance reform. More than the foremost lawmaker and best orator in the Senate, hes enthralled (and disappointed) a generation who saw him as the keeper of his famous brothers flame. Hes seen America -- and her politics -- change in drastic ways. In this definitive biography, New York Times Washington Editor Adam Clymer draws an in-depth portrait of this complex man. Through interviews with Kennedy, and the people close to him, he places Kennedys career in a historical perspective, and observes how Kennedys personal life has affected his political performance. The Senator has dealt with his infamous legacy, struggled to overcome the Chappaquiddick incident, and handled spectacular failures as well as many triumphs. Hes one of the few old-fashioned liberals who has held the Democratic Party to its principles, and is a hero to many. This is a unique, enormously readable chronicle of one of the most fascinating political figures of our time..deAdam Clymer, in his lengthy biography of Senator Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy, understands that his subject is simultaneously one of the most loved and most hated figures in American politics. Clymer nevertheless pours on the praise, calling the Massachusetts Democrat "a lawmaker of skill, experience, and purpose rarely surpassed since 1789." Clymer, Washington editor for The New York Times, also recognizes that Kennedy has never fulfilled his great ambition--to become president--because he stood far to the left of the public as much as because of personal controversy. Yet Jack and Bobby's kid brother has forged a remarkable career in the Senate, where he has become one of its longest-serving members and arguably the most influential senator of the 20th century. Even Kennedy's conservative enemies don't question his dogged persistence and ability to advance his goals through slow-paced reform. He is maddeningly effective, especially when it comes to "finding Republicans to work with and sharing the credit, or even letting them have it all." Clymer's book is engrossing, although it occasionally gets bogged down in legislative intricacies (chapter titles: "Creating Disability Rights" and "More Incremental Health Care Progress"). It's a compelling study of a man whose enormous political skills are routinely overshadowed by his own foibles. In the end, however, Clymer grows positively rhapsodic: "He deserves recognition not just as the leading Senator of his time, but as one of the greats in history." --John J. Miller

Pressestimmen""Edward M. Kennedy is a thorough, careful account of a passionately interesting man and politician."-- "The New York Times Book "Clymer reconstructs with careful and sometimes exhausting detail all the major legislative struggles Ted Kennedy has had in his nearly four decades in the Senate." -- "Time "Though Clymer believes that Kennedy is 'the leading Senator of his time, ' his book is not hagiography. He is blunt about Kennedy's errors and shortcomings, but he refrains from moralizing."-- "Washington Post "In a silly age of buzz, hype, gossip and garbage, Clymer's book supplies an uplifting end to a somewhat shabby decade of American biography. The triumphs, tragedies, successes, flops and misdeeds are all there in profound perspective. Clymer breaks enough new ground to build a small city on." -- Thomas Oliphant, "The Boston Globe "In this monumental work Adam Clymer gives us not only a rich, thoroughly researched narrative of Edward M. Kennedy's life but a fascinating glimpse into the inner workings of Capitol Hill. Here, in colorful detail, is an absorbing story of the personalities, maneuvers, compromises, ambitions, and principles that combine and collide to shape legislation in our democratic process."-- Doris Kearns Goodwin "The quality biography of Sen. Ted Kennedy that we have been anticipating has finally arrived...This is a political biography in the classic sense, as if it had been written about the parliamentary careers of Disraeli or Gladstone. It is the portrait of a public man constructed around the framework of the issues he had championed and the struggles he had won and lost...The story that the author tells with great skill and understanding..." -- Ross K.Baker, "The Philadelphia Inquirer "Adam Clymer's book is the crowning work of a superb journalist and assiduous student of American politics. "Edward M. Kennedy is an absorbing, original, judicious, unsentimental, and fastidiously researched life of one of the grand American figures of the late twentieth century."-- Michael R. Beschloss "Clymer lets the reader do the psychological speculation, while he does the reportorial work, finding details that illustrate how the Kennedy legacy has both blessed and cursed its surviving standard-bearer...As someone who started covering Kennedy in 1961, I learned something new on every other page. This is a masterful work worthy of its subject not least because of its impressive display of shoe leather." -- Martin F. Nolan, "Washington Monthly "The reader yearning for an intelligent, comprehensive history of Kennedy as ace legislator and political survivor must read this book."-- "Newsday "Dad and I both served with Ted Kennedy in the Senate. I did my rounds in the ring with him for 18 years. With laser like keenness, Adam Clymer goes right to the heart of the man -- not the myth. A sensitive portrait of a sensitive man. No shrink stuff, no fluff, no guff. Just Ted."-- Senator Alan K. Simpson "Clymer...gives us a readable and worthy account of a flawed and fascinating politician."-- "People "Better than any of many previous efforts, Clymer's book fleshes out Edward Kennedy in his Senate years -- in the Bork fight, for example, and the few feats of lawmaking that lend themselves to human drama. But essentially this is a senatorial biography of record, well-researched, well-annotated and sure the definitive source for years to come."-- "AtlantaJournal-Constitution "The best researched and most comprehensive biography yet of Senator Kennedy." -- "Baltimore Sun "Clymer says Kennedy is one of the most effective senators in American history. By the end of the book, most readers -- even devoted Republicans and not-so liberal Democrats ought to be convinced that Clymer has made his case...This is an old-fashioned, evenhanded, well-organized biography of interest to anybody who cares about post World War II politics."-- "Seattle Times "The Kennedy we see in Adam Clymer's book, "Edward M.

Kennedy: A Biography, is a more complicated man than any caricature. Kennedy emerges as one of the most important U.S. Senators of the 20th century, a man with an enviable record of personal achievement, as well as personal failings."-- "Providence Journal "There are times when his narrative about the nonlegislative Ted shines...Clymer shows a flair for the tempo and demands of political biography."-- "Tikkun "His research and his balance are impressive...Clymer's major goal was to explore Kennedy's public career. And he does so effectively." -- "The Deseret News, Salt Lake City "Clymer...reveals in his book Kennedy's previously unpublished foreign affairs achievements."-- The Associated Press "Adam Clymer makes a good and rather startling case that Sen. Edward M. Kennedy is one of the greatest senators of our century."-- Marianne Means, Hearst Newspapers