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The Clintons: The Lives and Legacies of Bill and Hillary Clinton

Charles River Editors

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*Covers the remarkable lives of the Clintons in one educational and entertaining narrative.
*Includes pictures of Bill, Hillary, and other important people, places, and events in their lives.
*Includes linked footnotes and a Table of Contents.

"Sometime in my sixteenth year, I decided I wanted to be in public life as an elected official. I loved music and thought I could be very good, but I knew I would never be John Coltrane or Stan Getz. I was interested in medicine and thought I could be a fine doctor, but I knew I would never be Michael DeBakey. But I knew I could be great in public service." – Bill Clinton

“I suppose I could have stayed home and baked cookies and had teas, but what I decided to do was to fulfill my profession which I entered before my husband was in public life.” – Hillary Clinton

It would be impossible to sum up the life and legacy of Bill Clinton in one sentence or even one paragraph, as the former president represents many different things to many different people. Indeed, the yin and yang of Clinton’s life and career are inescapable. Widely hailed as the greatest politician of his era, Clinton proved to be his own worst enemy, creating unnecessary scandals through his womanizing. Clinton was one of the first politicians to truly connect with young adults, yet in the process he provided ludicrous soundbytes like “I did not inhale.” Long considered the Democratic Party’s greatest spokesman and surrogate, Clinton’s presidency was defined by centrist “triangulation”. And though he is still publicly popular and considered a great president, Clinton became just the second president to be impeached in the House of Representatives.

Regardless of what Americans think of him, one thing Clinton does represent is the American Dream. Born to a single mother in Hope, Arkansas, Clinton used his ambition, hard work and intelligence to become a Rhodes scholar. As a teenager, a meeting with President Kennedy helped drive him toward politics, which he pursued after getting his law degree at Yale, where he met future wife Hillary Rodham.

During the presidential campaign in 1992, Democratic challenger Bill Clinton announced that by voting for him, Americans would get two presidents “for the price of one.” The reference to his wife Hillary signified that she would be no ordinary First Lady, and indeed she was employed frequently by her husband in the White House to try to push legislation through Congress, most notably universal healthcare. While that proved to be one of the Clinton Administration’s greatest failures, Hillary and her staff continued to act as a political surrogate for the president during his two terms.

Of course, describing Hillary Clinton as just a First Lady belittles all of her accomplishments. Today she is the most powerful woman in the world and one of the most recognizable, working so seamlessly with her former rival Barack Obama that her popularity has easily eclipsed his within a year of his victory over her in the Democratic primaries. In addition to the stirring Democratic primaries of 2008, Hillary was a U.S. Senator from New York for nearly 8 years before becoming Obama’s Secretary of State. Recognized as one of the sharpest minds in Washington and a complete policy wonk, Hillary has been one of the few bright spots in Obama’s Cabinet during his first term.

The Clintons looks at the amazing lives and careers of America's most powerful political couple, including their unprecedented highs and their notorious controversies, but it also humanizes the duo who have overcome considerable personal and political hurdles along the way. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events in her life, you will learn about Bill and Hillary Clinton like you never have before, in no time at all.

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Rosa Johnson:

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