



What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception

By Scott McClellan

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Scott McClellan was one of a few Bush loyalists from Texas who became part of his inner circle of trusted advisers, and remained so during one of the most challenging and contentious periods of recent history. Drawn to Bush by his commitment to compassionate conservatism and strong bipartisan leadership, McClellan served the president for more than seven years, and witnessed day-to-day exactly how the presidency veered off course.

In this refreshingly clear-eyed book, written with no agenda other than to record his experiences and insights for the benefit of history, McClellan provides unique perspective on what happened and why it happened the way it did, including the Iraq war, Hurricane Katrina, Washington's bitter partisanship, and two hotly contested presidential campaigns. He gives readers a candid look into who George W. Bush is and what he believes, and into the personalities, strengths, and liabilities of his top aides. Finally, McClellan looks to the future, exploring the lessons this presidency offers the American people as we prepare to elect a new leader.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Some listeners may get to the end of this audiobook and still be asking "What happened?" for even in his own words, McClellan's book appears either woefully naïve to the point of negligence or a continuance of spin and lying (or has he says, "shading"). As he traces his early years working with Bush in the Texas government through his tenure as White House press secretary, McClellan continues to applaud Bush with only a mild dash of criticism while laying much of the blame for Bush's poor decisions upon the "permanent campaign" political culture of Washington. Hailing from the party of "personal responsibility," this approach seems awkward at best. Even when he identifies the administration as a group of "well intentioned but flawed people," he still shies away from making strong and definitive statements. Predominantly hovering around his experience and problems as press secretary at the height of the Valerie Plame incident, McClellan's analysis and reporting of the Bush administration doesn't forge any new ground. As narrator, he manages well enough in a matter of fact tone with moderate inflection, minimally hindered with background noises and some stumbling or mispronunciations. However, on occasion, he does execute a good Bush impersonation. A Public Affairs hardcover.

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Review

"The former press secretary of President Bush (No. 43 version) empties out his notebooks, and all of Washington will be holding its breath." -- *Seattle Times*, March 16, 2008

About the Author

Scott McClellan served as White House press secretary from 2003 to 2006. before that he served as the principal deputy White House press secretary and as traveling press secretary for the bush-Cheney 2000 campaign. Earlier in his career, Mr. McClellan served as deputy communications director in the Texas governor's office and campaign manager for three successful statewide campaigns. He is now a senior adviser to a global technology firm and communications strategist. Born in Austin, Texas, he now lives near Washington, D.C.

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