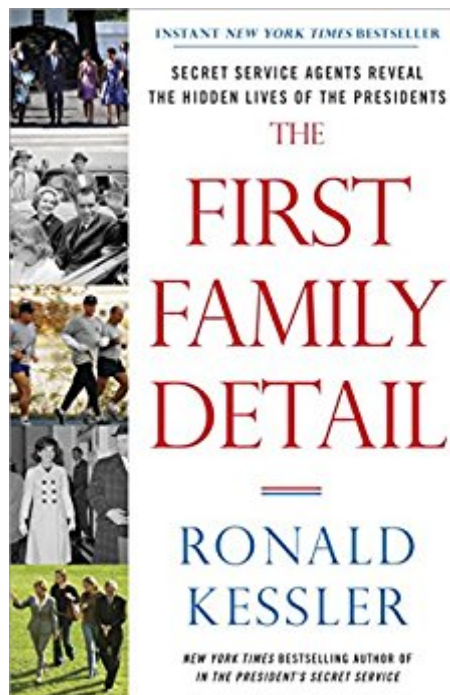




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# The First Family Detail: Secret Service Agents Reveal The Hidden Lives Of The Presidents



## Synopsis

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.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The author writes an interesting and thoughtful book about a part of government that many people are not very familiar with: the Secret Service. He describes the vast and impressive array of procedures employed in protecting presidents, current and previous, vice presidents, and their families, as well as cabinet secretaries and political leaders in the line of succession to become president in case of a severe emergency. During a presidential election the leading candidates are also protected. To accomplish their mission Secret Service agents must work in close proximity to all their protectees, becoming a part of their lives on a daily basis. This gives the agents a clear window through which to observe their personalities and character. Revelations from some of the agents

indicate that what transpires in their clients' private lives may not comport with the image that they desire to show to the public. As examples, the book describes how a number of protectees were especially "nasty" to the agents and their own staffs: Bill and Hillary Clinton, Nancy Reagan, Jimmy Carter and Al Gore. Especially friendly and respectful to agents were Ronald Reagan, Bush 41 and 43 and their wives, Dick and Lynne Cheney and Mitt and Ann Romney. The sexual proclivities of LBJ, Bill Clinton (both inside and outside of the Oval Office) and Gary Hart are portrayed as important character issues. Some revelations are surprising, such as the preference of Joe Biden to swim naked in his home pool while being closely guarded by female agents. Many other observations of family members are also related, including some of their drinking habits. Tension with the children of protected families seems to be prevalent in many cases. Another focus of the book is an analysis of the management of the Secret Service. The author describes and details the incompetence and corruption of senior management that has resulted in poorly trained agents with very low morale, lack of leading-edge technology and weaponry to discover and eliminate threats, and in some cases a demonstrable lack of concern about national security. Prior lapses in standard procedures have resulted in the assassination attempts on presidents Reagan and Ford, and have put more current presidents in grave danger. After a number of recent scandals involving penetration of the White House grounds by dangerous perpetrators, the author ridicules president Obama's decision not to bring in a new director from the outside to replace the one who was fired, as he believes that as a result there will not be any change in the dysfunctional culture at the top.

The First Family Detail by Ron Kessler, former Washington Post reporter, takes the lid off the White House and the families which have inhabited that prime piece of real estate on Pennsylvania Ave in Washington D.C. The book is just over 200 pages long but is filled with inside dope on the first family. The book also explains the function of the Secret Service in a free society and the many problems concerning security, weaponry and personnel that needs to be changed if the SS is to operate on a more effective level in our age of global terrorism and assassination. Among juicy items revealed by Kessler: LBJ and Spiro Agnew were both womanizers. LBJ was often crude and rude to the agents and even his family members. Hillary Clinton is despised by the Secret Service Agents who protect her. She cusses like a sailor on leave and is rude to the agents. She and Bill Clinton have a business arrangement. She loves power and is very ambitious. Her daughter Chelsea is polite and respectful of Secret Service personnel. Bill Clinton is a chronic womanizer, is always late and is a narcissistic and ego driven man. Kessler reports that the agents love Laura Bush and think highly of the entire Bush family. This is true even though Jenna and Barbara were

wild during the time their father occupied the Oval Office. Richard Nixon was a formal and distracted man who only thought of politics and sports when in conversation with agents. Pat Nixon was a heavy drinker. Jimmy Carter was self-centered and not friendly to agents. His wife Rosalynn was much better liked than her husband. Ronald Reagan enjoyed joking and telling stories with agents but his wife Nancy was cold and aloof. Gerald Ford was OK but was a tightwad who enjoyed running with the rich and famous. The family of Barack Obama are friendly and the agents like serving him as well as his friendly wife Michelle and their two adorable and polite daughters. Vice President Joe Biden has spent over one million dollars of taxpayer money for frequent air trips from D.C. to his mansion in Wilmington Del. Biden refuses to have the nuclear football near him when on the road. The book is an interesting read and explains the life of a Secret Service Agent. Enjoy!

Since others have prominently noted that this book is very similar to one of Kessler's earlier works, I will say this is my first exposure. Content: Although I lean conservative, I am neither a Democrat nor a Republican. I was eager to read this book because it interests me how the 'anointed' really live their lives. Opposite my expectation, I did not get the impression that this book's sole purpose was to bash one political party or the other. For example, the Obamas are generally portrayed in a favorable light, but not all good. The same is true of the Bush family. I do believe the author reported accurately what the Secret Service agents revealed to him. It seems that the book has two purposes. First, to expose the true character of our elected officials. And second, to expose how the Secret Service management makes bad decisions which ultimately puts protectee lives in danger. Not that it was wrong, or bad, but one thing that did not grab my interest were the parts that delved into the inner workings of the Secret Service. Style: This is mostly an easy read. However, in a couple of places in the book the author follows a couple of rabbit trails and then abruptly snaps back to the original subject. I found that to be hard to follow and a bit frustrating, which is why I took one of the stars away. Overall, I enjoyed the book, and learned a few things. What more could you ask for? I will be recommending this book to my friends.

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