

Primary Colors - A Novel of Politics

Anonymous

Titillating as a roman à clef, rather pedestrian once you know the truth

This is a novel by "anonymous," who has long since been identified as Joe Klein, a Newsweek reporter who covered the Clinton White House. It is about Gov. Clinton's pursuit of the presidency in 1992.

It deals with the whole panoply of now familiar themes: Bill's tendency towards infidelity, Hillary's shrewish nature, the conflicts between them and the disconnects that invariably resulted from those conflicts.

I reread it to see if I could pick up any insights for Hillary Clinton's 2016 run for the presidency. Not really. These topics, which were off-limits at the time the book appeared, have been widely discussed. The amazing thing is that even with so much dirt having come out about the Clintons, Hillary still has the chutzpah to run, and the gall to keep denying self-evident truths.

The book will be interesting from a historical point of view. As a work of art, not so much. The choice of an Ivy League, prep school graduate black man as the narrator is interesting. It offers an insight into the state of race relations 25 years ago, which appear if anything to be better than they are today. But it is from the somewhat limited perspective of a newsman/novelist, whose objective was certainly not mere social commentary.