

## Presidential Intentions

**Douglas J Wood**

CreateSpace (Jan 31, 2014)

Softcover \$11.50 (294pp)

978-1-4849-2652-9

*A determined, flawed heroine accentuates the knowledgeable portrayal of human behavior in the near-perfect plot of this political novel.*

A candid look at the rise of an ambitious presidential candidate destined for greatness from the days of her youth, this complex novel is an exciting yet tragic behind-the-scenes examination of the political process in America. In *Presidential Intentions*, Douglas J. Wood presents factual events and real people within a fictional context, juxtaposing an analysis of recent situations with the activities of his protagonist, Samantha Harrison.

Far from a patriotic tribute to the United States, this engaging book depicts anything but a clean procedure backed by the integrity and passion of all participants. Harrison herself is portrayed as a woman of reputable standing in most instances, but her opponents and even her supporters are often revealed in a dishonorable light, including her campaign manager, Zachary Watts:

*"Sam, now cast into a political furnace, hated the comparisons she had to face between campaigns and convictions. As Watts would tell her, something always needed to be compromised in the name of consistency with minimal damage to her aspirations. Sam could only wonder what was really at play and whether Watts and his political machine had long since taken over her life. She knew it wasn't just her aspirations at stake. Perhaps, Sam thought, she was getting to a point where she'd just as soon leave politics altogether."*

Told primarily in flashbacks, each chapter opens with an excerpt from the heroine's 2016 Republican nomination acceptance speech and then steps into the past to describe her arduous rise to success. With meticulously thorough and well-developed characters, along with a carefully planned narrative, there are only isolated flaws, such as momentary confusion or slight disorientation, that mar the near perfection of Wood's plot.

An intriguing mix of social statement and personality sketch, the novel traverses the main roads, as well as the roads less traveled, in alternating long shots and close-ups of the political scenery that Samantha Harrison passes on her self-imposed journey. Unexpected twists and turns take her in directions she had not anticipated. Nothing—not even the death of loved ones—stops her from reaching her destination.

Slick packaging enhances the marketing potential for this mainstream title, which will likely lead to a sequel, based on an ending that leaves an opening for another beginning. A provocative blurb, along with a simple cover featuring a handprint decorated like the American flag, draws sufficient attention to attract a vast audience.

Douglas J. Wood is an attorney with three law degrees. His background in legal issues has clearly contributed to the realism of *Presidential Intentions* and the portrayal of Samantha Harrison. Knowledge of human behavior, positive and negative, is evident throughout his novel. Similar to a biography, this in-depth story of a powerful conservative feminist brings a figment of the imagination alive to a degree of vividness rarely seen in a fiction debut.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (March 18, 2014)

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