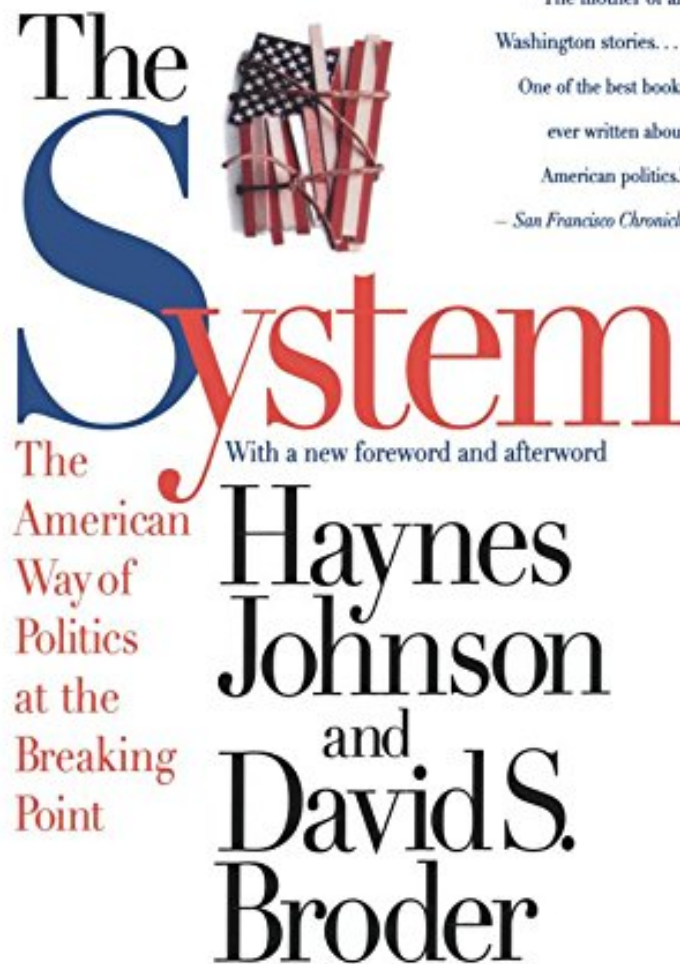


The System: The American Way of Politics at the Breaking Point

Haynes Johnson, David Broder

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#1093564 in Books Haynes Bonner Johnson 1997-04-01 1997-04-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x 1.77 x 5.50l, 1.97 #File Name: 0316111457704 pagesISBN13: 9780316111454Condition: NewNotes: BRAND NEW FROM PUBLISHER! 100% Satisfaction Guarantee. Tracking provided on most orders. Buy with Confidence! Millions of books sold! | File size: 44.Mb

Haynes Johnson, David Broder : The System: The American Way of Politics at the Breaking Point before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The System: The American Way of Politics at the Breaking Point:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Classic political process book
By Jack Lechelt
Perhaps only Showdown at Gucci Gulch matches The System for a true focus on how big-time policy really gets enacted - or doesn't as the Clinton health care drive shows. Whereas the Gucci Gulch focused on Reagan's 1986 tax policy overhaul success, The System follows President Clinton's efforts to revamp healthcare in America. What makes The System more representative of the political process than Gucci Gulch is that healthcare reform failed. Because of Clinton management inexperience, and Gingrich "coagulation" and scare tactics, healthcare reform never happened. That may be for the better. Clinton's plan left little to be desired, though it was not the "socialized medicine" that the right claimed it was. Still, that does not mean it was a worthy plan. The real problem, however, that scoring political success for both sides trumped the search for wise policy. Most everyone at the outset agreed that there was something wrong with healthcare, but change failed to occur. And no one is absolved of blame by Johnson and Broder: the President, First Lady, the wider Administration, Congress, the press, interest groups, and the public all allowed this to happen. Again, that doesn't mean that Clinton's plan should have been adopted, but something could have been done to better deal with the many healthcare problems plaguing the nation. Regardless, The System is a must-read for anyone who wants to see American politics as it really exists.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Easy Read, Great Insight on Clinton Health Care
By K. Mack
If you really want to get into the heads of the players behind the Clinton Health Care Reform plan then you must read Johnson and Broder's "The System." It reads more like a novel than textbook (which I happen to like). For anyone interested in health policy or political strategy this is a must-read.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good price.
By michelle mcfalls
Fast shipment. Good price.

Taking as an example the Clinton health care reform initiative, the authors show how a policy that aimed to please everyone ended by satisfying no one due to pressure groups, political gamesmanship and the inertia of the American 'system'.

From Publishers Weekly
A remarkable feat of investigative reporting, this is probably the fullest account to date of the behind-the-scenes political battles surrounding President Clinton's failed health insurance initiative. Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington reporters Johnson (Sleepwalking Through History) and Broder (Changing of the Guard) believe that Clinton made a major mistake in creating a special White House health-care task force headed by his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and business consultant Ira Magaziner. The First Lady's presence stifled the free expression of ideas by cabinet members and White House aides, and the president overlooked Magaziner's track record of overly complicated, failed public-policy proposals, the authors charge. Furthermore, the Clinton plan had fatal vulnerabilities, notably the absence of a few simple structural principles that could be readily grasped by the public. The authors expose the full extent of the massive lobbying campaign by the plan's opponents, among them conservative Republicans, insurance companies, health-care providers and the Christian Coalition. This probe into the failure to provide affordable, universal health coverage brilliantly illuminates why so many people believe that the government no longer represents them. Author tour. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal
These two Pulitzer Prize-winning political commentators spent three years interviewing politicians, experts, citizens, and lobbyists for this superb narrative about the healthcare debate of 1993-95. President Clinton, interviewed several times, admits he underestimated the strength of fiscal and conservative special interests. The authors also attribute the failure of the healthcare bill to the lack of an electoral mandate; the leadership of Hillary Rodham Clinton, who was too committed to universal care to be unbiased; and a proposed bill incomprehensible to legislators and citizens. A pledge by the Newt Gingrich-led House to defeat any Democratic proposal doomed the bill. The authors go beyond the Beltway to show that adequate medical coverage is becoming a have vs. have-not issue, for the inner city and for a growing number of downsized middle-class workers. This complex set of events provides lessons and warnings for a government that has lost its spirit of bipartisanship and no longer represents the best interests of its citizens. Highly recommended for public libraries. [For a similar discussion, see also Theda Skocpol's Boomerang, LJ 4/1/96; previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 1/96. Ed.]
Karl Helicher, Upper Merion Twp. Lib., King of Prussia, Pa.
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From Kirkus
A sobering and sometimes maddening play-by-play of Bill Clinton's abortive crusade to reform health care. Clinton came into office, note Washington-based journalists Johnson (Divided We Fall, 1994) and Broder (Changing of the Guard, 1980), committed to making sweeping changes so that all citizens would have access to health care. However, despite his charisma, a Democratic-controlled Congress, and opinion polls showing that most Americans favored such reforms, Clinton emerged from the battle badly scarred. Johnson and Broder show that several scarcely controllable factors collided to produce the rejection of his 1,342-page bill of reform. Among them were the Republican backlash then being orchestrated by Newt Gingrich in a successful bid to become speaker of the House; lobbyists' adoption of new techniques of buying political access and manipulating public opinion; the failure of White House staffers, led by left-leaning policymaker Ira Magaziner, to communicate their ideas effectively; competition among leading Democrats to introduce health-care packages of their own; and a highly effective campaign, spearheaded by Rush Limbaugh, to discredit Bill and Hillary Clinton, so that teacup-size tempests like Whitewater came to overshadow the Clintons'

legislative effort. Most of all, however, Clinton failed to reckon with the power of vested interests and of the so-called Gingrich revolution. The defeat was titanic--Clinton scarcely mentions health care these days--but the Republican victory may have been Pyrrhic: As the authors write, ``one year after the House Republicans signed their Contract with America, Congress had failed to pass 11 of 13 appropriations bills needed to keep the federal government operating, and half of the Contract's provisions were stalled by opposition or inaction." Hundreds of actors wander on and off stage in a sweeping narrative that deftly underscores the crisis of confidence now troubling our political system. (Author tour) -- Copyright copy;1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.