



Bare Knuckles and Back Rooms: My Life in American Politics

Ed Rollins

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In a book as fierce and stunning as a prize fight, Ed Rollins tells of his many triumphs and sometimes spectacular blunders during a thirty-year career in American politics. From the Reagan presidency to the campaigns of Ross Perot and Christine Todd Whitman, Rollins has long been at the red-hot center. Now, in *Bare Knuckles and Back Rooms*, he gives us the inside story on Washington and many of its most prominent players with sharp reflections, revealing and frequently irreverent anecdotes, and always astonishing candor.

Once a champion amateur boxer, Rollins brings the pugnacious spirit of a born fighter to everything he does. Never shy about his opinions, he now delivers the kind of take-no-prisoners honesty for which he is notorious. He dissects the personalities of Richard Nixon, Ronald and Nancy Reagan, George Bush, Ross Perot, James Baker, Michael and Arianna Huffington, and Newt Gingrich. He shows how political campaigns really operate, and he offers keen insight on this year's contenders, from Bill Clinton to Bob Dole and Pat Buchanan.

Part autobiography and part political primer, this is a deeply compelling story and a highly personal look into the inner workings of government and campaigns. Ed Rollins's passion for the game and thoughtful insight into our political system make this a must-read for anyone interested in how the game of contemporary politics is really played.

Who else but Ed Rollins--the brilliant, bare-knuckled political consultant--would dare give us the inside story on how Washington really works? Famously outspoken, Rollins is a true maverick whose gift for winning campaigns is matched only by his talent for generating controversy. Now, in this astonishingly candid book, he delivers a no-holds-barred, hugely entertaining account of his thirty-year career in American politics.

Rollins has worked for almost every major Republican politician of the past two decades, but he was never a member of the Washington aristocracy. Raised in the tough shipyard town of Vallejo, California, he fought as a championship amateur boxer and won over 160 bouts. His love of politics was kindled when he worked for Bobby Kennedy's presidential campaign in 1968, but after Kennedy's assassination and a life-changing experience during a violent anti-war demonstration, he joined the Republican party. By 1981, he had worked his way up to a job in the Reagan White House; the following year, he became the president's top political advisor. He has battled at the center of the political arena ever since, and he and his candidates have won far more often than they have lost.

If Rollins loves anything more than a good fight, it's a good story. Here is Richard Nixon complaining to him about the lack of a "nutcutter" in the Reagan administration; Nancy Reagan berating him for his atrocious attire; Barbara Bush telling him he's not welcome in the White House; Ross Perot wailing about how expensive campaign advertising is; Arianna Huffington hiring a private detective to investigate an unfriendly journalist. But Rollins has made some spectacular blunders of his own, and now he tells stories on himself too--most particularly when he provides the first full account of his role in the scandal that followed Christine Todd Whitman's election as governor of New Jersey.

Ed Rollins is an American original--a power-punching, street-smart insider who loves politics and his country with equal fervor. Fast and funny, pugnacious and passionate, this is one of the best books ever written about how the modern political game is really played.

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