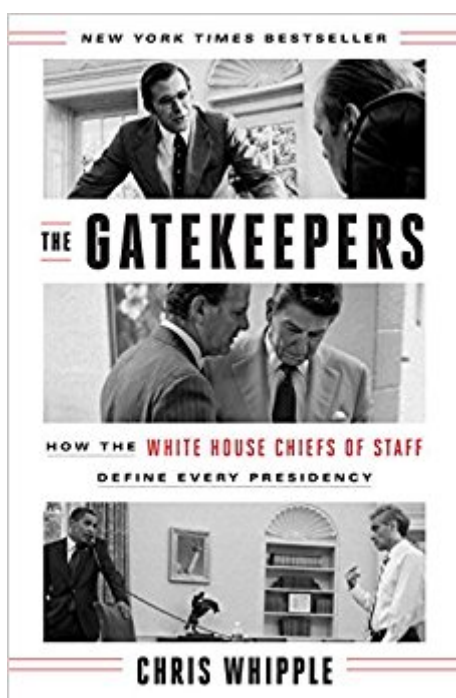


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# The Gatekeepers: How The White House Chiefs Of Staff Define Every Presidency



## Synopsis

The first in-depth, behind-the-scenes look at the White House Chiefs of Staff, whose actions and inactions have defined the course of our country. What do Dick Cheney and Rahm Emanuel have in common? Aside from polarizing personalities, both served as chief of staff to the president of the United States as did Donald Rumsfeld, Leon Panetta, and a relative handful of others. The chiefs of staff, often referred to as "the gatekeepers," wield tremendous power in Washington and beyond; they decide who is allowed to see the president, negotiate with Congress to push POTUS's agenda, and most crucially enjoy unparalleled access to the leader of the free world. Each chief can make or break an administration, and each president reveals himself by the chief he picks. Through extensive, intimate interviews with all seventeen living chiefs and two former presidents, award-winning journalist and producer Chris Whipple pulls back the curtain on this unique fraternity. In doing so, he revises our understanding of presidential history, showing us how James Baker's expert managing of the White House, the press, and Capitol Hill paved the way for the Reagan Revolution and, conversely, how Watergate, the Iraq War, and even the bungled Obamacare rollout might have been prevented by a more effective chief. Filled with shrewd analysis and never-before-reported details, *The Gatekeepers* offers an essential portrait of the toughest job in Washington.

## Book Information

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Memoirs > Historical > United States

## Customer Reviews

Praise for Chris Whipple's *The Gatekeepers* — New York Times Bestseller — "Entertaining and

engaging.ââ "Wall Street Journal" â "Compelling and insightful... destined to take its place alongside classic works by Richard Neustadt, Theodore White and other White House chroniclers" | A must-read.ââ "Huffington Post" â "Carefully researched and eminently readable, The Gatekeepers" | provides a fresh view of the modern presidencies. Whipple cuts to the heart of what, or more to the point who, makes a presidency succeed or fail.ââ "Newsday" â "A treasure trove of stories about 'the second-most-powerful job in government.'"ââ "Fort Worth Star Telegram" â "Could not be more timely... There are valuable lessons in The 'Gatekeepers' for Trump's chief, the embattled" Reince Priebus.ââ "TIME.com" â "Captivating... This is a tale told by a journalist, and in a way that makes for better history."ââ "USNews.com" â "[Whipple's] prose is clear, crisp and often evocative" | his observations ring true as he tracks the development of the office.ââ "Washington Times" â "Observers of the political scene will find this book well worth their time and attention. Whipple's style is lively and engaging, and he peppers the pages with colorful quotes and marvelous anecdotes."ââ "History News Network" â "A candid and exhilarating history about the development of the office of Chief of Staff."ââ "Missourian" â "Chris Whipple takes us deep inside one of the most important and demanding jobs in Washington" "White House chief of staff. " Here we get to know how great" power is managed, and exercised by those who have held the job. If you're a political junkie or merely curious, this is the book for you.ââ "Tom Brokaw, former anchor, NBC Nightly News " â "A vivid, enthralling, and brilliantly reported account of White House chiefs of staff, who are" "with all respects to US vice presidents" "the actual second-most-powerful people in Washington. This is US history through the fascinating prism of the men who guard the door to the Oval Office, and a learned, welcome, and important addition to the study of the executive branch.ââ "Christopher Buckley, author of Thank You for Smoking, No Way to Treat a First Lady, and The Relic Master " â "Understanding how government really works, what Presidents actually do, and what is the range of 'normal' versus 'unprecedented' behavior, is more important now than ever before. As The Gatekeepers makes vividly clear, White House chiefs of staff are at the center of the process that determines how presidents succeed or fail. This is an enlightening work of history with important lessons for our immediate future.ââ "James Fallows, The Atlantic, former White House speechwriter " â "Chief of Staff is a role of recent vintage" "the most powerful job in government never mentioned in the Constitution." Chris Whipple has done a wonderful job humanizing the crushing nature of the 24/7 job (literally 24/7) in which all credit or blame goes to the President who is served." This is a book of insights, but so too is it an important manual on how the executive branch of our government functions.ââ "Charles Gibson, former anchor, ABC World News Tonight " â "The story of White House chiefs of staff" "often second

only to the president in power” is an especially fresh and engaging way to chart the ups and downs of recent American presidents. And through Chris Whipple’s discerning lens, we learn scores of new things about how government really works at the highest level.

• Jonathan Alter, author of *The Center Holds: Obama and His Enemies* and *The Promise: President Obama, Year One* “The real power in Washington since 1968 has passed through the hands of twenty-one men — no women so far — who were never further than a phone call or a few feet down the hall from the presidents they served. Their job title is chief of staff but Chris Whipple in his new book calls them *The Gatekeepers*. What the chiefs do is what politics is. The president may run the country but his chief of staff runs the president — what he reads at night and who he sees by day, what he does and says, what he pushes or ignores. For success the chiefs get little credit, for failure all the blame. Every page of Whipple’s book casts fresh light on the great events of the last fifty years.

• Tom Powers, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter and author of *The Killing of Crazy Horse* “What is it like to have the toughest job in America? Using his access to seemingly every top White House official of the past half century, Whipple has asked all the right questions and written a book that is at once riveting and highly informative. It is also extremely relevant in the new Age of Drumpf.

• Evan Thomas, author of *Being Nixon* “I loved *The Gatekeepers*! The reporting is superb, the writing engaging and wonderfully fair-minded. Unbuttoned at last, these chiefs have wonderful stories to tell. This book serves as a compellingly readable thank-you note to a motley crew of policy nerds, fixers, maniacs, and soon-to-be-ex-best friends of the president who have lost sleep — and probably several years off their lives — in the service of the White House, and of their country.

• Alex Beam, author of *The Feud*, *Gracefully Insane*, and *American Crucifixion* “Chris Whipple is one of our era’s most accomplished multimedia journalists. Drawing on access to senior officials most reporters can only dream of, his documentary *The Spymasters* brought Americans inside the U.S. intelligence community as never before. Now, Whipple has done it again, exploring the inner workings of the last eight presidencies — from Nixon to Obama — through exclusive interviews with current and former White House chiefs of staff. *The Gatekeepers* is first-rate history, as told by the men who lived it to a man who knows, with supreme assurance, how to write it.

• James Rosen, Fox News chief Washington correspondent and author of *The Strong Man* and *Cheney One on One* “History, drama, intrigue. Every page is engaging. Required reading for every Washington power player.

• David Friend, *Vanity Fair*, author of *Watching the World Change* “Having interviewed all 17 living former chiefs of staff and two former presidents, Whipple offers a scintillating behind-the-scenes look at an office that is all but invisible to the public. This is page-turning catnip for political junkies, who will read it

with an eye to what lies in store for Reince Priebus and the Drumpf administration. • "Booklist" (starred review) • A vibrant narrative of the real-world West Wing | confident and fast-paced | In this page-turner of a history, readers will discover new facets of historical events that they felt they already knew. • "Publishers Weekly" • Whipple reviews the high and low points of the past eight administrations, and he greatly enhances the narrative with his many interviews.... A well-researched, well-written review of a unique government position • "informative for the general public and an insightful blueprint for the new administration. • "Kirkus Reviews" • Highly recommended for those seeking a history of the modern presidency or political insight. • Through firsthand accounts of the presidency, it gives valuable understanding of the position and would be a great tool for Reince Priebus as President Donald Trump's chief of staff. • "Library Journal" • A must-read book for all who want a backstage view of the presidency, from the Richard Nixon years through Barack Obama's two terms.... The remarkably candid interviews and reader-friendly narrative of this book make for very informative and entertaining reading. • "Bookpage"

CHRIS WHIPPLE is an acclaimed writer, journalist, documentary filmmaker, and speaker. A multiple Peabody and Emmy Award-winning producer at CBS's 60 Minutes and ABC's Primetime, he is the chief executive officer of CCWHIP Productions. Most recently, he was the executive producer and writer of Showtime's *The Spymasters: CIA in the Crosshairs*.

*The Gatekeepers* gives us an in-depth analysis of what the duties of the White House Chief of Staff are. It was not an official title until Nixon had H. R. Haldeman held that title in 1968. As explained by author Chris Whipple the Chief of Staff maintains the focus and order in the White House. He confers with the President and helps him keep to his agenda and not steer off course. He is the gatekeeper and through him alone maintains the schedule and access to the oval office. His job is that of an organizer and sees to it that the agenda of the President is staffed out to the most effective people to do the job. The other major part of the job of Chief of Staff is to not be a yes man. He has to have the courage to give the President bad news no matter what it is. His job determines the success or failure of the administration. His job is more administrative and management of staff and should not be political. From Haldeman who turned out to be effective but in the end a huge disappointment to James Baker who by and large was considered the best of all the Chiefs of Staff. The job is very demanding and it is seldom seen that any Chief of Staff survives a full 4-year term. Whipple gives us a seldom looked at perspective of a very key and important job.

Anyone interested in contemporary American politics would do themselves a favor to consume this well written and engaging book. It truly outlines and explains the dysfunctional today's White House.

Not quite finished reading this, but find it fascinating for the insights into the past presidents and how their personalities and character, rather than their policy inclinations, shaped their relationships with their chiefs of staff. I worked in the Nixon, Carter and Reagan administrations as a civil servant and Senior Executive and the stories ring true to my own sense of how those administrations operated.

Well researched and written. The author's musing about the current situation hits a strong chord. We've come through before let's hope we weather the current administration.

Well researched look at the importance of the role of each Chief of Staff since Eisenhower. Interesting insights about what works and what does not. It seems without fail that the Presidents viewed as most effective had strong and effective Chief's of Staff.

OMG.. This is the best book... The facts you learn are amazing and it is a very easy read....

Fascinating book. Well worth reading if you are somewhat of a political junkie.

Great read, particularly in light of what's going on in the White House now.

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Manuscript Paper Notebook: 10-staff (10 staves per page), 120 pages, perfect binding, standard staff width: Music Paper Notebook size = 8.5 x 11 ... standard staff width = 8.5mm = 11/32"

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