



Domestic Affairs

Bridget Siegel

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When twenty-something political fundraiser Olivia Greenley is recruited by her close friend Jacob Harriston to join the Presidential campaign of Georgia Governor Landon Taylor, she is intoxicated by optimism and opportunity. Taylor's commitment to social equality and economic responsibility in the post-housing-bubble era is palpable. Sacrificing her sleep, comfort and income are certain to help make the world a better place. Right?

Domestic Affairs: A Campaign Novel vividly captures the fervor and idealism of campaign life—as well as the disillusionment staffers feel when told to make the inevitable compromises. Leaving a meeting with foreclosure victims to hop onto a private jet is one thing, but how to justify dining at a 2,000-a-plate dinner knowing how many lunches the money could buy for at-risk kids? How far does one go when the ends appear to justify the means? And what's a girl to do when the most charming, erudite, capable and ostensibly honorable man in the free world wants to take her to bed (but he's married and her boss)? How does it feel to keep the biggest secret of her life from her best friend and coworker, even as the three of them spend every waking hour together? The tension between characters, right and wrong, and between success and implosion are taut.

Domestic Affairs Details

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From Reader Review Domestic Affairs for online ebook

Mike says

Politics, power, money and sex...

Hopefully, that got your attention! But, the truth is this is a great story about people. People who work towards their ideals, but also people whom have flaws, and are human nonetheless. This book is a look behind the scenes of political campaigns and fundraising, but at the end of the day, it's a great look behind the scenes of coworkers, or your friends or family. Whether you are a campaign staffer, political novice or anything in between, Domestic Affairs is a great read!

Wendy Hines says

Domestic Affairs isn't my normal cup of tea simply because I don't like to read stories steeped in politics. But, the synopsis sounded promising and I thought I'd give it a go. I have to be honest and say I was pleasantly surprised on how well I enjoyed Domestic Affairs. Siegel has a brilliant way of writing that kept me entranced with the story.

The three main characters, Olivia, Jacob and Landon aren't by any means complex characters. I liked them, but I didn't love them. It's the plot, the suspense and why people do what they do that kept me riveted. I soon found myself reluctant to put the book aside for other important things, like sleep. I enjoyed getting a closer look at how a campaign runs. Again, I didn't love the characters, but I wanted to know what motivates them to do what they do - it's amazing, really. If you enjoy romance, suspense and a splash of politics, pick up Domestic Affairs!

Hannah says

I live for the drama so I loved this (also having done some campaign volunteering I felt it captured the energy very well, even though I have not had a scandalous secret affair with a politician)

Nancy McKibben says

Domestic Affairs

By Bridget Siegel

Who could stand to read a novel about the insiders in a presidential campaign after suffering through the longest campaign in history this year? I suppose I picked up this book because the author is an actual insider (Siegel has worked for the state and national campaigns of prominent Democrats like Hilary Clinton and President Obama) and I thought I might be enlightened and entertained.

The novel's heroine Olivia is a seasoned twenty-something political fundraiser who is surprised to be tapped by an old friend to be the fundraiser in the national campaign of a Southern governor who exudes boyish

charm, sexy vibes, and high political ideals (Bill Clinton, anyone?) So already we see where this is going, and since the first chapter makes it clear, I'm giving nothing away. The author manages to make the heroine likable despite her blindness to the possible faults of her married seducer, and I kept mentally warning her (hey, I'm a mother!) to stay away from the bastard.

But the seduction is not the main interest of the book. What I found most arresting was the unfolding description of the absolute immersion in and fascination of a political campaign for its workers. Olivia cannot fathom why her friends are not equally fascinated, and she and the other workers happily neglect every other aspect of their lives to sink themselves into the primary campaign. As a side note, this very aspect assures that campaign workers are mostly young, as they burn out quickly.

Also noteworthy is a look at political fundraising, which is so central to the campaign (Olivia and the governor and the campaign manager are constantly obsessing over fundraising lists and whether they can meet financial deadlines) that it made me feel sad for our political system. Although Olivia and her friend and campaign manager Jake are initially drawn in by the governor's ideals, they become disillusioned by his personality changes, as he is gradually but surely corrupted by his celebrity status and lust for power.

Read *Domestic Affairs* for an educational inside look at a presidential campaign, but don't expect to be inspired by what you find.

Jamison Doran says

I'm a political wonk and love light political books (Kristin Gore's are phenomenal), and was really excited for this one.

While the book wasn't bad, and it certainly was fascinating trying to match the fictional characters with their real-life counter parts, I was rather underwhelmed.

The characters were not particularly likable, and the heroine, Olivia, came across as mildly annoying at best, to downright obnoxious at worst. She had potential, and as a smart and intelligent character, I was very dismayed by the path she continually went down knowing full good and well the potential consequences of her actions.

It is a very quick read, and can be finished in a couple of evenings with no problems. If you just want something light to read, this isn't a bad choice, especially if you follow politics and want to get some (albeit "fictional") dirt. However, don't expect to much from it, and don't be surprised if you walk away from it wanting to take a shower.

Jessica says

I don't really know why I even finished the book. Right around the middle I realized the characters were as good as they were going to get and I would never care for any of them. Olivia's "relationship" with Landon induced eye rolls and I constantly found myself thinking "ugh."

Bridget Siegel says

there's a chance i'm a little biased on this one. hope you all like it!!

Terri Powers says

Let me start by saying I joined a Book Club. Yes, I found out about a club and I invited myself. The invite was graciously accepted, so I graciously accepted the book everyone had decided to read, Domestic Affairs, by Bridget Siegel – a political romance/drama based in the present time. Would I have picked this book, no, but I'm hoping to introduce my book, Flashback To The Dragon, to them at some time in the future.

This is my first book club; I'm usually an independent reader and have never thought of myself as a join-y person. I'm not even sure what you are supposed to do at a meeting, but I'm a quick learner and have I told you I have high hopes that I can suggest my book at some point during my tenure with them?

Anyway, the story revolves around three people: Governor Landon Taylor, a presidential hopeful, Jacob Harriston, his campaign manager, and Olivia Greenley, a political fundraiser. While I didn't particularly like any of the characters, it is not because of Ms. Siegel's writing style, which I really liked, or because the characters were not described in detail, they were, it was because I'm not fond of the political arena.

Governor Taylor seemed like a likeable kind of guy, good-looking, friendly, explosive personality, passionate about the issues, driven to be a part of a run for the white house, etc., etc. The key to changing his mood to a more positive one was having pretty girls around.

Harriston was politically minded, organized, and driven to follow a true leader, one that shared the same political and moral views, but Jacob was shallow and a failure with relationships or activities outside of campaigning. Although he was interested in Sophie, a non-political groupie whom he termed "normal" and whom he squeezed dates with her in between political fundraisers, dinners, campaign trips, and press calls, he really didn't have much of a life outside of politics.

Greenley lost my respect in the prologue when she was in bed with the Governor, sneaking out of the room back to her own room. Everything she stood for prior to that is lost. She was an idealistic young lady who found that talking about anything other than elections or campaigning was boring, but she just couldn't understand why her friends were so bored with her stories *yawn*. Her life had gone pretty much like Jacob's where she lived in a messy house, subsisted off Doritos out of a bag, and hadn't had a date in a while.

I forged ahead, however, and actually enjoyed the story in its entirety (not the individuals, but the story) as it followed the three lead characters through the intricacies of fundraising, filing, and staffing. It was well-written and I would give Bridget Siegel another chance at another type of story because she kept me involved even though I wasn't vested with any of the characters.

The final chapters move along at a high-speed as Olivia and Landon's relationship comes into focus, a friend of Landon's gets into trouble, and both Olivia and Jacob try to come to terms with what they do for a living and why they do it. I liked the inner conflicts within the story that added another layer to the whirlwind of political fundraisers. And the ending is satisfying.

Did it change my mind about politics or politicians, no, but I'd vote for this book and Ms. Siegel.

Ozma says

It was great fun to read about the inner workings of a presidential campaign just starting to get off its feet, especially in the current political season. I read this whole novel without realizing until much later on that the authored worked on Edwards' presidential campaign. That brings quite a twist to the novel, in a way, considering what we know of Edwards now. Anyway, was a fun light read and gives an insight into what these political staffers do, their ambitions, their desires, and hopes. I also love books about young women getting established in their careers. I can live vicariously through them. The main female character, while admirable in her work ethic and determination, was a bit nuts, overly neurotic. It was a bit much. At some point, hopefully the neurotic female trope will evolve into something else or be replaced altogether. The problem is that women cannot write books with just a steady female heroine somewhat based on themselves unless they are totally secure and unafraid of others claiming they are boasting of how great their own real selves are. So they make the character based on themselves neurotic to overcome that perceived, potential allegation. So we women have to stop that. Can't we have a capable, female heroine based on the author's own experiences who isn't constantly secondly-guessing herself and in her head? Anyway, regardless of that though, I loved reading about the campaign and how it all worked and came together, how the politician operated, the other staffers, and the big campaign donors who often came to the rescue or totally abandoned the heroine right before the reporting deadline. The book was good but not quite a home run. Fun read if you have the time and are interested in politics. Would love to know the "back story" on the author.

Tonya says

This was pretty good. It was an interesting look at the Modern political landscape. And a look at life on the road in politics. It was also about characters who were shallow and unlikable.

Sandie says

Olivia Greenley can't believe her luck. Her good friend, Jacob, campaign manager for Presidential candidate Landon Taylor, has recommended her to be the new chief fundraiser. It is Olivia's dream job. Taylor is her perfect candidate; a man who is in politics to make things right and whose campaign she would be honored to work on. She is overjoyed when she is hired, especially at the knowledge that she is the youngest chief fundraiser around.

As the campaign progresses, Olivia spends hours each day on the job. She moves from fundraising event to event, hobnobbing with the rich and famous. Her job is to convince them to lend their support in whatever fashion they can. For some, that is hosting an event and committing to raising at least two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. For others, it is loaning the campaign private jets or picking up tabs for luxury hotels and amazing meals. Above all else, it is her job to convince everyone she meets to give money, tons and tons of money.

The weeks fly by and the campaign progresses. Olivia discovers the truth of political campaigns; the staffers are paid almost nothing and expected to work pretty much around the clock. Dream candidates don't seem

quite so dreamy when you spend all your time with them and learn their secrets and personality flaws. Still, one can't give up the perfect job, can one?

Bridget Siegel has written an entertaining political insider's view of a campaign. She is a veteran of several campaigns herself such as Kerry-Edwards, Obama-Biden, Hilary Clinton and others. She raises the questions of whether American politics demands too much of the candidates and if it is possible to remain pure in politics. Is the entire system flawed? This book is recommended for those readers interested in politics and what the electoral system does to the participants.

Stephanie Mah says

My dear friend Bridget wrote a smart, entertaining and engaging book about the juicy inner workings of political campaigns. A must read!!

Meg - A Bookish Affair says

"Domestic Affairs" is a wonky romance story. Now, I really enjoy politics and I like romances but this book didn't really do it for me.

The story itself is pretty interesting. Olivia, a woman who is enamored with the swarmy Landon, who is running for office, is also working Landon's campaign. Olivia makes some really bad decisions and doesn't seem to even begin thinking of the consequences. She falls for Landon and gets romantically entangled with him. This was one of my main issues. Olivia seems really smart. I don't get why she falls for Landon. Yes, he's enigmatic but what else draws her to him. Is it his power? Is it her want for power? What is it?

Also, while I appreciated political aspect of this book, it gets pretty dry and well, political.

Sara Bachman says

FINALLY a book with an ending that didn't leave me extremely pissed off, upset, or disappointed in the world. I was actually quite satisfied. I found this book to be fairly good. The inside scoop to political campaigning was really interesting to me. One thing that distracted from the content was the constant changing of tense and voice. There would be times where in one sentence, Olivia was talking about the past and in the next sentence, the narrator was describing Olivia in the present. Kind of confusing but I was able to look over it for the most part. I thought this book was really well paced, except for the last couple chapters. There was the random suicide note, then Olivia deciding she hated her life, then the end. That could've been written a lot more smoothly. I was satisfied simply because there was a conclusive ending and no setup for a sequel. Regardless, I was thoroughly entertained. I would recommend this book, but it isn't something I'll read several times over.

Miriam Downey says

Read my full review here: <http://mimi-cyberlibrarian.blogspot.c...>

Olivia and Jacob are good friends who work on political campaigns, moving up the ladder of campaigns from state races to national races. Jacob has begun working for Landon Taylor's Democratic presidential run. He suggests to Taylor that he might consider Olivia for the position of fundraiser. When Taylor hires Olivia to be his head fundraiser, she becomes the youngest head fundraiser in history. Olivia is smart and pretty, and quickly becomes dedicated to the values Taylor appears to stand for, but soon, she blindly becomes dedicated to the personal charms of the charismatic Taylor.

Told through the alternating experiences of Jacob and Olivia, the story moves through the beginning days of the campaign until just before the Iowa caucuses when the scene begins to unravel. Olivia is swept along with both the campaign and her love for Taylor, who shows himself again and again to be a cad. In the end, when he attempts for the umpteenth time to win her favor, Olivia looks at him honestly "wondering for the first time if she ever really did love him, or if she had just loved what he represented, what he pretended to believe." Facing up to her own personal dishonesty, she follows Jacob who has already gotten out of the campaign.

The question of Domestic Affairs is "Which political campaign is this book about?" The book's author, Bridget Siegel, worked on several political campaigns, including the John Edwards campaign. We have to assume that much of her experience and the resulting novel came from the Edwards campaign. One reviewer said: "It would be a better book if the events weren't so close to what happened in the Edwards' campaign, which ruined numerous lives in the real world. In the fictional world offered by the author, everyone moves on and nobody is hurt." And indeed, in the novel, Olivia and Jacob move on to the next campaign after their complete disillusionment with Landon Taylor. Will the next candidate disillusion them again, or are they older, wiser, and more realistic?

What Domestic Affairs successfully does is give a hard look at two aspects of politics that continue to baffle me: What motivates someone to choose politics as a life's work? and What is there in the personality of a candidate that makes him/her seek power? My husband's question would be: Does the personal life of a candidate matter if he/she can deliver the goods politically? I guess that we have seen this at work in the campaign of the formerly disgraced North Carolina governor, Mark Sanford. The electorate seems to think that he can deliver the goods despite his personal life.

Most political novels are seen through the eyes of male protagonists. In Domestic Affairs, we see the campaign through the eyes of a woman. Siegel says that many of her experiences were used in the book, but her experiences were not unique. The events in the book were "a compilation of many campaign workers' struggles and surprises."

The review on Blog Critics: <http://blogcritics.org/books/article/...>
