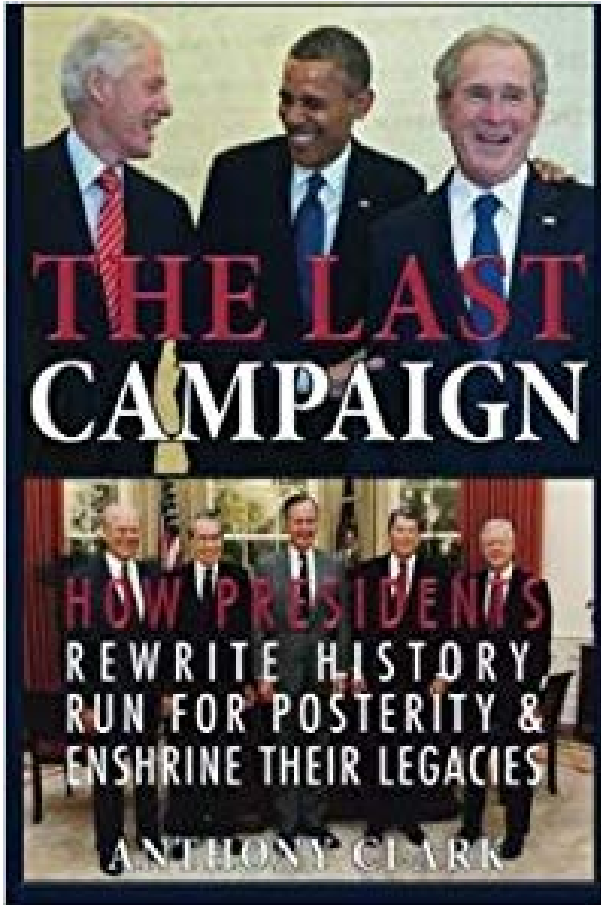


The Last Campaign: How Presidents Rewrite History, Run for Posterity & Enshrine Their Legacies



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Learn the hidden politics & history of presidential libraries, our taxpayer-funded American shrines - including the untold story of a president who broke the law to build his library on a tract of spectacular land: a primary training base for the United States Marines. The president took it anyway - during a time of war - and created a new bureaucracy to cover up his actions; only his other, larger crimes put an end to his scheme. "The Last Campaign" examines what presidents do to keep us from knowing what presidents do: skewed history, self-commemoration, the influence of private money and political organizations, and a compromised government agency - the National Archives, which operates the libraries. Presidential library expert Anthony Clark recounts his attempts, as a private citizen and as a senior Congressional staffer, to rein in the system's worst abuses. Unrestrained commemoration, unregulated – and undisclosed – contributions, and unchecked partisan politics have radically altered the look and purpose of presidential libraries, changing them from impartial archives of history into extravagant, legacy-building showplaces where the goals of former presidents, their families, financial donors, and the national parties trump accuracy and the (often inconvenient) facts. Using records discovered over twelve years of research and repeated visits to all the presidential libraries, the National Archives, and other sources, Clark deftly narrates the ways presidents rewrite history.

And how their private, political foundations use government institutions to raise millions of dollars for political purposes.

He tells the story of the most political Archivist of the United States, and why his deplorable actions still resonate, still matter to us, more than twenty years later. Americans deserve fair and accurate history in the libraries for which we pay; history based on records, not politics. But while presidents run for posterity, dedicating their self-congratulatory museums an average of four years after leaving office (complete with exhibits created to glorify them and their achievements), the records that show what actually happened won't be opened for more than a hundred years...un we decide to do something, and reform our presidential libraries.