

Dana Perino Is A Mind Reader

No, I have never sat across from her with a crystal ball between us, but in *And the Good News Is...* Dana Perino answers all the questions I would ask the Fox News co-host and former presidential press secretary if I had the opportunity to meet her. It is a delightful book that introduces the reader to a delightful person, and the many *good* people—famous and unknown—who have had an impact on her life.

I can think of a thousand well-known people whose lives do not interest me in the least—even if I do happen to admire their work or their talents or agree with them one hundred percent on political and ideological issues. But Perino pulls you into her life with brief yet interesting stories about her years in Wyoming, Colorado, Washington, D.C., and New York City. The book is well-paced, revealing events that are important and omitting those that are not, while often taking pleasant little detours to add something interesting before returning to the main point.

Perino notes that what she has said in public is on the record, but what she was “thinking, feeling, and seeing is what this book is about.” That is precisely what makes the book enjoyable. What was it like to be present when “a two-bit shoe thrower” (unsuccessfully) tried to run President Bush out of a press conference in Baghdad? (Few know that Perino was injured by a falling microphone.) What was it like to be the press secretary of a president when his approval ratings were falling? What was it like to deal with a combative press? What are the politicians like when the cameras are not on them?

Perino’s love and respect for Bush—a man who often speaks “from the heart and without notes”—is obvious. The stories she relates make it easy to understand why. The same can be said of her love and respect for the United States: “[Y]ou would never have picked me out of a crowd and said, ‘She’ll be the White House press secretary one day.’ And that’s what makes America so great...” How Perino went from “sitting on a barnyard fence” to “sitting on Marine One with the President of the United States” is a journey worth taking.

Worth the price of admission alone are Perino’s account of a meeting in Israel at which President Bush relieved tensions among participants who did not exactly see eye to eye, and her description of a visit to wounded soldiers at the Walter Reed military hospital. It is clear that Mr. Bush has extraordinary people skills (that his successor lacks). Perino provides several examples of advice she received from the president—advice which would certainly benefit the rest of us as well.

Fans of *The Five* will learn a few things about the “magic formula” provided by prosecutor Kimberly Guilfoyle, journalist Andrea Tantaros, “libertarian” Juan Williams, real libertarian Eric Bolling, brilliant rapscaillon Greg Gutfeld, and leftist curmudgeon Bob Beckel.

I will cut the author some slack for admitting she once read a Toni Morrison novel because I enjoyed reading about her Vizslas Henry and Jasper (“America’s dog,” who shares my birthday) and learning that her husband’s granddaughters call her “Grandma

America.” Yes, and the late Tony Snow had terrible taste in neckties, Ed Henry is sentimental, and Harry Reid is quite an unpleasant human being. (Well, you need not read Perino’s book to learn that last fact.)

Dana Perino has learned some good life lessons, which she eagerly shares with her readers. Some may seem obvious to those of us in the “baby boomer” generation, but regrettably not all of them have been learned by “millennials” and members of “generation X.” Buy extra copies of the book to give them as gifts. But keep yours for re-reading when you need a dose of wholesomeness and inspiration.

Don Fredrick
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