



# WHAT HAPPENED

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Inside the Bush White House  
and Washington's Culture of Deception

SCOTT MCCLELLAN

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In 1999, at the age of thirty, Scott K. McClellan accepted what he considered the job of a lifetime: working as press spokesman for Texas governor George W. Bush, just as Bush was beginning his campaign for the presidency of the United States. Drawn to Bush's strong, successful record of bipartisan leadership and commitment to compassionate conservatism, and later inspired by his promise to restore dignity to a White House sullied by scandal and partisan warfare, McClellan would serve the president for more than seven years, becoming part of his inner circle of trusted advisers and attaining the job of White House Press Secretary.

From that position, during what would become one of the most challenging and contentious periods in recent American history, McClellan witnessed day to day and year to year exactly what happened to take the presidency he served disastrously and irretrievably off course. In this bracingly candid and provocative book, he shares that story with the American people.

*What Happened* provides a unique perspective on the events, policies, and personalities of the Bush administration, including 9/11, the Iraq War and the marketing campaign to sell it to the public, the Valerie Plame leak scandal, and Hurricane Katrina. McClellan shares his personal experience of who George W. Bush is and what he believes, explains how the White House operated and how its goals and priorities were shaped, and offers insights into the roles and personalities of top aides including Karl Rove, Andy Card, Karen Hughes, Condoleezza Rice, and Dick Cheney.

Just as important, McClellan shares his keen understanding of exactly how our national political culture has become so toxic. He compellingly makes the case against playing "politics as usual"—whether

(continued on back flap)





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PublicAffairs  
New York

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Book design by Lisa Kreinbrink

Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN-13: 978-1-58648-556-6

First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

973.931  
MCC