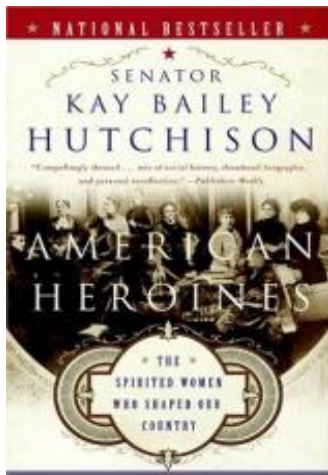

American Heroines: The Spirited Women Who Shaped Our Country

by Kay Bailey Hutchison



About the Book

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, a pioneer in her own right, became the first woman from the state of Texas elected to the United States Senate. In *American Heroines*, she celebrates the achievements of women whose commitment and courage enabled them to overcome prejudice and shape our nation's destiny. Here are inspiring accounts of trailblazers in fields ranging from government, business, and education to sports and the arts whose contributions have substantially bettered our lives and our world. Interspersed with profiles of American historic female leaders are profiles of today's women, including:

Aviator Amelia Earhart and astronaut Sally Ride

Carleton Fiorina, the first woman CEO of a Fortune 50 company

Record-setting athletes Mildred "Babe" Didrikson Zaharias and Althea Gibson

Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Madeleine Albright, the first female Secretary of State

Plus new material available in this edition.

An extended interview with Condoleezza Rice on her experience as Secretary of State

New biographies and interviews with Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao and author -- inspirational speaker Ruth Graham

Discussion Guide

1. In her introduction, Senator Hutchison writes, "No history can be written appropriately without acknowledging the part women have played in building the greatness of our country" (Page xix). Why is this true? Do you believe that women are no longer being left out of history-making today?

2. With which of these women did you most identify, and why?
3. Mary Austin Holly, the senator's ancestor, writes, "Women have the capacity for greatness, but they require occasions to bring it out" (Page 7). What does she mean? How is this reflected in her own life?
4. In what ways did the struggles of early Texas settlements provide more and different opportunities for women than the rest of the country might have had at the time?
5. Adina De Zavala and Clara Driscoll were both devoted to saving the Alamo as a historical monument. What was the source of their disagreement over this project? Was either of them completely wrong?
6. On page 50, Senator Hutchison writes, "Elizabeth Seton frankly admitted that her devotion to her own children represented a 'first claim, which must ever remain inviolate.'" Is this statement reflected in her life? This is such a crucial issue for many professional women. Has it been a concern in your own life?
7. Clara Barton's story certainly illustrates that women can recover from setback after setback and go on to achieve great things. Barton's achievements are still making a difference in our world today. Are there women today whose achievements you feel will carry into the future?
8. Some of these great women, such as Mary Cassatt, do not always fulfill society's understanding of being friendly or nice. Are women in general judged differently according to these standards than are men? Why or why not?
9. In the Senator's interviews with women of today, one of the answers most often given to question of what quality is required for success is "energy." Why is this quality so crucial? Do you think that energy is something one is born with, or can it be learned?

Author Bio

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson grew up in La Marque, Texas, and graduated from the University of Texas and the UT Law School. She was twice elected to the Texas House of Representatives. In 1990 she was elected Texas state treasurer, and in 1993, she became the first woman elected to represent Texas in the U.S. senate. Seven years later, more than four million Texans reelected her to a second full term. In 2001 she was elected vice chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, becoming one of the top five leaders of Senate Republicans and the only woman. Senator Hutchinson lives in Dallas with her husband, Ray, an attorney, and their daughter, Bailey, and son, Houston.

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Publication Date: February 28, 2006

Paperback: 372 pages

Publisher: Harper Perennial

ISBN-10: 0060566361

ISBN-13: 9780060566364