

Book review: A glimpse into what could have been

By Kathryn Reed

My favorite books are ones that educate (in a non-academic way) or entertain. Educate this did.

Before going further, let me state that I am not a Hillary Clinton fan, but I did vote for her.



For those who sat out the election last year, voted third party or cast a ballot for Donald Trump as an “anyone but that woman” vote, this book is really for you. It’s not for Clinton supporters. They know much of what lies on those pages and then some. I doubt, though, that many who didn’t vote for Clinton will take the time to read this book.

“What Happened” (Simon & Schuster, 2017) came out in September. It’s more than a rehashing of the 2016 campaign and what has gone on in the months since her bid to become the first female president of the United States went up in smoke.

This is a history lesson. And that’s what made the book so riveting to listen to. I was on a road trip last month and opted for the audio version to make the time go by. It did. Making it more interesting is that Clinton reads the book. So, the inflection is real, the emotion heartfelt, the energy palpable, and the anger edgy.

Yes, she goes into the whole email issue in detail and in more

than one chapter. It got repetitive, but then so did the issue when it was in the news.

Speaking of the news, she skewers the media for its coverage of the presidential campaign and rightly so. If only issues had been brought to the forefront more and not abhorrent behavior. Yes, the behavior needs attention, but there is so much more to being president of the United States.

Most of the voting public needs to be spoon fed facts because they won't seek them out on their own. Policy statements, though, don't make for interesting sound bites or headlines. Too bad. I'm a firm believer the media needs to give people what they need (hard news) and not just what they seem to want (fluff).

In the book Clinton delves into those ideas that seemed to garner no ink when it mattered.

She points fingers at herself where she failed and should have done things differently. She was campaigning old school. She points fingers at others.

Clinton has a lot to say about the Electoral College, and rightly so. She won the popular vote by millions; bringing into question such an antiquated system.

Her family's history – extended as well as immediate – are significant parts of the book. If you don't think Clinton is warm, listen to her talk about her daughter and grandchildren.

She is a complex woman, brilliant, with ideas that perhaps had they been delivered by a different messenger, would have resonated more with people.

I'm sure the book was cathartic for her to write. Clearly, it was also difficult. There is no second place in a two-person race, only last.

If people want a platform from which to build on for 2018, the

book could be it. It has more substance, though, than most people will want to stomach – whether they agree with the words or not.