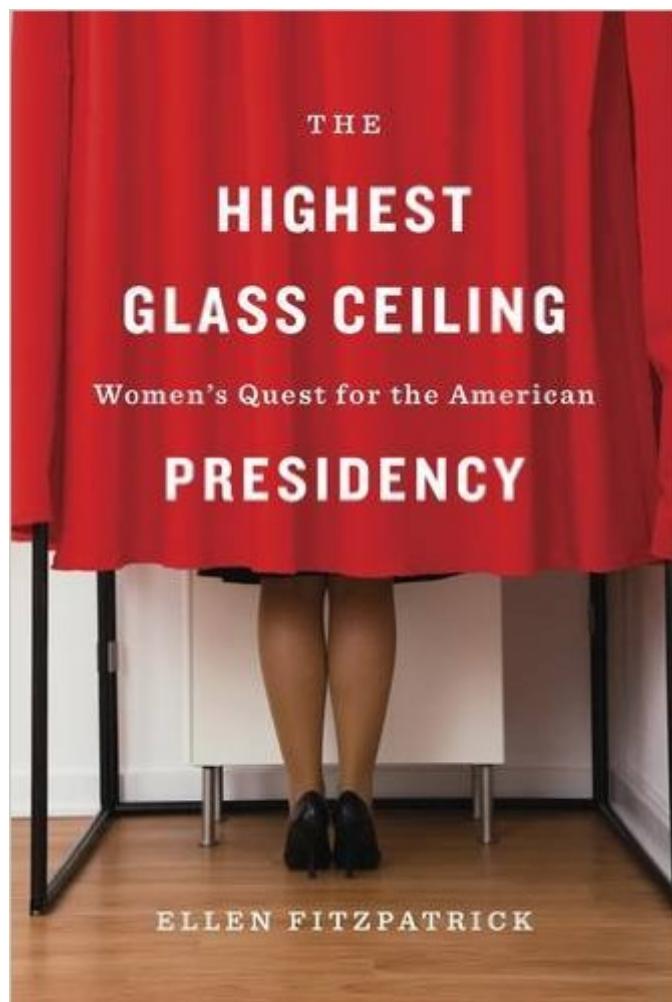


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# The Highest Glass Ceiling: Women's Quest For The American Presidency



## Synopsis

In *The Highest Glass Ceiling*, best-selling historian Ellen Fitzpatrick tells the story of three remarkable women who set their sights on the American presidency. Victoria Woodhull (1872), Margaret Chase Smith (1964), and Shirley Chisholm (1972) each challenged persistent barriers confronted by women presidential candidates. Their quest illuminates today's political landscape, showing that Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign belongs to a much longer, arduous, and dramatic journey. The tale begins during Reconstruction when the radical Woodhull became the first woman to seek the presidency. Although women could not yet vote, Woodhull boldly staked her claim to the White House, believing she might thereby advance women's equality. Republican Senator Margaret Chase Smith came into political office through the œwidow's mandate. Among the most admired women in public life when she launched her 1964 campaign, she soon confronted prejudice that she was too old (at 66) and too female to be a creditable presidential candidate. She nonetheless became the first woman to have her name placed in nomination for President by a major party. Democratic Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm ignored what some openly described as the twin disqualifications of race and gender in her spirited 1972 presidential campaign. She ran all the way to the Democratic convention, inspiring diverse followers and angering opponents, including members of the Nixon administration who sought to derail her candidacy. As *The Highest Glass Ceiling* reveals, women's pursuit of the Oval Office, then and now, has involved myriad forms of influence, opposition, and intrigue.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

With Hillary Clinton in a good position to become the first woman nominated and/or elected president, author Ellen Fitzpatrick has written a timely offering on women in the past who have sought the highest office in the land. Her book, "The Highest Glass Ceiling", provides a look at three women...Victoria Woodhull, Margaret Chase Smith and Shirley Chisholm...all who ran for president. The book starts off with a bang. Woodhull, a successful businesswoman, propelled herself into an unlikely race. Not even of the minimum age to become president under the Constitution and running nearly fifty years before women could vote, Woodhull, nonetheless forged ahead in her quest. As with Chase Smith and Chisholm, it's interesting to note that women often were much more opposed to their candidacies than were men. Fast forward to Margaret Chase Smith who entered politics upon her husband's death and served Maine as both a Congresswoman and a Senator for over three decades. Her rise to stardom occurred over a long period of time, but she was no less a rebel than Woodhull or Chisholm, taking courage to denounce her Senate colleague, Joe McCarthy. But Chisholm was the real firebrand...not only being a woman but also black, Chisholm lit a torch that made history. Fitzpatrick ends with an epilogue that discusses Hillary Clinton in her current race. It's a great way to finish a terrific book and I highly recommend "The Highest Glass Ceiling" for its depth and timeliness.

The only time I could put this book down was when I needed to process the horrifying ways in which history repeats itself. Margaret Chase Smith dealing with Senator Joseph McCarthy is eerily similar to what's going on today with right wing bullies. And what Shirley Chisholm put up with, both from feminism's leading lights as well as Richard Nixon's dirty tricksters will take your breath away.

MS Fitzpatrick has managed to close the generation gap for woman with this dynamic read. The book artfully reminds older women (50+) that we have not evolved in equality as we think we have. Of course, this fact is reflected in the present political fiasco with Hillary Clinton running unfortunately, it seems, against an obvious poor choice for a nominee much less a hopeful for President. The choice would seem clear, but alas that is not the case. Far too many men would rather cast their vote for the poorest of possibilities than to vote for a woman. Women, we have not come as far as we would like to think. For the under 50 women, equality for women is simply not equal. Historically, many young women do not know the fight has been long and hard. Fitzpatrick brings the fight to light in a historical manner which is both enlightening to both young and old but is a master in the delivery of the facts. This is a wonderful read and should be made available at every

political event. There is something vital in its message for both genders.

Found this book interesting, well researched and very engaging. I learned so much about the women described in the book as well as about the history of women in politics. Very relevant on today's election environment. I highly recommend it.

The struggles of three past women presidential candidates serves as a warning to all voters as this election season, which will undoubtedly ratchet up hateful rhetoric, snide innuendo and dirty tricks to discredit yet another woman candidate. It remains to be seen whether the country has learned anything since 1920 when women got the vote. The next several months are sure to tell the story.

Wonderfully written book introducing us to three women presidential candidates from various eras in history. You come away from this read admiring the three women and the author who skillfully describes their quests, their challenges and their ultimate defeats.

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