



Barney Frank: The Story of America's Only Left-Handed, Gay, Jewish Congressman

Stuart Weisberg

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In a survey conducted by Washingtonian magazine, Barney Frank was rated the smartest, funniest, and most eloquent member of Congress. A mainstay in the House of Representatives since 1981, he has come to be known for his talent as a legislator, his zeal for verbal combat, his imposing intellect, and a quick wit that both disarms and entertains other lawmakers. Most recently, as chair of the Financial Services Committee, he was instrumental in crafting a compromise bill to stem the tide of home mortgage foreclosures, as well as the subsequent \$700 billion "rescue plan."

Based on interviews with over 150 people, including more than thirty hours with Frank himself, this biography reconstructs for the first time his life and career, from his working-class childhood in Bayonne, New Jersey, to his years at Harvard and in Boston politics, through his rise to national prominence. Stuart Weisberg captures Frank in all his quiriness, irreverence, and complexity. He also examines his less appealing side?his gruff exterior, his legendary impatience, his aversion to wasting time. Weisberg reveals the pressure Frank has felt as the most prominent openly gay politician in the United States, one whose career was nearly derailed by a highly publicized sex scandal involving a male prostitute.

Above all, this book shows Frank to be a superb legislator?a pragmatic politician who has dedicated his career to pursuing an unabashedly liberal agenda and whose depth of intellect and sense of humor have made him one of the most influential and colorful figures in Washington.

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