

FROM THE CRITICS

Kirkus Reviews

A lighthearted intervention into America's discussion about child-care. Kline is the founder of White House Nannies Inc., which provides cabinet secretaries and the press corps with their child-care. She tells war stories from her years matching up kiddie caretakers with the nation's powerbrokers. At the center of it all is high-profile newscaster Janette Huntington (presumably a composite). She called Kline days before the birth of her son because the nanny she'd engaged had just quit, opting for a post that came with bigger closets in the nanny suite. (Good nannies can find themselves outfitted with a Porsche, monthly spa days and a trip to the Caribbean, all in the interest of keeping that most crucial member of the household happy.) Kline was able to find the perfect match-hard-working, devoted Emma-and gives over much of the text to describing the first few years of baby Huntington's life, during which he spent far more waking hours with the nanny than with mom and pop. Such seeming success stories alternate with outrageous vignettes about nutty parents and demanding nannies who all enter therapy to deal with the stress of fast-paced living. The parents portrayed here are desperate to do their best for the kids, but their best translates into excellent child-care, not time with their children. "Family togetherness is rarer than a Japanese cherry tree in bloom in Washington. In January," Kline avers. That's as close to a critique as she gets-of course, too robust a critique would undermine her business. But the failure to engage larger questions is a major flaw here. Does this remote-control parenting have any detrimental affects on kids? What about all those parents who work not because they want fulfillment, but because they want to keep food on the table, who can't afford the \$750 per week for White House Nannies Inc.? For what it is, very funny, very insightful, and very well done. But it would be nice if Kline were a bit less myopic.

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E.M, A reviewer, February 16, 2005, ★★★★★

Funniest Book I've Ever Read

This book had me laughing out loud the entire time. I couldn't put it down! Although the Nanny Diaries was an enjoyable read, White House Nannies is MUCH better written and far wittier. I RECOMMEND THIS BOOK TO ANYONE!