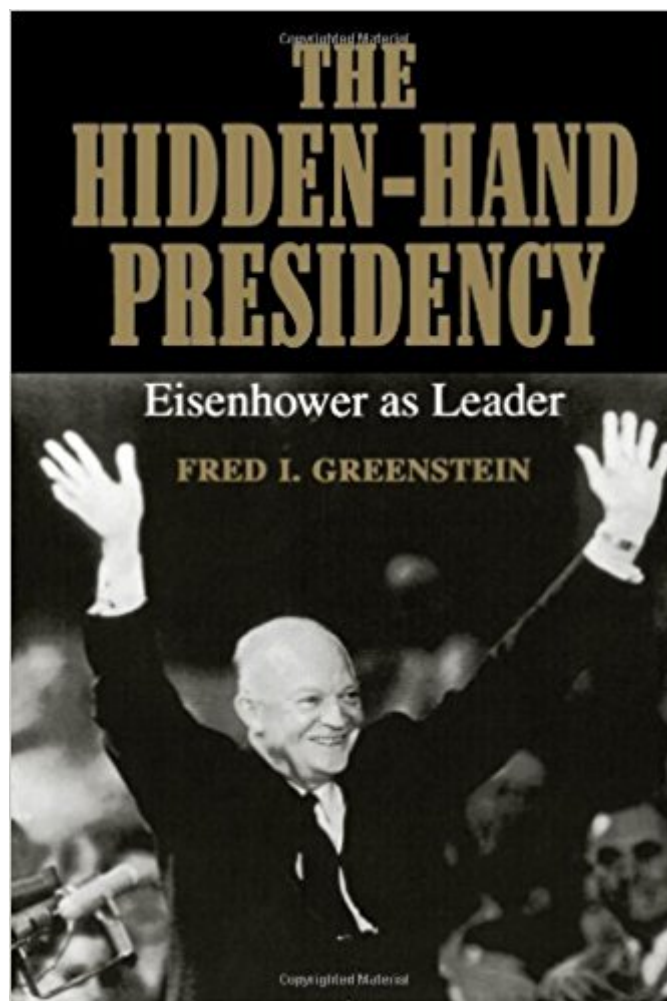


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The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower As Leader



Synopsis

Drawing on extensive interviews and archival research, Fred Greenstein reveals that there was great political activity beneath the placid surface of the Eisenhower White House. In a new foreword to this edition, he discusses developments in the study of the Eisenhower presidency in the dozen years since publication of the first edition and examines the continuing significance of Eisenhower's legacy for the larger understanding of presidential leadership in modern America.

Book Information

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At a moment in time when the debate over "leaks" of government activities and the value of transparency are pitted against the value of security, it is well to be reminded of the fact that every call for "balance" continues to fall on deaf ears in both camps. Differences between the parties are ideological and thus "political" in the most deadly sense of the word: opponents are viewed as enemies and their views are considered threats to the very existence of our" way of life. One has reason to wonder if open debates will result in any mutually satisfactory compromises. In light of the mental set of the "debaters," one also has reason to wonder if anyone could be an effective mediator. If there is someone who could play that role, would not the mediator require some allowance to punish those who remain recalcitrant, so that whatever agreements are made can be maintained? While thinking about those questions, I remember reading this very powerful book on President Eisenhower in 1995. Published originally in 1982, it was updated in 1994, while Bill

Clinton was President. Having been a teenager when Eisenhower was President, my memories of him were dominated by how often he appeared aloof from the daily operations of government. What I did not know until reading this book was how much in control he was. He took responsibility for approving or disapproving every important decision made in his Administration. The Eisenhower I discovered through this book was his ability to design an effective organizational structure that had a clear chain of command and how he successfully managed decision-making in such a structure.

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