

The political price

An avalanche of American political books is coming in this election year, covering subjects from the Bush White House to the Iraq War and grassroots activism.

One book that will interest a wide readership is *The Clinton Chronicles* by Tina Brown, the former magazine editor and author of last year's smartly gossipy, pink-covered bestseller *The Diana Chronicles*. Her new book, which Brown says is "not just the enthralling story of the Clintons themselves but the social, political and media context of the times", will be published by Doubleday in 2010, by which time Hillary Clinton will either be halfway through her first term as president or on her way to retirement.

If it's any guide to the future, secondhand copies of Barack Obama's 1995 memoir, *Dreams From My Father*, are outselling any other Democratic candidates' books at Abebooks.com, the Canadian-based online bookseller. The book went out of print before he emerged as a major figure and is therefore scarce. Signed first editions have sold in the past year for \$US1798 (\$2000) and \$US1299, almost matching the \$US1850 paid in 2006 for a signed first edition of Bill Clinton's *My Life*.

Abebooks has sold a copy of Hillary's 2003 memoir *Living History* for \$US575, whereas John Edwards's memoir *Four Trails* is available for \$US99. On the Republican side, signed first editions of John McCain's memoir *Faith Of My Fathers* are on offer - though not sold - for as much as \$US795. Rudy Giuliani's *Leadership*, about his management tactics, are priced up to \$US500. The first of Mike Huckabee's five books, *Character Is The Issue*, is asking up to \$US300.

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January 19, 2008 1:13 AM