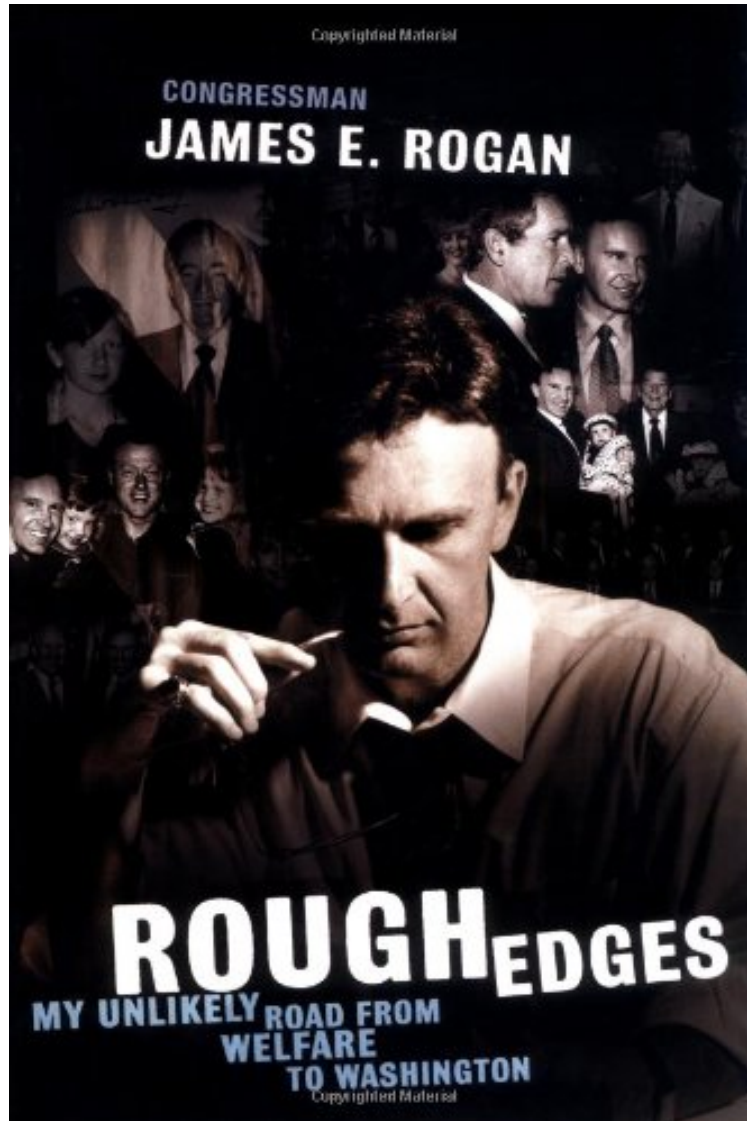


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## Rough Edges: My Unlikely Road from Welfare to Washington

*James E. Rogan*

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**James E. Rogan : Rough Edges: My Unlikely Road from Welfare to Washington** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rough Edges: My Unlikely Road from Welfare to Washington:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Proof That the American Dream Exists By Fern Richardson What an amazing life story! I read most of this book on a plane from Washington D.C. to LA. I was actually disappointed when the plane landed because I only had a few more chapters to go and I didn't want to stop reading. The author tells of his journey from the Mission District in San Francisco to halls of Congress. The book is surprisingly enjoyable

considering that the author is a lawyer (and lawyers often write in a yawn inspiring manner). The passengers on my plane kept on turning around to look at me as I laughed out loud or stifled tears. Republican or Democrat, young or old, rich or poor...you will enjoy this book!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. a great read.By Michael A. Cusumanofasinating book. a great read.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An American success storyBy Joan CastoThe book Rough Edges is an honest autobiography about a young man who was deep into all sorts of wrong things as a young man and yet turned himself around to be a successful US Judge today! It is an easy and entertaining read.

Jim Rogan was born to a single mother a cocktail waitress who was later convicted of welfare fraud; his bartender-father abandoned them both before he was born. After a rough-and-tumble childhood in San Francisco's hardscrabble Mission District where he was raised by his colorful extended family he became a political junkie at the age of nine, and once received help with his homework from Harry Truman. But Rogan traveled with a tough circle of friends; after years of borderline delinquency he was expelled from high school, became a porn theater bouncer, and then a bartender at a strip joint and a Hell's Angels bar. Along the way, a young Arkansas politician advised him to study law and become a member of a different kind of bar. In time Rogan scrapped his way through college and law school. He was appointed a Los Angeles County DA, prosecuting members of the notorious Crips and Bloods gangs; then became a judge, a state legislator, and finally a congressman from Southern California. And in 1998, as a Republican member of the House Judiciary Committee, he found himself prosecuting the impeachment of the President of the United States Bill Clinton, the same Arkansas politician who advised him to go into law and politics two decades earlier. Rough Edges is a rarity among Washington tales: full of outrageous stories, wild humor, pull-no-punches candor, and downright fun. Replete with character and characters, and told in Rogan's engaging and unswervingly frank voice, Rogan's story is certainly the most freewheeling and perhaps the most honest political memoir ever written.

From Publishers Weekly Raised by a single mom on welfare and food stamps, the author of this colorful and engaging autobiography dropped out of high school and misspent his youth hanging out with druggie friends and touring the fleshpots of L.A. as a bartender and porn theater bouncer. Perhaps not surprisingly, given his penchant for busting up inappropriate public trysts, he wound up a conservative Republican Congressman prosecuting Bill Clinton's impeachment case. The byproduct of this surprising career trajectory is that rare politicians memoir rife with sentences like "Fleabag...whipped out a switchblade, clicked it open and lunged at me" and "Joanne placidly complied with this vague request by raising her tank top and thrusting forth her bare breasts." There is, of course, a political subtext that occasionally surfaces as glib Republican boilerplate. Along with the funny, profane anecdotes about fending off angry biker chicks and selling vacuum cleaners in warehouses, Rogan slips in parables about the evils of drugs, unions and campus radicals, as well as the social benefits of concealed firearms. In describing his political journey from youthful admirer of Hubert Humphrey to Reaganite conservative, he invokes his street cred as a scion of the working class to justify right-wing policy nostrums on welfare reform and school vouchers. But he mostly keeps the ideology in the background and his outrageous stories and warm, self-deprecating authorial voice up front. Rogan writes like a P.J. O'Rourke with a Capra-esque streak of political optimism, and this hilarious, crowd-pleasing memoir will probably make him a major conservative media celebrity. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist In 1998 Rogan served on the House Judiciary Committee, prosecuting the impeachment of President Bill Clinton. It was a particularly poignant experience for Rogan because two decades earlier it was Clinton, then attorney general for Arkansas, who encouraged Rogan to get a law degree and enter politics. Citing other similarities between himself and Clinton (growing up without fathers; mothers who married and eventually divorced alcoholics), Rogan details his personal journey into politics, a switch from Democrat to Republican, and election as a congressman from California. Rogan is blunt and engaging in recollections of his rough childhood in the Mission District of San Francisco and of the allure of politics at the age of nine. He was so compelled by politics and personal conviction that he enlisted Harry S Truman for help with his homework. Stints as a bartender and a bouncer were as formative of Rogan's eventual political skills as his study of the law. Defeated in his reelection bid in 2001, Rogan offers a frank, refreshing look at politics and political personalities. Vanessa Bush Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved About the Author James E. Rogan was until recently undersecretary of commerce and director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office in the Bush administration. From 1997 to 2001 he was a member of Congress -- a conservative Republican representing a liberal Democratic district that included many Hollywood movie studios. Before that he was majority leader of the California State Assembly, a state court judge, and a gang-murder prosecutor in Los Angeles County. Accepting the assignment by the United States House of Representatives in 1998 to help prosecute the impeachment trial against President Clinton led to Rogan's reelection defeat in 2000. He now lives in Southern California, and is currently a partner at the law firm of Venable LLP in Washington, D.C. He will open Venable's West Coast office in the summer of 2004.