

Rahul

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Perceptions of Rahul Gandhi have ranged from the great Indian hope to that of an over-promoted dynastic scion. Everyone has an opinion, but the man himself remains opaque, his public persona confined to positions on political events, policies or programmes. Who is Rahul Gandhi—the real man—beneath the hype and the hatchet jobs? What are the ideas and influences that propel him? Who are his advisers? And how will he tackle his new responsibilities as his mother, Sonia Gandhi, makes way for him? Two young journalists, Jatin Gandhi and Veenu Sandhu, trace the evolution of the Rahul brand and explore the fascinating relationship between modernity and dynasty in this incisive political biography.

About the authors

Jatin Gandhi has reported from different parts of India for the last fifteen years for both print and electronic media, including the Hindustan Times, the Indian Express, Times Now, Star News and wahindia.com. He is currently Deputy Political Editor with the Delhi-based weekly, Open, and writes on politics and policy. He has covered Rahul Gandhi since he entered the political arena.

Veenu Sandhu has reported on a range of subjects in a career that spans fifteen years and which includes stints at the Indian Express, the Hindustan Times and NDTV 24x7. She is currently Features Editor with the Business Standard in Delhi.

Glittering Decades: New Delhi in Love and War

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New Delhi was purpose-built to trumpet the supremacy of the British Raj and inaugurated in 1931. Instead it came to represent a fading imperial dream in the two decades that followed. In the heyday of the British Raj, strict social and racial hierarchies governed the social life of the city's ruling elites. And the frivolity of New Delhi's high society was kept in check by a faithful adherence to etiquette and protocol in everyday life. For example, the sixteen-button glove at a formal viceregal dinner party was of great importance as a means of maintaining the authority of the Raj. But the 1930s and 1940s were a period of transition. The political shifts associated with India's journey to self-government echoed in the social codes of conduct adopted by the Indian elites of New Delhi, and undermining the Raj's pomp became a legitimate means of challenging its authority. Closely examining the role of social ritual, interaction and behaviour in the shaping of the city and its elite groups, *Glittering Decades* tells the story of New Delhi and its privileged inhabitants between 1931 and 1952.

About the author

Nayantara Pothen was awarded her PhD in History from the University of Sydney in 2007. Her current research interests include the impact of social life and culture on diplomatic relations—specifically in the formulation of the Australia–India relationship in the 1940s—and decolonization, the domestic sphere, and New Delhi in the Nehruvian era. She has contributed to *City Improbable: Writings on Delhi*, a collection edited by Khushwant Singh and published by Penguin India in 2010.