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Being Miss America: Behind the Rhinestone Curtain

By Kate Shindle

University of Texas Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Being Miss America: Behind the Rhinestone Curtain, Kate Shindle, For nearly a hundred years, young women have competed for the title of Miss America - although what it means to wear the crown and be our "ideal" has changed dramatically over time. The Miss America Pageant began as a bathing beauty contest in 1920s Atlantic City, New Jersey, sponsored by businessmen trying to extend the tourist season beyond Labor Day. In the post-World War II years, the pageant evolved into a national coronation of an idealized "girl next door," as pretty and decorous as she was rarely likely to speak her mind on issues of substance. Since the cultural upheavals of the 1960s, the pageant has struggled to find a balance between beauty and brains as it tries to remain relevant to women who aspire to become leaders in the community, not hot babes in swimsuits. In Being Miss America, Kate Shindle interweaves an engrossing, witty memoir of her year as Miss America 1998 with a fascinating and insightful history of the pageant. She explores what it means to take on the mantle of America's "ideal," especially considering the evolution...


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