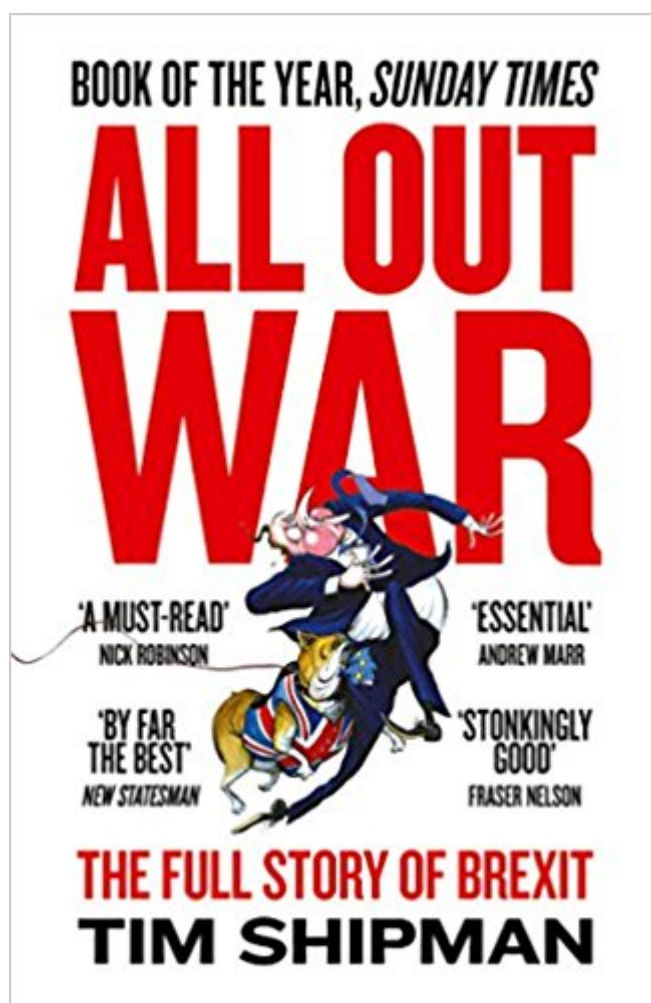


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All Out War: The Full Story Of How Brexit Sank Britain's Political Class



Synopsis

SHORTLISTED FOR THE ORWELL PRIZE 2017#1 SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLER
The best political book of the year
Andrew Marr
A superb work of storytelling and reporting. Sets new benchmark for the writing of contemporary political history
Guardian
The only book to tell the full story of how and why Britain voted to leave the EU. Based on unrivalled access to all the key politicians and their advisors – including Boris Johnson, Michael Gove, George Osborne, Nigel Farage and Dominic Cummings, the mastermind of Vote Leave – Tim Shipman has written a political history that reads like a thriller, and offers a gripping, day-by-day account of what really happened behind-the-scenes in Downing Street, both Leave campaigns, the Labour Party, Ukip and Britain Stronger in Europe. Shipman gives his readers a ringside seat on how decisions were made, mistakes justified and betrayals perpetrated. Filled with stories, anecdotes and juicy leaks the book does not seek to address the rights and wrongs of Brexit but to explore how and why David Cameron chose to take the biggest political gamble of his life and explain why he lost. This is a story of calculation, attempted coups, individuals torn between principles and loyalty. All the events are here – from David Cameron's pledge to hold a referendum, through to the campaign itself, his resignation as prime minister, the betrayals and rivalries that occurred during the race to find his successor to the arrival of Theresa May in Downing Street as Britain's second female prime minister. All Out War is a book about leaders and their closest aides, the decisions they make and how and why they make them, as well as how they feel when they turn out to be wrong. It is about men who make decisions that are intellectually consistent and – by their own measure – morally sound that are simultaneously disastrous for themselves and those closest to them. It is about how doing what you know has worked before doesn't always work again. Most of all it is about asking the question: how far are you prepared to go to win?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“I can't imagine a more even-handed or better sourced, all points-of-view account of the biggest story in British politics since WWII” A fine book
—ANDREW MARR, Sunday Times
“Shipman's dispatches are a must read if you want to understand what happened beneath the smog and beyond the noise of the conflict”
—NICK ROBINSON
“Shipman is brilliantly qualified to write the inside story of the referendum, with his unrivalled access to all the players”
—JOHN RENTOUL
“One of the best political journalists of his era”
—It's impossible to fully comprehend what happened on June 23 and the ensuing two weeks without reading this book
—Brilliant
—IAIN DALE, LBC
“Shipman's book is by far the best. It is a detailed, often pitch-perfect account that delivers the tale with an infectious sense of human drama”
—no mean feat, given the task of completing the whole thing so quickly
—JOHN HARRIS, New Statesman
“The essential account”
—Shipman has spoken to every key individual to produce the definitive first draft of history, a comprehensive yet impartial study of how Brexit won
—Financial Times
“Excellent”
—Shipman convincingly marshals fresh evidence to prove what we already half-knew
—WILL HUTTON, Observer
“The best political book of the year was undoubtedly Tim Shipman's masterly”
—All Out War
—New Statesman
“Stonkingly good: if you're vaguely interested in politics buy it. It won't be bettered”
—FRASER NELSON
“Thorough, comprehensive and utterly gripping. It is hard to imagine a better first draft of history”
—Economist
“Undoubtedly the British political book of the year”
—ALEX MASSIE
“Shipman, one of the most brilliant, best informed and well-connected journalists in Westminster, has written a superlative book which does full justice to a momentous time”
—PETER OBORNE
“Don't think any of the quotes do justice to quite how good it is. A superb work of reporting and storytelling, and sets new benchmark for the writing of contemporary political history”
—ANDREW SPARROW

Tim Shipman has been a national newspaper journalist for sixteen years and has a wealth of experience reporting on British and American politics and international relations. Currently the Political Editor of the Sunday Times, Tim has covered four British General Elections and three American elections from the US. Well known in the Westminster political mix, he is a trusted confidant of politicians from all political parties and has a growing following as a witty observer of the political scene @ShippersUnbound.

Fascinating look at the actors, the plans and the gaffes that led to Brexit. Shipman interviewed extensively and provides an almost day-by-day in progress review of the run-up to Brexit. The players on display are shown at their brilliant best and their lewd, bumbling worst. A must-read for political junkies, those trying to make sense of internationalism in retreat, and those curious about the parallels between Brexit and Trumpism.

Fascinating instant - history of the Brexit campaigns and immediate aftermath. Even this yank across the pond could not put it down once I started reading - even knowing how it ends!

One of the best books I've ever read, and, as a political work, in the league with Cramer's masterpiece "What it Takes" (the greatest book ever written on politics) and Caro's Lyndon Johnson series. I've been following British politics since the 1990's and intensely since the 2000's. But I wondered whether 688 pages on the Brexit referendum was more than I needed. On the contrary, Shipman provides all the necessary context of Britain's long and tumultuous relationship with the European Union without lingering or engaging in tedium. What follows is a gifted storyteller mining an epic drama for all of its narrative worth. Imagine a national referendum over the future of the country with fissures running through party lines and pitting leaders of the two major parties against one another. Underlying this national battle is the psychodrama among a group of friends who attended Oxford in the 80's: Boris Johnson, who watched as his younger classmate David Cameron ascended to the leadership of the Conservative Party and the premiership ahead of him, who emerges as the front man of the Leave campaign, putting him on the path to being prime minister; Michael Gove, whose modest background affected the dynamic with his classmates Cameron and Johnson, found himself marginalized in the latter's government. Gove, who supplied much of the intellectual heft of the new Conservatives, would do the same for the Leave campaign. The interpersonal politics and personal history was just as interesting as the campaign itself, which

cannot be understood without it. Shakespeare wouldn't have dared to invent this story. Cameron, the young prince, never a Europhile, promises a referendum in order to win a General Election in 2015. The referendum fails, and his political career with it. In the retrospect of his amazing career, Europe was always there, waiting, to give him his greatest victory but also his final and fatal defeat. How Leave wins, and the head Brexiteers lose the peace, is a story that deserved a book of this magnitude. I enthusiastically recommend it.

An important story

In this great book Tim Shipman gives the inside story on BREXIT. There was actually two OUT campaigns, the official Vote Leave campaign run by the Tory establishment, and Leave.EU which was run by Arron Banks and spearheaded by Nigel Farage. The tale is interesting and well written. Both campaigns hated each other and believed the other was having a negative effect. But the fact is both campaigns were required to win BREXIT. Vote Leave targeted middle-upper class conservative voters, making it socially acceptable to vote OUT, while Farage and co hit the Labour heartlands and working class areas with a nativist and anti-immigrant pitch. I had a good laugh at Daniel Hannan and other establishment figures who claim that anti-migrant sentiment was not the single largest motivating factor in BREXIT. Hannan is a liar, and it's a perfect example of how our political class has become so petrified of being called racist they must do mental gymnastics on such an obvious issue. Yes, Vote Leave did have polling of upper class Tory voters showing 'make our own laws' to be the top issue, but that's because those respondents were too cultured to tell the pollster what they really think. But what really fascinated me was the following attack on Michael Gove, one of the leading OUT figures for the Tory party..."More than any specific ideological vision he has, Gove is an ideologue. You do get the whiff of burning witches. The thing about ideologues, whether they're left or right, none of them need experts because they're the expert; because the ideology has the answer. Ideologues force the world to conform to their theory instead of having their theory conform to the world. That, to my mind, explains Michael Gove." This passage is utterly instructive of a larger issue of our time. It shows that Cameron's government, at heart, regarded ideology as the enemy. But isn't this for the best, you may ask? Does this not show their sound pragmatism? No. Let me explain. The new political class, on the left and right, eschew ideology in favor of a technocratic form of governance. The idea is to deliver reform based on empirical evidence and pragmatic solutions to issues as they arise. It sounds good, but the end result is very different. An ideology-less government will, in practice, always devolve into ad hoc, piece-meal

social engineering and paternalism. Right now, Britain is under almost unprecedented assault in the areas of civil liberties. Facebook posts, tweets and all manner of petty thought crimes are now grounds for being imprisoned. Child welfare services have become tyrannical and out of control. Spying, privacy intrusion and video surveillance now rival anything that Orwell's 1984 could have envisioned. Not only have these things continued since the Cameron government took over from Labour in 2010, they have accelerated. Cameron's technocrats have proven themselves almost indivisible from Blair's New Labour. Without any ideology to guide them, there can be no internal movement to roll any of this back; to do so it to be accused of being ideological. Without ideology to guide them, each crisis is only solved through flexible ad-hoc interventionism, always more paternalism, always more government. This explains the disaster British society has been heading into these last few decades, right alongside those other European technocratic governments; Germany, Sweden e.t.c

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