



Sammy's Hill

Kristin Gore

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Comedy writer and middle daughter of Al Gore, Kristin Gore has written a funny and moving debut novel about life on Capitol Hill as seen through the eyes of Samantha Joyce, a twenty-six year old health care analyst to Ohio Junior Senator Robert Gary. Hard working, idealistic, extremely competent as well as neurotic and prone to daydreaming, Sammy, as she's known to her friends, has little time for anything, much less a relationship. But in the midst of lobbying and late-night dinners at the office, she meets Aaron Driver, who is hot, smart, and sweet, and who, after a night of binge drinking at a bachelor party, proclaims his love for her. But how will Sammy balance her seventy-plus hour weeks with her budding romance, while keeping her best friend's slimy boyfriend from hitting on her, and making time for family, who insist her outfits match the centerpiece.

Sammy's Hill Details

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Author : Kristin Gore

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From Reader Review Sammy's Hill for online ebook

Bill Gienapp says

The debut novel of Kristin Gore (daughter of Al and, perhaps more significantly, former Harvard Lampoon staffer and ex-Futurama writer), *Sammy's Hill* could best be described as *Primary Colors* meets *Sex and the City*, with a little *Bridget Jones* sprinkled in for good measure. The story tells of the trials and tribulations of Samantha "Sammy" Joyce, an idealistic and endearingly quirky health care advisor who works for charismatic Ohio senator Robert Gary. Sammy mostly juggles her personal life while sweating over important legislation, aiding Gary in his bid for the Vice Presidential ticket and desperately trying to keep her Japanese fighting fish alive and swimming.

While I shudder to use the term "chick lit," it's difficult to avoid slapping the label on this amiable piece of literary fluff. Gore's keen sense of humor mixes well with her insider's perspective of Capitol Hill and Sammy's inherent likeability carries the novel through the occasional moment of strained farce. The weakest element is the tired romantic triangle at the book's center - Sammy falls for silver-tongued speechwriter Aaron Driver, even though we recognize a good 300 pages in advance that Washington Post columnist Charlie Lawton is the guy for her. When Aaron's transgressions ultimately come to light, they're so easily telegraphed, one can't help but wonder why Gore didn't put forth a bit more imagination.

Still, a consistently entertaining and even laugh-out-loud funny effort throughout. I won't hesitate to check out Gore's just-released sequel "*Sammy's House*," once it hits shelves in paperback.

Final rating: 3.5 out of 5 stars

Sam says

Gore takes the cutesy, neurotic female professional (read: Ally McBeal type) overboard! Just in the first chapter, which I couldn't even get past, Sammy has envisioned herself without a right arm and wears a sling to see if she'd be able to cope; realizes too late that she wore mismatched shoes to work--one high heel and one sneaker; and offers to hold on to the weed from the old man who's supposed to be testifying at a committee hearing. Too much! Each dialogue exchange that Sammy has with another character is interrupted by her inane thoughts that show how she's soooo gosh darn wacky, even if her outside persona is professional competence. I had to throw the book against the wall with great force--an action reserved for the truly horrifying books. I wasn't expecting literary genius--just nice, fluffy chick-lit in a new setting, so I had already set the bar pretty low, but this amazing fell under my low standards.

Sarah says

I really wanted to like this book, but I just didn't. The main character was way too neurotic, the plot was pretty formulaic and predictable, and the writing was not strong enough to make it anything special. I like light-hearted chick-lit, so you know I'm not too snobbish to enjoy something like this. This particular book was just a mediocre member of that genre.

I definitely will not bother trying out the sequel.

Charlotte says

This book is highly enjoyable and I would like to rate it higher, but it is undeniably fluff. Sammy is a marvelous character with a lot of entertaining quirks and the scrapes she got into were both highly entertaining and far too easy to relate to. My issues with the book were more with the plot. Some serious editing and a more solid structure would have given the book direction and kept the plot rolling.

Christine says

Anyone who knows me, knows that i loathe the "chic-lit" genre. (Although I have been caught reading a chic lit book or two in my day.) I find that the books are often cliché at best. *Sammy's Hill* is a completely different kind of book. Yes, it fits the characteristics of chic-lit. It's heroine, Sammy, is a quirky single girl in her mid twenties who struggles with her interactions with the opposite sex. But the book is so much more. First of all, the author, Kristen Gore (daughter of Al Gore), is uncommonly witty. To add to her wit, she sets her story not in midtown New York City, but in the political jungle of Washington DC (no doubt due to Gore's own experiences). Sammy is loveable, sympathetic, neurotic, and completely hopeless in almost every arena... except her job. She s a health care policy advisor to Senator Robert Gary. The book is *The West Wing* meets *The Devil Wears Prada* and a happier combination I have yet to find.

Erik says

In the first chapter, Sammy gets dressed while pretending to have a broken arm. A lot of people do that, right? Then she discovers on her way to her big Senate hearing that she accidentally put a sneaker on one foot and a dress shoe on the other. I hate it when that happens! We also learn that she loves talking to telemarketers; in fact, she calls them regularly to discuss her personal life. So do I! Or maybe not. This book would have been a lot better if Sammy resembled a real human being instead of a random collection of supposedly humorous quirks. The book does offer a pretty good sense of what it's like to be an idealistic 20-something staffer on Capitol Hill, and there are a few mildly amusing moments. Unfortunately, it then devolves into a chick lit fantasy in which she (surprise!) ends up with the smart, decent guy who seems annoying at first but is actually a lot better looking once you get to know him blah blah blah...

Best says

THIS REVIEW ON B'S BOOK BLOG!

Oh myy! I just completed my 2011 reading goal with this book! *throws confetti*

I've had this book for almost a year now and never really wanted to read it, until one day, my main bookshelf became sadly clustered and full, so this had to be taken out. Feeling slightly guilty for it to be homeless, I

decided to finally go through with it.

I have mixed feelings about this book, there are some things that I really like about it and some that turn me off. Well, first of all, Sammy is kind of funny, as expected to be in chicklit. She's a health care adviser (if my memory's correct) to Senator Robert Gary (called RG in the book). She's obsessive and ambitious and sometimes reminds me of myself (crying over the death of fish, obsessive thinking, etc.). I find her character to be believable, though I'm not sure if I like her all that much. Secondly, I think this book is too full of political stuff to *really* be fully identified as chicklit. I found that there are more of professional than personal stuff in it. And yes, it sometimes bored me. Kristin Gore, the author, really *knows* so much about politics, I assume, but then again I could be wrong, because I'm not really a native and don't know much about America's political system. I like to think I've learned some knowledge on politics just by reading it. Thirdly, the getting together with (view spoiler) doesn't look very believable to me. It's too easy, after all that's been happening between them and Sammy's many guys. But I can't deny that I like them being together.

There are a couple of things that I specially I like about this book. I like how RG and Sammy seem the care so much about the public good, whereas other politicians view politics as a means to do something for their own goods, rather than for the people. Politicians like that are everywhere, and that's why it's nice to read about the good ones, even though they're fictional. It kind of restores faith in me that maybe there really are the good ones out there waiting to show themselves and make some great impacts. And also, the last page of the book, how it ends, is hilarious. Hahahhahaha. RG FTW!

[cross-posted at my blog [here](#)]

Christine says

While it was interesting to gain insight into the working world of politics, I could not take the heroine. Sammy is so, so quirky and painfully incompetent, except at policy issues. From the hypochondria to the fish to the fashion accidents to the email miscues, it was all just too much. It was hard to see why she would be given such a major position with a senator or in a presidential campaign, and why so many men were interested in her. I ended up not caring about her or her story. Disappointing.

Rachel says

This was a fun quick summer read, and I enjoyed the departure from New York City and the endless fashion labels of most chick-lit novels. I didn't realize that the author is the daughter of Al and Tipper Gore, which actually explains much better her knowledge of Washington politics. I found Sammy to be endearing in the way she never lost her idealism, even if she was frustrating to follow at times.

Keith says

This novel dragged a bit from time to time. It is an adequately written coming of age story of a young woman, an only child, who seeks to find her own place in the world, apart from her parents, especially her baby-boomer mother. Sammy's passions as a woman contradict their parental virginal desire for her. Getting

laid seems a much more contradictory thing for a young woman, who carries her parents implicit dreams and prejudices, than it is for a young man, for who getting laid is expected, even encouraged. The novel is set in DC, Sammy being an idealistic young staffer for a rising-star senator. The twists and turns of her "relationship" journey is complicated by the image imposed on young female staffers like her. It did keep me reading, and made me laugh in a good way from time to time. Its not Dostoevsky, but it is a fair-to middling good story, and Kristin Gore is a fair-to-middling raconteur.

?Tamara says

I'll give this 2 stars because it does have it's humorous parts. However, for a leisurely book of enjoyment, it was entirely too political for me. In reading between the lines of obvious real-life character fill-ins, the author makes her political stance extremely apparent.

I personally could not relate at all to the protagonist (Sammy). Although her nearly unrealistic clumsiness is amusing at some points, her neuroticism draws the lines for me. I just cannot relate with someone who hates themselves so much they have to pick apart a 2-lined text/email from their boyfriend and systematically listing the assumed pros and cons of said message. I'm sorry, but that's just ridiculous. If women really think this way, then this world is in bigger trouble than we thought. Not everything said (especially by a man) needs to be put under a microscope and analyzed. Geez.

Kathy says

From a blog post I wrote in 2005:

This book by Kristin Gore (yeah, I think she's one of those Gores) is a step above Chick Lit but not a very big step. It's the tale of a young Senate staffer in D.C. and follows her personal and professional life. She falls for a bad boy to whom she feels physically addicted (who hasn't been there?) and helps her boss run for VP.

Our heroine, Sammy, has more ticks than a Wisconsin woods but is still an appealing character. Her break up scene with the bad boy is priceless and the D.C. political stuff is what takes the book beyond the typical Chick Lit. It's actually entertaining, informative and pretty darn funny.

I give it a thumbs up.

Chea says

I would love for someone to explain to me why every moderately successful, intelligent, ambitious young woman in a novel these days needs to be turned into an even more idiotic version of Bridget Jones. It's like if she's too smart and interesting, no one will understand that she's also pretty. I mean really, this book is just soooooo fun because she's completely inept at managing everyday life despite the fact that she's a major part of a vice-presidential campaign! Isn't that hilarious? No. It's annoying.

Nadeen says

I use the term "finished" in a different context with this particular book. On page 200 I decided I was finished with this heroine. It was hard to read a book where the main character was so ... boring and annoying. Don't get me wrong; I have read quite a few books where the main character was despicable, loathsome or worthless but yet the story was interesting and the main character provoking in one fashion or another. At times the books might have redeeming social value or a larger purpose. Not this time. This time the main character did not even have that much going for her and at page 200 I thought about the stack of books awaiting me and the prospect of slogging through this one became too onerous to continue. So I found myself finished with the book as it sailed in the trash.

Amy says

Had it not been for the fact that this book was a quick read, I would not have finished reading it. The main character, Sammy, was an obsessive worrier who would map out elaborate plans to avoid, for instance, alligator attacks, and who programmed random "birthdates" into her blackberry, i.e., the 25th anniversary of the day KFC was invented. These were humorous at first, but became so abundant throughout the book so that they eventually became annoying.

The character is also quite young, in her mid to late 20s, and it's not really clear why a senator would have chosen her as his healthcare policy expert. Had she been part of a team, that would have been one thing. But she got this job as an EXPERT right out of college. The more I thought about it the more it made no sense, especially since she did the typical stupid chick-list things, i.e., the man she got to testify at the Senate hearing on prescription drug costs showed up stoned.

So it's best not to think about the book must, if you decide you need to read it. It was fun to read the references to various spots throughout Washington, D.C., having lived there four years during college. But other than that, it was a pretty painful read.

_kouw says

This book was given to me and as I started reading, I connected with the main character. But after about 100 pages I felt a bit stifled: dealing with my own anxiety is plenty of work, I don't really need Sammy's high strung life on top of it! So I've taken it slow and I am verrrry ready to move on to the next book. As usual I feel this book could have done with more careful editing and could have been at least 30% shorter.

Shira says

This book is basically Bridget Jones Diary for policy wonks! The main character is Sammy, an idealistic 20-something who works on health policy for a senator. The book revolves around Sammy's love life and attempting to pass a health care law. Sammy is rather quirky (like the fact that she loves to talk to

telemarketers), which is mainly fun though her quirks can be a bit over the top at times.

This book was written by Al Gore's daughter, so there are also a few not so subtle jabs at Bush in it. Of course, I found these most entertaining. The president in the book is fictionalized, but he is a thinly veiled Bush -- someone who can't string together a sentence and who is completely incompetent. The fake president's administration basically ends in disgrace with the entire country, even his own party, fed up with him. Since this was written in 2004, I guess that was just wishful thinking, but it turned out to be true!

In any case, I recommend this book if you are into politics. Otherwise, it probably won't appeal to you.

Roshan says

This one's tough to pigeon-hole. The first 2/3 is standard fare chick-lit, the last 1/3 is a breathless account of a Presidential campaign. Almost like 2 different books, except for the whacky protagonist. I'd agree with most reviewers that Gore is too wonkish and too witty to be easily dismissed as chick-lit. For instance, her account of Republican hysteria to health care reform is like reading the papers today. So she's prescient too: her America in the run up to the campaign is eerily similar to 2008 America after 8 years of Bush. Which is deliciously ironic since she is, after all, Al Gore's daughter.

Trin says

For once the blurbs on the back of the book are pretty much right: this is basically Bridget Jones meets *Meet the Press*. And it's not a bad combination. At times Gore does rely too heavily on chicklit clichés, getting her heroine into wacky scrapes involving things like rollerblades and accidentally clicking "send-all." It's also insanely obvious who her true love is going to be from the moment he appears. But I very much enjoyed the political fluff aspects of the book, with Sammy, the health care policy advisor to Ohio Senator Robert Gary, standing in for all the hard-working, idealistic government workers we would all so badly like to believe exist. And in her own right, Sammy's a great character—a smart, neurotic, nerdy, still-getting-laid-a-lot woman the likes of which one rarely sees in fiction. She gets my vote.

Shannon says

Echoing the sentiments of prior reviewers, I have to say that this book fell flat in multiple ways, beginning with its biggest problem: the title character. I'm not sure if Gore meant for her to be in any way relatable, but she has multiple overdeveloped "quirks" which border on crazy and are certainly not realistic or endearing. She has an unrealistic job (and apartment) for her age, education, and sanity. She gets into a terrible relationship with an unlikable man who is so obviously using her that she'd have to literally have a social disability not to see it, and continues to obsess over him in exactly the way sexists imagine that women spend half of their time doing. The setting (Capitol Hill) is, with the exception of the below, done better than expected, but her character is so awful that I can't appreciate it.

Essentially, I hated Sammy and was utterly glad she did not exist. I set the bar fairly low with chick-lit, expecting only down-to-earth, slightly funny women figuring their shit out like real people and having some good makeout sessions with lit-crush-worthy men along the way. This book failed me.

