



Kennedy: His Life and Legacy

Ben Nussbaum

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Commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the untimely death of America's most popular president, *Kennedy: His Life & Legacy* is a candid look at the charisma and excitement that captured the nation during John F. Kennedy's one thousand days of Camelot. Editor Ben Nussbaum has compiled a collection of riveting chapters that discuss the influence and money of the Kennedy clan, the politics and unique circumstances that led to JFK's election, his presidency, his family, and his assassination. The book convincingly debunks the major conspiracy theories that mushroomed on our nation's darkest day, when the much-loved young president was violently slain in the streets of Dallas, Texas.

Concise and colorful, this 96-page book offers readers a snapshot of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy and a glimpse at what made Americans fall in love with the thirty-fifth president during a time not only of great population and economic growth but also of pressing international conflicts with Vietnam, the U.S.S.R., and Cuba. Over five decades since JFK's election, he remains the most highly rated President, according to a Gallup poll; during his brief presidency, his approval rating of 70.1 was the highest of any post-World War II chief executive.

A handsome young Boston native, from one of America's wealthiest and most influential families, JFK declared on the day of his inauguration that the country was now "a new generation of Americans," and citizens responded enthusiastically to the new president's positive outlook, charisma, and confidence. By 1960, the United States of America had emerged as the world's only superpower, and JFK, as the first president born in the twentieth century, represented hope, prosperity, and strength to the world at large. He used the country's new popular medium—television—to his great advantage, appearing in ninety percent of the country's living room as a charming, well-educated, worldly world leader. The book presents JFK as the nation's first Hollywood president—a celebrity who braced the nation for changes and challenges of the New Frontier, encouraging Americans to dream about stars, far-off planets, and a moon that an American would soon be the first to walk upon.

In *Kennedy, His Life & Legacy*, Nussbaum presents John F. Kennedy, our youngest president—forty-three upon his inauguration—as a U.S. Navy war hero, the inspired author of *Profiles in Courage*, and a talented, thoughtful statesman and then demystifies the hero by showing how he used his charisma and power to downplay his youth and inexperience, his lackluster performance in Congress, and his unattractive Catholicism. Kennedy did well, too, to hide his dark side—his years as a rash and wild womanizer, his poor health, and the elitism that stemmed from his family's virtually limitless wealth. The book unapologetically recounts JFK's playboy escapades, taking place before and during his presidency—in the Oval Office, the Lincoln bedroom, and the White House pool. The author names names: Mary Pinchot Meyer, Judith Campbell Exner, Jill Cowen, Priscilla Wear, Pamela Turnure, and of course, Marilyn Monroe. The family's great wealth, however, easily offset the president's moral bankruptcy, and the White House staff along with Frank Sinatra, J. Edgar Hoover, and other high-profile celebrities miraculously kept all of JFK's sexcapades quiet until years after his death.

In painting a realistic human portrait of JFK, the book discusses the president's relationships with his father, Joseph; his younger brother Robert; his wife, Jacqueline; his Vice President, Lyndon B. Johnson, as well as various world leaders, and how the devotion of his wife and family helped to shield his political and personal image from disgrace.

The head of the Kennedy family, a self-made tycoon, and a for

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