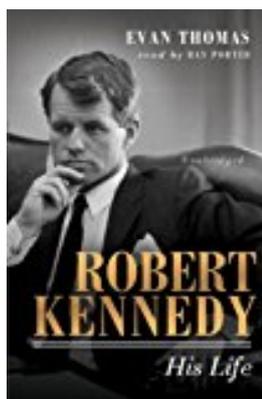


[PDF] Robert Kennedy: His Life

Evan Thomas, Ray Porter - pdf download free book



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Description:

In the nation's varied memory, Robert Kennedy is a contradictory figure, a hard-bullying McCarthyite obsessed with Hoffa and Castro but also a gentle, poetry-reading herald of a new age bent on stopping the Vietnam War and lifting up the poor. As Evan Thomas (and) writes, both liberals and conservatives have their own spin on his legacy, with predictably different visions of what he would have done if he had lived to be our 37th president. As it turns out, none of the Good Bobby/Bad Bobby projections are right, and none are completely wrong either. In sorting through the myths and the truths, Evans provides a detailed portrait of a man centrally engaged in most of the important issues of the postwar era, and concludes that the best way to understand him is "fear":

He was brave because he was afraid. His monsters were too large and close at hand to simply flee. He had to turn and fight them.... He became a one-man underground, honeycombed with hidden passages, speaking in code, trusting no one completely, ready to face the firing squad--but also knowing when to slip away to fight again another day. Although he affected simplicity and directness, he became an extraordinarily complicated and subtle man. His shaking hands and reedy voice, his groping for words as well as meaning, his occasional resort to subterfuge, do not diminish his daring. Precisely because he was fearful and self-doubting, his story is an epic of courage.

RFK was born after the chosen siblings had been established in the Kennedy clan. He originally had low standing in the family hierarchy. Evans describes how the "runt" of the family, the one not born and raised for power and whose only ambition was to please the father who ignored him, turned into the essential son, the defender of the family and mediator between Joe Sr. and JFK. He fleshes out Bobby's role in JFK's campaigns, his testy relations with Martin Luther King, his middle-ground stance on integration, his performance during the Cuban missile crisis, and his genuine concern for the poor. He reveals the truth behind such events as the vice-presidential appointment of Lyndon Johnson as well as the famous calls from the Kennedy brothers, which got Martin Luther King out of jail. He also tries to untangle the webs obscuring the Kennedys' involvement in Castro assassination plots, their relations with Marilyn Monroe, and RFK's guilt over his brother's death. And finally, he, too, speculates on what kind of president one of history's great what-ifs might have made. The picture he paints--of a sensitive, courageous, and determined man on the verge of achieving greatness--is more complex and human than any we've had before, and reminds us again of the tragedy of his death. --*Lesley Reed* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Thomas has made a career writing about Washington insiders (he was co-author, with Walter Isaacson, of *The Wise Men*). A high-ranking editor at Newsweek, Thomas (an insider himself) has now written a nuanced biography of one of the 20th century's most iconic insiders. Although there are no startling revelations in this capably written, thick book, there is a lot of new information, thanks to the increasing openness of Kennedy's surviving colleagues and the new availability of oral histories, RFK's personal files, declassified national security documents and other sources. As a result, Thomas offers an illumination of the man's failings as well as his strengths, and unravels the complex knot of relationships within the Kennedy family. Portraying RFK as a man whose "house had many mansions," Thomas calls him "the lucky one" Ahe was raised in the shadow of his brothers, and his passion-filled life shined a light into "the family cave" of secrets. Throughout, Thomas highlights the contradictions of Kennedy's persona Ahe was an extraordinarily wealthy individual who could act spoiled one day, then express empathy with the have-nots on the next; he was a devoted, sometimes around-the-clock protector of his often wayward older brother, John, but still established his own career; he was shy but sought out publicity; and he was an enthusiastic family man who ran for the presidency despite its obvious risks. Though primarily a tribute to a man whose potential for greatness was cut short, Thomas's book sheds new light on a man Aand an era, and a family Aabout whom Americans will probably never know the whole truth. (Sept.)

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