



## **Jack: A Life Like No Other**

*Geoffrey Perret*

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## **Jack: A Life Like No Other** Geoffrey Perret

Previous biographies of John F. Kennedy have been based almost entirely on newspaper files and personal recollections. Geoffrey Perret's *Jack* is both the first comprehensive one-volume biography of JFK and the first account of his life based on the extensive and important documentary record that has finally become available, including Kennedy's personal diaries, hundreds of hours of taped conversations from the White House, recently declassified government documents, extensive family correspondence, and crucial interviews sealed for nearly forty years. The result is a gripping, accurate, and ultimately moving portrait of America's most charismatic president.

*Jack* provides much-needed context and perspective on Kennedy's bewilderingly complex personality. It offers an even-handed account of the seamy side of his life - orgies and abortions, health and drug problems - along with valuable insights into JFK's truly idealistic and visionary character.

*Jack* presents a compelling account of the volatile relationship between Kennedy and his wife, including Jackie's attempt to divorce him, move to Hollywood, and become a film star. At the same time Perret explains how, together, they created the Kennedy style.

*Jack* reveals how the restless, innovative Kennedy was able to overturn more than a hundred years of political tradition, forge the modern political campaign, and, once in the White House, modernize the presidency. His success was so complete that all serious presidential candidates since 1960 have sought to compare themselves to JFK, not challenging his legacy but embracing it.

*Jack* is filled, too, with numerous revelations, such as the true story behind the lobotomy of JFK's sister Rosemary. And here, for the first time, is a comprehensive account of Kennedy's numerous and varied ailments from childhood on, including his back problems.

Perret describes how JFK got the two most important decisions of his administration right: his handling of the Cuban missile crisis and his stance on civil rights. As to Vietnam, Kennedy did not believe it was worth fighting for, and in the last months of his presidency he began formulating a secret plan for neutralization and withdrawal-if he won the 1964 election. But that, of course, was not to be: Convinced he would die young, Kennedy foresaw that a violent death would claim him. Throughout his brief time in the White House he was haunted by a vision of a man standing at a window, looking down at him, holding a rifle.

*Jack: A Life Like No Other* is a book like no other. Here, at last, John F. Kennedy seems to step off the page in all his vitality, charm, and originality.

## **Jack: A Life Like No Other Details**

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Author : Geoffrey Perret

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# From Reader Review Jack: A Life Like No Other for online ebook

## Allie says

An entertaining read, especially if you like a mix of history and biography. The author kind of glosses over some details or issues surrounding JFK and the book's conclusion is a little truncated, but it is a good read.

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## Vern says

A bit of a tough read if you are a JFK fan, and most of my generation probably are. I was 13, in 7th grade art class, when the news came over the school public address system that JFK had been shot. Almost everyone alive that day remembers where they were and what they were doing when the news was announced. After that, it seems like everyone just accepted that he was a great man and a great president. This book exposes much of that myth, and the conflicted and complicated man that JFK was. His health issues were far more varied and serious than I had known. The rumors of his sex life have always been around, but whoa, I had no idea. His presidential legislative accomplishments were few, but thank God he was president in October, 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crises. One wonders what would have happened had someone else been president at that moment in history. The world was literally at the brink of catastrophic nuclear war, and but for his leadership it could have, probably would have, turned out very badly. Maybe for that alone he deserves the reputation of a great president. (Some argue, not without a modicum of justification, that the Cuban Missile Crises arose in the first place due to missteps by JFK early in his presidency, but that is for a whole different discussion.)

But if you decide to read this book, beware that it was not the intent of the author to place JFK on a pedestal. JFK had many flaws, and almost certainly would not be electable in today's political age; not from either party. Would he be held in such high esteem had he not be assassinated? After reading this book, I have some thoughts on it. But I will leave it to other readers to make their own decisions on that question.

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## Lisa says

#108 of 120 books pledged to read during 2018

If you haven't read any books on John F. Kennedy, this is a great "condensed" one-volume version of his life from beginning to end. I have read many books on him, so I kept noticing many missing details. But if you just want the basics, I think this was written exceedingly well.

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## Patrick says

A fantastic read that is both compelling and revealing of a man that did much to shape the course of history in this century. Through well written prose and insightful revealing of JFK's personal life we learn about the man as a whole; his greatest qualities, and his worst.

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### **Ana Mckee says**

Insight into who Jack Kennedy was beyond the public persona. Validated the stories about his sexual escapades and revealed his extremely poor health. Still a favorite icon for me.

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### **Patricia says**

I liked this biography of JFK. It was very readable and took care to give you the historic background to the many 20th century events that shaped his life and presidency. It didn't ignore the salacious details of his life but didn't dwell on them either. It gave you a better picture of his often precarious health than one would ever imagine looking at him. In the end, I was sad that it appeared that he and Jackie did not have a mature, loving marriage. And that he was killed just when he seemed to be growing into the presidency.

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### **Ken says**

This is an engaging biography about JFK. I don't know enough to "fact check" this book, but it is well written and presents an interesting take on JFK's life. I'd recommend it to anyone who enjoys reading biographies that have a little flare.

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### **Bruce says**

Really three and a half stars. I have read many many biographies of JFK and thought there wasn't anything else to learn. Wrong! The author seems to bring a different, deeper perspective to the book gleaned from among other things JFK's family history and his belief he would not live a long life. I did finish feeling his marriage was pretty much loveless on both sides. And that he was far more conservative than his legend would have us believe.

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### **Beatrice says**

(??)

Il mio professore di Storia Contemporanea era solito ripetere, con malcelato disprezzo nella voce, che John Fitzgerald Kennedy fosse stato il presidente americano più sopravvalutato, "perché era belloccio ed è morto giovane".

E confesso che parte della mia ammirazione per JFK si fondava esattamente su questi due superficiali motivi, per cui, sebbene il libro in sé non mi abbia entusiasmata, è servito quantomeno ad un rapido ripasso della storia americana del tempo.

Il difetto principale di questa biografia è il fatto di concentrarsi per lo più sulle circostanze storiche nelle quali Kennedy era inserito, dilungandosi in particolare economici e burocratici che possono fare la felicità del lettore già esperto, ma finiscono per allontanare ed annoiare chi come me desiderava più avvicinarsi alla

psicologia del personaggio, più che alla sua agiografia.

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### **Joe says**

I really enjoyed this book. I learned a lot about the Kennedys not just JFK. I learned so much about Jack that I had never suspected. The Cuban issues of his presidency were amazing! I never knew how involved the US military was in this conflict. Also the why of our involvement in Vietnam was very interesting.

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### **Donna says**

It fascinates me that both Jack Kennedy and Jackie still fascinate me. And I flip flop from thinking Jack was bad and good. The more I read about all our historical figures....the more I realize I can't judge any of them. But back to the Kennedy time....I suppose the reason is the he was the first president I remember. This was an excellent historical account.

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### **Beth Bedee says**

I felt that the book was well-written and contained many seemingly well-researched facts. But I prefer history that focuses on the person and their relationships with others rather than the events that surround them. I skimmed through some sections in the beginning because they were rather dry and bogged down with tedious facts. The chapters dealing with Kennedy and his immediate family were very interesting.

This would be a great book for someone who is very interested in Kennedy's public and foreign policy. A good deal of the book focuses on politics and life in Washington.

I'd say JFK and the other players are depicted fairly and accurately. At times, dialogue is presented that gives insight to JFK's sense of humor. I wish there was more of that so I could get a better sense of him as a person. Joe, Rose, and Jackie are sometimes painted in an unfavorable light.

This is a more academic biography than others books I've read on the Kennedys. Some read like tabloid tell-alls. This one has footnotes that list many reputable sources, including Kennedy's own writings.

I was a little bothered by the last couple of paragraphs that briefly described the assassination. I find it hard to believe that a person, who obviously has devoted a great deal of time researching Kennedy, seems to fully embrace the "magic bullet" theory. Perret even goes on to write that Oswald was "doing this for Cuba." Of course, I understand this was not a book on the assassination conspiracy, but on his life.

The book leaves little out of his life. It truly is womb to tomb.

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### **Harry Tomos says**

really enjoyed this,changed my view of Rose and Jackie Kennedy, it ends very poetically for something so

violent.it pulls no punches about JFK but you still like him...recommend to anyone to read

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### **Ellen says**

A book packed with lots of detailed information. It made me gain many new insights into the bay of pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, the Cold War and of course the civil right movements of the early sixties.

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### **Michelle says**

One of my favorite JFK biographies. He had quite a life and people forget that there was a complex person who existed long before he ever ran for office. Oh, and he was an introvert. Ha! Score one for my side.

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