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John F. Kennedy: The Most Despicable President In American History

4 10 2010



By [Timothy D. Naegele\[1\]](#)

Gannett's USA Today began publishing its daily newspapers in Washington, D.C., and I have always been proud of the publication and have praised it. I believed it was one of the finest newspapers in the United States, if not the world; and I have been pleased with its success. I have encouraged friends, business associates, and acquaintances to read it because of what I believed was objective reporting, or certainly very close to it.

However, I was rudely awakened by its recent series of articles about John F. Kennedy and his family, which were a travesty and a lie.[\[2\]](#) Sadly, USA Today has become a participant in the deliberate distortion of history. There was not merely one isolated article about the Kennedys, but it was an unprecedented series —which made matters far worse and even more irresponsible. Whoever approved the series should be fired immediately. Wholesale distortions of history by a mainstream publication such as this one warrant and, in fact, demand nothing less.

John F. Kennedy was a fraud, pure and simple. When he died, his “image” was frozen in time, but the truth is grotesque. To lionize him like USA Today has done is a crime, and unconscionable. The once-excellent and seemingly objective USA Today has reached new lows by publishing this series about Kennedy—which is the moral equivalent of running a praiseworthy series of articles about Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin.

USA Today failed to mention that John F. Kennedy was possibly the most morally corrupt and reckless president in American history, who came tragically close to bringing about a “nuclear winter” that might have destroyed the United States and other parts of the world. Also, he plunged America into the Vietnam war. USA Today’s entire series would fall like a “house of cards” if the truth about Kennedy and his family had been told, instead of repeating the factual distortions that have been spun since he was assassinated in Dallas.

There have been two outstanding books written about Kennedy and his life, and that of his family: American historian Thomas C. Reeves’ “A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy”^[3] and Pulitzer Prize winning investigative journalist Seymour M. Hersh’s “The Dark Side of Camelot.”^[4] First published in 1997, Hersh’s book is a companion to Reeves’ equally fine book, which was published in the same year. To have two truly outstanding books introduced at the same time, on the same subject, is interesting unto itself.

Like Reeves, Hersh laid bare the myth of “Camelot” for all to see. The Kennedy family and its sycophants have attempted to perpetrate that myth since the day Kennedy was shot—as well as myths surrounding the entire family, which is surely the most dysfunctional family ever to achieve significant political power in American history. Indeed, after reading both books, one wonders whether there was anything decent or moral about the family, certainly the male Kennedys.

Unlike Reeves, Hersh does not mention Ted Kennedy’s culpability in the tragic death of Mary Jo Kopechne in 1969, just as she was about to celebrate her 29th birthday, and the ensuing Kennedy cover-up. Similarly, Hersh makes scant mention of Marilyn Monroe, with whom both JFK and, after him, Bobby Kennedy had affairs, nor does Hersh discuss the possibility that she was murdered. Instead, he discusses JFK’s long-time relationship with Judith Campbell Exner, as well as his affair with an East German “prostitute” by the name of Ellen Rometsch.

Kennedy’s reckless affairs with women were only outdone by his irresponsible and dangerous relationships with mobsters such as Chicago crime boss Sam Giancana. These two character flaws merged when both Kennedy and Giancana had sexual liaisons with Exner, who was used as their go-between. Indeed, it is doubtful whether Kennedy would have become the president-elect in 1960 if the Mob had not helped him in Illinois and West Virginia—and Giancana claimed credit for that. Kennedy was the son of a bootlegger, and the apple did not fall far from the tree, with respect to all three Kennedy brothers who entered national politics.

The thread that runs through the writing of Reeves and Hersh, and through JFK’s life, is utter recklessness—which not only endangered his life, but the lives of those with whom he came into contact, and every American. Perhaps the most vivid example is the “Cuban Missile Crisis” that Hersh documents in considerable detail, which might have been averted if JFK and Bobby had used their back-channel communications effectively with the Soviet Union’s Nikita Khrushchev and the Kremlin.

Instead, the two Kennedy brothers turned the crisis into a grand display of American military might—to further JFK’s political ambitions—which constituted recklessness that might have brought about a “nuclear

winter.” Hersh states emphatically: “[Jack] Kennedy did not dare tell the full story of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, because it was his policies that brought the weapons there.”^[5]

Those Americans who believed in JFK, as yours truly did^[6]—and to a lesser extent in Bobby—were deceived and disillusioned with respect to almost every issue. The public perception bears almost no relationship to the actual facts. Indeed, thirty-four years after his death, the American people finally learned the truth about JFK (and his “hatchet man,” Bobby) from these two books and other sources. Even then, as Hersh describes in considerable detail, Kennedy operatives may have destroyed large amounts of historically-important documents.

Vast numbers of documents are still held by the Kennedy Library with respect to both JFK and Bobby, which have never been made available to the public. This is a scandal unto itself. Not the least of these are medical records about JFK’s health, which have only been reviewed by a handful of Kennedy “sycophant-like” writers. Almost 50 years after Kennedy’s death, the full extent of his life-long medical problems is still being withheld from the American people and conservative scholars, and Reeves recounts many of those problems.

The failed “Bay of Pigs” invasion of Cuba, where Fidel Castro humiliated JFK and “the Kennedys,” led to almost 50 years of enslavement for the Cuban people, and repeated attempts by the two Kennedy brothers to have Castro assassinated. This fiasco has potential relevance today—with respect to the presidency of Barack Obama—because, as Hersh describes, there was a “prevailing sense that Kennedy could do no wrong.”^[7] In fact, the Kennedy brothers ignored advice from the CIA and the military; and like Lyndon Johnson vis-à-vis later stages of the Vietnam war, they ran the “show” themselves and then tried to blame others when it failed colossally.

Ample mention has been made of JFK’s perpetual “thirst” for women. Indeed, the three Kennedy brothers, Jack, Bobby and Ted, trashed what was sacred in their Catholic religion, such as the sanctity of marriages. For them, nothing seemed sacred, ever. Hersh uses statements from Secret Service agents to describe the president’s penchant for prostitutes, and how they and other women were “procured” by Dave Powers and some of Kennedy’s other “New Frontiersmen.” Jackie Kennedy’s travels were carefully monitored so that she would not return to find the president and women “frolicking” in the White House swimming pool or in the family quarters.

What went on in hotels and private homes, wherever JFK traveled, is described as well. The book also discusses JFK’s venereal disease(s)^[8]; and the risks that he and Powers took by cavorting with women who had been waived through routine Secret Service checks without prior clearances, and who might have carried weapons, listening devices, drugs or something similar.

There is no question that Kennedy launched this nation into Vietnam; and his secretary of defense, Robert McNamara, was the architect of that lost war and the enormous suffering that it produced. Almost 60,000 brave Americans died, some of whom were my friends; and it impaled this nation’s honor on the horns of a tragedy that still haunts policy makers and citizens alike. What was not known generally until Hersh’s book is that JFK “had a chance in 1961 to disengage from an American involvement in South Vietnam.”^[9] Instead, he chose to go to war, and to spend the blood of young Americans. Hersh states, again emphatically: “Whatever Jack Kennedy’s intentions were, Vietnam was his war, even after his death.”^[10]

Hersh describes the constant pressure especially on CIA operatives, which was brought by JFK and Bobby, to have foreign leaders such as Castro killed. Mob operatives were used with Bobby’s knowledge and

involvement, even though as the U.S. Attorney General he was ostensibly prosecuting the Mob. The family patriarch Joseph P. Kennedy's ties to the Mob are detailed, as well as *his* ruthlessness and penchant for women. JFK's first marriage to Durie Malcolm is also described, and his father's efforts to expunge the record.

Hersh discusses how Bobby and Jackie believed that JFK was struck down by a "domestic conspiracy," probably involving Mob boss Giancana or others.^[11] However, Hersh states: "Robert Kennedy did nothing to pursue the truth behind his brother's death [in 1963]. . . . The price of a full investigation was much too high: making public the truth about President Kennedy and the Kennedy family. It was this fear, certainly, that kept Robert Kennedy from testifying before the Warren Commission."^[12] Aside from prostitutes and other women, and close Mafioso ties and health issues, and the presidential election in 1960 that was stolen from Richard M. Nixon, Hersh details "cash payments" that JFK requested and received—which monies were ostensibly used to buy Ellen Rometsch's "silence."

A footnote in history, perhaps, but a very important one is that JFK hurt his back cavorting in a West Coast swimming pool. He was "forced to wear a stiff brace that stretched from his shoulders to his crotch." As Hersh concludes: "The brace would keep the president upright for the bullets of Lee Harvey Oswald."^[13] Hence, JFK's sexual escapades may have contributed to his tragic death.

Today, Kennedy is not someone to look up to, much less deify, as many of us thought when he was president. That conclusion was reached reluctantly by lots of Americans, years ago, with a sense of sadness rather than anger. Like the potentate in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, "The Emperor's New Clothes," the myth about Kennedy *and* his feet of clay have become clear for all to see with the passage of time.^[14]

Greatness is often achieved in times of war, and Kennedy never won the war with Cuba, much less the Vietnam war that he started, nor did he win the Cold War—which Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush won. Kennedy was a tragic Shakespearean figure who may be forgotten and consigned to the dustheap of history, in no small part because of the question of character that both Reeves and Hersh described brilliantly in their terrific books.

USA Today's series of articles extolling the virtues of Kennedy and his family are shameful, and constitute the gross distortion of history. Indeed, they seem to represent yet another attempt by America's discredited Left to glorify its politicians, regardless of how corrupt and immoral they may be.

Few young Americans even know who John F. Kennedy was—or care about him—because less than a handful of his positive accomplishments had any lasting significance. Like former President William McKinley before him, the fact that an assassin cut short Kennedy's life and presidency might be all that Americans recall about him 50 years from now.^[15]

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and http://www.naegele.com/naegele_resume.html). He has an undergraduate degree in economics from UCLA, as well as two law degrees from the School of Law (Boalt Hall), University of California, Berkeley, and from Georgetown University. He is a member of the District of Columbia and California bars. He served as a Captain in the U.S. Army, assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency at the Pentagon, where he received the Joint Service Commendation Medal. Mr. Naegele is an Independent politically; and he is listed in Who's Who in America, Who's Who in American Law, and Who's Who in Finance and Business. He has written extensively over the years (see, e.g., http://www.naegele.com/whats_new.html#articles), and can be contacted directly at tdnaegele.associates@gmail.com

[2] See <http://specials.usatoday.com/jfk/>

[3] See http://www.amazon.com/Question-Character-Life-John-Kennedy/dp/0029259657/ref=tmm_hrd_title_0 and http://www.amazon.com/Question-Character-Life-John-Kennedy/product-reviews/0029259657/ref=cm_cr_dp_synop?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=0&sortBy=bySubmissionDateDescending#R2SDUMI20EEA8Z

[4] See <http://www.amazon.com/Dark-Side-Camelot-Seymour-Hersh/dp/0316359556> and http://www.amazon.com/Dark-Side-Camelot-Seymour-Hersh/product-reviews/0316359556/ref=cm_cr_dp_synop?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=0&sortBy=bySubmissionDateDescending#R3Q8NBIYKP5W01

[5] See Seymour M. Hersh, “The Dark Side of Camelot,” p. 343.

[6] Although I was not old enough to vote for him, I was in the Los Angeles Coliseum and watched while he delivered his acceptance speech at the close of the Democrats’ convention in 1960. Also, despite growing up in a “devoutly” Republican family, I registered to vote as a Democrat when I was able to do so, largely because of him.

After law school at Berkeley—where I had walked out of one of my classrooms to learn that he had been shot in Dallas—I spent two years at the Pentagon and had an excellent offer to return thereafter to a wonderful law firm in San Francisco, for which I had worked briefly before entering the Army. Instead, I went to work on Capitol Hill, in no small part because of Kennedy and the call to government service that his words engendered (e.g., “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country”).

In short, Kennedy had changed the course of my life, which is why the *truth* about his life—and the fraud that was “Camelot”—needs to be exposed, not covered up or papered over as USA Today has done so irresponsibly.

[7] *Id* at 202.

[8] *Id* at 230.

[9] *Id* at 265.

[10] *Id* at 437.

I know an outstanding reporter with impeccable, world-class credentials who is based on Washington, D.C.

This person covered the Vietnam war and other wars up to and including the present day. I admire and respect the person's experience, opinions and judgment greatly. In an e-mail message that I received on July 29, 2010, the person wrote:

Tim, [w]e won the Vietnam war – and Congress lost it.

Let me explain.

Last US soldier left Vietnam March 29, 1973.

Saigon fell April 15, 1975.

ARVN – South Vietnamese army – did very well on its own for two years with US military assistance, but no US soldiers, not even as advisers to ARVN.

Then Congress, in its infinite wisdom, cut off all further military aid to Saigon.

ARVN saw no point in continuing to fight, stabbed in the back by the US Congress.

Gen. Giap, in his memoirs, says Hanoi was taken by surprise by what Congress did because they thought that taking Saigon would not be within their reach for two more years.

So Giap improvised an offensive – and Saigon fell without a fight.

I have no reason to believe that this person's assessment is inaccurate in any respect. I will not disclose the person's identity while he or she is alive, certainly without permission to do so.

[11] *Id* at 450.

[12] *Id* at 456.

[13] *Id* at 439.

[14] *See, e.g.*, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Emperor's_New_Clothes

[15] *See also* Timothy D. Naegele, "Ronald Reagan and John F. Kennedy: A Question of Character" – <http://naegeleblog.wordpress.com/2010/03/20/ronald-reagan-and-john-f-kennedy-a-question-of-character/>




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[smilinjacksez](#) (20:24:18) : [edit](#)

You are correct Timothy, they certainly made Kennedy “King” when they made him president, and they kept the aura after he died. Too bad it took this long for the crown to be taken off, but it’s better late than never.

I hope you take Obama's "crown" off much quicker.

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5 10 2010



Frankie Pintado (18:35:46) : [edit](#)

Yeah, that pretty much sums up my feelings on the guy. As a Cuban-American who was removed from Miami at a fairly young age and integrated with American children in VA and AZ, I was always surprised when people glorified JFK. I had always been told by the Cubans in Miami (who believe very strongly in democracy) that he was a traitor, liar, gangster, and pretty much despicable. His father's Cocaine trafficking business is still legendary in Miami.

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