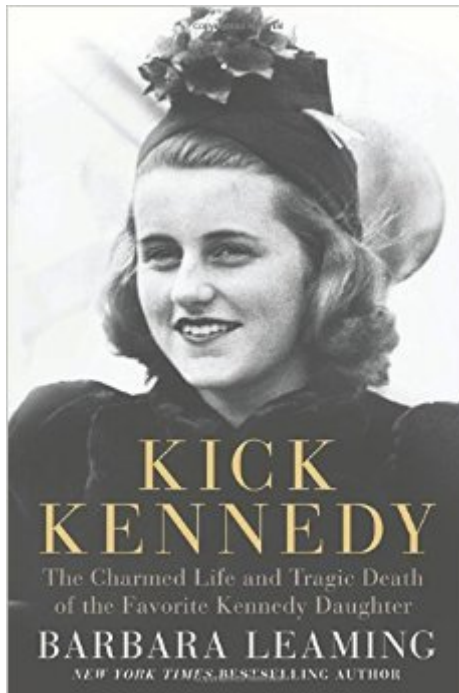


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Kick Kennedy: The Charmed Life And Tragic Death Of The Favorite Kennedy Daughter



Synopsis

A Los Angeles Times Bestseller Kathleen âœKickâ• Kennedy was the incandescent life-force of the fabled Kennedy family, her fatherâ™s acknowledged âœfavorite of all the childrenâ• and her brother Jackâ™s âœpsychological twin.â• She was the Kennedy of Kennedys, sure of her privilege, magnetically charming and somehow not quite like anyone else on whatever stage she happened to grace. The daughter of the American ambassador to the Court of St Jamesâ™s, Kick swept into Britainâ™s aristocracy like a fresh wind on a sweltering summer day. In a decaying world where everything was based on stultifying sameness and similarity, she was gloriously, exhilaratingly different. Kick was the girl whom all the boys fell in love with, the girl who remained painfully out of reach for most of them. To Kick, everything about this life was fun and amusingâ•until suddenly it was not. For this is also a story of how a girl like Kick, a girl who had everything, a girl who seemed made for happiness, confronted crushing sadness. Willing to pay the price for choosing the love she wanted, she would have to face the consequences of forsaking much that was dear to her. Bestselling and award-winning biographer Barbara Leaming draws on her unique access to firsthand accounts, extensive conversations with many of the key players, and previously-unseen sources to transport us to another world, one of immense wealth, arcane rituals and rules, glamour and tragedy, that has now disappeared forever. It was a world of dukes and duchesses, of grand houses, of country house weekends, and of wild rich boys. But it was also a world of blood and war, and of immeasurable loss. It was a time of complete upheaval, as reflected in the life of this most unlikely and unforgettable central character. Kick Kennedy reveals her story, that of a young girl learning about love, sex, and deathâ•and doing it all at warp speed as the world races toward war and then reels in the warâ™s chaotic aftermath. This is the coming-of-age story of the female star of the Kennedy family, and ultimately a tragic, romantic story that will break your heart.

Book Information

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Thomas Dunne Books; Stated First Edition edition (April 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250071313

ISBN-13: 978-1250071316

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.1 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (113 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #53,735 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in [Books > History > Europe > Great Britain > England](#) #94 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Royalty](#) #132 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Great Britain](#)

Customer Reviews

This was so disappointing. It begins with the author interviewing an octogenarian. He had known and lusted after Kathleen Kennedy when both were young in England before the war. That was a promising beginning, but unfortunately set a tone of too much detail about many peripheral people and too little about the Kennedys themselves. I was particularly shocked that after this beginning there was no effort to go back to the eighteen years of Kick's life before the family went to England. The little there was, about "Darling Daddy" and how he always spoiled her, was not just superficial, it was wrong. Yes, she was a family favorite--the much idolized in the family--"golden trio" of Kick and her two older brothers, John and Joe Jr. The Kennedy family was so important a factor in each child's development that to write so little about those eighteen pre-England years is just shocking. One reading elsewhere about the Kennedy children quickly disabuses themselves of the image of spoiled, pampered rich kids. Joe and Rose Kennedy were -tough- parents. Rose was strict and emotionally remote though involved in their lives when they were home. She was old fashioned in discipline and would beat them with clothes hangers when they disobeyed. Joe Kennedy was more openly loving and emotional, but he, too, had high standards and high expectations of their children. More to the point was that the boys were sent to many different boarding schools, coming home only on vacations (summers of course, in Cape Cod--fun to all be together, but highly structured with lessons, and Joe Kennedy's insistence on endless competitions over everything his children did--girls and boys alike. They were supposed to always win--sailing, tennis, swimming.

This book covers the life of "Kick" Kennedy from about the time she joined her father Joe Sr. when he was appointed Ambassador to England and ends with her death so it does not cover her birth, early childhood, and teen years so for this reason I wouldn't classify it as a full biography. I've read a couple of other books by Barbara Leaming and I like her writing style -- it is very fluid and easy to read and she does her research, from what is available. This book was a quick read. Since much of Kick's adult life was embroiled before/during/after WWII, the author provides a good backstory about some influential British political figures during that period. There are photos in this book (black/white) but all of them have been seen in other publications -- nothing new. I got the impression that the

author either didn't have access to much of Kick's papers or wasn't allowed access. The author did speak with the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire (the late Andrew Cavendish and his late wife, "Debo") but since no one was alive from the Kennedy side who actually knew Kick, this book provides most insights from her British friends and relatives-by-marriage. The book confirms what we all know - a) that her mother Rose Kennedy was a nut case and a textbook case of why certain females should never be allowed to procreate; and b) that her father Joe Sr. only worshipped the almighty dollar irregardless of how many lives were lost in the process. However, we also find out that Kick was a spoiled, self-centered, rich brat. Everyone in the British upper class thought she was wonderful but I suspect it's only because her father was so wealthy. Even the old Duke and Duchess of Devonshire pushed for their son Billy to marry her instead of an upper class British woman.

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