

# [PDF] The Patriarch: The Remarkable Life And Turbulent Times Of Joseph P. Kennedy

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## Books Details:

Title: The Patriarch: The Remarkable

Author: David Nasaw

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## Description:

**From Publishers Weekly** The father of Jack, Bobby, and Teddy (plus six others) was not a bootlegger, nor does any evidence link him to the Mafia, writes Nasaw, refuting two longstanding rumors. But Joseph P. Kennedy (1888-1969) was possibly the worst U.S. ambassador to Great Britain ever, so committed to appeasing Hitler that FDR cut him out of the diplomatic loop. Kennedy won the post because he was one of the few businessmen to support the New Deal, creator of pioneering financial regulations as the first chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. He knew all about manipulating stocks, having parlayed the modest affluence of his father, an East Boston ward heeler, into a fortune in the market. Kennedy was a wonderful father himself, although he and his wife, Rose, led almost completely separate lives. Nasaw (Andrew Carnegie), a history

professor at the CUNY Graduate Center, does a fine job of capturing Kennedy's fiery personality and his eventful, ultimately tragic life, watching Jack rise to the presidency, suffering a stroke but living long enough to see two of his sons assassinated. But the book is much too long and oddly focused; Kennedy's three-year ambassadorship occupies more than 25% of the text. The reams of fascinating material would have been better served by more careful shaping. Agent: Andrew Wylie, the Wylie Agency. (Nov.)

**From \*Starred Review\*** What's considered common knowledge about historical figures often gets a biographical rewrite, and to some degree that's what happens in this heavy (literally, sometimes figuratively) look at Joseph Kennedy. When one reads in the introduction that Nasaw was asked by the Kennedy family to write this biography, the obvious question is, How did the request affect the finished product? Nasaw was granted access to papers denied to other researchers and worked for six years on the project. Some of his conclusions clash markedly with what has been written about Kennedy (Nasaw dismisses rather lightly the long-held conclusion that Joe made part of his fortune as a bootlegger). But he gives readers a much fuller look at various accusations made against Kennedy, especially the charge that he was an anti-Semite. Through quoted letters, it is clear that Kennedy did have a grudge against the Jews, mostly because they interfered with what he wanted, be it getting a foothold in the movie industry or keeping the U.S out of WWII. His isolationism never really wavered. He believed that "victory over Hitler had cost much and accomplished little." Perhaps the key element to Kennedy, Nasaw suggests, is that rather than being larger than life, he was much smaller. He was all about protecting his family and his fortune. Though fortune remained, the family shattered, cutting Kennedy, in many ways, adrift. The book becomes more fascinating the farther one gets into it, and while there may be areas for dispute here, there's no doubt it makes a major contribution to Kennedy history. --Ilene Cooper

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