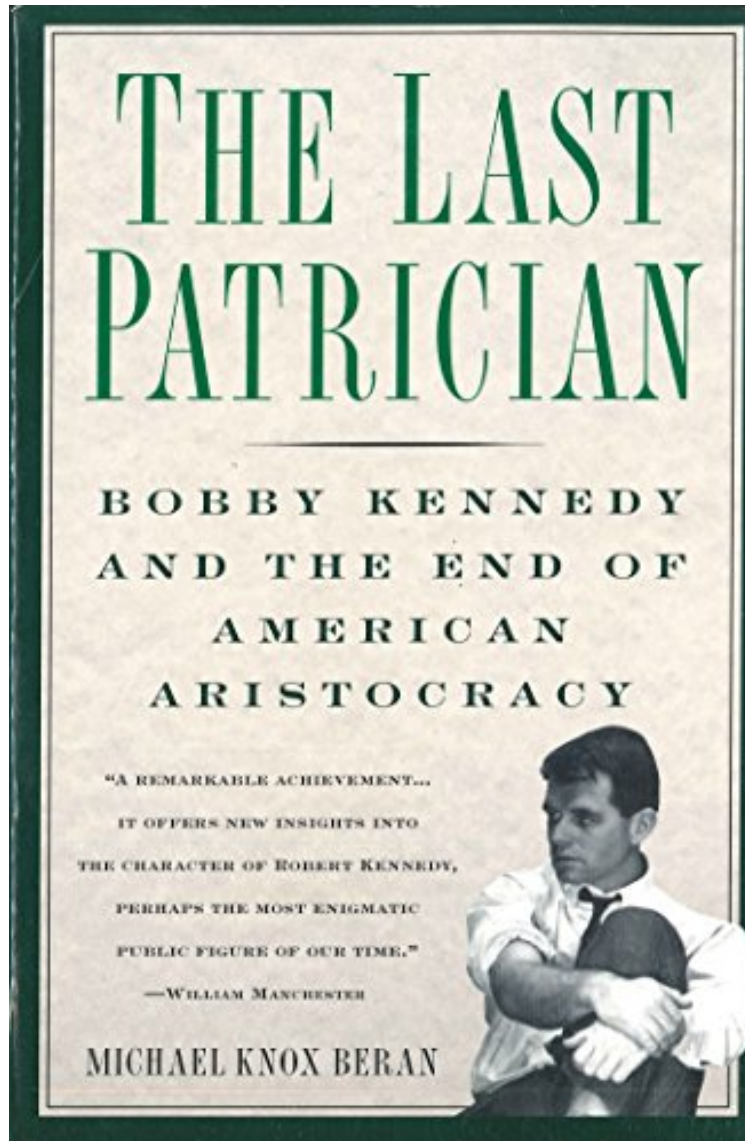


The Last Patrician: Bobby Kennedy and the End of American Aristocracy

Von Michael Knox Beran

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Von Michael Knox Beran : The Last Patrician: Bobby Kennedy and the End of American Aristocracy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Last Patrician: Bobby Kennedy and the End of American Aristocracy:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Of course RFK was a conservative liberal Von Herman Prager, PhDI just ordered the book and will read it with great

interest. I was visiting Los Angeles with my family in 1968 when I was 12 years old, and the death of Robert Kennedy really began my interest in politics and public life. I shall wait to read the book before concluding anything definitive, but of course RFK was this "conservative liberal." That's why he was so successful in motivating and moving people. He understood inherently that almost all of us are conservative at our core, and when we venture from that safety we do so - in part - because a leader is showing us why it is worth the risk. Bobby Kennedy was first rate at that task of a politician - challenging the complacency and fear and that often usual inattention to public issues in our lives. If there was one thing he stood for in his public life, I think it is best represented by the quote he frequently used on the campaign trail in 1968; in Indiana and California and other places... "Some men see things as they are and say why, I dream things that never were and say why not." With this man, so many people could find a common ground - black and white, liberal and conservative, working and middle-class. Since he left us, we have not seen his likes again.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Interesting Thesis; Breathtaking Generalizations
Von Ein Kunde
The central thesis of this book is a compelling one, as so much of the work on RFK is either hagiography or sensationalism. Beran validly critiques some of the more ridiculous elements of Kennedy's enshrinement as a liberal icon, but errs by oversimplifying some of Kennedy's views as precursors to Reagan's conservative revolution. Pithy, yes. Provocative, yes. But far too simplistic. The greater problem with the book, however, is Beran's critique of the foreign policy "establishment," which he refers to again and again as "Stimsonian." The book is replete with generalizations, oversimplifications, and unsubstantiated claims regarding much of the foreign policy of the 2nd half of the century. I understand this is an essay about RFK, but because so much of it centers around Beran's understanding (or lack thereof) of the "Stimsonians," more attention should have been paid to fleshing out and explaining some blanket statements made by Beran. Most egregious was Beran's dismissal of the influence of this group--utterly failing to grasp how truly revolutionary their "internationalist" approach was, and how enduring its impact has been, despite the obvious mistakes in Vietnam. In addition, while the connection between this group of "Stimsonians" and RFK is intriguing and not completely without merit, it is also far more tenuous than the author would lead one to believe (one need only refer to the titanic clashes of the world views of "Stimsonian" high priest Dean Acheson and RFK during the Cuban missile crisis to see this). While this is the most thought-provoking piece on RFK since Garry Wills' *Kennedy Imprisonment*, and is worth reading, it is best taken with a grain of salt AND an understanding of 20th century foreign policy gleaned elsewhere.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. 3 and a half, actually; the book stumbles into insight
Von Ein Kunde
This book is an often strained attempt to claim RFK for small-government conservatives. Any all of RFK's support for welfare-type programs is dismissed away as not representing RFK's "true" views; any statement RFK made against the so-called "welfare state" is claimed as RFK being at his most enlightened. There's a case to be made here for this thesis, but it's a somewhat weak case, and is especially hard to maintain for the length of the whole book. Still, this book does provide the service of forcing one to re-think some of the conventional wisdom that has built up around RFK and his family. In that sense, it's worth a read. Some other notes: I have a post-graduate degree, and this book sent me to the dictionary more times than any book I've read since college. And when the author runs out of big words, he simply coins new ones - such as "Stimsonian." That word is beat to death in the text, without a concise explanation of who Stimson even was. There's no real new info here - the author is a better stylist than researcher. Even much of the research that is cited is second-hand popular stuff, not really good, hard, academic study. Certain key points are cited with footnotes, but many others go unattributed, meaning that the author is simply speculating spilling his own ideas out. You may disagree with those ideas, you may agree, but there's no objective source to go to for a lot of what the author is saying here. A pretty good read, not so good as history.

Kurzbeschreibung Overview
In this provocative reassessment of one of the most controversial figures of twentieth-century American politics, Michael Knox Beran shows how Bobby Kennedy was shaped by values of the aristocratic class to which he had been brought up to belong. He was one of them - until he realized that the welfare state they had helped to create at home and the empire they had helped to found abroad were undermining some of America's most cherished traditions. In denouncing the welfare system as a "second-rate set of social services" and "hand-outs," and in questioning the imperial commitments that the patricians made in places like Vietnam, Bobby Kennedy was a prophet who accurately foresaw the changing direction of American politics. Challenging the work of Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Jack Newfield, and others, Beran demonstrates that Bobby was neither a pious liberal martyr nor a would-be revolutionary. He was a man who drew on the wisdom of Emerson, the ancient Greeks, and his own father's ideas about the transformative power of free markets - and used them to create a compelling vision of a better America.

dePart biography, part cultural retrospective, Michael Beran's work is a somewhat controversial reassessment of Robert Kennedy's public and private life. Thirty years after Kennedy was murdered, he is still remembered, along with other great liberal contemporaries such as Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy, as a tragic crusader for liberalism. To liberals, Bobby Kennedy was their last champion of social reform and civil rights;

when he died, their pursuit of these aims took a mortal blow. So when Beran intimates that on the day Kennedy was killed, it wasn't a Rooseveltian idealist who died, but rather a man who was essentially a conservative practitioner of liberal politics, it is bound to create controversy amongst his staunchest supporters. To them, Kennedy was "a rare example of a liberal icon," which is why political liberals might be antagonized by Beran's argument. It is to Beran's credit that he persuasively and passionately backs up his points, carefully illustrating popular misconceptions about Kennedy. He explores the so-called liberal policies instigated by Kennedy, and concludes that these were really little more than timely suggestions and tentative actions, rather than bold policy moves. He chronicles Kennedy's drive toward conservative statesmanship, epitomized by his understanding of public service. Kennedy seemed to understand that success in the modern political arena meant blending liberal policies with a conservative support system, a vision of politics that can be seen in modern-day politicians such as Bill Clinton. In tracing this evolution of thought, Beran illustrates Kennedy's maturation from arrogant aristocrat to responsible, benevolent crusader whose compassionate actions were driven more by his own misfortunes than by liberal morals. At a time when other books are revising public opinion of the Kennedy compound, focusing on the darker side of their affairs, this is a respectful and thoughtful work that subtly reminds us just how much was lost the day Robert Kennedy was shot down in his prime. --

Jeremy Storey

Kurzbeschreibung Overview

In this provocative reassessment of one of the most controversial figures of twentieth-century American politics, Michael Knox Beran shows how Bobby Kennedy was shaped by values of the aristocratic class to which he had been brought up to belong. He was one of them - until he realized that the welfare state they had helped to create at home and the empire they had helped to found abroad were undermining some of America's most cherished traditions. In denouncing the welfare system as a "second-rate set of social services" and "hand-outs," and in questioning the imperial commitments that the patricians made in places like Vietnam, Bobby Kennedy was a prophet who accurately foresaw the changing direction of American politics. Challenging the work of Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Jack Newfield, and others, Beran demonstrates that Bobby was neither a pious liberal martyr nor a would-be revolutionary. He was a man who drew on the wisdom of Emerson, the ancient Greeks, and his own father's ideas about the transformative power of free markets - and used them to create a compelling vision of a better America.