



All the Presidents' Children: Triumph and Tragedy in the Lives of America's First Families

Doug Wead

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From Abigail "Nabby" Adams to Barbara and Jenna Bush, George Washington Adams to John F. Kennedy, Jr., the children of America's presidents have both suffered and triumphed under the watchful eyes of their powerful fathers and the glare of the ever-changing public. Many, like the children of William Henry Harrison and Andrew Johnson, writhed under the pressure and fought bitter battles with alcoholism and depression only to die young. Others, like Robert Todd Lincoln, Margaret Truman, and Helen Taft Manning, used the privileges granted them to achieve their own success in the worlds of politics, business, and academia. All, however, had to cope with the entirely unique experience of sharing their fathers with the country that called them to leadership and living a life worthy of their place in history.

Combining twenty years of study with never-before-published letters and personal accounts from presidential children, Doug Wead has produced a remarkable and authoritative analysis of the extraordinary people born to American presidents throughout history.

Stories of outstanding presidential daughters; the eight weddings performed in the White House and what later happened in the marriages; tales of the real and rumored illegitimate children of the presidents; a list of presidential children who pursued politics and the five who were almost president themselves; examples of how the pressures of being a celebrity child interrupt the normal desire for intimacy and personal identity; biographies of living presidential children and where they are now -- these are just a few of the historical gems unearthed.

Both an entertaining lesson on our nation's history, a study of the problems and solutions of high-achieving parents, and a fascinating look at the father-son dynamics of the current White House, "All the Presidents' Children" is a must-read for anyone interested in America's most high-profile pedigree.

All the Presidents' Children: Triumph and Tragedy in the Lives of America's First Families Details

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From Reader Review All the Presidents' Children: Triumph and Tragedy in the Lives of America's First Families for online ebook

Diana says

It was interesting to read about the families of our presidents: lots of triumphs and lots of tragedies.

Amanda says

Great book for learning more about presidents and their families.

Lisa says

This book was fairly well written, and I learned a lot about presidential children that I didn't know. Here's why I didn't give it a higher rating: When approaching a book of this type, which is basically just scores of biographies, it can be handled one of two ways: chronologically, or with people grouped in areas of commonality. Doug Wead chose the second option, which made the book more interesting in some ways, but it also caused repetition, which was a little confusing. Also, there was too much time spent on modern presidential children, and not as much space devoted to those of the past. There were several appendices in the back that helped sort out some of the confusion. I enjoyed the book, but it wasn't as easy of a read as I thought it would be.

Karen says

A good reminder that our politicians are just people with lives that mirror the rest of us. They seem bigger than life but suffer all the pains the rest of us do. Maybe more so.

Jan says

Chock full of lots of great information. I really found so much of it interesting.

However, the author had a very strong bias and it shone through quite clearly throughout the book. It got rather tiresome after a while. For example, when he suggested that a certain presidential daughter lied about being abused by her mother, his only evidence being that the accused reacted to the allegation with so much public decorum, I could not have rolled my eyes any harder.

Also, the book isn't structured well.

jane says

Interesting biographies of presidential children. Relentlessly positive writing about those still alive. More objective writing about those no longer with us. Some interesting insights about family relationships.

Krista says

Interesting historical accounts of president's sons and some daughters and the pressures of living of up to a legend. Same could probably be said for offspring of all celebrities & high-profile corp execs.

Doreen says

An interesting read about the presidents and their families. So many stories that I had never heard before, from the tragedies of Franklin Pierce and Calvin Coolidge, to the antics of the Theodore Roosevelt family. Each chapter was a new story. An easy read for those interested in American history.

Gina says

This book is a fascinating look into the lives of the offspring of US Presidents. What surprised me most was that a vast majority of Presidential children suffered in different ways for having been under the big glass dome that is the White House.

A few children, of course, prospered and went on to lead amazing and full lives. Some used their notariety to further causes they believed in.

Many, however, never found their own identity outside of the "offspring" of their fathers, and some turned to alcohol, drugs, and various other forms of self destruction.

The book includes quite a number of photographs (which I especially enjoyed) and stories on each of the children. It was an interesting and eye-opening read.

Cindy says

Very interesting read as it delves into the family life of Presidents. The author definitely has a theory that the majority of these children are cursed to end up trying to out achieve or out-run (in alcoholism, etc.) their father's legacy. I skipped some of this discussion for the actual life descriptions and also disliked how short other children's paragraphs were (usually the more modern or normal lives) as if this was unremarkable or we were supposed to know about them so he skipped the assumptions of the historical reasoning used for other children. But all together an interesting read.

Lindsey says

I could have done without the homage to the Bush "dynasty," but overall I enjoyed this book. There were so many fascinating stories of the first families and the struggles they faced. A recommended read for any history buff.

Dave says

Having just watched the Historical HBO series on John Adams, I think back to when i finished this book last year. The stories of incredible sacrifice and expectations were all more vivid. A great read for anyone who appreciates what it might be like having a US President in your family

Rebecca says

I really enjoyed learning about American history through the perspective of the presidential children. The format was much more interesting than your typical chronological order. The author is affiliated with Ron Paul and is a member of the Constitutional party, so he is pretty well grounded in his views. A very interesting, informative book - a warning, some parts can be a bit dry... :)

Debra Rubin says

The facts in this book are fascinating. I enjoyed the book, although I will probably not retain much of what I read. For people that love history, this book will appeal to them.

Marmie says

This book is one of the most revealing of Presidential families. It puts flesh, blood, and emotions to those we have longed to know. Outstanding Book!
