

Reliable Source

By Ann Gerhart and Annie Groer

1 Gore Vidal + 2 Magazines = 2 Exclusives

- The Interview: Gore Vidal, on the occasion of the publication of his memoirs, "Palimpsest."
- The Outlet: The upcoming New York Times Sunday Magazine.
- The Hype: "The last time" Vidal gives an interview.

Writer Andrew Solomon's description of Vidal's villa: "We admire the variations on the view from several rooms, then settle for the day on the suede sofa in the study, Vidal reclining at one end like Xerxes, heaped on pillows, his head silhouetted against the window so that the sparkling sea seems a nimbus around his noble head."

Vidal on breeding: "If you're not in the business of baby-making, the anonymous or paid encounter is far more satisfactory. It takes so much time the other way... If it's somebody that you know, there's nothing exciting about it at all to me."

The relatives: "Jackie Kennedy was Vidal's mother's second husband's third wife's daughter."

On knowing John Kennedy: "Jack believed



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Vidal, playing easy to get.

in the cold war. He really was a war-lover, a very, very right-wing boy from a very Catholic family; we can thank Cardinal Spellman for a good bit of the Vietnam War. Jack wanted to be a great President, and he'd figured out that the great Presidents were war Presidents."

- The Interview: Gore Vidal.
The Outlet: The November Vanity Fair.
The Hype: "The only interview" Vidal is doing.

Writer Christopher Hitchens's description of Vidal's villa: "A painter might show Gore's once lissome form arrowing into the waves like Bruegel's Icarus while the majestic cliffs of the Analfi coastline look impassively on."

Vidal on breeding: "No, I don't wish that I had any [children] when I see what friends have gone through. I do think that at about 40 a man—in my case briefly—sometimes wishes that he could pass on what he has learned to a son; this is doubtless innate. But my son would probably be a computer analyst and I am computer-challenged."

The relatives: "His half sister, Nina Auchincloss Straight, is the stepsister of the late Jackie Kennedy."

On not meeting his cousin, Vice President Gore: "I can't say I like the company he keeps, from Marty Peretz—Israel's uncrowned queen—to the late Armand Hammer. On the other hand, his father is a noble soul. Do I want to meet Junior? I've met too many vice presidents as it is."