

**Sunday**  
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2-star edition

# Herald

## JFK

### 25 YEARS LATER

Associated Press correspondent Mike Cochran covered the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas and reported on the slaying and burial of Lee Harvey Oswald. Here, he explores the significance of the 25th anniversary of Kennedy's death.

## Kennedy mystique and conspiracy theories thrive

By Mike Cochran  
Associated Press

DALLAS — As Air Force One began its descent into Carswell Air Force Base, President John F. Kennedy glanced down through the darkness. Amber lights silhouetted the Fort Worth skyline and gave the city a friendly, festive glow.

"Spectacular," Kennedy told Congressman Jim Wright.

The date was Nov. 21, 1963, and the presidential party had flown to Fort Worth for the third

stop on a whirlwind tour designed to end the left-right squabbling among bitterly factionalized Texas Democrats and secure the state for the presidential election the following year.

A crowd estimated at 6,000 greeted Kennedy and his wife, Jacqueline, at Carswell, and thousands more lined the motorcade route to the old Hotel Texas, where the president would spend his final night.

A 26-year-old Associated Press reporter caught his first

JFK, A-10 ►

# Examiner

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In the final moments before shots rang out, President and Jackie Kennedy acknowledge the crowd.



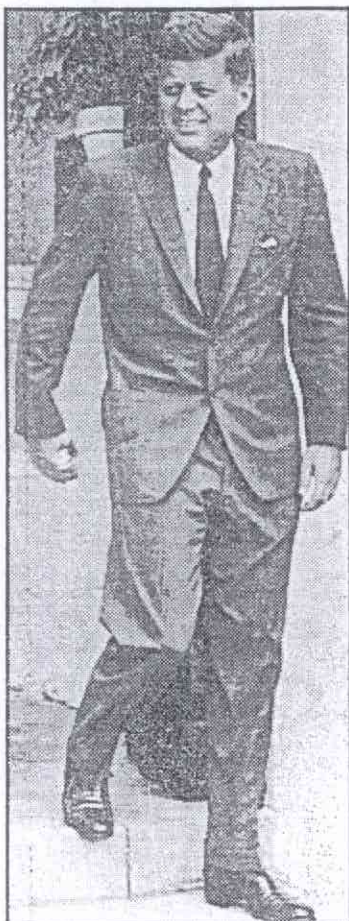
# JFK

► From A-1

glimpse of an American president that evening and, in that era of innocence, was every bit as excited as a small-town West Texan should have been.

Hours later, that AP reporter joined other numbed and dismayed colleagues in covering the death of his president and the wounding of Gov. John Connally. Just days later, he covered the slaying of Lee Harvey Oswald and, drafted for the task, helped carry his body to its grave.

Then came the 1964 murder trial of Jack Ruby, the Ides of March conviction, a death sentence and an appellate court ruling that set the verdict aside. Ruby died of cancer before he



**JFK's death** and persistent allegations about conspiracies have left an indelible mark on the American conscious

could be retried.

Through the years, there were interludes with Oswald's widow, Marina, and turbulent, intriguing bouts with his mother, Marguerite, whose favorite pastime was haranguing Fort Worth reporters.

And always the conspiracy buffs, the researchers dedicated to proving the Warren Commission's basic conclusion a lie, and not a very convincing one at that.

They insisted Oswald was not the killer or, at the very least, was not the sole triggerman.

In 1981, the conspiracies peaked with a trip to Rose Hill Cemetery to dig up the body buried 18 years before in Oswald's grave. A British author had claimed we had buried an impostor, a Russian spy in fact. He was wrong. Forensic tests at Baylor University Medical Center proved it was indeed Oswald.

Although the echoes of gunfire in Dealey Plaza grow fainter with each passing autumn, the events of November 1963 continue to touch us all in mystifying ways and to different degrees.

This month, there will be network and cable documentaries, new books, an all-night Capitol vigil and memorials by former Peace Corps volunteers and PT boat veterans. Millions of words will be written.

Still, Kennedy family members would prefer that remembrances of the slain president be changed.

"They have tried to get away from commemorating the day of his death and try to celebrate the day of his birth," says Melody Miller, an aide to Sen. Edward Kennedy.

What is the significance of this 25th anniversary and the anniversaries that preceded it? Do we know the legacy of Dallas? Or the lessons of 1963?

Historians might one day pinpoint all this and more.

But don't bet on it.

**ANYONE OLD ENOUGH** to read or watch television 25 years ago can recite from memory the events of Nov. 22.

Kennedy spoke twice in Fort Worth that morning, first to a crowd of 5,000 who had gathered in the rain in the hotel parking lot. Vice President Lyndon Johnson and Connally joined him, but Jackie did not.

"It takes a little longer to put herself together, that's why she's prettier than we are," the president joked with the cheering crowd.

Inside, Kennedy addressed a sold-out Chamber of Commerce breakfast in the hotel's Grand

Ballroom. That group totaled 2,050, with 50 extra tickets allotted at the last minute to the black community.

No blacks, no breakfast speech, the White House said when told the president would be addressing an all-white audience.

It was Kennedy's final speech, but Jackie stole the show, looking lovely and self-assured in a two-piece pink suit with matching pillbox hat.

Kennedy and his entourage then returned to Carswell for the short flight to Dallas, where the president was to address a luncheon at the Trade Mart.

In Dallas, 200,000 people, many on lunch breaks, jammed the streets to see the 46-year-old president and his 34-year-old wife. Smiling and waving, Jackie sat at her husband's side as the motorcade rolled through the canyons of downtown Dallas.

Delighted and relieved by the big, friendly reception, Nellie Connally, the governor's wife, turned from her seat in front of Kennedy and said:

"No one can say Dallas doesn't love and respect you, Mr. President."

"You sure can't," he replied.

Seconds later, the motorcade passed in front of the Texas School Book Depository and into a sniper's cross hairs.

**THE FIRST YEAR** after the assassination was difficult for most Americans. It was a night-



mare for Texans, particularly those living in Dallas.

A number of publications found much to dislike about Texas and most were mightily concerned with the so-called "mood of Dallas" and the accommodation granted its far-right fanatics in the conservative mainstream.

In an editorial headlined "A Year Later," the Dallas Morning News touched on the "scathing and unjust criticism" of Dallas and observed how the city stood alone "in the spotlight of unfavorable conspicuousness."

The editorial did not mention the small but noisy element of right-wingers whose agitation had prompted Kennedy's visit 12 months before.

Perhaps it was unimportant. What seemed to matter to the newspaper was that hysteria and shock had subsided and the city could move ahead with new resolve and high purpose.

Nov. 22 that year fell on a Sunday, and a still sorrowful nation remembered Kennedy in prayers and memorial services across the country.

It had been a year of memorials.

The U.S. Space Flight Center at Cape Canaveral, Fla., was renamed Cape Kennedy, but later was changed back. New York changed the name of its international airport from Idlewild to John F. Kennedy.

Congress authorized construc-

tion of a cultural center in Washington to be named in Kennedy's honor, and Harvard University announced plans for a Kennedy Memorial Library.

By the end of the year, it seemed certain that more American streets, avenues and boulevards would be named Kennedy than Main.

**THE DALLAS** ceremony marking the fifth anniversary of the assassination was so brief and simple it almost slipped past unnoticed.

Fifty people gathered for the prayer service near the spot where Kennedy was slain. A city official laid a wreath of red and white carnations beside the bronze marker that tells the assassination story.

The news was dominated by the Vietnam War and the 1968 election. Pain still lingered from the slayings earlier that year of Martin Luther King Jr. and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

By the 10th anniversary in 1973, reporters were getting lathered up over Watergate. In Dallas, 500 people gathered near the assassination site, but the top news story of the day was an 18-minute gap in a Nixon White House tape recording.

The JFK focus in 1973 was shifting to conspiracy theories, fed by books and a movie called "Executive Action" that laid blame for the Kennedy killing on a group of greedy Texas oilmen

"There's nothing new. My view is the same — Oswald did all the shooting," retired District Attorney Henry Wade said in an interview last month. "I haven't seen anything to change my mind. I feel like somebody might have planted the seed or thought that somebody ought to kill him (Kennedy) while in town. But there is absolutely no proof of anything like that."

Fifteen years ago, Wade, who would have prosecuted Oswald had he lived, was less certain.

"I find it hard to believe that Oswald didn't have help," he told the AP in 1973. "Call it a gut feeling on my part. I don't have any evidence to back it up. But I believe there was a conspiracy. You just don't go downtown one morning and kill the president."

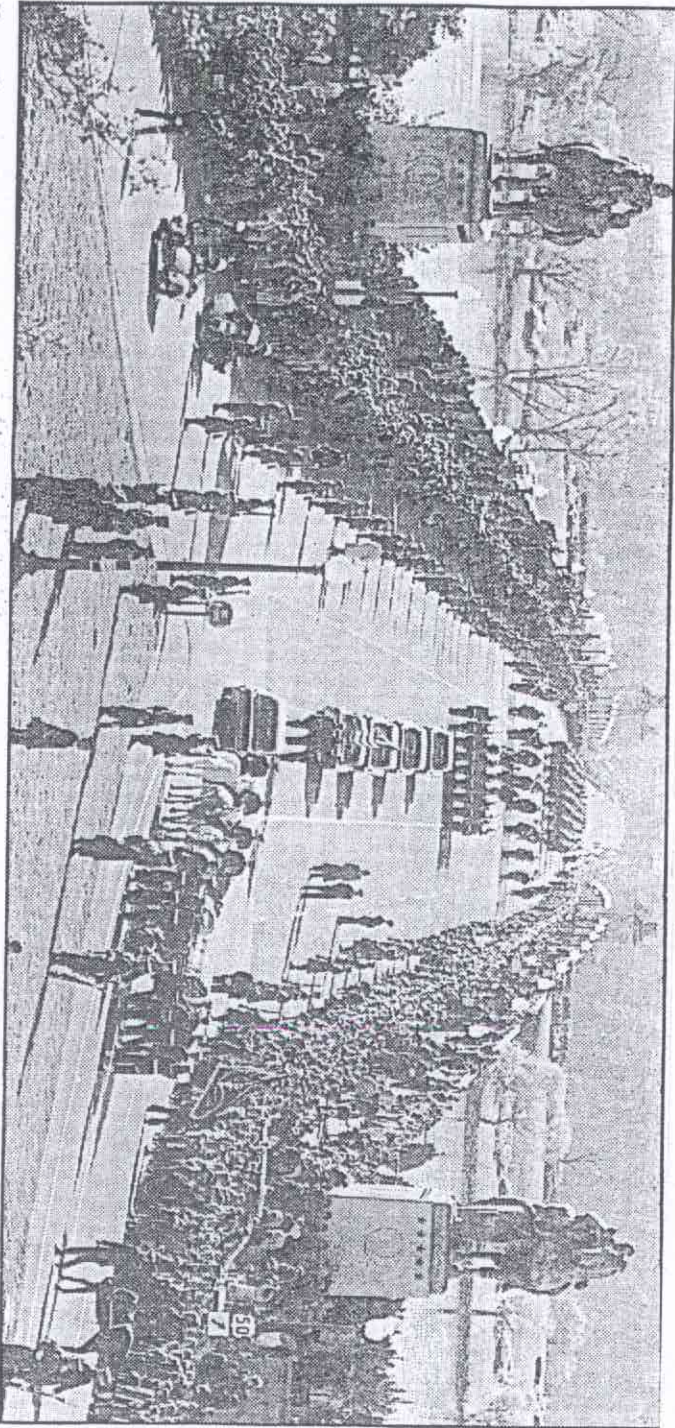
The widow of J.D. Tippit, the police officer Oswald shot after fleeing the school book warehouse, had remarried by the 10th anniversary. A lawyer said the \$600,000 she received from a sympathetic public after Tippit's death went into a trust for their three children.

**UNLIKE THE SPARTAN** fifth anniversary, the landmark 20th touched all bases.

Movies, television specials, documentaries, books, magazine articles and news stories explored the assassination anew.

In 1963, Marina Oswald, at age

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**Horse-drawn caisson** bearing the body of President Kennedy turns onto Memorial bridge before entering Arlington National Cemetery.



## JFK

► Continued from previous page

22, was a stranger in a foreign land, a frightened young woman with few friends, no money, no job, no future, two infant daughters and a dead husband accused of killing the president of the United States.

"It was horrible," she told the AP 20 years later.

"For a while I thought it would all blow over, just go away. But now I accept the fact that I must live with this for the rest of my life."

Less than two years after the assassination, Marina married Kenneth Porter, a carpenter, and they moved to a country house north of Dallas.

She was then and remains today uncertain of Oswald's guilt and whether he acted alone. She initially agreed with the Warren Commission that Oswald was the lone assassin, but doubts crept in and she later changed her mind.

But, she told the AP, "I don't have any desire to waste the rest of my life trying to prove something that cannot be proven."

There are those, however, who are obsessed with doing precisely that.

In 1983, an AP story first pulled together theories about: the Black Dog Man, the Umbrella Man, the Mafia Con Man, the Tall Tramp and a man called Frenchy. The article also looked at publications called "The Continuing Inquiry," "Coverups!" and "Echoes of Conspiracy."

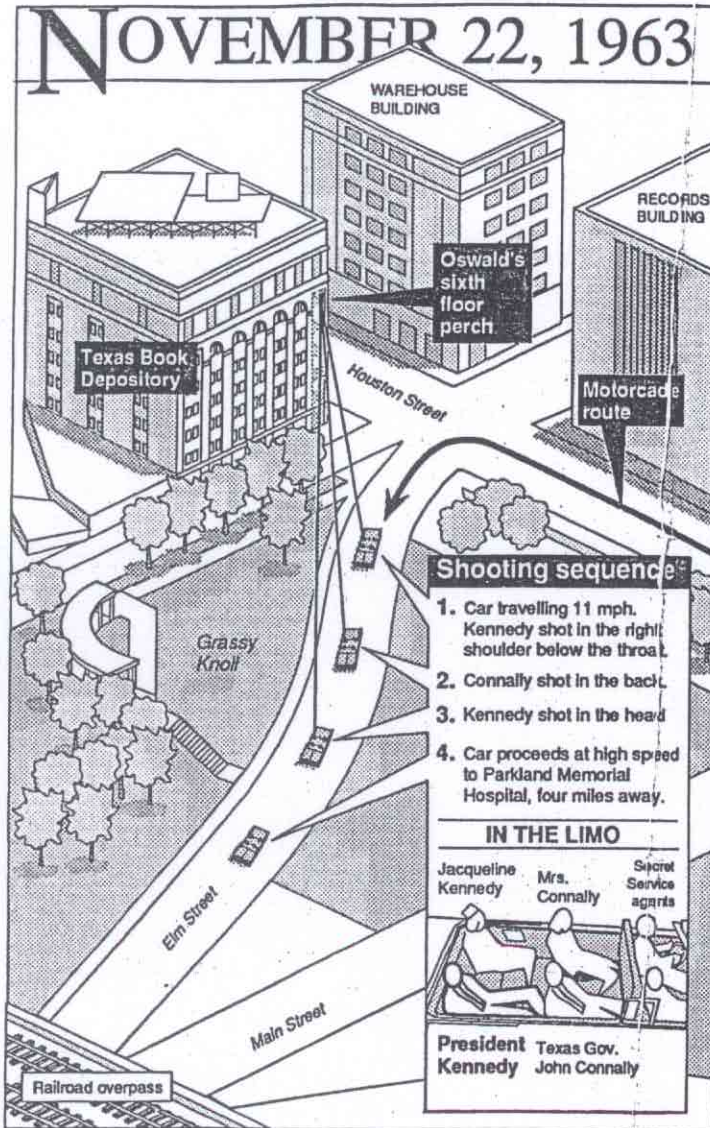
**THOSE ARE NAMES** and newsletters well-known to the self-described "theorists" or "critics" who claim there is a sinister and still secret story behind the assassination.

They raise provocative questions but provide few answers.

That brings us to the 25th anniversary and the latest theories.

A British television documentary entitled "The Men Who Killed Kennedy," broadcast Oct. 25, claimed three gangsters from Marseilles, France, assassinated Kennedy on orders from U.S. organized crime.

The two-hour documentary on Central Television identified the



Harl Gude/AP

purported assassins by name and said one was shot to death in Mexico in 1972, a second was working in Colombia's drug trade and the third was living in Marseilles after his recent release from prison.

But the day after the program aired, a Marseilles newspaper assembled records indicating that two of them could not have been in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963; one was serving on a mine sweeper from Oct. 16, 1962, to April 16, 1964, according to French navy headquarters, and another was in a Marseilles jail cell that day, according to the Justice Ministry.

In addition, the newspaper account quoted the navy veteran as saying that the third man singled out was also in jail on the day of the assassination.

The program was based on a four-year inquiry by American writer and researcher Steve Rivelle and the program's British director, Nigel Turner.

In this country, a syndicated

television report is reviving the theory that Kennedy's assassination was an act of revenge by Louisiana mob boss Carlos Marcello, who was deported in 1961 by then-U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy. The program, presented by reporter Jonathan Kwitny, was broadcast in New York on Nov. 1 and will air elsewhere this month.

The report said evidence indicated that Oswald and Ruby had connections to Marcello: Oswald through his uncle, who purportedly worked for the Marcello organization, and Ruby through drug trafficking, which would have been controlled by Marcello.

In a two-hour television special Nov. 2, columnist Jack Anderson argued another theory involving the Mafia, that Kennedy was a victim of underworld figures first hired by the CIA to kill Fidel Castro. Anderson's special says Santo Trafficante, mob boss in Havana before Castro took power in 1959, double-crossed the CIA and informed Castro.

Castro then made a deal with Trafficante to kill Kennedy, Anderson theorized. Trafficante allegedly enlisted the support of two other bosses, Marcello and Sam Giancana, and Oswald was

set up as the fall guy. Anderson's special also linked Ruby to the Mafia plot.

**BACK WHEN** the echoes of gunfire were still ringing in Dealey Plaza, the media struggled to define the mood of Dallas and how the city's right-wing tolerance might have figured in the assassination.

They apparently failed.

D Magazine, a slick Dallas monthly, unveiled its November 1988 issue with this cover: "25 Years Later: Did Dallas Kill Kennedy?"

Inside, there is a story entitled "Was Dallas a City of Hate?"

The debate goes on.

Robert H. Johnson Jr., the AP's Texas bureau chief who directed the news agency's assassination coverage, wrote the AP's first startling words:

**"BULLETIN**

**"DALLAS (AP) --** President Kennedy was shot today just as his motorcade left downtown Dallas. Mrs. Kennedy jumped up and grabbed Mr. Kennedy. She cried, 'Oh, no!' The motorcade sped on."

Johnson, recently retired and living in New Mexico, remained in Texas for six years after the shootings. Never once, he said,

plain it either. But she vividly remembers the look on her fifth-grade teacher's face when he dismissed his pupils in Chicopee Falls, Mass., that November afternoon.

"Just by his expression, we knew something really big had happened," she says now.

Womble, 35, now director of

marketing at upscale Highland Park Village shopping complex in Dallas, said the whole issue is muddled because the case has never been solved.

"But to me, the way to work out our emotions of guilt and regret is to discuss them openly and repeatedly," she said. "They just don't vanish."



## YEARS LATER



A sailor weeps as the caisson carrying John Kennedy's body rolls by during funeral procession. AP



JFK: 25 YEARS

# Life after Camelot for



**A time to grieve:** Jackie Kennedy, Caroline and John Jr. walk up steps of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington, D.C., for the president's funeral Mass on Nov. 25, his son's third birthday.

Jackie, Caroline and John still in limelight but privacy prevails

By Jerry Schwartz  
and Kiley Armstrong  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — In fairy tales, the beautiful princess marries the handsome prince and they live happily ever after.

But Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis' fairy tale short-circuited on a warm day in Dallas when her pink suit was splattered with her prince's blood. In the ensuing 25 years, she has had to write her own happy ending.

The plot twists she has chosen have not been popular with the adoring multitudes who would have preferred that she remain the national widow. Her 1968 marriage to Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle Onassis engendered outrage, and her penchant for privacy bred resentment.

But once a year, she kneels alone at Arlington National Cemetery. And once again she becomes the stoic, black-veiled widow who stood at that spot in 1963 to bury her husband.

It is important to remember what Jackie Kennedy was to America and to the world. She was the glamorous, whispery-voiced brunette whose appearances caused as much commotion as her husband's — so much so that he laughingly introduced himself as Jackie's escort.

She was the fashion plate whose designer dresses, pillbox hats and white gloves spurred the fashion industry.

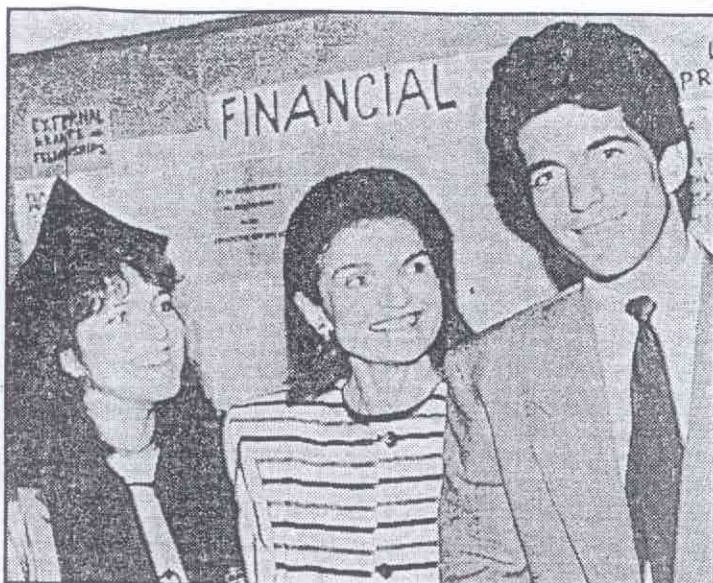
Most of all, she was mistress of Camelot.

She forfeited that title when she married Onassis, the aging Greek who seemed the antithesis of the elegant Kennedy.



LATER

# the Kennedy family



**A time to celebrate:** Jackie Kennedy is flanked by Caroline and John Jr. after a pre-commencement ceremony marking Caroline's graduation from the Columbia School of Law last May.

The marriage foundered quickly, and Ari and Jackie lived separate lives: When he died in 1975, he left her \$120,000 in his will; she won a \$26 million settlement from the Onassis family.

With her millions, Jackie Onassis could have done absolutely nothing, enjoying her 14-room apartment on upper Fifth Avenue, her estate in Bernardville, N.J., and the oceanfront compound on Martha's Vineyard.

Instead, she entered the job force in 1978 as an editor for Doubleday & Co. She works there 3½ days a week — producing ideas and acquiring books from authors and agents, then guiding the writing of manuscripts.

She declines all interviews, according to her spokeswoman, Nancy Tuckerman.

**WHEN HE TOOK** the podium at the Democratic National Convention in July, the national memory drifted back nearly 25 years, to the mind's image of a

3-year-old boy saluting his father's horse-drawn caisson.

But this was no "John-John" on the stage in Atlanta. This was a handsome, well-spoken law student. This was a 28-year-old millionaire who had traveled the world and worked with the poor.

More than a quarter-century has passed since John F. Kennedy Jr. and his sister, Caroline, now 30, charmed the nation with their Oval Office shenanigans.

They endured the assassinations of their father in 1963 and their Uncle Bobby in 1968. They adjusted when their mother married Onassis.

Still, by all reports John and Caroline thrived — they did well in private schools, became proficient in sports, made lasting friendships and avoided drugs.

Like their mother, both Kennedy children guard their privacy and decline all interview requests.

Caroline Kennedy earned a fine arts degree at Harvard, then served as manager and coordinat-

ing producer of the office of film and television at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

She married author-artist Edwin Schlossberg in July 1986. After a \$1,250-a-week internship in 1987 as a summer associate at a New York law firm, she graduated from Columbia University law school in May. She gave birth to a daughter, Rose Kennedy Schlossberg, on June 25.

Her brother has kept a more public profile.

Now an athletic 6-foot-1, with matinee-idol good looks, Kennedy recently was named by People magazine as "the sexiest man alive."

Like his father, Kennedy has been described as extremely shy, although he did make a few campaign speeches when his cousin, Joseph P. Kennedy II, ran for Congress.

Kennedy acted in two productions at Brown University in Providence, R.I., where he graduated in 1982.

In the summer of 1985, he starred in a revival of a play called "Winners," staged and directed by his fellow Brown graduates at the Irish Arts Center in Manhattan.

In 1984, he began his first job, in the New York City Office of Business Development. He also spent a summer as a \$1,100-a-week intern at an L.A. law firm.

The young Kennedy, who lives in a modest apartment in Greenwich Village, is a millionaire, thanks to a trust fund left by his father and the settlement his mother made with the Onassis estate.

Although he has no personal recollection of the White House days — he was only 3 when his father was killed — he majored in American history in college, has studied his father's administration and is a member of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation.

Despite speculation about a possible political future, he has steadfastly denied having any definite career plans beyond New York University Law School, where he is completing his final year.