

DONNELLY NEWS 4/1/67  
"THE DEATH OF A PRESIDENT" by  
William Manchester (Harper & Row). This  
book has been so publicised and serialized  
and excerpted and reported on and  
criticized and hashed-over that I am not  
going to make a serious attempt to review  
it. I'm not sure what's newsy in it at this  
late date; volumes seem to have been  
written on every aspect of the manuscript,  
and on all the personalities most intimately  
concerned with it.

Mr. Manchester's book is of a kind that  
lends itself more to quotation than to  
criticism, and if I quoted all the things in  
it that seem to me particularly striking, I'd  
need a special supplement. It's Mr.  
Manchester's documentation. I want to  
quote, not his turns of phrase. When Mr.  
Manchester attempts to write beautifully,  
or to comment on his material in the  
manner of some supreme philosopher or  
epic historian, he is either embarrassing or  
appalling. Fortunately he concentrates for  
the most part on assembling a mosaic of  
details; he tells us what happened just  
before, during, and after the assassination  
of President Kennedy. Mr. Manchester  
gives us a tragic historical event as seen,  
felt, and experienced by a multiplicity of  
persons, and he has turned out a work that  
is of compelling interest, despite those  
jarring, tasteless passages, and despite the  
fact that many of the details in Man-  
chester's mosaic really were too trivial  
to mention. Readers who may think, as I  
did, that they have already "had" the  
Manchester book would do well to give this  
volume a try.