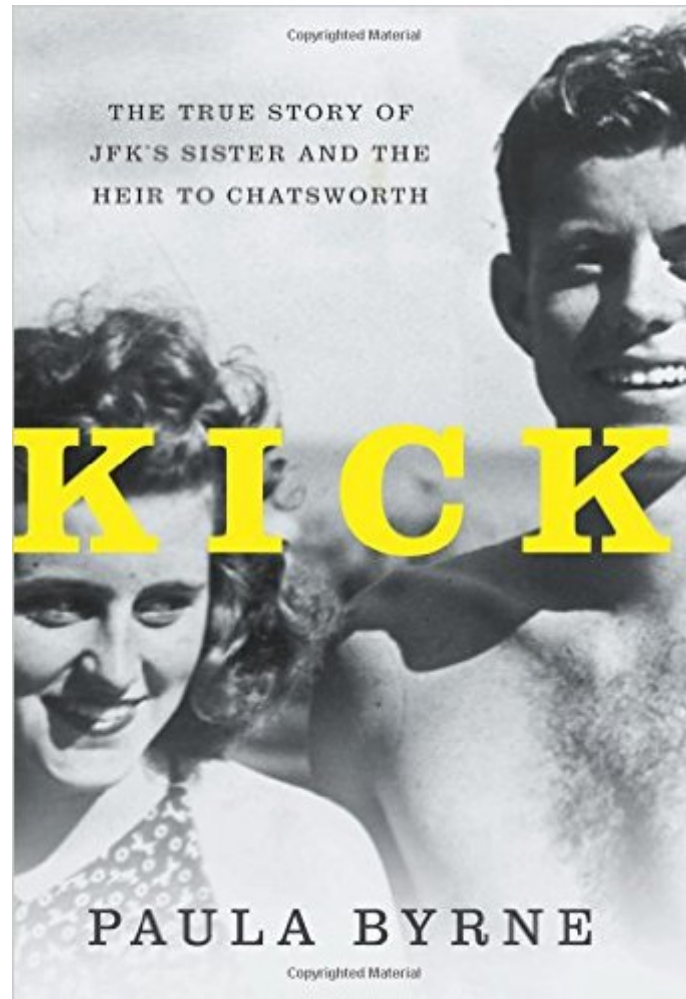


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# Kick: The True Story Of JFK's Sister And The Heir To Chatsworth



## Synopsis

Filled with a wealth of revealing new material and insight, the biography of the vivacious, unconventional and nearly forgotten young Kennedy sister who charmed American society and the English aristocracy, and would break with her family for love. Encouraged to be winners from a young age, Rose and Joe Kennedy's children were the embodiment of ambitious, wholesome Americanism. Yet even within this ebullient group of overachievers, the fourth Kennedy child, the irrepressible Kathleen, stood out. Lively, charismatic, extremely clever, and blessed with graceful athleticism and a sunny disposition, the alluring socialite fondly known as Kick was a firecracker who effortlessly made friends and stole hearts. Moving across the Atlantic when her father was appointed as the ambassador to Great Britain in 1938, Kick the nicest Kennedy quickly became the family's star. Despite making little effort to fit into British high society, she charmed everyone from the beau monde to Fleet Street with her unconventional attitude and easygoing humor. Growing increasingly independent, Kick would also shock and alienate her devout family by falling in love and marrying the scion of a virulently anti-Catholic family William Cavendish, the heir apparent of the Duke of Devonshire and Chatsworth. But the marriage would last only a few months; Billy was killed in combat in 1944, just four years before Kick's own unexpected death in an airplane crash at twenty-eight. Paula Byrne recounts this remarkable young woman's life in detail as never before, from her work at the Washington Times-Herald and volunteerism for the Red Cross in wartime England; to her love of politics and astute, opinionated observations; to her decision to renounce her faith for the man she loved. Sympathetic and compelling, Kick shines a spotlight on this feisty and unique Kennedy long relegated to the shadows of her legendary family's history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A fast read and interesting. Probably because she died at 26 without making many waves in world affairs, Kathleen Kennedy is as much an unknown in the Kennedy saga as her older sister Rosemary and her heir-apparent brother, Joe. This copy of the book is an uncorrected proof so the fact that the redundancy of the comment of how everyone, males especially, fell immediately in love with this spritely girl is very irritating will be edited somewhat. Also we Catholics take Missals, not Bibles, with our rosaries to Sunday Mass and usually not the Rosary since it isn't part of Mass. It is true, however, that it is not unusual to take our Rosaries with us in pocket or purse as a matter of course. Also we usually capitalize the word Mass. Those few minor things aside the Irish Catholic upbringing of the time is not exaggerated and the stigma of marrying outside the Church was very real, though with the right connections and enough money, almost anything can earn a dispensation--see Henry VIII and divorce as an example. I'm amazed Cardinal Spellman was unable to get Kathleen the freedom to marry her Duke in the Church. Of course, the children would have had to be Catholic too and that was yet another sticking point. The decadence of the life of these affluent young people with their parties and lack of any real direction in life was rather appalling. The incidence of Jack's telling his friend, Lem, about the "Ross Kennedy" alliance he and the Earl of Rosslyn had formed to "seduce as many women as they could find" rather than form a serious relationship as others were doing with the threat of war imminent brought to mind the recent Phillips Exeter scandal of the Senior Salute. Guess things haven't changed much in those circles.

Kick by Paula Byrne is a 2016 Harper publication. I was provided a copy of this book by the publisher and Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. Does the fascination with the Kennedy's ever really fade? This larger than life family, is remembered for their unprecedented success and mark on our country and our lives, but they are also remembered for the heart wrenching tragedies the family has endured. This book is about Kathleen "Kick" Kennedy, the fourth Kennedy child, whose life ended abruptly, and shockingly, at such a young age. While I have always been very curious about the Kennedy assassination, having read many books on the subject, both fiction and non-fiction, I can't say my interest in the Kennedy family has ever strayed beyond

that. I confess to knowing very little about Kathleen Kennedy before starting this book, so for me it has been very enlightening, giving me a different perspective on the family. Kathleen appears to have been a vivacious girl, smart, funny, and full of mischief. She was close to her father, but seemed to have an especially close relationship with her brother, Jack. Despite her life being cut so tragically short, she did appear to live it with gusto, unafraid to tread into uncharted territory, break rules, and was a little scandalous, especially for the time era in which she lived, which did not always please her parents. This accounting of her life is interesting, but, the reading could be dry at times, especially in the beginning with the requisite background on the Kennedy family dynasty.

It seems to be the time for books about the Kennedy sisters. Recently, *Rosemary: The Hidden Daughter* by Kate Clifford Lawson was published and now Paula Byrne's *Kick*, about Kathleen Kennedy is on the shelves. Not much has been written about Kathleen, the fourth child of Rose and Joseph Kennedy, better known as Kick. She, Joe Jr. and Jack were thick as thieves growing up together. When Joseph Kennedy was named U.S. Ambassador to England, Kick began to blossom. She loved their time in England and when WWII was looming over England, the Kennedy clan returned to America much to Kick's dismay. She had fallen in love with Billy Hartington, the son of the Duke of Devonshire and Chatsworth. The Kennedys were the embodiment of good Catholics and Billy's family were from the Church of England and historically hated Catholics. Though they were madly in love, their marriage would be problematic for all. Kathleen returned home and got a job working at a Washington DC newspaper, and pining for Billy. She found a way back to England as a volunteer for the Red Cross, where she and Billy rekindled their love. Although she risked her mother's wrath, Kick accepted Billy's marriage proposal and married him outside of her deeply felt Catholic faith. They were married for only a few months when Billy was killed in combat. Kick was devastated. She had lost her brother Joe in the war and her brother Jack was nearly killed when his PT-109 boat was destroyed in the Pacific theater. She fought through the pain and eventually began a relationship with Peter Fitzwilliam, a married man. Kick and Peter were killed in a plane crash outside of Paris in 1948. The first half of the book is filled with names, so many that it made my head spin.

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