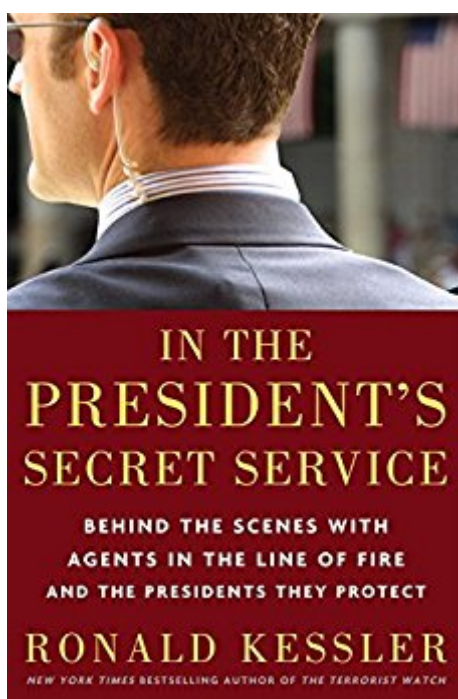


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# In The President's Secret Service: Behind The Scenes With Agents In The Line Of Fire And The Presidents They Protect



## Synopsis

Never before has a journalist penetrated the wall of secrecy that surrounds the U.S. Secret Service, that elite corps of agents who pledge to take a bullet to protect the president and his family. After conducting exclusive interviews with more than one hundred current and former Secret Service agents, bestselling author and award-winning reporter Ronald Kessler reveals their secrets for the first time. Secret Service agents, acting as human surveillance cameras, observe everything that goes on behind the scenes in the president's inner circle. Kessler reveals what they have seen, providing startling, previously untold stories about the presidents, from John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson to George W. Bush and Barack Obama, as well as about their families, Cabinet officers, and White House aides. Kessler portrays the dangers that agents face and how they carry out their missions—from how they are trained to how they spot and assess potential threats. With fly-on-the-wall perspective, he captures the drama and tension that characterize agents' lives. In this headline-grabbing book, Kessler discloses assassination attempts that have never before been revealed. He shares inside accounts of past assaults that have put the Secret Service to the test, including a heroic gun battle that took down the would-be assassins of Harry S. Truman, the devastating day that John F. Kennedy was killed in Dallas, and the swift actions that saved Ronald Reagan after he was shot. While Secret Service agents are brave and dedicated, Kessler exposes how Secret Service management in recent years has betrayed its mission by cutting corners, risking the assassination of President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and their families. Given the lax standards, it's a miracle we have not had a successful assassination, a current agent says. Since an assassination jeopardizes democracy itself, few agencies are as important as the Secret Service—nor is any other subject as tantalizing as the inner sanctum of the White House. Only tight-lipped Secret Service agents know the real story, and Ronald Kessler is the only journalist to have won their trust. From the Hardcover edition.

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## Customer Reviews

Today the Secret Service is in charge of protecting the President... the Vice-President... former President's... world leaders... big events... and even the Pope. Things have come a long way since April 14, 1865 when President Lincoln's bodyguard on duty outside the president's box at Ford's Theatre "was Patrolman John F. Parker of the Washington police. Instead of remaining on guard outside the President's box, Parker wandered off to watch the play, then went to a nearby saloon for a drink". And of course John Wilkes Booth assassinated Lincoln that night. Author Ronald Kessler then leads the reader not only through the growth... both in size... and responsibility... of the United States Secret Service... but he also brings to light... almost limitless Presidential peccadilloes... character traits... and faults... that are almost beyond an average citizen's imagination. The revelations in this book go way... way... past the JFK-Marilyn Monroe sexual liaisons... which is almost accepted common knowledge by multiple generations. We're talking about JFK bedding multiple women at the same time... with the security of a Secret Service team with Jackie... giving alerts to JFK if she was on the way back... while he was in the pool with two buxom women wearing nothing but wet T-shirts. We're talking about Lyndon Johnson having multiple sex partners... and even being caught in the act on the couch by Lady Bird Johnson... thus leading an irate LBJ to request a red warning light in his office and other areas that could be activated by agents to alert him when Lady Bird was on the way. LBJ would even have women on his ranch while Lady Bird was home... and simply get up at night and go into a different room for sex.

"In the President's Secret Service" is something of a guilty pleasure for those interested in learning

more about our nation's presidents and first families and those agents who protect them. Yet it also pays tribute to those agents who put their lives on the line every day for their charges, and also seeks to highlight deficiencies in the agency that desperately need to be addressed. Kessler interviewed a number of active and retired agents in order to describe the dangers the agents and their charges face from a myriad of threats and seeks to personalize the history of this agency that often serves in the shadows and in silence for very obvious reasons. In an age when citizens are critical of the government and its agencies it is refreshing to read about these genuinely selfless individuals who are literally willing to take a bullet in their line of duty. Secret Service agents are a favorite topic for fiction and for Hollywood, but their portrayal there is often stilted and two dimensional rather than the nuanced portrait Kessler reveals. Agents endure considerable abuse and difficulty with supreme diffidence and their demonstration of duty, honor, and valor that emerges is very much what you would find in the Armed Forces. Along the way Kessler gives readers a healthy amount of anecdotes about Presidents and their families and how they interacted with the agents assigned to protect them. These stories are by turns funny, interesting, and sometimes downright disturbing. Rather than being a distraction from the more serious messages of the book they help to provide levity when needed. Many of these stories give readers greater insight into the agents and their charges, particular how those protected react to having someone shadow their every move.

IN THE PRESIDENT'S SECRET SERVICE Four and a half INFORMATIVE Stars!! Loaded with historical data and trivia that is very informative and in some cases very personal, Ronald Kessler's book ultimately delivers an overview of the history of the Secret Service from early presidential administrations right up to the 21st Century status of the Secret Service that is somewhat troubling. Beyond that we get tidbits of confirming gossip on people such as JFK, LBJ, Spiro Agnew, and others that are extremely unflattering. There is more on recent and current presidents, families, and staff that will titillate those who want inside stories, however brief. There are some stories that are also 'laugh-out-loud' funny. The author says early 'pre-Secret Service' attitudes toward presidential protection probably got 3 presidents shot before the era of heavy protection arrived. Heavy presidential protection was added almost as an "after thought" to crime-busting duties of the Secret Service following those 3 incidents. Then came the advent of expansions and refinements such as the White House Police. We even get a look into their secretive headquarters. The author covers a number of revelations such as: the "biggest gunfight in Secret Service history"; Nixon's unusual private life; more disturbing information on what happened before, during, and after the JFK

assassination; the "Fiddle & Faddle" threesome mistresses; the midnight peacock; secret amphibious vehicles; LBJ's unbelievable antics; Carter's quirks, and so on, right up to the Obama administration which the author says is more of a challenge than the others for one particular somber reason.

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