

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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The Secret Plot to Make Ted Kennedy President.

Shepard, Geoff (Author)

Jun 2008. 256 p. Sentinel, hardcover, \$27.95. (9781595230485).

Between John Dean's efforts to gain immunity from prosecution for his central involvement in the Watergate break-in and plot to cover it up and Ted Kennedy's efforts to redeem his political career after Chappaquiddick lies the real truth behind the Watergate scandal, alleges Shepard, a former Nixon White House staffer. Drawing on extensive research, Shepard contends that Kennedy used his subcommittee to begin an investigation and funnel information to the committee officially charged with looking into the Watergate scandal. Kennedy insiders were all part of a "Camelot conspiracy" to bring down President Nixon and harm the Republican Party to such an extent that Kennedy would be primed to win a bid for the presidency in 1976, alleges Shepard. Although Dean has come to be regarded as one of the heroes of the era, Shepard asserts that once Dean, the president's counsel, decided to aid the investigation, he became the villain, breaching attorney-client privilege and releasing government secrets. All the drama of Watergate is here: Deep Throat, the 18 ½ minute gap on the Nixon White House tapes, the Senate posturing, and the impeachment inquiry. Shepard is thorough in his research and passionate in his viewpoints but has no compunction about imagining events and motivations where they are not documented and is reluctant to provide facts and let readers come to their own conclusions. Still, Shepard brings back vivid memories of an acrimonious time and raises some interesting questions.

— *Vanessa Bush*