**Press Kit**

***Becoming JFK: John F. Kennedy’s Early Path to Leadership***

**by Scott Badler**

*Author*

Scott Badler

[badlersc@hotmail.com](mailto:badlersc@hotmail.com)

(510) 847-7094 (cell)

Richmond, CA (San Francisco Bay Area)

[www.scottbadler.net](http://www.scottbadler.net)

*Publisher*

Bruce L. Bortz

Bancroft Press

bruceb@bancroftpress.com

410-627-0608 (cell)

Los Angeles, CA

[bruceb@bancroftpress.com](mailto:bruceb@bancroftpress.com)

[www.bancroftpress.com](http://www.bancroftpress.com)

*Title Info*

Pub Date: September 22, 2025

978-1-61088-676-5 (HC) ($32.99)

978-1-61088-678-9 (Ebook)

978-1-61088-680-2 (Audiobook)

*Distributor*

Baker & Taylor Publisher Services (the premier worldwide distributor of books, digital content and entertainment products from approximately 25,000 suppliers to over 20,000 customers in 120 countries) 30 Amberwood Parkway Ashland, OH 44805

*Publisher Info*

* Been a top-ten indie since 1992
* Profiled by Publishers Weekly
* Publishes 4-6 books a year
* Distributed nationally by Baker & Taylor Publisher Services
* Frontlist and backlist titles frequently optioned or bought by Hollywood producers
* Publishes almost all types of books, from memoirs to mysteries, young adult novels to history and biography
* Bancroft books have received numerous starred reviews—four, in fact, for two 2018 summer books—and have won numerous awards
* *The Missing Kennedy,* a NYT ebook bestseller, was on the cover of *People Magazine* when published in 2015
* Published the books of four Pulitzer Prize winners (Alice Steinbach, Stephen Hunter, Elizabeth McGowan, and Mark S. Johnson)
* Operated internship program with colleges and universities around the country each semester (and summer) since 1992

**Detailed Description of *Becoming JFK***

*Becoming JFK* offers an intimate and engaging exploration of John F. Kennedy’s formative years. This narrative non-fiction work delves deeply into the life of a young JFK, from his privileged upbringing in the Kennedy family to his adventures and trials that shaped his character and future presidency.

The book begins in July 1935 at the Hyannis Port Yacht Club, where the demanding expectations of Joseph Kennedy Sr. and the intense sibling rivalry with Joe Jr. come to life. Through vivid descriptions and well-crafted dialogue, readers are transported to the Cape Cod sailing races, where JFK's competitive spirit and complex relationship with his father are laid bare.

As the story unfolds, the reader follows JFK to Choate, where his rebellious nature leads to the formation of the Muckers club and his temporary expulsion. The narrative captures the essence of a young man struggling to find his place and prove himself worthy of his father’s approval. This period of defiance and growth is portrayed with honesty, highlighting JFK's flaws and resilience.

The journey continues through JFK's pivotal decision-making moments, such as choosing between Harvard and Princeton, influenced by both familial pressure and personal desire. His experiences in Europe provide a rich backdrop for understanding the broader political and social context of the time. The book does not shy away from detailing his fact-finding missions, encounters with notable figures, and the foreshadowing of global conflict.

JFK's wartime service on PT-109 is recounted with an emphasis on both his bravery and the less glamorous aspects of his leadership. The narrative balances the heroics with the realities of wartime, offering a nuanced portrayal that deepens the reader’s understanding of JFK's character.

Interwoven with these major events are the personal anecdotes and lesser-known stories that paint a full picture of JFK's early life. From his health struggles and frequent hospital visits to his romantic escapades and the influence of significant relationships, the book provides a comprehensive view of the man who would become a pivotal figure in American history.

Rich in historical detail and written in a novelistic style, *Becoming Jack Kennedy* combines meticulous research with engaging storytelling. The book is enhanced with historical photographs and illustrations, providing visual context and breaking up the text to maintain reader engagement. It is both a captivating read and a valuable addition to the Kennedy canon, offering fresh insights into the early years of one of America’s most iconic presidents.

Whether you are a history enthusiast, a Kennedy admirer, or a general reader looking for a compelling narrative, *Becoming Jack Kennedy* promises to deliver an enlightening and enjoyable journey through the early adventures and challenges of JFK.

**Loglines for *Becoming JFK***

**Logline 1:** Before he became a legend, he was just Jack. Journey through the transformative years of a young John F. Kennedy as he navigates the pressures of his ambitious family, the trials of his academic and military life, and the formative experiences that shaped his path to greatness.

**Logline 2:** Discover the untold story of John F. Kennedy’s early years—from his rebellious youth and daring wartime exploits to his first steps into the political arena. This is the riveting saga of how a young man forged his destiny to become an American icon.

**Eight Great Reasons to Read, Review, or Champion *BECOMING JFK***

**1. A Fresh Take on a Legendary Figure**

*BECOMING JFK* challenges the traditional narrative of JFK’s early years, portraying him not as a man destined for greatness, but as a scrappy underdog who had to prove himself against the odds​.

**2. Immersive, Novelistic Storytelling**

Unlike traditional biographies, this book blends **meticulous historical research** with **engaging, dialogue-driven narrative**—bringing young JFK to life as a complex, ambitious, and often rebellious character​​.

**3. Unvarnished Yet Balanced Portrait**

*BECOMING JFK* does not shy away from JFK’s flaws—his womanizing, his family struggles, and even the less heroic aspects of PT-109. Instead, it presents a **well-rounded, deeply human** depiction of a young man learning to lead​​.

**4. Rarely Explored Adventures & Influences**

The book **vividly details JFK’s formative travels**, from his eye-opening experiences in pre-WWII Europe to his early political aspirations, offering insights into how these shaped his worldview​​.

**5. A New Angle on the Kennedy Family**

While many JFK books focus on his presidency, this one dives deep into the **family dynamics**—his rivalry with Joe Jr., his complicated relationship with his father, and how these influences pushed him toward leadership​​.

**6. A Book That Appeals to Both Scholars & General Readers**

With its mix of **rich historical detail** and **fast-paced narrative**, *BECOMING JFK* appeals to history buffs, Kennedy enthusiasts, students, and casual readers alike. It’s as **engaging as a novel**, yet **grounded in factual accuracy**​.

**7. Stunning Visuals & Storytelling**

The book includes **rare historical photographs** that complement its vivid descriptions, making it both an **immersive read and a collector’s item** for Kennedy fans​​.

**8. The Perfect Book for Today’s Political & Cultural Climate**

JFK remains **one of the most admired presidents in American history**, and his **early struggles with privilege, expectations, and leadership** feel particularly relevant today. *BECOMING JFK* helps us understand the **making of a modern leader**​

**Target Audiences**

1. **History Enthusiasts:**
   * **Interests:** Detailed historical accounts, biographical insights, American history, presidential histories.
   * **Appeal:** The book’s accurate portrayal of JFK’s early life, combined with rich historical context, will attract readers who appreciate well-researched historical narratives.
2. **Kennedy Family Admirers:**
   * **Interests:** Biographies of the Kennedy family, political history, personal stories of prominent figures.
   * **Appeal:** The focus on JFK’s formative years and family dynamics provides a new perspective for those who are already familiar with the broader Kennedy story.
3. **General Non-Fiction Readers:**
   * **Interests:** Engaging and well-written non-fiction, character-driven stories, personal growth narratives.
   * **Appeal:** The narrative style, which reads like a novel while maintaining historical accuracy, makes the book accessible and enjoyable for a wide range of non-fiction readers.
4. **Students and Academics:**
   * **Interests:** American history, political science, biography, leadership studies.
   * **Appeal:** The book can serve as a supplementary text for courses on American history or leadership, offering detailed accounts of JFK’s early influences and development.
5. **Fans of Narrative Non-Fiction:**
   * **Interests:** Stories that combine factual history with engaging storytelling, books that bring historical figures to life.
   * **Appeal:** The blend of historical detail with a novelistic approach will appeal to readers who enjoy narrative non-fiction that is both informative and entertaining.
6. **Book Clubs and Discussion Groups:**
   * **Interests:** Books that spark conversation, stories with complex characters and rich themes.
   * **Appeal:** The book’s exploration of JFK’s character, family dynamics, and personal growth provides ample material for discussion and analysis.
7. **Social Media and Digital Readers:**
   * **Interests:** Trending topics, influential figures, visually enhanced content.
   * **Appeal:** The potential for visual enhancements and engaging marketing campaigns on social media platforms will attract digital-savvy readers who follow popular historical and biographical content.
8. **Political Buffs:**
   * **Interests:** Political history, stories of political figures, understanding the personal side of politicians.
   * **Appeal:** The insights into JFK’s early political influences and the Kennedy family’s political ambitions will captivate readers with a keen interest in politics.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**La Crescenta, CA – February 21, 2025**

**New Biography "Becoming JFK" Set to Release on September 22, 2025**

Author Scott Badler delves into the untold story of John F. Kennedy's formative years in his upcoming book, *Becoming JFK: John F. Kennedy's Path to Leadership*. Scheduled for release on September 22, 2025, this compelling work offers a fresh perspective on the young man who would captivate a nation.

*Becoming JFK* explores Kennedy's journey from the windswept shores of Cape Cod to the hallowed halls of Harvard, shedding light on his complex relationships with his family, particularly his father, Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., and his older brother, Joe Jr. Through meticulous research and vivid storytelling, Badler reveals how these early experiences shaped JFK's character, resilience, and path to leadership.

"This book isn't just about Jack Kennedy's personal evolution—it's a lens into the dynamic, often tumultuous Kennedy family," says Badler. "By understanding his early challenges and triumphs, readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the man who inspired millions."

The biography is enriched with numerous rare photos and vivid details of JFK's worldwide travels as a young man, providing readers with an intimate look at one of America's most beloved presidents.

*Becoming JFK* will be available in hardcover (ISBN 978-1-61088-676-5) for $32.99. Readers can find it at major bookstores and online retailers starting September 22, 2025.

*Becoming JFK* is published by Bancroft Press and spans 320 pages, offering an immersive experience into the early life of John F. Kennedy.

**About the Author:**

Scott Badler is a prominent Kennedy researcher and scholar known for his in-depth studies of the Kennedy family. His passion for uncovering lesser-known aspects of historical figures brings a unique and engaging perspective to his writing.

**About Bancroft Press:**

Bancroft Press is an independent publisher dedicated to delivering high-quality works of fiction and non-fiction across various genres. With a commitment to literary excellence, Bancroft Press brings compelling stories and insightful works to readers worldwide.

*Please do not quote for publication without checking against the finished book.*

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Bruce L. Bortz, Esq.

Publisher, Bancroft Press

“A Top-Ten Indie Since 1992”

4527 Glenwood Ave.

La Crescenta, CA 91214

410-627-0608 (cell)

410-764-1967 (fax)

[bruceb@bancroftpress.com](mailto:bruceb@bancroftpress.com)

or [bruce.bortz@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.bortz@gmail.com)

[bruceb@bancroft.press](mailto:bruceb@bancroft.press) (ZOOM)

**Praise for *Becoming JFK* by Scott Badler**

“*Becoming JFK: John F. Kennedy’s Early Path to Leadership* by Scott Badler is a fresh and compelling portrait of a young man on the path to greatness. Far from the typical, predetermined destiny narrative, this book reveals JFK as an underdog, constantly striving to prove himself. From his rebellious college A person in a suit and tie

AI-generated content may be incorrect.days to his eye-opening travels in pre-WWII Europe and the crucible of war in the Pacific, Kennedy’s transformation is both riveting and deeply human. With vivid storytelling and sharp insight, Badler crafts an intimate, character-driven journey that breathes new life into a well-known figure, making *BECOMING JFK* an essential read for history lovers and newcomers alike.”

**—Evan Swartz, Loyola University Maryland**

**Q&A with Scott Badler, Author of *Becoming JFK***

**1. What inspired you to write *Becoming JFK*?**

I wanted to tell the lesser-known story of how a privileged, rebellious second son transformed into one of the most influential leaders of the 20th century. Most books focus on JFK’s presidency, but his early years are equally fascinating and reveal the challenges, failures, and defining moments that shaped him.

**2. How does *Becoming JFK* differ from other books about John F. Kennedy?**

Unlike traditional biographies, this book is narrative-driven—meaning it reads like a compelling novel while staying true to historical facts. I also don’t mythologize him—this is an unvarnished portrayal of JFK as a young man, including his insecurities, womanizing, and struggles with family expectations.

**3. JFK is often portrayed as destined for greatness. Was that really the case?**

Not at all! His older brother, Joe Jr., was the family’s chosen one. JFK was physically frail, academically inconsistent, and rebellious. It wasn’t until after Joe Jr.’s death in WWII that Jack embraced leadership and responsibility. His transformation was anything but inevitable.

**4. You highlight JFK’s European travels before WWII. How did those experiences shape him?**

JFK’s 1937-39 travels through Europe were eye-opening. He saw Hitler’s Germany firsthand, met politicians and refugees, and quickly realized that war was coming—something his isolationist father, Joe Sr., refused to accept. These experiences shaped his worldview and foreign policy instincts.

**5. What role did Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. play in JFK’s early development?**

Joe Sr. was a dominating, ambitious father who expected absolute success from his children. He favored Joe Jr. and considered JFK a lightweight—until Jack proved him wrong through sheer resilience and wit. Their complex relationship fueled much of JFK’s drive.

**6. How did JFK’s health struggles impact his personality and leadership?**

JFK suffered from chronic illnesses, severe back pain, and Addison’s disease, yet his public image was one of strength and energy. His struggles fostered resilience, a wry sense of humor, and an ability to hide weakness under charm and charisma—an invaluable political skill.

**7. The Kennedy family is known for fierce sibling rivalry. How did that shape JFK?**

His older brother Joe Jr. was the golden child, the leader, the athlete—and he constantly belittled Jack. JFK responded by developing his own identity—wittier, more independent, and more strategic. The rivalry pushed Jack to sharpen his intelligence and leadership instincts.

**8. What do you think is the biggest misconception about young JFK?**

That he was born a leader. He was a sickly, rebellious underachiever who gambled his way through school, had run-ins with authority, and wasn’t initially taken seriously. His leadership developed over time, especially during his wartime experiences with PT-109.

**9. JFK’s romantic escapades are well-known. How do you address that in the book?**

I don’t sugarcoat it—JFK was charismatic and deeply flawed when it came to women. He saw romance as a game, often prioritizing conquests over emotional connections. However, these experiences also taught him how to connect with people and build personal alliances.

**10. How did JFK’s experiences in WWII change him?**

His near-death experience with PT-109 forced JFK to grow up quickly. He became a leader under fire, putting his crew’s survival above his own. That experience solidified his reputation for courage and helped him craft his public image as a war hero.

**11. If you could ask JFK one question about his early years, what would it be?**

I’d ask him, “Did you ever really believe you’d be president, or did you just keep pushing forward?” His early life was so unpredictable that I wonder if he saw his destiny unfolding or if he simply adapted to each new challenge as it came.

**12. What do you hope readers take away from *Becoming JFK*?**

That JFK was not a mythic figure but a human being—flawed, ambitious, and constantly evolving. His early struggles, failures, and resilience show that leadership isn’t just inherited; it’s earned through experience, setbacks, and the courage to keep going.

**20 Book Club Discussion Questions for *Becoming JFK***

1. *Becoming JFK* presents a more personal and complex portrait of young John F. Kennedy. What surprised you most about his early years?
2. The book portrays JFK as an underdog rather than a man born for greatness. How did this affect your view of him compared to other accounts of his life?
3. What role did Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. play in shaping Jack’s character? Do you think his father’s high expectations helped or harmed him?
4. How did the intense sibling rivalry between JFK and Joe Jr. influence Jack’s development? Do you think Jack would have become president if Joe Jr. had survived the war?
5. The book portrays JFK’s health struggles in depth. How do you think his chronic illnesses shaped his resilience and leadership style?
6. Throughout the book, JFK is described as rebellious and defiant. Do you think these traits helped him or held him back in his journey toward leadership?
7. The author makes extensive use of dialogue-driven storytelling. Did this approach make JFK feel more real to you? How does it compare to other biographies you’ve read?
8. JFK’s travels in Europe before WWII had a profound effect on his worldview. How do you think these experiences prepared him for his future as a world leader?
9. How did JFK’s experiences during World War II, especially with PT-109, change him? Do you think he would have pursued politics as seriously without this experience?
10. JFK had many romantic relationships throughout his early life. How do you think his view of women and relationships influenced his character?
11. The book doesn’t shy away from JFK’s flaws, including his womanizing and privilege. Did this change your perception of him in any way?
12. JFK was known for his wit and ability to connect with people. How did the book show the development of his charisma and charm?
13. The book describes many instances where Jack was underestimated. How did he overcome the perception that he was weaker or less capable than his older brother?
14. In what ways did JFK defy the expectations set by his father and society?
15. How do you think JFK’s upbringing as part of a wealthy, powerful family influenced his perspective on leadership and public service?
16. The book highlights how JFK’s experiences shaped his approach to politics. What early experiences do you think most contributed to his leadership style?
17. If you could ask JFK one question about his early life, what would it be?
18. The Kennedy family is one of the most famous in American history. How does this book change or reinforce your perception of them?
19. What are the most important leadership qualities JFK developed in his early years? How did he differ from other historical leaders?
20. After reading *Becoming JFK*, what do you think was the single most defining moment of his youth? Why?

**JFK Timeline**

**May 29, 1917:**·Birth of John F. Kennedy in Brookline, Massachusetts.

**September 1927:**·Kennedy family moves to Bronxville, N.Y.

**October 1929:**·Stock market crash triggers the Great Depression.

**Fall 1931:**·Kennedy enrolls in Choate.

**June 1935:**·Kennedy graduates from Choate, ranked 64th in a class of 112.

**Fall 1935:**·Kennedy enrolls in Princeton; he drops out due to illness later that year.

**1936:**·Kennedy attends Harvard University.

**Summer, 1937:**·Kennedy and Lem Billings tour Europe.

**March,** **1938**: Joseph Kennedy, Sr. is named ambassador to Great Britain.

**September 1939:**·Outbreak of World War II (1939-45) in Europe.

**1940:**·Kennedy writes his senior thesis on English foreign policy prior to World War II.

**July 1940:**·Kennedy's senior thesis on English foreign policy prior to World War II is published as book entitled *Why England Slept*.

**Summer 1941:**·Kennedy enters the U.S. armed forces.

**December 7, 1941:**·Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor, compelling the U.S. to enter World War II.

**1942-43:**·Kennedy serves on, and then commands, a Motor Torpedo Boat, or "PT Boat," in the South Pacific.

**August 2, 1943:**·Kennedy's PT boat is rammed by a Japanese destroyer. Under his leadership, most of the crew is eventually rescued. Kennedy receives the Purple Heart for his heroics.

**Spring 1944:**·Kennedy enters Boston's Chelsea Naval Hospital with a lower back condition.

**August 12, 1944:**·Joseph Kennedy, Jr. is killed while flying a mission over Europe.

**March 1, 1945:**·Kennedy is discharged from the Navy.

**November 1946:**·Kennedy is elected to the House of Representatives.

**Fall 1948:**·Kennedy is elected to a second term in the House. While on a trip to England, he is diagnosed with Addison's Disease. His condition is kept secret from the public.

**About the Author**

Scott Badler is an accomplished writer, educator, and humorist whose diverse career spans journalism, academia, and authorship. A former newspaper reporter, he has contributed extensively to prestigious publications including *The Boston Globe*, where his humor pieces earned him widespread acclaim, as well as *The Dallas Morning News* and *The Connecticut Post*. His essays often explore themes of political history, the Kennedy legacy, and sharp satire.

A person wearing glasses and a suit

AI-generated content may be incorrect.As an educator, Scott has shared his expertise in Humor Writing at institutions like Harvard and Emerson College. His engaging teaching style reflects his lifelong passion for storytelling and wit.

A California native born in Los Angeles, Scott spent many formative years in the Greater Boston area, residing in the very district where John F. Kennedy launched his political career in 1946. This proximity deepened his fascination with the Kennedys and their impact on American history.

Scott holds a degree from San Francisco State University and a Master’s in Education from Cambridge College. Currently, he resides in the San Francisco Bay Area.

He is the author of three insightful and entertaining non-fiction books: *What’s So Funny About Looking for a Job?*, *Oh Brother, and Other Revelations on Family, Relatives, Pets, and Sex*, and *JFK & the Muckers of Choate* (Bancroft Press, 2022). His latest work, *Becoming JFK: John F. Kennedy’s Path to Leadership*, continues his exploration of one of America’s most iconic figures, delving into the experiences that shaped Kennedy’s journey to greatness.

A close-up of a text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A close-up of a text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A close-up of a text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A close-up of a text

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A close-up of a document

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A close-up of a paper

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A close-up of a document

AI-generated content may be incorrect.