



## The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters

*Sam Kashner , Nancy Schoenberger*

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A poignant, evocative, and wonderfully gossipy account of the two sisters who represented style and class above all else—Jackie Kennedy Onassis and Lee Radziwill—from the authors of *Furious Love*.

When sixty-four-year-old Jackie Kennedy Onassis died in her Fifth Avenue apartment, her younger sister Lee wept inconsolably. Then Jackie's thirty-eight-page will was read. Lee discovered that substantial cash bequests were left to family members, friends, and employees—but nothing to her. "I have made no provision in this my Will for my sister, Lee B. Radziwill, for whom I have great affection, because I have already done so during my lifetime," read Jackie's final testament. Drawing on the authors' candid interviews with Lee Radziwill, *The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters* explores their complicated relationship, placing them at the center of twentieth-century fashion, design, and style.

In life, Jackie and Lee were alike in so many ways. Both women had a keen eye for beauty—in fashion, design, painting, music, dance, sculpture, poetry—and both were talented artists. Both loved pre-revolutionary Russian culture, and the blinding sunlight, calm seas, and ancient olive groves of Greece. Both loved the siren call of the Atlantic, sharing sweet, early memories of swimming with the rakish father they adored, Jack Vernou Bouvier, at his East Hampton retreat. But Jackie was her father's favorite, and Lee, her mother's. One would grow to become the most iconic woman of her time, while the other lived in her shadow. As they grew up, the two sisters developed an extremely close relationship threaded with rivalry, jealousy, and competition. Yet it was probably the most important relationship of their lives.

For the first time, *Vanity Fair* contributing editor Sam Kashner and acclaimed biographer Nancy Schoenberger tell the complete story of these larger-than-life sisters. Drawing on new information and extensive interviews with Lee, now eighty-four, this dual biography sheds light on the public and private lives of two extraordinary women who lived through immense tragedy in enormous glamour.

## The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters Details

Date : Published September 25th 2018 by Harper

ISBN : 9780062365002

Author : Sam Kashner , Nancy Schoenberger

Format : ebook 336 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, History, Biography, Biography Memoir, Historical, Autobiography, Memoir

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## From Reader Review The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters for online ebook

### Tammy says

I've never been enormously fascinated by the Kennedys but as an American of a certain age, it is impossible not know more than you need to know about their triumphs and tragedies. However, I didn't know much about Lee Radziwill so I thought I would give this a try. As the title states, this book is about the sibling rivalry between Jackie Kennedy Onassis and her sister Lee Radziwill. It follows their journey from childhood through Kennedy Onassis' death and beyond. Fraught with jealousy, estrangement and periods of closeness, their sisterhood is mainly about lives lived in pursuit of wealth and its accompanying accoutrements. It's quite gossipy and neither Kennedy Onassis nor Radziwill fare well in this telling but their relationship was the most complicated and important of their lives. There is always a big Kennedy book for the fall publishing season and this one will be "it".

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### Chris says

Since I lived through the sixties, I knew a great deal about Jackie and a bit about Lee, before reading this book, but learned so much more by reading it. Kashner has thoroughly research the lives of the two sisters and relates their stories in compelling detail. I certainly recommend this to anyone who is interested in that critical period of American history and wants tp peek into the private lives of these two fascinating women. Thanks to Goodreads for this book!

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### Lynn says

I received a copy of this book by Harper Collins in exchange for an honest review.

Today's post is on The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters: The Tragic and Glamorous Loves of Jackie and Lee by Sam Kashner and Nancy Schoenberger. It is 336 pages long and is published by Harper Collins. The cover is a picture of Jackie Onassia and Lee Radziwill. The intended reader is someone who is interested in the Bouvier family and its history. There is mild foul language, no sex, and no violence in this book. There Be Spoilers Ahead.

From the back of the book- A poignant, evocative, and wonderfully gossipy account of the two sisters who represented style and class above all else—Jackie Kennedy Onassis and Lee Radziwill—from the authors of Furious Love.

When sixty-four-year-old Jackie Kennedy Onassis died in her Fifth Avenue apartment, her younger sister Lee wept inconsolably. Then Jackie's thirty-eight-page will was read. Lee discovered that substantial cash bequests were left to family members, friends, and employees—but nothing to her. "I have made no provision in this my Will for my sister, Lee B. Radziwill, for whom I have great affection, because I have already done so during my lifetime," read Jackie's final testament. Drawing on the authors' candid interviews with Lee Radziwill, The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters explores their complicated relationship, placing them at the center of twentieth-century fashion, design, and style.

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Review- If you are very into the history of the Kennedys, Jackie O, and their family then you should read this book. This book covers not just Jackie and Lee's lives but the lives of those around like close friends and family. With lots of first hand resources and interviews with those still living, this book gives great insight into this complex family and their secrets. The writing is engaging, the details are not too scandalous, and story moves quickly so we do not get stuck in the complications of their lives. The authors handle this history with respect to the women who lived these lives and the choices that they made right or wrong. At times this piece was very moving and at times I rolled my eyes at the petty behavior of the players involved but I was never bored.

I give this book a Four out of Five stars.

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### **Sarah Beth says**

I received an uncorrected proof copy of this book from HarperCollins.

This biography hones in on the relationship between Jackie Bouvier Kennedy and her lesser known sister Lee Bouvier. Raised to expect men to bankroll their expensive lifestyle, both women were known for their cultured and European sense of style in both fashion and design, their grace and beauty, and their captivating personalities. Yet Lee, who according to this biography had the more outgoing, star-seeking personality, was forever overshadowed by her older sister. This imbalanced dynamic led to years of jealousy and competition between the sisters who otherwise had a close relationship.

The overarching dynamic between Lee and her famous sister seems to have been tension over Jackie's international fame, which forever and overwhelmingly overshadowed her little sister. Lee "never wanted to be the footnote in Jackie's story" and yet that seems to be the way both her own lifetime and her legacy has been defined. Yet this book asserts that many of the elements of her life that Jackie is known for her were copied from her younger sister: "Jackie often took her aesthetic interests and style, in décor and in couture, from her younger sister, and earned international acclaim for her discernment, while Lee increasingly resented it" (46).

This appears to be a very well written, if not comprehensive biography. In telling the story of the sisters, the book must inevitably tell their life stories. Yet this is not done in great detail in some areas. For example, the book does not discuss the birth of Caroline Kennedy at all, other than indirectly when talking about the birth of Lee's first child Anthony: "By marrying first and having a child before Jackie, she had indeed trumped her older sister" (65). This is actually inaccurate, since Caroline Kennedy was born in 1957 and Anthony Radziwill was born in 1959. Perhaps the authors actually intended to say that Lee had the first son (and I'm sure the final version will correct this error). Other topics are skimmed over as well. For instance, the girls' mother plays an exceedingly small role in this biography and is not mentioned for chapters on end. On the other hand, it was a distinct advantage that the authors were able to meet with the still living Lee and get some first hand account from her and the biography appears to be very well researched.

Both Jackie and Lee were captivating, complicated individuals who lived fascinating, and at times tragic, lives with the rich and famous of the day. Kashner and Schoenberger have done an excellent job of writing an accessible and relatively compact biography that specifically hones in on the dynamic between the two sisters. Although at times I wish more details had been included about other major characters in their lives including their parents and children, I thoroughly enjoyed this biography.

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### **Susan says**

Another great read. I could read anything about the Bouvier sisters (and pretty much do) and just zipped through this because I couldn't put it down. I even missed my bus yesterday morning because I forgot to look up in time and it pulled out of the stop during one of Lee's many crises. There were lots of things in the book that I hadn't read anywhere else before so it was well worth it. More has been written about Jackie but Lee was equally intriguing.

The author had a great style of writing, the book never lagged. Now maybe he will do an entire book on cousins Big Edie and Little Edie Bouvier of Grey Gardens.

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### **Valerity (Val) says**

I originally read this in July, then lost my first review when I went to post it. So this is just what I could remember. I found this to be very much to my liking for the most part, as I've always enjoyed reading about Jackie and wanted to know more about her family and her sister Lee. This book provided that and quite well. During their heyday these two ladies were always fascinating as they were in the news, dressed in something noteworthy, dating someone noteworthy and usually up to something just as noteworthy. They were always up to something you wanted to know about, or just had been or were about to be, it seemed like. They just had fascinating lives, compared to ours. They couldn't help it, that's just how it was going to be. They were born for it to be that way.

There were times the sisters were close and got along well, but not long ones. There was just too much rivalry over men pulsing between them. And Lee didn't like all of the power that Jackie's position as First Lady gave her. It made her feel 'less than' and like just a hanger on all the time. Though she did like the perks that came with being part of Jackie and the President's entourage could bring at times. Lee had her own talents and liked having her own friends and circle of influence, away from the Kennedy's. She had a mind of her own and often just did her own thing, including infidelity, not caring who liked it. My thanks for the advance electronic copy that was provided by Edelweiss, authors Sam Kashner & Nancy Schoenberger, and the publisher for my fair review.

Harper Collins  
Pub: Sept. 25th, 2018

My Bookzone blog:  
<https://wordpress.com/post/bookblog20...>

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## Joanne says

Being a teenager growing up in the Kennedy's presidential era, I was in awe of the Bouvier Sisters. The theory of Camelot was magical; but the reality was not all as it seemed. Jackie and Lee were human, warts and all. My education of their social society without the Internet was limited to periodicals, gossip magazines, and books. The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters, is well a written book with notations, fills in the missing cracks of information for me.

Will other readers after completing this book acknowledge liking Jackie and Lee? Or will they see both women as products of their time? This book is a view and a step back to earlier and secretive times. I have let the Camelot myth go....

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## Nancy says

This is a very readable, but not compelling, biography of Jackie Kennedy and her sister Lee Radziwell.

It is hardly the author's fault that I found these women less than admirable, but in some ways I was sorry that I read enough about them to dislike both women. Their competitiveness was the essence of this biography--and, real or imagined, it did not present either one in a very positive light.

There is no argument that they were both style icons, but their beauty, style and fame seemed to contribute to their base behavior, rather than inspire them to rise above their demons. Kasher and his co-author Nancy Schoenberger gamely tried to present both women as intelligent and cultured, but it was impossible for the reader to ignore all the niggling little stories that added up to the conclusion that they were extremely mercenary, competitive with each other, status-seeking and perhaps back-stabbing. I was sorry to learn all this. IF either had a philanthropic side, it was ignored by the authors. IF they showed a love for their friends or community, it was not a part of this story.

Certainly, some readers who are better informed about these two women will enjoy reading the anecdotes included in this book. If there was any balance in their lives, it did not come out in this telling of their tale.

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## Ashley Pope says

I will never think of Jackie O the same again.

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## Krista says

"The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters" is a popular biography of Jackie Kennedy Onassis and her younger sister, Lee Radziwill. What's good about it is that the book does give life to a character mentioned, but not typically discussed, in all of the Kennedy biographies--Lee Bouvier. In addition, the book is more developed than many Jackie biographies in the post-Onassis era, providing a realistic look at her work, for example, in publishing. What's iffier is the book is obviously attempting to make the case that Lee was a great powerplayer in art and style of the 20th century, and now, in 2018, I just cannot see that to be the case. Would she have been so much known in the world without her relationship to her sister? Probably not. Yes, she hobnobbed with the famous, and sure, she was in "Town and Country," but other than a glamorous

clotheshorse, she doesn't come off from the book as quite the eternal icon the authors seem to believe her to be.

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### **Alison says**

\*\* I received an advance copy from the publishers\*\*. I'm fascinated with the Kennedys and this account was well researched enough to form what I would believe to be accurate reflections of these women without feeling gossipy or assuming. Some parts dragged in the beginning, but soon I couldn't put it down.

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### **Lovely Loveday says**

The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters is a lovely biography of Jackie and Lee. Both women were known for their cultured and European sense of style in both fashion and design, their grace and beauty, and their captivating personalities. A story about two sisters who were close and always there for each other not matter what but at times the tension between the two was unbearable. Lee always felt like she lived in the shadows of Jackie and jealousy always led to competition between the two sisters.

While both women were captivating and intriguing in their own individual ways, they lived fascinating lives that were at times tragic and heartbreaking. A well-written biography that shares the dynamic relationship the two sisters shared. I enjoyed reading The Fabulous Bouvier Sisters.

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### **Karen Hagerman says**

Not a very flattering portrait I'm afraid - but scandalous and juicy!

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