

JFK and the Presidency: Past and Present with Chris Matthews

Thursday, December 1 at 7:30pm



A television news anchor with significant depth of experience, Matthews has distinguished himself as a broadcast journalist, newspaper bureau chief, presidential speechwriter, and bestselling author. Matthews covered the fall of the Berlin Wall, the first all-races election in South Africa, the Good Friday Peace Accord in Northern Ireland, and the funeral of Pope John Paul II. He has covered every American presidential election campaign since the 1980s.

Prior to his broadcasting career, Matthews worked for fifteen years as a newspaper journalist, thirteen of them as a Washington bureau chief for the *San Francisco Examiner* and two as a national columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Before that, he had a fifteen year career in public service, in various positions in the U.S. Congress and the White House. Matthews is also the author of six books, including *American: Beyond Our Grandest Notions* (2002), *Life's a Campaign* (2007) and the soon to be published book on John F. Kennedy.

Matthews has received the David Brinkley Award for Excellence in Broadcast Journalism and the Gold Medal Award from the Pennsylvania Society. He was a visiting fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy Institute of Politics and holds twenty-four honorary degrees.

A graduate of Holy Cross, Mr. Matthews did graduate work in economics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Matthews served for two years with the U.S. Peace Corps as a trade development advisor in Swaziland, Africa.

Resources related to Chris Matthews' talk on JFK and the Presidency

Jack Kennedy, Elusive Hero (a book by Chris Matthews, 2011)

On-line biography of John F. Kennedy <http://www.biography.com/articles/John-Fitzgerald-Kennedy-9362930>

Documentary on the Kennedy family:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/kennedys/>

2012 Presidential Candidates and Election articles and links:
<http://2012.presidential-candidates.org/>
<http://www.politico.com/2012-election/>
<http://www.usnews.com/topics/subjects/2012-presidential-election>

PBS Teacher and Parent Resources

<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/7047/preview/> (Kennedy family's life and times, articles, primary sources and activities)
<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/7047/preview/> (the Kennedys and civics, a consideration of JFK's call to action)
<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/6928/preview/> (Activities regarding the presidency)
<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/1628/preview/> (President for a Day activities)
<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/6844/preview/> (Presidential Campaigns)

Discussion questions on JFK and the Presidency

Before the lecture

- Is JFK still relevant?
- Why is there so much interest in JFK nearly 50 years after his presidency?
- Do presidential candidates have to choose a past president as a model for their candidacy/presidency?

After the lecture

- Did you learn anything new about JFK in this talk?
- Have you already decided on whom you will vote for in the 2012 election?
- Do you think one person's presidential vote matters?