



The Senator from New England: The Rise of JFK

Sean J. Savage

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Chronicles JFK's growing confidence and ambition while a member of the US Senate.

John F. Kennedy's path to the presidency began during his eight years of service in the United States Senate. In *The Senator from New England*, Sean J. Savage contends that Kennedy initially pursued a centrist, bipartisan course in his rhetoric and policy behavior regarding the regional policy interests of New England. Following his narrow defeat for the Democratic vice presidential nomination in 1956 and his nationwide speaking campaign for Adlai Stevenson, JFK's rhetoric and policy behavior became more partisan and liberal, especially during the 1958 midterm elections. While JFK claimed that he still protected and promoted the policy interests of New England on a bipartisan basis, he used his speaking engagements to interact with Democratic politicians throughout New England in an effort to secure the entire region's delegate votes at the 1960 Democratic National Convention. Based on the use of primary sources, archives, and special collections from four presidential libraries, the Library of Congress, Boston College, the Margaret Chase Smith Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and other institutions, *The Senator from New England* provides an unrivaled glimpse into Kennedy's Senate career and early presidential campaign strategy.

"Sean Savage's masterful account of the early political career of John F. Kennedy takes a commanding place in the multitude of Kennedy biographies. With his focus on Kennedy as a US Senator and his complex relationship with President Eisenhower and major figures in his own party, Savage illuminates the ambition and shrewdness of this rising star of American politics and adds nuance and complexity to our picture of JFK." — Ross K. Baker, author of *Is Bipartisanship Dead? A Report from the Senate*

"Asking how John F. Kennedy extricated himself from sometimes sordid and provincial state and regional politics to become an inspiring national leader, *The Senator from New England* provides new insights into the forces and strategies that propelled Kennedy into the presidency." — Donald A. Ritchie, author of *The U.S. Congress: A Very Short Introduction*

Sean J. Savage is Professor of Political Science at Saint Mary's College and the author of *JFK, LBJ, and the Democratic Party*, also published by SUNY Press.

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