

Bobby Before the Last Stand

While *Kennedy* focuses primarily on Robert Kennedy's campaign for President of the United States, he had a rich history in U.S. politics that colored his time in the race. Below is a short biography of Kennedy, tracking his life and involvement in U.S. government prior to announcing his candidacy.

Born on November 20th, 1925 in Brookline, Massachusetts, Robert Frances Kennedy was the seventh of Rose and Joseph P. Kennedy's nine children. Kennedy spent his childhood constantly moving between his family's homes in New York City, Hyannis Port Massachusetts, and Palm Beach Florida. During WWII, he interrupted his studies at Harvard University to serve in the U.S. Navy before returning to the university and graduation with a degree in government in 1948. Kennedy went on to get a degree in law from the university of Virginia in 1951. While studying law he married Ethel Skakel, from Greenwich Connecticut. They would go on to have eleven children.

Having received his law degree Kennedy began his political career in June of 1952 when he managed his brother John's Senate campaign in Massachusetts. That December Robert was appointed by Joseph McCarthy as assistant counsel of the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. McCarthy was known for ruthless and often controversial tactics to gain intelligence from supposed communists in the U.S. Disturbed by these practices, Kennedy resigned after six months of service but later returned to the subcommittee as chief counsel for the democratic minority. He first gained national recognition when working as Chief Counsel for the Senate Rackets committee where he investigated and exposed corruption in trade unions under Jimmy Hoffa and David Beck.

In 1960 Robert became the manager of his brother John's presidential campaign. The campaign was a success and once elected, John appointed Robert U.S. Attorney General. As Attorney General Kennedy continued to fight against union corruption and organized crime, with convictions against organized crime rising 800% while he was in office. Kennedy also supported the civil rights movement, fighting to help win black Americans the ability to vote. More than just Attorney General though, Robert was the closest advisor and confidant of his brother President Kennedy. Most notably, Robert played a key role in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 where he assisted in developing a strategy to blockade Cuba and negotiating with the Soviet Union to remove their weapons.

Following the assassination of President Kennedy, Robert resigned position as Attorney General and launched a successful campaign to represent New York in the U.S. Senate. As a Senator, Kennedy concerned himself with several pressing issues across the U.S. He had great concern for underprivileged and dispossessed American citizens, urging legislation that would improve living conditions and create jobs for the unemployed. Kennedy also devoted his time in office to finding a way to end the Vietnam War, urging President Johnson to cease bombing and reduce the war effort. In 1964 Kennedy announced a presidential campaign that would focus on these issues and continue until his assassination in 1968.