

fascination for Matthews, who draws on his own experience as an Irish Catholic to explain what it's like to be "in" but not "of" the Establishment.

The abiding insight in Matthews's book is that the very traits JFK concealed allowed him to resolve the Cuban missile crisis, his greatest test. His advisers were pushing toward war, but Kennedy escaped this conventional and potentially fatal analysis. "It was his detachment that saved us," Matthews writes.

It may be a bit harder to find my second recommendation, which opened this weekend at theaters in four cities and will enjoy a wider release later this fall. It's a new documentary about former CIA director William Colby, made by his son Carl. The film has the haunting title, "The Man Nobody Knew: In Search of My Father, CIA Spymaster William Colby ."

Colby was among the very best spies the CIA produced. Though his career was in the shadows, he shared some attributes with JFK: He was a Catholic, a war hero and a man who led others partly by concealing his innermost feelings. Colby also exemplified what JFK never lived to see, which was how his "best and brightest" ran headlong into the shattering

disaster of Vietnam. The film converges on the true riddle of Colby's life — which is why this lifelong denizen of the secret world decided to go public with the agency's "Family Jewels" in 1975, beginning

an era of investigation from which the CIA has arguably never recovered. The son searches for his father's motivation, through interviews with his family and friends: Was it a Catholic's guilt over past misdeeds? Was it idealism? Was it a reluctance to say no to political pressure? Many people speculate in this film, but no one knows.

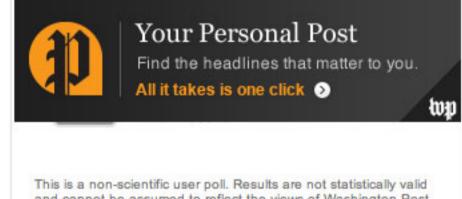
diligent and loving reconstruction cannot resolve. That's so with most of our public personalities: The closer we get, the further they seem to recede.

Colby died in a boating accident in 1996. He left behind a mystery that even his son's

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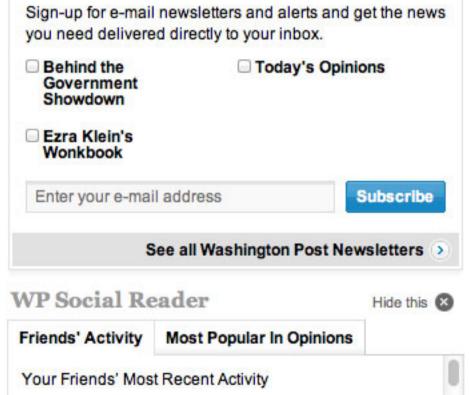








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