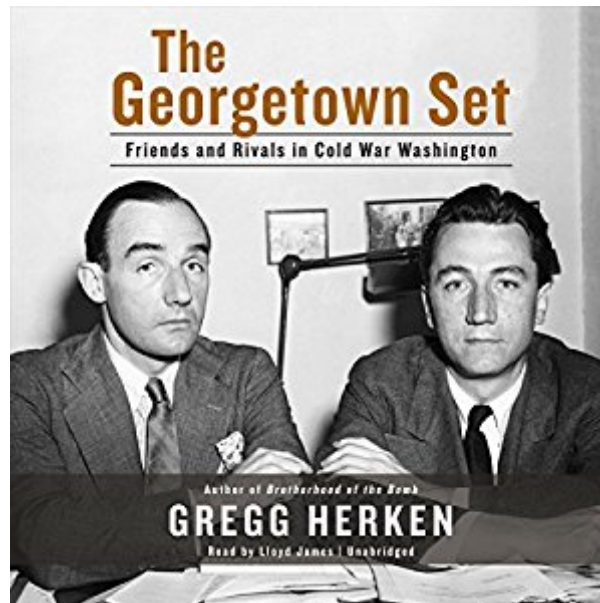




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# The Georgetown Set: Friends And Rivals In Cold War Washington



## Synopsis

This fascinating, behind-the-scenes history of postwar Washington is a rich and colorful portrait of the close-knit group of journalists, spies, and government officials who waged the Cold War over cocktails and dinner. In the years after World War II, Georgetown's leafy streets were home to an unlikely group of cold warriors: a coterie of affluent, well-educated, and well-connected civilians who helped steer American strategy from the Marshall Plan through McCarthyism, Vietnam, and the endgame of Watergate. This Georgetown set included Phil and Kay Graham, husband-and-wife publishers of the *Washington Post*; Joe and Stewart Alsop, odd-couple brothers who were among the country's premier political pundits; Frank Wisner, a driven, manic-depressive lawyer in charge of CIA covert operations; and a host of diplomats, spies, and scholars. It was a time when presidents made foreign policy in consultation with reporters and professors - often over martinis and hors d'oeuvres - and columnists like the Alsops promoted those policies in the next day's newspapers. Gregg Herken illuminates the drama of these years and brings this remarkable roster of men and women and their world not only out into the open but vividly to life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This marvelous book on the Washington power elite during the early postwar era almost reads like a novel. The tales revolve around the Alsop brothers columnists who seemed to know everybody who was anybody in the Government.

A comprehensive behind the scene history of times, personalities and events which I lived thru. It personalizes those tumultuous years and gives perspective to things one merely read about in the NY Times and accepted as gospel. The Government, Military and Media got the benefit of the doubt, without a doubt, but if this story is accurate all was not as it seemed. It's almost comical, and somewhat concerning, that so much was decided and done so informally and under the influence too.

This extremely interesting book portrays a time in our History when patriots from WW II moved to Washington to make the country safe and export Democracy to the rest of the World. Although of different political stripes they had a mutual respect due to their wartime experiences. The Alsop diner table was an example of how the intellectual and experiential elite fought out ideas that would later become National policies. This "we can do this" approach lies in stark contrast to the "I'm not listening to you" approach we see in today's political scene. Nostalgia is for losers but I feel an ache in my heart. Hats off to the author for capturing an interesting time in our History.

yes, read the Best and Brightest...haven't done that yet? shame on you...but read Herken's book too...ALL OF IT...No Way it gets only one star. Its excellent. If you don't like Georgetown, don't like history, don't like the background, shades of grey, relationships, yada yada yada then there are some excellent novels out there. This one is history; yes, it reads like a novel, given the personalities and the skill of the writer. Its a page turner, so do it and then do Halberstam.

Here's what happened when Blueblood Wasps were influencing political policies, the CIA and the FBI during WWII, the Korean and the Vietnam War. These insufferable snobs caused as much harm as good and this book was a good read if you can get past the name dropping.

The only thing keeping the book from a five-star rating was that it spent a bit too much time on setting the stage for Georgetown stuff. Maybe it was unavoidable, but I would have liked more about the Georgetown interaction and less general history. In any case, the role of relationships in governing during that post-World War II period was most interesting.

Provides an intimate and revealing glimpse of how our government worked in the 1950's and 1960's. We can appreciate now how decision-making was made on subtle and not-so-subtle

involvement of newspaper journalists and publishers, society mavens, and politicians and statesmen from both parties. The primary focus on the Alsop brothers was especially revealing and interesting.

This is a book about the makers and shakers behind the scenes during most of the Cold War. The story is built around the Alsop brothers, especially Joe. But, into their world you are taken on a trip through the CIA, the press and the social world they occupy. The book is an easy read.

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