



# Theodore Roosevelt and the Assassin: Madness, Vengeance, And The Campaign Of 1912

By Gerard Helferich

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**Theodore Roosevelt and the Assassin: Madness, Vengeance, And The Campaign Of 1912** By Gerard Helferich

***A New York Times Bestseller!***

John Flammang Schrank—a lonely Manhattan saloonkeeper—was obsessed with the 1912 presidential election and Theodore Roosevelt. The ex-president's extremism and third-term campaign were downright un-American. Convinced that TR would ignite civil war and leave the nation open to foreign invasion, Schrank answered what he believed to be a divine summons, buying a gun and stalking Roosevelt across seven Southern and Midwestern states, blending into throngs of supporters. In Chattanooga and Chicago, he failed to act. In Milwaukee, on October 14, Schrank crossed TR's path again—BANG!

*Theodore Roosevelt and the Assassin* is the dynamic unfolding account of the audacious attempt on Roosevelt's life by a lone and fanatical assailant. Based on original sources including police interrogations, eyewitness testimony, and newspaper reports, the book is above all a fast-paced, suspenseful narrative. Drawing from Schrank's own statements and writings, it also provides a chilling glimpse into the mind of a political assassin. Rich with local color and period detail, it transports the reader to the American heartland during a pivotal moment in our history, when the forces of progressivism and conservatism were battling for the nation's soul—and the most revered man in America traveled across the country campaigning relentlessly against Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson, and Socialist Eugene V. Debs in what historians agree was the first modern American presidential contest.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

*A New York Times* Bestseller

"A fast-paced look at a little-remembered piece of history."

—*New York Post*

"Immensely readable, entertaining and disturbing.... The book is hard to put down. Mr. Helferich's narrative structure recalls a number of recent popular histories that recount world-historical events from the perspective of a marginal figure, most notably Erik Larson's best-selling *The Devil in the White City*.... Poor mad John Flammang Schrank, an assassin manqué—but for Gerard Helferich's literary efforts, lost to history, unable to earn the infamy of a John Wilkes Booth or a Lee Harvey Oswald."

—*Wall Street Journal*

"A lively account of Theodore Roosevelt's would-be murder reveals the roiling issues and personalities of that key campaign.... Roosevelt's shooting certainly yanked American politics into the modern era and revealed the courage of the irrepressible victim.... Helferich creates several wonderful character studies.... Outsized personalities within a blistering campaign render this work a rollicking history lesson."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Theodore Roosevelt—Rough Rider, Nobel prize winner, builder of the Panama Canal—ranks as one of America's most beloved presidents. Yet often forgotten is how close one man came to murdering him. In his vivid and richly detailed narrative, Gerard Helferich transports readers to the presidential campaign of 1912 when, in the shadows of a truly historic election, a would-be assassin silently tracked 'Bull Moose' Roosevelt and shot him. The result is a compelling and chilling work that brings to life this overlooked chapter of the TR legend."

—Scott Miller, author of *The President and the Assassin: McKinley, Terror, and Empire at the Dawn of the American Century*

"Skillfully weaving together the heated debate of a critical election and the riveting tale of a stalking assassin, Helferich's is the rare book that both educates and entertains the reader. This gripping drama affirms Theodore Roosevelt's 1912 Progressive campaign as one of the most important and entertaining chapters in American political history."

—Sidney M. Milkis, White Burkett Miller Professor of Politics, University of Virginia

"Theodore Roosevelt—with his 'take no prisoners' approach—dominated the political life of the nation. Heir to a fortune, a know-it-all Harvard graduate, a righteous reformer with fierce opinions and unshakable confidence—he attracted passionate followers and equally passionate haters. This book is a compelling read about the historic 1912 presidential campaign, and the madman from a New York City saloon who was obsessed with de-railing Teddy's third term."

—Richard Zacks, author of *Island of Vice: Theodore Roosevelt's Quest to Clean Up Sin-Loving New York*

“One doesn’t have to be a serious student of third party politics or of Roosevelt’s try for a third presidential term to enjoy this minute-by-minute nonfiction account of the audacious assassination attempt on his life as the Bull Moose candidate.... Rich with local color and period detail [Theodore Roosevelt and the Assassin] transports the reader to a pivotal moment in our history, when the forces of progressivism and conservatism were battling for the nation’s soul.”

—*Delta Magazine*

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Praise for the author's previous book, *Stone of Kings*

“A compelling tale.... This well-focused and well-told account brings America’s most mythologized gemstone into sharp relief.” —*Wall Street Journal*

“[T]he story of the search for the long-vanished mines of the Mayas . . . [with] engaging digressions into plate tectonics, the technology of jade carving and the brutal history of the regimes of a succession of Guatemalan generals. . . . [Prospectors] Ridinger and Johnson endured earthquakes, coups, kidnapping, even civil war. But eventually they stumbled upon huge blocks of the alluring, elusive stone.” —*New York Times Book Review*

“The search for the sources of this mysterious rock reads like detective fiction, and involves geologists, archaeologists, entrepreneurs, poachers, and a host of other characters, but it’s all true. A wonderful read!” —Michael D. Coe, author of *Breaking the Maya Code*

Selected as an Indie Next List “Great Read”

About the Author

**Gerard Helferich** is the author of the widely praised *Humboldt’s Cosmos*, which was a *Discover* magazine Science Bestseller; *High Cotton*, which received the 2008 Authors Award for nonfiction from the Mississippi Library Association; and *Stone of Kings*, an Indie Next List “Great Read.”

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