

John McCain obituary

Notes & Cues:	Article: <p>Senator John McCain of Arizona, who has died aged 81 after suffering from brain cancer, was for many Americans an authentic national hero. The son and grandson of admirals, he was a pilot who, shot down over North Vietnam, inspired his fellow prisoners by his courage under savage beatings and torture so severe that to the end of his life he could not lift his arms above his shoulders. He refused offers to be sent home, to deny his captors a propaganda victory, and inspired older and higher-ranking prisoners with his exceptional bravery and leadership in jail.</p> <p>As a Republican senator and as a candidate for the presidency he combined fierce traditional patriotism with an unpredictable independence of mind. The conservative journalist William Buckley said McCain was “conservative but not a conservative” – conservative, that is, in his instincts and beliefs, but not a member of the conservative movement. Barack Obama, McCain’s victorious rival for the presidency, when he learned that McCain had been diagnosed with cancer, commented: “Cancer doesn’t know what it’s up against.”</p> <p>Despite his courage, both physical and moral, he was far from a saint. Capable of great personal charm, he had a volcanic temper and could be enormously rude, even on occasion to his wife in public. This may have been exacerbated by his sufferings in Hanoi, but he was never a model of conventional virtue. As a young man he was a hard-drinking, hard-partying tearaway who excelled at wrestling and boxing.</p> <p>He is survived by his second wife, Cindy, their children, Meghan, John, James and Bridget, the three children of his first marriage, his mother, a sister, Sandy, and a brother, Joe.</p>
Summary:	