



## The Big Picture

By Douglas Kennedy

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On the face of it, Ben Bradford is your standard Wall Street hot shot - Junior partner in a legal firm, 6 figure income, wife and two young kids straight out of a Gap catalogue. But along with the WASP lifestyle comes the sting - Ben hates it. He wants - has always wanted - to be a photographer. When he discovers his wife is playing outside the ground, the consequences of a moment of madness force him to question not just the design of his life but the price of fulfilment. Because finding yourself means nothing when you're pretending to be someone else. From the picket fences of yuppie New England to Montana's untouchable splendour, THE BIG PICTURE spans states and states of mind in a thrilling novel of genuine originality.

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## **The Big Picture** By Douglas Kennedy Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Oscar Wilde once said that the only real tragedy in life is getting what you want. Ben Bradford, the protagonist of Douglas Kennedy's new novel, *The Big Picture*, is living proof of that adage. At the start of Kennedy's novel, Ben Bradford would appear to have it all: a beautiful wife, a big suburban home, two kids and a partnership in a prestigious New York law firm. But Ben's heart lies neither with his family nor his career. Instead, he dreams of being a photographer, and when he discovers his wife is having an affair with the man next door--who happens to be a photographer--Ben snaps and commits an act that will commit *him* to a whole new way of life, forever.

Kennedy threads his tale of obsession, murder, and identity with themes that resonate strongly today: what compromises are worth making? What sacrifices require too much? *The Big Picture* is both a thriller and a cautionary tale concerning the complexities of modern life.

### From Publishers Weekly

This astonishingly assured first novel, by an American working in London as a journalist, has a breathless readability that is rare--particularly as it seems at first to cover pretty familiar territory. Ben Bradford is a Wall Street lawyer living a comfortable life in Connecticut, with a wife and two small children, but he seems to be heading, rather early, for a midlife crisis. He had always wanted to be a photographer, still putters around at it, but feels his life is ebbing away. Beth, his wife, a frustrated novelist, is increasingly estranged from him. Then Ben discovers she has taken a lover--ironically, another failed photographer--and in a confrontation with the man, Gary Summers, Ben's accumulated rage leads to a moment of murderous madness. Both Beth's infatuation with Gary and Ben's maniacal rage seem rather out of character, but with that caveat, the rest of this headlong novel grips like a vise as Ben carefully covers up his crime, disappears and takes on his victim's identity. *The Big Picture* has to be the most careful and imaginative exploration of such a situation ever penned, from the details of how one convincingly contrives an apparent accidental death to the minutiae of building a new life, unrecognized, in a far place. In Ben's case, it is a small town in Montana, and his born-again existence there is rich in ironies, from his eventual success as a photographer to his ultimate need to disappear yet again. The book is more than just a compelling read: it also has poignant and moving things to say about lost opportunities and wasted lives in America, the cynical quality of sudden fame, the awfulness of willed separation from deeply loved children. There is a lot of excitement in the air about Kennedy's novel, and it is thoroughly justified. 400,000 first printing; \$750,000 ad/promo; Literary Guild and Doubleday Book Club selection; film rights to Fox2000  
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### From Library Journal

Ben Bradford is a successful lawyer with a wife, two children, and a house in the suburbs. He is also obsessed by his dream of becoming a photographer. Forced to confront the reality of his crumbling marriage and professional life, he struggles ineffectually to regain control. One out-of-control moment ends in death. Horrified, he wallows in self-pity as he methodically tries to cover his tracks and recover his previously despised lifestyle. The literate prose, competently read by Cotter Smith, cannot compensate for the shallowness of the characters in this abridged version. Still, this classic suburban tragedy may appeal to the many listeners who enjoy social commentary associated with violence. Recommended for larger recreational collections. ?I. Pour-El, Iowa State Univ. Lib., Ames  
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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Whitney Obrien:**

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#### **Christina Epp:**

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#### **Martin Williams:**

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#### **Garry Brown:**

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