

Quotation of the Day:

"I also wonder about aggression. Is there so much difference, or is it only in kind, when people like Oswald use a violence [sic] in pulling a trigger, and others, who live a much more sophisticated experience and have enriched backgrounds and training, go through the process of abusing their colleagues when discussing their ideas and ideals? When I was [studying the JFK assassination], I observed men of great ability and experience who freely tore to pieces the brainchildren of their associates with delight. Is that another expression of aggression in which we all love to indulge...?"

Who said this about his colleagues? Answer on page 9.

LAPD files on the RFK assassination:

105. 31 Jun 85 (Phila. Inq.) "Calif. board to open files on assassination of RFK" The L.A. Board of Police Commissioners voted "to begin the process of releasing the 50,000 pages of documents involved in the police investigation." Quotes Phil Melanson and Paul Schrade in favor of release. (In the last EOC, I put Prof. Melanson in the history department, instead of political science.) (and) 31 Jun 85 (AP) "Summary of probe... to be made public"
106. Full text of the motion, adopted July 30. Preparation of the summary volumes for release (with the usual deletions) is to begin immediately. For the additional material, standards for redaction and release are to be developed "in concert with experts."
107. 31 Jul 85 (UPI) "Board might free Kennedy reports" "The commissioners agreed they could not allow release of information related to national security, confidential contacts with other law-enforcement agencies or material that would invade the subject's privacy."
108. 31 Jul 85 (LA News) "Police to air summary on RFK killing" The unanimous vote was "against the wishes" of Police Chief Daryl Gates. Commission President Stephen Yslas "estimated that all the files will be released within six months." Quotes Melanson, Arthur Schlesinger, and an archivist at the JFK Library.
109. 4 Aug 85 (Dubin, Phila. Inq.) "Opening the files on RFK" [2 pp.] Includes a summary of the unresolved issues in the RFK case, based largely on an interview of Melanson.
110. 9 Aug 85 (Hollywood Press) [2 pp.] A rather detailed account of the July 30 hearing, focusing on the comments of the speakers (including the author, Greg Roberts). Includes reference to an ABC audio tape thought worthy of acoustical analysis.
111. 28 Jun 85 (Roberts, Hollywood Press) "L.A. Police Commission May Release LAPD's Suppressed RFK Death Files" On Melanson's testimony at a June 18 hearing, with comments by Peter Noyes.
112. 29 Jul 85 (LA Times) A brief pre-hearing item. "Previous requests to view the file have been refused, but numerous inquiries from historians, journalists and researchers of a conspiracy theory in Kennedy's murder have prompted the commission to put the issue on its agenda."
113. 11 Jul 85 [2 pp.] A letter from Bud Fensterwald (for AARC) to Yslas, in support of release.
114. 13 Aug 85 Acknowledgement of the previous item.
I don't keep up to date on the RFK case, but I can provide a series of major L.A. Times articles by Bill Farr, based on interviews with Sirhan:
115. 24 Jun 85 "After 17 Years, 'Ifs' Still Haunt Sirhan" [2 pp.]
116. 26 Jun 85 "Sirhan to Seek Parole Date for Seventh Time" [2 pp.]
117. 27 Jun 85 "State Denies Sirhan Parole Bid as Press 'Eavesdrops'" [2 pp.] An open mike revealed that there was no serious discussion of paroling him.
118. 28 Jun 85 "Sirhan's Fears" [2 pp.]
(115a: AP account based on #115; 117a: Boston Globe version of #117.)

Marilyn Monroe and the Kennedys:

As expected, there has been a lot of press attention to Tony Summers' new book, "Goddess: The Secret Lives of Marilyn Monroe." I will not attempt a thorough review, since I am unfamiliar with the literature on Monroe, and there is so much fascinating new material in this book that a systematic summary would be difficult. The possibility of relevance to the JFK assassination is provocative but limited and tentative. It would be hard for me to be precise about what Summers actually thinks about some key issues relating to Monroe's death, where the book does not purport to be definitive. (Summers uncovered some important evidence near the end of his investigation.)

The book convinced me that JFK did have an affair with Monroe; that RFK got involved with her, probably at first to untangle the mess caused by his brother's casual fling; and that RFK was in Los Angeles on the day of her death (August 4, 1962), in response to her desperate condition and, possibly, a threat by her to expose the relationships.

Summers found fragmentary evidence that an ambulance was called. He believes that she died en route to the hospital, and that "someone accompanying her, perhaps Robert Kennedy himself, was faced with an awful dilemma.... Even had he never had an affair with Marilyn... for a Kennedy to be found with a dead Marilyn Monroe, even on a legitimate mission of mercy, would have meant certain political disaster. The solution was to return the body to [her] house... [and make time] to allow Robert Kennedy to slip out of town, time for a cleanup operation at Marilyn's home.... [Peter] Lawford destroyed some compromising document [as he later told his third wife], probably a half-written letter rather than a suicide note, and commissioned private detective Fred Otash to sweep dust over whatever telltale tracks might remain.... In all probability, no serious crime was committed that night.... If our reconstruction is essentially correct, the death of Marilyn Monroe had been [RFK's] Chappaquiddick. Unlike his less fortunate brother Edward, he escaped public exposure, but only by a hair's breadth." (Pp. 355-6)

What happened to the Monroe story was not just a successful coverup; it had some persistent consequences. Lots of people knew enough to at least embarrass JFK and RFK: some LA authorities, of course, but also some of Monroe's friends, and their friends, and JFK's enemies. Summers shows that the last two categories significantly overlapped.

The book is most relevant to the JFK case for buffs who take seriously one thesis of the Blakey-Billings book: that JFK's womanizing was a tragic and fatal flaw because it led the Mafia to conclude that he had violated the rules of the game. At the very least, the reaction of the Kennedys, their friends, and their enemies to the Monroe affair illuminates their reactions to JFK's affair with Judith Campbell Exner.

In fact, Summers' evidence suggests that Monroe left JFK vulnerable in much the same way that Exner did. Summers provides extensive detail on people who apparently knew about JFK and Monroe; he even managed to get information from Phyllis McGuire, a friend of both Monroe and Sam Giancana. It is very likely that Giancana - and who knows how many of his associates, from CIA people on down - knew about JFK's affair with Monroe.

Frank Sinatra, for example, knew both Campbell and Monroe himself. "The troubling question mark over Marilyn's relationship with Sinatra concerns not so much the singer himself as the potential opportunity it gave to others to hurt the Kennedys. The Sinatra association brought Marilyn into a milieu peopled by some of the Kennedys' worst foes at a time when she was also seeing both Kennedy brothers. The question is - How much did the Mafia know?" (P. 233)

"There are disturbing indications that the leaders of organized crime were indeed watching the Kennedy's [sic] with predatory interest." (P. 236) In 1984, former FBI Assistant Director Courtney Evans, RFK's liaison with Hoover,

discussed with Summers "the vulnerability of President Kennedy to sexual blackmail.... 'There was, I know, an effort to bring pressure on the presidency - by organized crime.... That's my recollection.' He had said little, but more than any official source before him." (P. 228)

Summers' examination of the political context illuminates the Kennedys' response to the Monroe affair, and to her death. In May-June 1962, he reminds us, Jimmy Hoffa had been indicted, and was threatening the Kennedys; RFK had learned of the CIA-Mafia plots, and knew the FBI knew about Judy Campbell. "Robert Kennedy was aware that this was a time of extraordinary peril. There had to be an end to the Kennedy's [sic] escapades with Marilyn Monroe." (P. 292)

In short, we can not separate the Monroe-Kennedy relationships from issues which are often thought to be relevant to the JFK assassination or the subsequent coverups: the JFK-Campbell-Giancana tangle, the hostility between RFK and Hoover, and the complex CIA-Hughes-Mafia-Castro story.

Summers emphasizes RFK's debt to Hoover for fixing the phone records. In light of Jim Hougan's information about CIA and DC Police sex files, quite a few interesting people in Washington may have known a lot, even before Monroe's death. The coverup may have remained active for years - e.g., the raid apparently designed to get Bernard Spindel's Monroe tapes and files was in December 1966, just when the growing demand for a new official inquiry into the JFK assassination was about to be diverted towards Jim Garrison's "investigation." If one wants to understand the way RFK and the rest of the family reacted to the assassination and the investigations of it, perhaps one should keep the Monroe secrets in mind.

I don't want to push the possible relevance of the Monroe case too hard. A recent article about release hearings for mental patients reminds me to be careful. ("In Raul's case, it's time for the prosecutor to ask a few questions. 'Have you had any conversations with Adolf Hitler lately?... Do you have red lights in your forehead?... How about Marilyn Monroe - do you think she had anything to do with the Kennedy assassination?... Ever tell anyone that?'" [SFC, 15 Sep 85, #119])

Basically, "Goddess" is getting a lot of space in EOC because Summers is a friend and colleague who understands how various things might connect to the JFK case. One aspect of the book which is worth noting by buffs is the sheer amount of new information which can be dug up by a skilled reporter, even after 20 years. Among about 600 others, Summers interviewed Arthur Balletti, the wiretapper in the Giancana-Rowan case; Sen. George Smathers; and Bernard Spindel's assistant wiretapper. (Many people would not talk to Summers, but some might talk now that most of the story is out.) Assassination buffs really should be interviewing more people about the JFK case. This book also reminds us that the FOIA is still useful, at least with Jim Lesar's help.

Baseball fans will find one error in the book (in the description of Joe DiMaggio's most famous record, on p. 67). Fans of the Kennedy family may find less trivial points of disagreement. I didn't find the tone particularly hostile to RFK or even to JFK, although the portrait of RFK as not "a saint in sexual matters" might be enough to offend some loyalists who think he was. Summers emphasizes that if RFK went to Monroe's house after her final call to Peter Lawford, he had been "jolted... into a decent, humane action." (Pp. 213, 355)

I have no trouble believing that the circumstances of Monroe's death were covered up, for and in part by the Kennedy family. The details, however, require cautious interpretation. When someone like private detective Fred Otash talks about Lawford asking him to remove anything incriminating, that is a claim, not an admission. The coverup seems to have involved people who were certainly not Kennedy loyalists, and who may have secret agendas causing them to exaggerate or distort the nature of the coverup. (The same caution can be applied to evidence of the affairs, but there is so much from Kennedy

sympathizers that only details are in doubt.)

Consideration of the idea that Monroe was murdered brings us to even more shaky ground. Summers does not dismiss the possibility of foul play out of hand. He seems to prefer the hypothesis of an overdose accidentally administered by someone trying to calm Monroe who did not know what pills she had previously taken - or, even more likely, a self-administered accidental overdose. "Today it is impossible to say whether Kennedy's enemies - the agents of Sam Giancana and Jimmy Hoffa - played an active role in Marilyn's last hours. The medical evidence... leaves open the possibility that someone other than Marilyn administered the fatal barbiturate dose. More probably, she simply underestimated the effects of a sudden large dose.... This author does not believe that she intended to kill herself." (P. 355)

Allegations of murder have been circulating since 1962, often with the suggestion that Kennedy friends as well as Kennedy enemies were suspects. (Perhaps it was fortunate for the Kennedys that such implausible charges were getting attention, rather than something like Summers' account of a relatively innocent but very embarrassing coverup.) Certainly some of the people who seized upon these reports did so out of political anti-Kennedy motives. Summers (whose book was intended, after all, to be a biography of Monroe and not his third who-done-it) may not emphasize enough this aspect of the history of the controversy.

One of Summers' sources was the first police officer on the scene, Sgt. Jack Clemmons. After "Goddess" was published, an article by him appeared in the NY Post. (#120, 2 pp., 4 Oct) He still believes Monroe was murdered. His conclusion: "whoever killed her committed a very clumsy crime." Clemmons names no suspects, but his article mentions Monroe's alleged threat to expose RFK publicly and fails to mention the Mafia or any other Kennedy enemies.

Clemmons says he encountered Frank Capell about six weeks after Monroe's death. Clemmons discussed his suspicions with Maurice Reis (a new name to me), whom Capell wanted to meet. "Capell asked me to help him investigate the case and I agreed. I began by getting everything obtainable in the police department."

Capell, of course, was not just "a writer." I do not yet have his 1964 booklet entitled "The Strange Death of Marilyn Monroe," which reportedly alleged that RFK was in Monroe's home when she died. I understand that Capell's work was widely publicized in right-wing circles, and circulated in New York during RFK's 1964 Senate campaign. (In 1968, Capell came up with "Robert F. Kennedy, Emerging American Dictator." [Schlesinger, p. 867]) Capell was not a lone-nut right-wing fanatic either. Jonathan Marshall's article on secret societies mentions that this "veteran Army intelligence officer" was once the president of the Shickshinny [Pennsylvania] Knights of Malta. (Herman Kinsey and other interesting people were members.) (Parapolitics 2.3.1, reprinted in Lobster, #6) Marshall mentions some of Capell's views on the Goliniewski case and the JFK assassination; for more of the latter, see the Oliver Exhibits, 20 WCH 745-8 and 794-7.

Clemmons, in fact, was not just another police officer. According to Bill Turner, in 1965 Clemmons was a former director of "Fi-Po," a right-wing group (of Birchite views) in the L.A. Fire and Police departments. Along with Capell and two others, he was indicted for criminal libel for calling Sen. Thomas Kuchel a homosexual and pleaded "no contest." (Power on the Right, pp. 189, 225) (As with Watergate, one can wonder about an interesting policeman who happens to be the first on the scene. Similarly, some of the most active Dallas police officers on November 22 should have been asked some tough questions.) I think Summers tried to be fair to the Kennedys, but I have no reason to assume that Clemmons did the same, either in 1962 or recently.

I recommend that you read the book, but I can copy a series of excerpts

which appeared in the S.F. Chronicle. (#121, 10/28-11/1/85, 10 pp.) These selections are heavy on the juicy stuff (the Kennedys, the Mafia, a possible RFK-induced pregnancy, Lawford's comments on the final hours). For different excerpts, with more photos and fewer gory details, from the National Enquirer, ask for #122 (9/17-10/15/85, 10 pp.)

The following items relate to reactions to Summers' work:

123. 19 Sep 85 LAPD announcement on their release of certain Monroe files. I declined the opportunity to copy the 125 or so pages involved, since Summers got this material a while ago and used it for the book.
124. 24 Sep (LAT) "Police Open the Files on Marilyn: No Bombshells" Chief Gates said the release was in response to a request from ABC's 20/20. There are deletions (even of material reproduced in Summers' book) "'but, at least, when [writers] come to us from now on, we can tell them that we have released everything we have on her,' Gates said." (A good precedent for the RFK assassination files?) California AG John Van de Kamp expressed "a faint hope that Marilyn Monroe be permitted to rest in peace." (#124a: SFC version)
125. 24 Sep (NY Post) "Secret police files bared: Marilyn's last words: Goodbye JFK" [2 pp., with a big page-one headline.]
126. 24 Sep (AP in Newsday) Emphasizes what Lawford told the police when he was first interviewed, in 1975.
127. 26 Sep (NY News) "The haunting legacy of Marilyn's death" Liz Smith, whose coverage of this story has been consistently good, emphasizes that there is nothing new about Monroe's last words to Lawford, and quotes Summers on the inadequacy of the LAPD release. 20/20 has been working on the story, and "some ABC people were afraid their network might never air the sensational Monroe material." (More on the ABC flap below.) (#127a: SFC version of this column.)
128. 29 Sep (LAT) "Marilyn Monroe Mystery Persists" [4 pp.] Some new information. Otash in essence confirmed what Summers got from other sources about his cleanup effort. Lawford's last wife dismissed the allegation that Lawford had destroyed a note, but confirmed that he said that Otash had assisted him the day of Monroe's death. Deputy DA Ronald Carroll, who headed a 1982 reinvestigation, said he had found "historically interesting" discrepancies, and mentioned a report that the 1962 investigation placed RFK at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on August 4. (#128a: SFC version, 4 Oct, 2 pp.)
129. 2 Oct (USA Today) "Monroe death still teases imagination" [2 pp.] Summary of findings by Summers, LA Times, NY Post, and the BBC. The Post quoted Eunice Murray (Monroe's housekeeper) as saying that RFK met with Monroe on August 4.
130. 14 Oct (Newsweek) "The Star-Crossed Kennedys" The Summers book is criticized as relying on "gossip and speculation," but Sam Yorty's confirmation of the report about RFK at the Hilton is noted. Opinion on an affair "remains sharply divided." Peter Collier finds it "wholly plausible," but "others firmly reject the theory": there is a quote, but not actually a denial, from Pat Newcombe, of all people.
131. 15 Oct (Star) Quotes Otash, and a Star interview of the owner of the ambulance company. ("It was in our log. There's no doubt about it.") Notes that the 1975 LAPD review was prompted by an article in Oui by Tony Scaduto, now on the staff of the Star (and the author of a 1976 book, "Who Killed Marilyn?", under the name Tony Sciacca). The lead: "Hollywood officials, trying to pull the covers over Marilyn Monroe's corpse once and for all, have snagged a thread that threatens to unravel two decades of lies, cover-ups, and protection of the Kennedy name."
132. 21 Oct (AP in SFC) "BBC Links Robert Kennedy, Monroe" The 71-minute documentary has been shown in Britain and on SelectTV here, but I have not seen it. It generally follows the Summers book. Among those interviewed were

Sgt. Clemmons ("She was murdered"), Murray (confirming RFK's last-day visit), Deborah Gould (Lawford's third wife), and Otash, who claimed that Hoffa ordered him to bug the Lawford home "to get up a derogatory profile' on the Kennedys." Chuck O'Brien said Hoffa "had the tapes in his safe."

133. 22 Oct (Star) [3 pp.] Includes Robert Slatzer's account of the cancelled 20/20 segment, and comments from George Carey, executive producer of the BBC program. "There were two operations to bug Marilyn. The first was at an earlier stage [and targeted at JFK], and we think we know who the [tapper's] clients were, but we're not prepared to say at present." The later operation, Carey thinks, was targeted against RFK.

134. 29 Oct (LAT in SFC) "Marilyn Monroe Idea Flops" As the foreman of the LA grand jury was holding a press conference calling for an investigation of Monroe's death, the judge announced that he had been replaced, for "not directly related" reasons. "Grand jury members had complained that he was repeatedly making unauthorized statements on their behalf." The DA called Sam Cordova's suggestion of a reinvestigation "irresponsible almost beyond description."

135. 31 Oct (SFC) "There will be no comment on the current book or any of the other 20 books on the subject," said a spokesman for Edward Kennedy.

136. 11 Nov (Liz Smith in SFC) The forthcoming Rolling Stone article (next item) was reportedly spiked by Life magazine.

137. 5 Dec (C.D.B. Bryan, Rolling Stone) "Say Goodbye to Camelot" [6 pp.; photos: #137a, 2 pp.] A rather detailed account and analysis of Summers' scenario for the final hours, with bits from the BBC film. For example, Murray said that Marilyn was not yet dead when Dr. Greenson first arrived (but her testimony on RFK's last visit is, "at this point, confused enough for a good cross-examiner to reduce her to ash.")

"No one involved in the current round of investigations [Summers, ABC, BBC]... really believes Marilyn was murdered," or that she even intended to kill herself. How she died is no longer a key issue, Bryan says.

Bryan's critical account of what ABC did is the most detailed I have yet seen, with some new inside information. He favors a more abstract interpretation than Kennedy family interference: "the media created the Kennedys" and "a prudent parasite [TV news] does not kill its host."

Clippings primarily about the 20/20 flap:

138. 3 Oct (Smith, NY News) "Please, ABC: Have a '20/20' view of history" Published the morning before the cancellation, this article alleges that Roone Arledge did not want to upset his friend Ethel Kennedy. "Ethel got awfully angry with ABC when they allowed... Sirhan to be seen on 'Nightline.'" "Someday, when the history books are rewritten, this will all figure quite heavily, at least in the important psychology of the men who were running America in the '60s." (She's right, you know.) (#138a: SFC version)

139. 4 Oct (Smith, NY News) "Arledge: '20/20' segment 'sleazy'" Arledge said that "the segment purports to show a link through organized crime, via Marilyn Monroe, which compromises the Kennedys. But it didn't prove anything happened beyond the possibility/probability of an affair between Marilyn and Bobby." (My feeling is that widespread knowledge of facts which could have compromised the Presidency - or even widespread belief in such rumors - is in itself a significant historical fact.) Summers said that the cancellation "seriously damages" ABC's image. (#139a: SFC version)

140. 4 Oct (WP) TV columnist John Carmody quotes Summers and Arledge. Arledge "said 'it ended up with some people who said they'd participated in bugging Peter Lawford's and Marilyn Monroe's houses for... Hoffa but they couldn't produce the tapes or any firsthand evidence. I just didn't think it was ready.... If in the future some hard evidence can be shown that proves the Kennedy relationship with Monroe somehow affected history and the presidency,

we could run a piece.'" (#140a: Boston Globe version)

141. 5 Oct (NYT) "ABC Monroe-Report Cancellation is Argued" Hugh Downs and others at 20/20 are not happy. Downs: "I honestly believe that this is more carefully documented than anything any network did during Watergate." (Okay, but that's another story.) The new information in the ABC film is summarized; "several people not in the book say on camera that Miss Monroe kept diaries with references to meetings with the Kennedy brothers." (#141a: LA Herald-Examiner version, with photos, 3 pp.)

142. 5 Oct (NY Post) A short account of the "feud" at ABC.

143. 7 Oct (LAT) "ABC reviews Kennedy-Monroe story" [2 pp.] Arledge and Downs are quoted at some length. Downs objected to Arledge's alleged comments to Smith ("a sleazy piece of journalism"); Arledge says that "sleazy" was Smith's word and that he agreed that "the story itself is a sleazy story without some larger context."

144. 7 Oct (Smith, NYN) "Arledge makes '20/20' staff see red" Geraldo Rivera, among others, was "seething." The "general feeling... was that Arledge had been pressured by Kennedy factions," which he denied. (Smith mentions an article in Picture Week, a Time spinoff, which I haven't seen.)

145. 8 Oct (Carmody, WP, in Boston Globe) "Poor [Arledge-Smith] communication cited in '20/20' flap"

146. 12 Oct (NYP) "Twice Spiked" John Davis was interviewed at length for the 20/20 segment, as he had been for CBS Morning News when his book on the Kennedys came out. When "he learned that Maria Shriver... was coming aboard [at CBS]... he knew... that the segment was permanently dead."

147. 21 Oct (People) "The Monroe Report" [2 pp.] "Cries of censorship and cronyism" have been raised. (One Arledge assistant is Ethel Kennedy's son-in-law.) (#147a: accompanying photos, 3 pp.)

148. 23 Oct (WP) Rivera has left ABC, declining to link his departure to the Monroe flap.

149. 7 Nov (USA Today) The dust at 20/20 is settling; executive producer Av Westin still stands by the story.

Documentary material:

Item #150 is an FBI document discussed on pp. 238-9 of "Goddess"; it was provided by Mark Allen, who found it in released HSCA-related files. It is a nine-page account, in fascinating and sometimes amusing detail, of the confrontation between the FBI and Giancana on July 12, 1961, at the Chicago airport.

In their discussion of the Campbell affair, Blakey and Billings noted that Giancana said "I know all about the Kennedys... and one of these days... [I am] going to tell all." (The Plot to Kill the President, p. 381) Summers suggests that the omitted words ("and Phyllis knows a lot more about the Kennedys") point to Monroe. McGuire told Summers that she knew of Monroe's affairs with both RFK and JFK.

During the HSCA public hearings on organized crime, two pages of ELSUR transcripts were torn out of many copies of the press kit, leaving only the corner of each page at the staple. (See 2 EOC 11, p. 13.) I now have both pages in full. (#151, 2 pp.) One was quoted in part in the Blakey-Billings book (p. 382). Eddie McGrath was unhappy that RFK's FBI agents were leaking information about who people in the gambling business were living with; if they tried that with McGrath, he would notify the press and say that if sexual congress was a federal offense, JFK should be indicted "because I know he was whacking all those broads Sinatra brought him out."

In the other ELSUR, Meyer Lansky told his wife about RFK's alleged affair with a "girl" in El Paso. (Mrs. Lansky commented on Sinatra's alleged role in providing women.) This intercept (just three days before Monroe died) was probably the basis for an August 20 meeting at which Courtney Evans told RFK about that rumor. Evans' report to Hoover (reproduced in "Goddess," p. 363)

suggests that allegations of RFK's involvement with Monroe were also discussed at that meeting.

Here are two unusual items (not mentioned in the book) which raise questions about the side effects of JFK's hidden intimate relationships:

152. Summer 1962 (Eros, Vol. 1, #2) "We All Love Jack" (Text only) This article, by Faye Emerson, could not be more innocent. The accompanying pages of photos, also innocent, include Jackie, Grace Kelly, Queen Elizabeth, and Mrs. Khrushchev. Still, the title might have caused some concern in official circles. Most of the journalists who knew about JFK's womanizing were discreet, hardly the word for Eros' publisher Ralph Ginzburg.

153. 2 Dec 62 (SFC) Part of an ad for Eros, sent to the FBI by a concerned citizen. (This copy, almost illegible, is from the Monroe file, as provided to Summers by Robert Slatzer.) Under a large photo of Monroe, the text starts with a provocative sentence: "Yes, the rumors are true." But the rumor in question seems to be only that Marilyn did some nude studies shortly before her death.

Gay Talese has written that the vindictive prosecution of Ginzburg was triggered by photos (actually quite mild) of an interracial couple in the Winter 1962 issue, but that RFK had previously contemplated going after Eros. (See #1981.540, in 3 EOC 5.) Nicholas Katzenbach told Victor Navasky (Talese's cited source) that RFK vacillated about going after Ginzburg. (Kennedy Justice, p. 391) I wonder if RFK was concerned about what Ginzburg knew, or might publish, about Monroe. If I had been in JFK's shoes (or pants), those innocent references in Eros would have made me nervous. Perhaps RFK went after Ginzburg in part for the same reason he continued to target Giancana after he learned of the CIA-Mafia plots: to show that he was not subject to blackmail.

Some reviews of "Goddess":

154. 1 Aug (Kirkus Reviews) "A book of sordid, sensational, and ultimately sad revelations." Focuses on some of the pre-suicide aspects.

155. 2 Aug (Pub. Wkly.) A short, descriptive review.

156. 4 Sep (Yardley, WP) "Marilyn, My Marilyn -- Take 39" The reviewer seems unpersuaded, but calls the book "too dispassionate and sympathetic to be... dismissed" as another exploitation of Monroe.

157. 19 Sep (Lehmann-Haupt, NYT) Generally very positive. "What is particularly impressive is Mr. Summers's objective approach to people connected with the case who for one reason or another have been dismissed as part of a lunatic fringe on the subject of Monroe. Many of these people turned out to be credible," notably short-term Monroe husband Slatzer. "Inexplicable mysteries remain; another reporter as skilled as Mr. Summers might tip the balance of evidence another way. But that rebuttal will now have to be written."

158. 22 Sep (Ross, Detroit News) "Bringing Marilyn Monroe back to life" Mostly favorable.

159. 25 Sep (Newsday) "A truly trashy book," says novelist George V. Higgins. "An unabashed wallow in the warm, liquid mud." Monroe was "a high-powered hooker" and Summers is "a hack writer."

160. ? Sep (NY News) A favorable review in Liz Smith's column.

161. 30 Sep (Time) A brief, mostly descriptive, review. "Ultimately, 'Goddess' portrays a born victim, an essentially simple soul far out of her depth."

162. 19 Oct (Boston Globe) "A disturbing portrait of Marilyn Monroe" Given Summers' reputation, "even the most seemingly preposterous portions of this mesmerizing, disturbing book can't be lightly dismissed." The evidence of affairs with JFK and RFK is "convincing." (#162a: accompanying photo of MM)

163. 29 Sep (NYT Book Review) A full-page ad, with quotes from reviews. (#163a: a small ad, SFC 10/85)

164. 13 Oct (SFC) Bay Area best-seller list; "Goddess" is #11 in its

third week on the list. The NYT for 17 Nov shows it as #8, in its 7th week.

A few additional reactions:

165. 6 Jul (NY Post) "More Marilyn" "People who have seen the manuscript... say there's explosive new stuff on Marilyn's relationship with [JFK and RFK]. But then, there always is." (#165a: SFC version, 21 Jul)

166. 4 Nov (SFC) Letter to the editor: you should have been as much interested in JFK's death as in "his apparent sex life."

(and) 6 Nov (SFC) "Leave Them Be" Two short letters. "How many times must we assassinate John and Robert Kennedy?" (We?)

167. 10 Nov (Nachman, SFC) "A Last Peek Inside the MM Caper" Sort of a parody of the Summers excerpts, I guess. "'One of these days, it's all going to come together,' says the FBI man, who heads up the U.S. Department of Conspiracy."

168. 22 Nov (East Bay Express) [2 pp.] Grossed out by Summers' detailed account of the autopsy (and by JFK's allegedly inadequate sexual technique), alleged humorist Alice Kahn imagines the Noguchis' dinner-table conversation.

I hear that NBC's Saturday Night Live had a really nasty episode of "National Enquirer Theater" on November 9, depicting JFK and RFK disposing of MM themselves. ("Tastelessness ill-disguised as outrageousness" - Oakland Tribune, 12 Nov.)

"The Third Decade" - Army Intelligence and more:

As noted in 7 EOC 2, my article on certain Army-related issues left unresolved by the HSCA has appeared in the July issue of "The Third Decade." (It consists largely of information I gave to the HSCA and the Justice Department.) If you are among the dozens of EOC readers who do not yet subscribe to Jerry Rose's journal, you may get this article from me. (#1985.169, 9 pp.)

Rose's September issue includes a chapter from Fred Cook's recent autobiography, and an article by Martin Shackelford on "Suddenly," a film which (Priscilla McMillan suggested) may have inspired Oswald. On the one hand, the protagonist (Frank Sinatra, of all people) is more Oswald-like than McMillan indicated; on the other hand, the available evidence indicates that the film was not shown on TV when she said it was. There are several other articles of more than routine interest in the July and September issues.

Quotation of the Day II - The Answer:

No, that wasn't Ron Rosenbaum talking about the buffs. The remarks on page 1 refer to the Warren Commission investigation, and were made by Chief Counsel J. Lee Rankin on December 13, 1964, in a closing statement at the Brandeis Conference on Violence. (The words paraphrased in brackets are "working with the Commission.")

This was brought to my attention by Larry Haapanen, who came across it some time ago in the Journal of Human Relations (Vol. 13 [1965], #3), published by Central State College, Wilberforce, Ohio. Has anyone previously noticed Rankin's comments? They would have made a nice addition to Ed Epstein's first book.

It is strange that Rankin would feel that way, and stranger still that he would speak out in public in 1964. I don't know which WC people upset Rankin; my leading candidate would be Wesley Liebeler.

Rankin, it appears, never really grasped the unique complexity of the case he was looking into. By the time of his HSCA testimony, WC lawyer Burt Griffin, for one, realized the possibility that "under the American system of civil liberties and the requirement of proof beyond a reasonable doubt... it is virtually impossible to prosecute or uncover a well-conceived and well-executed conspiracy." (5 HSCA 480) Leaving the investigation in the hands of lawyers was bad enough, but using only polite and unaggressive lawyers, which Rankin

would have liked, would have guaranteed the complete failure of the Warren Commission investigation.

For Rankin's closing remarks only, ask me for #170 (2 pp.) More pages from this issue (#171, 14 pp.) include some typical social-science anti-conspiratorial analysis of the assassination, and references to additional odd comments by Rankin. (E.g., he allegedly "warned that the most important lesson of the Warren Report was the fact that our society keeps spawning Oswalds in many parts of the country.")

The Justice Department Review:

No hard news. Robert Ranftel has talked briefly with one of the JD lawyers involved. He seemed to confirm that they were not just looking at the acoustics, but at three areas left by the HSCA. (One is presumably the Bronson film; my best guess for the third is organized crime.)

This lawyer more or less encouraged us to send in leads for consideration, especially information relating to areas examined by the HSCA. I think we should be writing to the JD, despite low expectations. I would like to see copies of any letters you do send, either for distribution or in confidence.

The Earl Warren Papers:

Earl Golz, who is now with the tabloid Star, told me that Warren's papers are available at the Library of Congress. (They were reportedly sealed for ten years after his death.) A quick peek by Robert Ranftel revealed some interesting items, but nothing sensational.

Anyone in the Washington area who might want to review these files (or others) for us through AARC can contact him.

AARC's two-page descriptive pamphlet is my #172 - no charge.

Acoustics, anyone?

Steve Barber asked me to mention that he would like to hear from people who are still interested in working on aspects of the acoustics, as he is. He can provide, among other things, good tapes of both channels, and photos of the Dictabelt.

Todd Vaughan has sent me a 1983 analysis which relies on signals deliberately put on both channels (but not the crosstalk) to show that the alleged shots are at the wrong time. (#173, 9 pp.) Since I have no doubts about the crosstalk match, I have not worked through the details of his argument.

Answering machine alert:

Speaking of tape recordings, I now have an answering machine at (415)525-1980. The maximum delay is only four rings, so if you insist on avoiding the machine, hang up during the fourth ring, and call right back so that I can get to the phone if I am at home. I can not promise to return toll calls; please leave a good message. Ordinarily, your message can be as long as you want.

Book news:

Look for Henry Hurt's book, "Reasonable Doubt," in stores starting around December 7. The official publication date is now January.

Credits: Thanks to P. Cassidy (#140a), J. Davis (138, 142, 146), J. Goldberg (129, 140, 157), L. Haapanen (170-1), G. Hollingsworth (111, 124, 155), H. Hurt (138, 139, 140, 141, 144, 156), P. Lambert (112, 115), P. Melanson (105, 107-8, 140a, 141a, 145), J. Mierzejewski (158), R. Ranftel (105-7, 109-10, 113-4, 120, 126-7, 129, 138), T. Summers (123, 125, 127, 150, 153-4, 160-1, 163, 165), E. Tatro (115a, 117a, 162) and T. Vaughan (173).