

June 29 *Stanza Journal & Criticism*

The TEWITTERS OF THE COLORED WOMAN

first National Poetry Series. Judy Grahn is known in certain circles for her incisive satire and powerful blend of poetry and politics. "The Work of a Common Woman" gathers under hardcover all five chapbooks of Grahn's work which has circulated in the feminist underground for many years. The best known of these, and introducing the first section of the book, is "Edward the Dyke," a criticism of the mistreatment of women in the hands of the medical profession. Grahn wrote while in the Air Force. At the time (the early 1960s), "Edward" was considered "completely unpublishable," but with the rise of the independent women's presses, the chapbook began its journey in 1969. The second section, "The Common Woman," is a seven-poem set of portraits of "regular, everyday women." Grahn's purpose

Kay Leigh Hagan is an Atlanta poet.

A Welcome Addition for Students of the Kennedy Assassination

CONSPIRACY

By Anthony Summers. 640 pages. McGraw-Hill. \$17.95

By SETH KANTOR
Constitution Washington Bureau

Tony Summers is an Englishman, a London TV figure who has immigrated to a strange U.S. community — the community of Kennedy assassination buffs. Wild-eyed theorists reside there. So do a few serious scholars, and occasionally a reporter. As an early settler in that community this reviewer on

South Kaylor accompanied President Kennedy to Texas on the fatal trip as a White House reporter, and has written extensively on the assassination.

MANCHESTER (HARDCOVER), P. 43-
DALLAS (COVER) WANT FOR NIXON, BY 62.5-98*
P. 45- CABELL PRESENT AT BACH SOCIETY FORNOME,
I BUT H+BNIT JOINED.
TONY (P. 35) CITES MANCHESTER —
THE 2 ALBERT BRADORS AGE MANCHESTER'S
*TONY'S REFERENCE CAN BE READ AS BEING TO
DALLAS AS WELL AS TO TEXAS
PH

was to write about women "without making us look either superhuman or pathetic." She succeeds, not only in her purpose, but in creating images that later inspired Morzke Shange to write "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is End" — Grahn's deep commitment to the development of women's self-awareness pushes her

Start Act — John Buckley

more than one occasion has looked over an irresponsible new-comer and said: "Oh, oh. There goes the neighborhood." But not this time.

It is true that immigrants frequently don't have the feel of the new country that goes with being a pioneer. Therefore, Summers blows it on Page One, Chapter One of his book. He's talking about John Kennedy's trip to Texas in November 1963: "The president knew he had to go. The horse's nest, a thousand miles away, had voted overwhelmingly for Richard Nixon in the last presidential election."

Wrong. In that election Kennedy had received 1.16 million votes in Texas, to Nixon's 1.12 million.

In the next paragraph Summers tells us the mayor of Dallas "had openly sympathized with the city's flourishing and furiously right-wing John Birch Society." That line ought to make Earle Cabell restless in his grave. The late Mayor Cabell was a fashionably conservative Democrat who abhorred the Birchers.

RIVER" WAS ROCKET, STUNTER, AND DISPLAYED from the catch by Judge Donald Hall in this pretentiously designed first volume. The book jacket blurb let me know that the poetry within was "extraordinary" and the poet was a "genuine discovery," whose "cumulative strength is grounded in the poet's sense of place." I could hardly wait.

There are some good lines, don't get me wrong. "Branches veiled the window and viceria fumed in my throat" caught my ear — or caught in my ear. "European Strange-ness" is a likable story poem told from an adolescent view. By the middle of the book, however, I'm putting up with palms of hands that taste oxygen and weep, which is a bit much what with all the leaping mullet. Dismal might beach walks, fogging and misting and steaming. Is what Salinger describes emphatically when into the shadow of my own heart is where she says she meant to go. Do not pass go, Wendy.

See POETS, 5E

Even a half-baked expert might not make it past page one. But that would be a mistake. Summers undertakes — and pulls off — a meticulously assembled book (including more than 75 pages of sources and notes).

This book scores its best points as an articulate, readable compendium of Kennedy assassination facts and remaining questions, in the perspective of 1980 — A choice book for the budding student of America's crime of the century.

Summers waits until the final pages of the last chapter to take a hefty swing at the role of the American press in reporting what really happened in the wake of that crime — the governmental misfeasance in the investigation of the murders of Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald. What this foreign observer says is correct. The "establishment" press in the United States was grossly derelict in its continuing failures to investigate

See KENNEDY, 5E

a gem (if you could stand to cut out pages you could have a collection of prints), but it also provides a frosty sort of social record. If two soldiers marching to war behind the plume of a very piquant *chapeau* is your idea of social comment — Michele Baird.



It is exactly what the title implies. A father of four grown children shares insights into family life he gained the hard way — from experience. This father is as open about sharing hopes and mistakes as success, which saves the book from being

Winds

Kennedy Continued from 4E

balancing small talk, then hit me that, except there were in their 40s professionals who had known the journey of our life. "lost from the straight I to dwell on the past. It rbody seemed excited w projects. just sold two hour-long adcasting Network at a ear. One of them, Night-d this winter by Peach-Jim Townsend has two hree Publishers. ered her biggie, "Fox's three generations of a and the first flashback wood indeed. They love it; head. prospects for being host vision network show was amorous of news set be-el comes through, and it an a whole new life for lly, it would take them for a while. about the evening was ed so young. And, instead ll hot to set sail again on f renewed adventure, of

return to innocence in ll wear the ring.

Reading

ensible "influences." despite triggering echoes ers and traditions, "Tor-ou have ever read before. involute, and how Wolfe hing alchemy, I leave you

life's prose demands close ur preconceptions about t of a fantasy quest, for a portion of its bounty to pers. The novel is beauti-ocatively — written, and

fully the intentional and inad-vertent coverup that took place in Washington and Dallas after the shooting.

In a separate 12-page summary of his book, written as sort of a news release, Summers puts much heavier stress on the negligence of the American press in its reporting of assassination-related events.

"For too long, the press in the United States has tried hard to suggest that the Kennedy assassination is a dead issue," Summers writes, "that Lee Oswald probably did shoot the president all on his own, and that few, any-way, now care one way or the other."

"Even at the beginning, hardly any of the powerful American newspapers deemed the Kennedy assassination worth persistent inquiry by top journalists."

Summers points out that the major news magazines and The New York Times formed their own views on the 1978 congressional probe of the Kennedy assassination, "long before their reporters could possibly have studied the monumental verbiage of the report and its accompanying volume of evidence."

Summers is right on the button in this disturbing analysis of one of the really bad reporting jobs in American newspaper history. The



John Kennedy

American newspaper establishment went soundly to sleep on a story it should have been investigating night and day after word flashed round the world from Park-land Hospital that the Presi-dent was dead. But from the beginning, reporters stood in the third-floor corridor of the Dallas police station and taunted Oswald, shouting emotionally at him, "Why did you kill the President?" — even before Oswald was ar-raigned.

Within hours after that, major newspapers that should have been digging let them-selves be cowed by the new president, Lyndon Johnson, who wanted no digging. Re-porters were turned away by the stony faces of J. Edgar Hoover, the CIA and the War-ren Commission.

In the end it was a story not so much of commission, but of omission.

#1 BESTSELLER
 "Bigger than 'Evergreen'...for readers who enjoy a long, gripping, romantic, heart-tugging story peopled by strong, believable characters."
 —John Barkham Reviews \$11.95
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 by BELVA PLAIN



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