

Robert Osborne

Rambling Reporter

Trouble in Toontown; Monroe, JFK deals set

Word has it that **Steven Spielberg** and the Disney gang aren't seeing eye to eye about the format for the "Roger Rabbit" sequel . . . Producer Bernie ("What About Bob?") Williams and Adona Prods. have plunked down six figures for the film rights to "Crypt 33, the Saga of Marilyn Monroe: The Final Word," to be published next spring by Carol Publishing/Birch Lane Press. It's a blazer by Adela Gregory and Milo Speriglio, researched over a six-year period, with a conclusion M.M. didn't die by her own hand but was murdered, even naming the name of the person who ordered her death, also identifying the names of the people who supposedly carried out the deed . . . Meanwhile, "JFK: The Last Dissenting Witness," written by Bill Sloan and Jean Hill and due out via Pelican, has also been snapped up for a screen version. Producer Craig Anderson has firmed it for a telefilm via Columbia TV in a deal packaged by Joel Gotler of the Metropolitan Agency . . . Marilyn and JFK, like Lizzie Borden, Elvis and a few others, seem destined to fascinate us forever. Maybe because we'll never know for sure happened to any of them during the third act . . .

Ken Kragen announced it on Peter Tilden's KABC Talkradio show: "The war is over" meaning performers Travis Tritt and Trisha Yearwood, both Kragen clients, have been booked for "The Tonight Show" in December . . . To jog your memory, it was on Tilden's show that Ken K. first went public about Helen Kushnick barring Tritt and Yearwood from Jay Leno's domain, a disclosure that was the real kicker that ultimately booted Kushnick out of the producer's chair at "Tonight" . . . By the way, even when he's not dispensing scoops, Tilden's show is one of the best reasons you'll find for turning on a radio. The guy's screwy, bright, unpredictable and a consistent ear pleaser.

Judy Ovitz, wife of Mike, caught "Conversations With My Father" at N.Y.'s Royale Theatre and was so impressed with Brando look-alike Robert Canaan she made a post-show visit backstage to suggest Canaan get in touch the next time he's in L.A. so she can introduce him to her superagent husband. Interesting footnote is that R.C. is actually the understudy for actor Tony Gillan, who's briefly out because of illness . . . Canaan, for the record, is the son of Lee Canaan, president of Canaan Communications Group Inc. . . . NBC is adding a special dedication "to the memory of Tony Perkins" on "In the Deep Woods," Tony's last acting appearance that airs Oct. 26. It was filmed last March, with T.P. co-starring with Rosanna Arquette, exec produced by Frederic Golchan and Len Hill . . . Publicist Milt Kahn, after years of beating drums for people working in front of the camera, is about to become a bantam Brando himself. He'll do a cameo newscaster in "The Skateboard Kid" with Bess Armstrong and Tim Busfield . . . Joe Sirola wrote out a six-figure check to the College of the Desert, near Palm Springs . . . Hal Kantor will emcee Sunday's doings at the Friars when the entire Monty Hall clan, including Monty's Tony Award-winning daughter Joanna Gleason, is being honored . . . Ginger Rogers was among those applauding, and loudly, when Mitzi Gaynor and her 13 changes of Bob Mackie gowns wowed 'em at Palm Springs' McCallum Theatre.

The authors conclude Monroe didn't die by her own hand but was murdered, even naming the name of the person who ordered her death.
