

'Case Closed' author writing book on Ray

By Marc Perrusquia
The Commercial Appeal

Author Gerald Posner said Friday he is under contract to write a book on the 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis.

Posner, whose critically acclaimed book *Case Closed* countered years of conspiracy theories surrounding the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, said he has a contract with Random House to produce a book on King's murder.

The development comes in the wake of a number of conspiracy claims by William F. Pepper, attorney for convicted assassin James Earl Ray.

Pepper alleged in a 1995 book that the civil rights leader was murdered in a sweeping conspiracy that included elements of the federal government, the Mafia, a former Memphis cafe owner, a produce dealer and a mysterious figure named Raoul.

Posner's entrance in the Ray controversy has been anticipated for weeks by conspiracy buffs who say Posner comes

into the King fray with a bias.

Posner maintained in his meticulously researched, 1993 best-selling book on the Kennedy murder that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone despite theories implicating everyone from the CIA to the Mafia, the Cuban government and a network of homosexuals.

But Posner may surprise his critics — he said he believes there might have been a conspiracy behind King's murder.

"I don't know yet what my conclusions are in the King case," said Posner, 42, of New York.

Reviewing the case two decades ago, Congress concluded in 1979 there was "a likelihood" of a conspiracy involving two St. Louis businessmen who placed a \$50,000 bounty on King's head.

Posner said he plans to visit Memphis in June but probably won't know until the end of the year when his book may be published.

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