

Dorothy Kilgallen, 52, Columnist And TV Panelist, Dies in Sleep

**Reporter of Broadway Gossip
and Caustic Commentator
Had Morning Radio Show**

Dorothy Kilgallen, the newspaper columnist and sharp-witted radio and television personality, died early yesterday in her five-story town house at 45 East 68th Street.

Miss Kilgallen, who was 52 years old, had appeared as a panelist Sunday night on the Columbia Broadcasting System show "What's My Line?" She correctly identified the occupation of one of the contestants, a woman who sold dynamite.

Miss Kilgallen then returned to her home and wrote her regular column, "The Voice of Broadway," and sent it by messenger to the editorial offices of The New York Journal-American.

In August, 1964, officials of the Warren Commission expressed distress that a Kilgallen column had contained testimony made before the commission by Jack L. Ruby, the convicted murderer of President Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald.

Miss Kilgallen wrote that she had obtained the testimony from "sources close to the Warren Commission in Washington."

She was found dead when her hairdresser arrived at 12:45 P.M. to keep an appointment.

The cause of death was not immediately made public. The office of the Chief Medical Examiner reported that Miss Kilgallen's body had been taken to the mortuary for an autopsy.

Miss Kilgallen's husband, Richard Kollmar, a former actor and producer, and their youngest child, Kerry Allen, 12, were asleep in other rooms when she died.

"Broadway Bulletin Board:" Miss Kilgallen's column in yesterday's Journal-American began: "City Hall reporters might ask Mayor Wagner if he and his charming bride, Barbara, are keeping a happy secret."

Characteristically, the remainder of the column dealt with the travails or achievements of such theatrical personalities as Brigitte Bardot, Harry Belafonte and Pier Angeli.

When the news of Miss Kilgallen's death was first reported, shortly after 3 P.M., she was appearing on a pretaped C.B.S. show, "To Tell the Truth."

Miss Kilgallen, a brown-haired woman of medium height, with a high forehead and small chin, dressed expensively and chose clothes that highlighted her fair complexion and slender figure. After her first appearance on television, she was reported to have broken into tears when told that she had not appeared attractive on the screen.

Followed Her Father

Miss Kilgallen, a hard-driving, often controversial newspaperwoman, left college at the



United Press International
Dorothy Kilgallen

age of 18 after one year, to follow the career of her father, James L. Kilgallen, a star reporter for the Hearst newspapers.

Besides presenting tidbits of gossip in the show world, she often reported major news events, sometimes attracting more attention than the principals.

In 1954, when Miss Kilgallen disagreed with the guilty verdict against Dr. Samuel Sheppard, the Cleveland osteopath accused in the bludgeoning of his wife, the Hearst editors ordered a Page 1 banner declaring: "Dorothy Kilgallen Shocked?"

Miss Kilgallen usually reacted philosophically when someone became angry over tart or biting remarks in her columns. On at least one occasion, however, an outburst of criticism hurt her deeply.

This followed her caustic comments on the clothing worn by Mrs. Nikita S. Khrushchev when she accompanied her husband, then the Soviet Premier, on a visit to the United States in 1959.

"The grisliness of her [Mrs. Khrushchev's] attire almost amounts to a demonstration of piety," she wrote. "It would be difficult to find clothes comparable to hers in the waiting room of a New York employment agency for domestic help; in this decadent capitalistic republic, applicants for jobs as laundresses, chambermaids and cooks are usually far more à la mode than Russia's First Lady."

"Her blue and blue-gray suit could be most charitably described as dismal," Miss Kilgallen continued. "It was just there, covering her like a homemade slipcover on a sofa."

Letters from outraged readers accused Miss Kilgallen of "ignorance," of "the worst possible taste" and of having set a "new low in journalism."

Describing the columnist's dismay over the criticism, a friend said: "It was the first time I've ever seen her crushed

—and she's taken plenty of kicks in the teeth."

Once described by a colleague as a "newspaperman in a \$500 dress," Miss Kilgallen always found time from her heavy schedule for her column and radio and television shows to appear frequently at opening nights on Broadway or to sip vodka and tonic at El Morocco or the Stork Club.

On one occasion in a nightclub, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor invited her to their table to question her about "What's My Line?" Miss Kilgallen, ever a keen observer, is said to have returned to her table with the discovery that the Windsors ate caviar with a spoon.

Dorothy Mae Kilgallen was born July 3, 1913, in Chicago, where her father was then making a name for himself as a newspaperman. Later, Jimmy Kilgallen's employment with the International News Service brought the family to New York.

Dorothy was graduated from Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn in 1930 and entered the College of New Rochelle that fall.

Got Byline as a Cub

At the end of her freshman year, Miss Kilgallen took what was to have been a summer job as a cub reporter with The New York Evening Journal. However, the sight of her first byline, over a story about a child in a hospital, changed her mind about returning to college.

By the time she was 20 her byline was familiar to the readers of The Journal, which was merged in 1937 with The American to become The Journal-American.

Miss Kilgallen won national and international recognition during her coverage of a round-the-world race by commercial flights in 1936.

Her 24 days for the trip was second to the 18 days of a Scripps-Howard reporter, Herbert Roslyn Ekins, but she finished first in acclaim and publicity.

The stories Miss Kilgallen cabled to The Journal were published under such front-page headlines as: "Dorothy Lands in Egypt; Ends Sixth Lap of Race; Baghdad Her Next Objective."

In 1937 she wrote a book about the exploit titled "Girl Around the World."

After a brief time in Hollywood reporting for The Journal-American (during which she appeared in a movie, "Winner Take All"), Miss Kilgallen returned to New York to start her column, "The Voice of Broadway."

Although she was invading what had been an exclusively male field, her column soon became a success and was syndicated.

In 1940, Miss Kilgallen was married to Richard Tompkins Kollmar, then acting on Broadway. The following year she entered radio with a "Voice of Broadway" series on C.B.S.

She became best known on radio, however, with a program she began in 1945 with her husband, "Breakfast With Dor-

othy and Dick." With the microphone on the table among the breakfast dishes, the couple chatted about family incidents, parties and plays in a quiet and intimate tone. The program was discontinued in 1963 because of the couple's "outside interests."

In 1949, Miss Kilgallen appeared on the first panel of "What's My Line?" now the second oldest show on television, after "The Ed Sullivan Show."

Miss Kilgallen's survivors are her parents and her husband; three children, Richard Jr., 24, Mrs. Larry Grossman, 22, and Kerry Alden, 12; A grandson, Alexis, 3, and a sister, Mrs. Eleanor Snaper.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete last night.