

Mary's Mosaic

The CIA conspiracy to murder John F. Kennedy, Mary Pinchot Meyer and their vision for world peace

Peter Janney

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Mary Pinchot Meyer is one of the footnotes to the Kennedy assassination. She married future CIA bigwig Cord Meyer in 1945 and their social circle in the 1950s included many of Washington's ruling elite. As far as it was then possible for a woman to be an insider, she was one. She was good-looking, talented and financially independent. After divorcing Meyer in 1958 she became a bit of a bohemian amongst the Wasps of Georgetown – a painter, a dooper and an LSD user. She might have lived a long and interesting life had she not become one of JFK's lovers and joined the list of those linked to the Dallas event who died a violent death. She was shot in Washington in 1964 while taking her daily walk along a canal towpath. The Washington police duly arrested the nearest available black male and tried to convict him of her death. Thanks to spectacularly sloppy police work and a very good defence lawyer, the frame failed.

Meyer surfaced in Timothy Leary's memoir *Flashbacks* with Leary's account of phone calls from Meyer talking of smoking dope with JFK in the White House and forming a kind of LSD conspiracy with some female friends, to turn on the powerful men of the Washington elite.¹ Meyer was also one of the people who knew enough about Washington and its secrets not to believe the Warren Commission's account of the murder of her lover. In 1964 she was the personification of a loose cannon for those trying to sell the crudely constructed fable created around the events in Dallas.

Meyer is a very interesting figure who was close to the centre of the power structure of the American empire. This book's author, Peter Janney, had known Meyer when he was a child; his father was a CIA officer and part of the same social

¹ As Jim DiEugenio pointed out, this sounds like Leary's fantasy of turning on the world. See his 'Beware: the Douglas/Janney/Simkin Silver Bullets' at <www.ctka.net/djm.html>.

circles in Washington. Janney appears ideally equipped to write this book; and as far as describing the social and political setting goes, it is very good. But I didn't buy the book for that (and I skimmed those sections). I bought it looking for new information on the deaths of Meyer and JFK.

Completing research begun by others, Janney has pretty well solved Meyer's death, identifying the shooter. No, he doesn't have evidence that would satisfy a court, but by the standards of investigations of fifty-year-old murders, he has produced a well-documented solution. Though I think it very likely that it was the CIA who organised the killing – who else? – his evidence that it was the Agency is less substantial; and for the same reason that his account of Kennedy's death is unconvincing: he relies on sources who are not reliable.

One is Robert D. Morrow, who had a minor role in the anti-Castro operations and wrote two books about the assassination which none of the JFK researchers have taken seriously.² Of Morrow, Janney writes on p. 313 that 'some of his claims have been questioned, even discredited'; he then immediately quotes Morrow on the death of Meyer. This will not do. If Morrow is unreliable in some areas – and he is³ – he is unreliable, period.

His second unreliable source is Gregory Douglas. A.k.a. Peter Stahl and other *nommes de guerre*, Douglas is perhaps the best known fabricator in the English-speaking historical world. He has produced at least four books – one on the

² If you Google 'Robert Morrow + JFK' you will find that a Robert Morrow is very active, putting out lots of material on the assassination. This is not the Robert D. Morrow to whom I am referring. Robert D. Morrow died in 1998.

³ Morrow's claims are destructively examined at <<http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/morrow.htm>>. At best Morrow knew some things and surmised others.

Kennedy assassination – which are accepted as fabrications.⁴ Janney is apparently aware of this. He refers to Douglas' 'history of shady dealings' and the fact that he is 'considered a pariah within the JFK research community'. (p. 353)

Douglas made contact with a retired CIA officer, Robert Crowley, who had been assistant deputy director for operations, and an acolyte of James Angleton. Crowley talked to Douglas on the phone – they never met – and eventually, says Douglas, Crowley gave him boxes of documents, including Crowley's account of the CIA's role in the assassination of JFK. Crowley – says Douglas – called this document his 'personal insurance policy'. This forms the core of Douglas' book, *Regicide*. Crowley died in 2000, providing a fabricator like Douglas with an opportunity: his real relationship with Crowley could be the basis of something bigger, the kernel of truth at the heart of all successful disinformation. In the first instance the 'transcripts' of some of the conversations with Crowley,⁵ and then the solution to the Dallas mystery.

A witness to the relationship between Douglas and the CIA officers exists. A retired FBI agent, Tom Kimmel, who knew Crowley was talking to Douglas, commented that he could not understand why the 'very introspective, very accomplished intelligence officer' Crowley 'embraced Stahl [Douglas] so unequivocally'. (p. 353) It might just have been that Douglas was skilled at flattering an old intelligence officer who had developed a bad case of flapping jaw in his dotage. But it might have been that Crowley saw Douglas as the vehicle for

4 I wrote about Douglas in the *Fortean Times* in 2006. See <www.forteanimes.com/strangedays/conspiracycorner/371/the_conspiracy_fabricator.html>; and David Irving has written about Douglas. See <www.fpp.co.uk/docs/Irving/RadDi/2002/100602.html>. As far as I can tell, no orthodox academic historians have bothered with Douglas. Gitta Sereny exposed Douglas the fabricator in 'Spin time for Hitler', in *The Observer* 21 April 1996. This is reproduced at <www.jfklancerforum.com/dc/dcboard.php?az=show_topic&forum=3&topic_id=178&mode=full#179>

5 Some of these are on-line at <www.fourwinds10.net/siterun_data/government/homeland_security_patriot_act_fema/news.php?q=1265732241>. They are very interesting indeed but, without evidence of the recordings, entirely incredible.

a nice piece of disinformation – a bad CIA–killed–JFK theory which would fall apart on examination, thus discrediting other CIA–dunnit theories – and gave it to Douglas.

Janney's account of Douglas' conversations with Crowley is sort of qualified, with several uses of 'allegedly'. Janney even notes that none of the hard evidence – in this case the recordings of the phone conversations with Crowley, let alone the actual Crowley 'insurance policy' document (though why would we believe it to be genuine, if it appeared?) – has been forthcoming. Nonetheless, having established that Douglas is not to be relied upon, Janney presents Douglas' version of Crowley's comments on the Kennedy and Meyer murders (CIA-dunnit) at face value. This will not do.

How does Janney square this circle? First, he tell us that the transcript of the alleged (Janney's word) phone conversations with Crowley contained 'specific details about Mary and Cord Meyer that Douglas, in my opinion, could never have fabricated.' (p. 354) Which merely tells us that Janney hasn't looked at Douglas very closely; for Douglas is a brilliant faker. More importantly, he thinks he has had the documents' veracity confirmed.

There are two sets of Crowley documents in this story. One apparently went to Douglas; but an earlier set went to a journalist and author on intelligence matters called Joe Trento. When Trento read Douglas' book *Regicide* he saw that it apparently contained documents from Crowley. Trento wrote to Douglas telling him that as he, Trento, was the literary executor of Crowley's estate, he wanted the documents back. Douglas told him to get lost and there it ended. Janney prints this exchange between Trento and Douglas and concludes that 'Joe Trento has inadvertently confirmed that the Crowley documents Douglas had in his possession were, indeed, legitimate'.(p. 360) Has he? At best Trento has confirmed merely that the documents appeared to have come from Crowley. And since *Regicide* has been shown to be bogus,⁶

⁶ See Bill Kelly's comments at <<http://educationforum.ipbhost.com/index.php?showtopic=9791>> And Daniel Brandt's analysis done in 2000 of the 'CIA names' in the list apparently given to Douglas by Crowley at <<http://cryptome.org/cia-namebase.htm>>.

does it matter whether it was Crowley or Douglas who faked the documents upon which it was based?

As for the Meyer/JFK 'vision for world peace' in the book's subtitle, of that there is almost no evidence. The best that can be established is that JFK wanted to cool the Cold War and spend less of America's taxes on the Pentagon and its satellite corporations. Beyond that all we have are wisps of stuff, chiefly Timothy Leary's account of what Meyer said to him about JFK, upon which we cannot rely.⁷

So, in the end what we have is an interesting account of the death of Mary Meyer, a portrait of the Cold War *milieu* of the time and the Washington elite, with a section about Dallas tacked on which tells us almost nothing which is new and reliable.⁸ Having said that, two JFK researchers with infinitely more knowledge of these events than I, Douglas Horne, who worked for the Assassination Archives Review Board, and Professor David Mantik give this rave reviews on Amazon.com.

Robin Ramsay

⁷ Jim DiEugenio makes short work of Leary's 'memories' of what Meyer said to him in an essay in *The Assassinations*, edited by Jim DiEugenio and Lisa Pease, (Feral House, 2003). See pp. 341-342.

⁸ There is a snippet of new evidence of the Zapruder film being altered.