

*The Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy:
Crime, Conspiracy and Cover-Up – A New Investigation*

Tim Tate and Brad Johnson

London: Thistle Publishing, 2018, £11.99 (p/b)

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The assassination of RFK has received infinitely less attention than that of his brother. This isn't surprising as he wasn't the president. He was just a politician on the make and was widely disliked, even within his own party. Robert Kennedy may have had some kind of radicalising journey in the years after Dallas, but to many he was still the hatchet man on his older brother's election campaigns. But more than that, the suggestion that there was a conspiracy – a second shooter – just seemed absurd. Sirhan Sirhan had emptied his Saturday night special at Robert in full view of dozens of people and had been seized with the (literally) smoking gun in his hand. Case closed.

This certainty should have crumbled when the autopsy by LA coroner Thomas Noguchi found that the fatal head wound had been fired from a couple of inches behind RFK's head. But none of the many eye-witnesses saw Sirhan anywhere but in front of him. Instead of reopening the case, Noguchi's employers tried (but failed) to fire him and the cover-up began.

Noguchi's autopsy also told us where the second shooter would be: behind Kennedy. And only one person had been there: Thane Cesar, a temporary security guard. In effect, the crime was solved by the autopsy: Cesar must have shot RFK.¹ This much has been known since the early 1970s. What we don't know is who employed Cesar.

The authors of this new book are British and American authors/journalists/TV producers² who have separately produced documentaries on the case showing that there was more than one shooter. The book presents all the extant evidence on the existence of the second shooter, the details of the

¹ The last book on the case I read, Dan Moldea's *The Killing of Robert F. Kennedy*, was reviewed in *Lobster* 36 (20 years ago!). In that I noted that after building a very convincing case for a second shooter, Moldea interviewed Thane Cesar, who agreed to be polygraphed – and passed. Solely on the dubious basis of the polygraph result Moldea – absurdly – concluded that, despite all the evidence of conspiracy he had laid out in the first four-fifths of the book, Sirhan Sirhan did do it.

² Biographical details on the authors and some information about the book are at <<https://tinyurl.com/y8h645rg>> or <<http://www.andrewnownie.co.uk/authors/tim-tate/books/the-assassination-of-robert-f-kennedy-crime-conspiracy-and-cover-up-a-new-investigation>>.

cover-up by the LAPD and assorted city officials and politicians and the repeated attempts to get the Sirhan case reopened.

As for who was behind it, Tate and Johnson have got closer than anyone else to date. One of the central questions has been the identity of the 'girl in the polka dot dress' who was with Sirhan Sirhan immediately before the shooting and was seen running away from the scene, shouting 'We shot Kennedy'. The authors have identified her, they think, after Paul Schrade,³ was contacted by her family after her death. Tate and Johnson conclude the chapter on the story of the woman concerned with the startling information that according to her son, his late father said he had worked for the CIA and had been involved with mind control projects. Which brings us back to where we were circa 1970 with the discovery by various shrinks that Sirhan was susceptible to hypnosis and appeared to have post-hypnotic blocs which prevented him from remembering much of what had happened before and during the shooting.

This is a very good book, and massively documented (800 footnotes). Recommended.

³ Schrade had been a union official and had worked with Robert Kennedy. He was present at the shooting, was shot in the head, never believed the Sirhan-dunit story and became a public dissenter.