

BUILDING WEALTH IN CHANGING TIMES



---

# The Solari Report

---

NOVEMBER 21, 2013

## **The Presidency & Assassination of John F. Kennedy** with Peter Janney



Photo Credit: [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org)



# The Presidency & Assassination of John F. Kennedy

November 21, 2013

---

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Today is November 19<sup>th</sup>. We're recording for The Solari Report on November 21<sup>st</sup>. It is my great pleasure to welcome to The Solari Report an author who has written a book, which you've read the review on the blog. It's *Mary's Mosaic* and we're welcoming Peter Janney. I will say that not only is this one of the finest books I've read on the Kennedy administration and the death of the president and associates around him, but it's one of the finest books I've read on American history. I have to say, I'd put it in my top ten favorite reads of all time.

So a year ago when I reviewed *Mary's Mosaic* on the blog I asked Peter if he would join us on this very important week, which is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kennedy assassination, and he said yes, to our great delight. So, Peter, it's my pleasure to welcome you to The Solari Report. Thank you for joining us and thank you for everything you've done with this unbelievable masterpiece.

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, Catherine, that's very kind of you, and thank you so much for having me. It indeed was and has been and continues to be a labor of love, but one that is I think demonstrably important as we look forward as a country, as a people in terms of what's taking place in the United States today. I think shows like yours really give your listeners an opportunity to come to terms with the real truth of what has taken place in American history, and I can think of nothing more valuable.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, if you could, describe your background because I don't think you ever planned on being an historian. So describe yourself, your background, and how you came to write *Mary's Mosaic*.



**PETER JANNEY:** Well, you're absolutely right. Even though I was intensely fascinated by the study of history, that wasn't my major in college. I was actually, technically a psychology major, but I kept gravitating towards history, mainly because when I was an undergraduate at Princeton I just discovered some incredible teachers. One of whom was Professor Martin Duberman, who is a very well-known historian. He actually left Princeton, went to CCNY, and he's on emeritus status there now. He had a profound impact on me and really encouraged me in a number of ways. That was certainly one part of it.

I think your listeners should also know I grew up in the belly of the beast, in Washington, DC. My father was a career CIA officer, recruited by Allen Dulles, none other, right after the CIA's inception in 1948. So I grew up with a number of other, what I called, CIA brats. The children of people like James Angleton, Cord Meyer, Tracy Barnes, and Desmond Fitzgerald – all the really top-flight, top-level CIA officers were sort of within my social milieu. It was here that I came to know the family of Mary and Cord Meyer. My mother had actually gone to college with Mary Pinchot Meyer at Vassar in the class of 1942. Of course my father and Cord Meyer were very close friends and CIA officers together.

So, at a very early age we were socializing as families, and I became best friends with the middle Meyer child, Michael Meyer. Unfortunately he was killed: he was hit by a car when we were both nine years old. It was a very traumatic event for me in terms of losing my best friend. Ironically it really wasn't my parents who were able to give me the kind of consolation that I needed with this event. It was Michael's mother, Mary Meyer. I found my way toward her more and more because there was just an atmosphere about her that I intuited that understood what I was going through. She was someone who I had always been able to feel very close to to begin with. She was like no other adult that I can remember in my parents' generation, and she was also one of the most beautiful women of an entire generation.

So not only did she help me with my grief over the loss of Michael, but she and I became friends. When she was killed in the fall of 1964 I was



away at boarding school. I did not even know that this had taken place until I came back for Thanksgiving. It was at the night before Thanksgiving in the fall of 1964 that her death was revealed to me at the dinner table. This started a chain reaction inside of me. I did not know what was going on. I knew something was up. It was very, very agonizing to me. I had a very bad night that night, all of which I talk about in the book and I don't want to ruin it for your readers who may want to not lose sight of this. So that is really the story in a nutshell.

**“I did not even know that this had taken place until I came back for Thanksgiving. It was at the night before Thanksgiving in the fall of 1964 that her death was revealed to me at the dinner table.”**

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, talk about whom Mary Meyer was and the importance of her role in the Kennedy administration. Talk about Mary not just as a personal friend and family friend, but also as really somebody who's playing a role in writing history.

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, you know, I think this role for Mary was not something that of course she had prepared for. She and Jack Kennedy met in the winter of 1935 at a prep school dance when she was only 15 years old. Kennedy laid eyes on her at this dance (she was actually someone else's date) and he started cutting in on the dance floor. He was obviously very, very taken with her. She was not particularly taken with him. This wasn't the kind of young man that she was typically interested in. She was already a very highly developed person for her age. She came from a very aristocratic, progressive family. She was encouraged to foster her own independence intellectually, emotionally, socially.

So she got the attention of Jack Kennedy that night, and the two did go on to, in a sense, cross paths, but there was never really any romance. That happened much, much later, in 1960. But they did know of each other. In fact they were next-door neighbors for a period of time right outside of Washington when Jack and Jackie lived in the house next door in McLean, Virginia. So they knew each other socially but it wasn't until after her divorce from Cord Meyer that Mary and Jack started



seeing each other. That really takes us into a whole dimension of the story in the book as to what actually happened.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** So Mary and Jack become lovers and confidantes, and to me, *Mary's Mosaic* and your work is one of the best descriptions of the different policy issues that were building the tension in the Kennedy administration. So you describe Mary's role in serving as a confidante to the president as he's really breaking ranks with the machinery, if you will. Is that a fair way to describe it?

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, and that initially comes gradually. Starting in April of 1961 after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Kennedy becomes aware of the fact that he's been manipulated, that the CIA and the Pentagon had tried to manipulate him to be drawn into this conflict so that they could invade Cuba and overthrow Castro. He didn't go along with it of course, and it just infuriated these people that they could not manipulate him and influence him like they had done with President Eisenhower, and even with President Truman to some degree.

So Jack starts to have an awakening as to what he's really up against in terms of being the kind of president that he wants to explore being. Mary of course, you know, is very hip to what the CIA is about. She's been with this guy Cord Meyer, who was an avowed pacifist when he came out of World War II. He went around preaching the country through this organization called the United World Federalist as to the importance of things like the United Nations or having some kind of organization like the United Nations to keep World War III from happening. Of course that didn't happen, and what did happen is that Cord really kind of fell off the wagon. He started drinking a lot. He got very disenchanted, and lo and behold, his father gets him an interview with Allen Dulles and Allen Dulles seduces him into the CIA. This becomes just a total anathema to Mary. It really disrupts the vision she had for what their partnership would be like. So during the 1950s they become increasingly alienated from one another, and this is in the wake of having been the post-World War II glamor couple.

So by the time Mary is with Jack in the early 1960s, she already has a





pretty clear understanding of what the CIA is up to, and I think she's trying to tell him, not that he doesn't have some idea. I think she gets convincing as to what he's really up against.

Now of course the big test, the big crucible comes the following year in the fall of 1962 when we have the Cuban missile crisis. This is arguably the most dangerous moment in all of human history. Very few people understand how literally close we came to having a nuclear holocaust. It's doubtful that you and I would be having this conversation right now had that taken place. But that event in the fall of 1962, I think, scared the living hell out of a lot of people, but certainly –

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** – out of President Kennedy, and Premier Khrushchev. This is when the two of them, who had been already communicating secretly with letters and going through other channels because they didn't want other people in their government knowing what's going on. These two were having similar problems on both sides. It was after this event, the Cuban missile crisis, that they really came together and decided that, "We can't go on like this. This Cold War mentality is going to take us all down."

So there's real stepping away and opening, and I think this is where Mary is again particularly helpful to Jack in helping him see that the Cold War mentality is a dead-end street. It's no longer viable to walk that trajectory. She encourages him to turn away toward world peace initiatives, which he does. Of course that becomes readily apparent at his American University commencement address in June 1963, and this is where he begins to announce to the world what his presidency is really going to be about.

Of course all the while this is increasingly infuriating to the national security apparatus. They realize at this point that they can no longer control him, and the writing is on the wall. He's creating this Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty behind their backs. He's communicating with Castro secretly, behind their backs, because he wants a reproshma with



Cuba and Castro. This is going on in the fall of '63. He has drawn up plans to end the Vietnam War. His National Security Action Memo 263, which he wrote and signed in the fall of '63, called for bringing 1,000 soldiers out of Vietnam by the end of that year and the rest out by the end of 1965.

So JFK is already on a completely new trajectory. It's at this point that I think Mary has really been instrumental in becoming the kind of ally, not only as a person, Catherine, but as a woman. I maintain that his relationship with Mary Meyer was really for Jack what I call a relationship of redemption. This is where he had an opportunity to be with a woman like no other woman in his life, and of course we all who have studied the life of Jack Kennedy know that he had some serious intimacy issues.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** In today's parlance he would be labeled a sex addict. He was really I think quite maimed emotionally in certain ways. I think his relationship with Mary was really part of a healing for him. It was no accident that Jack told his chief assistant, Kenny O'Donnell, that fall in 1963 that when he got out of the White House he really wanted to divorce Jackie so that he could be with Mary. So, I do think that this was a serious, serious relationship for both of them, and had he lived they would have made a real stab at it in terms of becoming a partnership and living together.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, you can really tell from their communication and what was happening that they were partners along with a group of people because I think there were many people in that administration who really saw themselves as people who were about making a serious contribution to the world. Of course the chief one being moving out of a war machine into both a way of being and an economy that was based in peace and cooperation.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.



**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** This was really a vision. This was a dream, and going into space was part of it. It's very hard to describe to people who weren't there at that point in time how as a culture we really thought of ourselves as people who did important things. No one was about making money. We were about making an important contribution to mankind, and we really thought –

**“No one was about making money. We were about making an important contribution to mankind...”**

**PETER JANNEY:** That's right.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** – It could be. It was through the many fascinations of that decade (both the President and his brothers and Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and of course all the people covered around the cover-up) that somehow America got deeply afraid and went into this mode of making money instead of dreaming and making important contributions. So it was an enormous cultural turn, and one of the things I love about *Mary's Mosaic* is you're back in the middle of Camelot and you still believe that it's all possible. It's possible to build a whole new vision of the world and we have the resources and the technology to do it, and you can feel the power of that. I often have people come to me and they say, “Oh, well, the reason Kennedy was killed was because of this,” and there are about 20 different ‘this's. What you realize was this was the man who was shifting the model. And he was –

**PETER JANNEY:** That's right. He was shifting the paradigm; that's absolutely correct. What he didn't see and nor did she is that the rise of the military industrial intelligence complex had become so pervasive underground and had such force that I think to one degree or another people were caught off-guard that they had the kind of power that they did where they could attempt to pull something off like the Kennedy assassination. Remember, the CIA was already successful in the 1950s overthrowing governments, many of them democratically elected. This was one of Allen Dulles' and his brother John Foster Dulles' fortes. If you're not going to be part of our capitalist economy and welcome the US economic needs in your country, you're going to be an enemy.





These two brothers, I think really, people underestimated them, what they were really up to.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right. Well, Kennedy was the last president who believed he was president.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** John F. Kennedy really believed he was president, and one of the things that comes out in the book. He knows he's subject to all sorts of political forces, both economic and geopolitical. But he's moving as the president to lead the country in a new direction, and he's bumping into the model, and the pro-centralization team jumped out and bit hard. You often saw that during that period. I grew up in Philadelphia and you saw it there, too, where people, Kennedy and Mary being two of them, thought they were above the assassination list. In other words they still believed they had personal power and that that couldn't be done to them. What we see in your book is the slow realization and dawning throughout the Washington social world that no one is above that and this black budget world, the covert world is rearing up and doing in the United States what it has been doing around the globe.

**PETER JANNEY:** I think that's very well put. I'm reminded to some degree of what happened at the end of 1987, at the end of Iran Contra Affair, when Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii made the following statement at the end of the Congressional hearings, and this an exact quote of what he said. I quote, "There exists a shadowy government with its own Air Force, its own Navy, its own fundraising mechanism, and the ability to pursue its own ideas of the national interest free from all checks and balances and free from the law itself."

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** One of the things I've always wished I could do is to go back in a time machine, give a truth serum to everybody on the shadow government side, and say, "Why did you think you had to do what you had to do? Why did you?" Because what you've got is a group of people who are deeply risk-averse and don't think the Kennedy way is going to



work and don't think they're going to end up on top if we go down that road.

**PETER JANNEY:** Right.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** I've always wanted to give them the chance to tell their side of the story, because I think we could learn a lot from it. Who knows what they might say? But clearly –

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, I think that they were caught up in this dichotomy. It's like, "Look, either we're going to rule the world or the Russians are. We can't share the leadership about this."

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right, right.

**PETER JANNEY:** Much of the fear around Russia had been manufactured, largely by the CIA in the 1950s and early 1960s. So, one of the interesting things about JFK's commencement speech in 1963 is that he really calls on his audience to manufacture their empathy towards Russia. Look at them with the kind of compassion with what they have had to endure, the kind of suffering that this country has gone through, through World War I, World War II, the massive losses that they took. He's asking people, "Look, if you really want world peace, we're all going to have to, in a sense, reexamine our attitudes toward peace." Frankly, I could never say enough about this, because there has been no other presidential address in history that has gone into this dimension and asked the peoples of the world to participate together in the most important topic that could face any of us: the province of world peace.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right after I put up the book review on *Mary's Mosaic* I went back and got the video of that speech at American University and put it up on the blog, because it's so amazing. When you listen to it, it's such an amazing and dramatic turn of events for a president of the United States to say what he says. It's quite startling.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes. It's just a fascinating event. A number of people have asked me, "Do you think Mary's influence on President Kennedy was



such that the two of them actually did have some kind of hallucinogenic exploration before this event took place?” It turns out that there is a certain amount of evidence that I brought to bear in the book where if this event did happen, and I really am persuaded that it did, that the two of them did have a mild hallucinogenic journey together in May of ’63. It took place in Georgetown at a particular house; it wasn’t in the White House. By that point Jack was well on his way, but this may have pushed a little bit further in terms of really just acknowledging the sense of universal, cosmic consciousness or whatever you want to call it –

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Sure.

**PETER JANNEY:** – that an experience like this can provoke. So there are a number of instances in the commencement speech where it really is kind of a spiritual calling to people, saying, “Look, we all care about the future our children. We all breathe the same air. We have to come together, united as a people of the world, or there’s just going to be increased, prolonged suffering into eternity. We can change that now. If you want to really have a new world, we can do that now because this is where I want to go.”

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** It’s amazing, because over the years as you watched more and more people be assassinated and more and more people be shunted aside, you kind of feel like the violent and mediocre are sort of taking out everybody who has charisma and confidence.

**PETER JANNEY:** Right.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** You feel that in the book because we’re basically talking about all the kids who couldn’t get dates in high school shooting and killing everybody who could.

**PETER JANNEY:** Right. That’s right. That’s a good way to put it.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** One person came to me and said, “You know that Kennedy had cancelled the sex slave privileges. He didn’t think the taxpayers should be paying for it and his attitude was he could get his



own sex, thank you very much, and it infuriated Dulles.” Now I have no idea if that story is true, but it just completely fit with everything you were watching. And you are. You’re talking about a culture of people who come at life very fearfully and in a state of insecurity, and by one way or another they’re removing the most talented and gifted from the leadership, and moving –

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, and that is profoundly tragic.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** That happened with his brother, it happened with Martin Luther King, and to one degree or another with Malcolm X. These are the people who really could have had a substantial impact on history. When you really examine what these people were doing, you understand how the forces of darkness were out to squash them.

**“When you really examine what these people were doing, you understand how the forces of darkness were out to squash them.”**

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right. One of the great tragedies in the American life is we’re not allowed to have great leaders. What we have is we have poodles who are on leashes, but –

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** – greatness has gone out of the civic and political leadership and life. There’s a very deep hunger in the body politic for that kind of greatness. In *Mary’s Mosaic* it takes you back and you remember, ‘oh, I remember what that was like.’ I remember when I looked at my leaders and I said, “Now there is a great human being who inspires me to want to be better.” That was the thing. They inspired you to want to be better.

**PETER JANNEY:** Right.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, let’s talk a little bit about what happened to Mary. Kennedy is killed in Dallas, of course, and you know this is the 50<sup>th</sup>



anniversary this week. Kennedy is killed in Dallas. We have behind the scenes literally a coup d'état and we end up with more people in Vietnam, the whole machine defends itself, and the pro-centralization is back. What happens to Mary? I know you don't want to give away the book, but I want to get into the implications of what goes on in Washington in that time, so maybe if you could give us a little tidbit.

**PETER JANNEY:** Okay. Well, I think of course Mary is just traumatized and shocked by this event. I think it really upends her. As I try and point out in the book, there's nothing more painful than a parent losing a child, which she had to do in 1956. But the fact that she has now lost Jack and with that she has witnessed the destruction of all the work that they had done together, it was devastating. To her credit –

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, if –

**PETER JANNEY:** Go ahead.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Interestingly enough she was in a unique position to understand the full ramifications of what this meant for America. In other words, she had been inside the beast, and if the beast was willing to assert this kind of power, she understood what was coming and what it meant in a way that very few people would be able to understand.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes. That's very well put. She takes it upon herself at that point as she struggles each day to console herself, to keep feeding her work life, to keep her fragile equilibrium alive and well, she wants to know what really took place. How in God's name could this have happened? So she does have certain access within Washington. She's very socially well-known, very respected, very well thought of. She goes and talks to her friend and fellow artist William Walton who of course is going through his own version of this. He tells her to throw herself into her work like he's doing, and she complains that she doesn't think Bobby is doing enough. Walton says, "Well, he is, and he's going to try and get elected president, but it probably isn't going to happen until 1968, and so we've just got to make do here."



So Mary decides that she's going to try and put the pieces together. She's going to try and come to terms with whatever mosaic she can of what took place. Clearly one of the people that she did talk to was Kenny O'Donnell. As you read what Kenny O'Donnell told Tip O'Neill in Tip O'Neill's book, they were riding in the car right behind the president, and of course basically says, "Look, we drove into an ambush. The shots that were really killing Kennedy came from the right and the front of the motorcade, not from behind where the Texas School Book Depository was." But of course the two of them will not go over the heads of the FBI and stick to their story. So that gets buried as well. But it's clear that I think Kenny O'Donnell confided in Mary that there was certainly more than one shooter, probably two or three, and it was –

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** There was a triangulation.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, there was. I think it's very clear there was triangulated gunfire and that they were driving into an ambush. Then Mary is also talking to people. She begins serious diary writing again. All through 1964 as she's trying to just save herself and keep it together, she is painting a picture, so to speak, of what exactly had happened.

Of course when the Warren Commission comes out in September of '64 it just really throws her. She is just utterly outraged. Whatever denial she had still been in, the fact that there's a second cover-up going on to cover up what actually happened in Dallas in the media, throughout the culture, becomes impossible for her not to see. It's at this point that I think she decides that she's going to go public, that she is going to come out and tell the world who she is, who she was in terms of her relationship with the president, as well as what she believes she has discovered, and it's going to in a sense end up right at the front and back door of the Central Intelligence Agency.

They're already monitoring her. They know she's not a happy camper. It's my contention based on pretty good circumstantial evidence that they made the decision to terminate her, and that Cord Meyer, her ex-husband was in on that. Certainly James Jesus Angleton was





orchestrating this particular assassination, and it's just one of the things that they realized they had to do if they were going to keep a lid on this, because the Warren Commission is barely three weeks old. It's already having an initial bumpy ride, although most people are willing to be drawn into this illusion. They have her under surveillance. They know what her daily routine is. They know after every morning she goes to her studio to paint. She takes long walks out on the C&O Canal towpath. In my opinion this is where they begin to set up the plan to kill her on the towpath and make it look like it was just some kind of random act of violence.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** It's hard to say my favorite because there are so many favorite parts of *Mary's Mosaic*. But one of my favorite parts (just because I had so many truly despicable experiences with the Washington folks when I worked in Washington) was the story of the *Washington Post's* role in helping to essentially cover up Mary's assassination and the framing of an innocent bystander for her death. Maybe you could talk a little bit about that, because I think what it brings out, Peter, is you get a sense of the extraordinary amount of betrayals that ripple through the place when these kinds of things happen, and the extent of the corruption. The corruption is not just within the intelligence agencies. It ends up spreading throughout the society.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, and that's totally true. One of the biggest transgressions of the CIA in the 1950s and '60s was its infiltration of the media. They really wormed their way into placing people in various media positions, not only on the *Washington Post*, but *The New York Times*, and the television world. In my opinion this goes on to this very day in terms of how the national security apparatus controls the media. For instance, you just don't see anyone talking about the evidence that has come out in the last 50 years with regard to JFK's assassination and how it really points to a very pervasive conspiracy. You didn't see that on 9/11. You have over 2,000 licensed structural engineers and registered architects now going on record to one degree or another and saying that the 9/11 buildings were not brought down by plane crashes; they were brought down by controlled demolition. But the media will not touch a story like this and take it seriously, even though the factual evidence is there to support this.



So this kind of media corruption has really destroyed the backbone of our democracy, because if we don't have a free press, we don't really know what the truth is and we can't get at the truth. That's being kept from us, as is the truth of really what has happened in our country. The biggest casualty of the Cold War era in my opinion is that we have lost the truth. We don't know so many things that were taking place.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** And so –

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, no, I do have to say in defense of the people in the media, I worked with a lot of really great journalists when I was in Washington. I think they weren't corrupt but they were struggling in an environment where, if they went too far, they literally could lose their lives. It was a very dangerous situation.

**PETER JANNEY:** Exactly.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** I've seen some great journalists lose their positions and have to go reinvent their careers. There are many heroes in that story, and it's a –

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** This is not because they're just paid off. This is because they're worried about the safety of their kids. So this is really dangerous.

**PETER JANNEY:** That's right.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Yes, very dangerous for them.

**PETER JANNEY:** That's exactly right. Back around the Kennedy assassination, one of the things that happened in Washington was in August of 1963.

**“The biggest casualty of the Cold War era in my opinion is that we have lost the truth. We don't know so many things that were taking place.”**



Philip Graham was the owner and the executive editor of the *Washington Post*. He was married to Katherine Graham. He allegedly committed suicide. He had had some mental health problems. He had been in a kind of bipolar kind of situation.

The other thing that was taking place is that he had really turned cool on the CIA. He had been a champion of the agency back in the 1950s until he realized what was taking place. The combination of his mental “instability” and his turning away from being the kind of staunch supporter of the CIA that he had been, really set up a big problem for them. Because remember, by August of '63 the decision has already been made to take JFK out. It's just a question of when and where and how soon.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right, right.

**PETER JANNEY:** The biggest thing that they needed to do this successfully was to be able to control the story that came out afterwards. If they had someone like Philip Graham who was not on board, this could've been a huge, huge problem for him.

Now it turns out that Philip Graham was also really trying to wrest control away of the *Post* from Katherine Graham, his wife, who he planned to divorce. The paper literally came out of Katherine's family, the Eugene Meyers family (not related to Mary Pinchot Meyer). She wasn't about to let Phil Graham walk off with the crown jewel of that family. So as I try to point out in my book, I think Mrs. Graham made a Faustian deal with the devil and got some help to get rid of Phil Graham to make it look like it was a suicide, when in fact I do not think that it was.

Now when you juxtapose that with the fact that Philip Graham and Mary Meyer were kind of friends – Phil Graham I think was interested in LSD, as Mary Meyer was in the late 1950s, early '60s, because she was an artist. This was a big time thing going on in Hollywood, for people in the avant-garde art world to sort of extend the boundaries of their consciousness. People like Carey Grant, Andre Previn: a lot of big time



Hollywood notables were into this method under controlled clinical circumstances to see how it could help them be more effective people. Mary Meyer was a seeker, and she was very, very much interested in this. There was a time where Phil Graham thought it might be helpful to her, and possibly even Katherine Graham might've thought this could've been helpful for Phil.

So without ruining it for your listeners here, because I want them to really get into the whole dynamic of this story, I believe Phil Graham was taken out of the picture. It was made to look like suicide, which left Mary even more vulnerable, because she had no powerful media ally as she would've, had Phil Graham been alive at that time.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right, and the thing that most struck me was the story of the editor or the gentleman who becomes the editor who's married to Mary's sister. Isn't that correct?

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, that's Benjamin Bradlee, although he was not the editor at that time. At that time Ben was still working for *Newsweek*. But it is very curious that a year later, by July 1965, Katherine Graham has already encircled him and brought him back to the *Post*, where he is given the job to become deputy managing editor. This is in the wake of Mary Meyer's murder. I think he started that job in October of '65; the trial was over in July of '65. Of course Ben Bradlee, on the day of Mary's murder, is contacted by none other than my father. So he writes about that in his book, in his 1995 memoir, and I don't think Ben was really aware of what was taking place at that particular moment, how he was being used as an asset. I think this really was a highly compartmentalized operation.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** The assassination of Mary Meyer, and they were controlling every bit of the actual murder and what took place afterwards. Of course it's my father who calls Ben Bradlee within 90 minutes after the actual murder takes place and comes up with some bogus story about, "Ben, I was listening to the radio and apparently a woman's been killed down on



the towpath, and by the sound of the description it could be Mary. Do you know where Mary is right now?” That sends Bradlee into being quite frantic, and he rushes home, and several hours later the police show up at his doorstep saying that they believe they may have his sister-in-law in the morgue, and would he come down and identify her body.

So again, without going too far, this is how delicately intricate the plot is in terms of how the CIA manages it. I didn't actually put all the pieces of this together until I was writing the book, which I go into, about what my own father's involvement was in terminating Mary Meyer's life. It's an astounding story.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** One of my favorite descriptions is when you describe this dawning on you, where all these events and this corruption is going on in the flow of history and people you know, but suddenly it becomes intimate. You start to see yourself in the flow of it and you face what's going on at a very intimate level, and that's a very unusual step that many people never take. It's one I had to live through in my own sort of experience in Washington. I know what an amazing experience – I call it coming clean, but you describe your coming clean process and seeing the intimacy of both good and evil as it flows throughout our own intimate life. It's extraordinary. That's why I call it the hero's journey. Your authorship is the hero's journey because you live through it as you're writing the book and you write about it.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, and you know, Catherine, it was an exciting time for me, but it was also terribly, terribly painful. There was a point where I had to stop working on the book for a couple of months and I intentionally put myself back into psychotherapy, because I realized I could not sit on this anymore. I had to find a way to process all of what was coming up and what I had discovered, because it was bigger than I was. That's the way it felt. If I was going to get a handle on it, I had to find a way to get my arms around it so that I could begin to manage what was taking place.

It's a wonderful testament to the province of mental health and mental health services. Being a clinical psychologist myself, it certainly wasn't



my first experience in being in psychotherapy. But boy, if there was ever a moment in someone's life or in my life when this could be just incredibly helpful, this was it. I was very, very –

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** You needed somebody to talk to.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, exactly, in a big way. Someone who could really understand the enormity of what I was going through, because that was the only way I was going to be able to contain the level of complexity and intensity of what I was discovering. I had to write about it, and I had to write about it in such a way that it didn't take away in a large measure from the focus of the book, but that the reader needed to understand for the sake of truth how the author was able to come into relationship with this. To do it in such a way that really I think in the service of both dimensions it ends up being a more impactful book for the reader in terms of establishing a larger credibility of the entire story. I started this project in 1976, but it really wasn't until 2003 where I made a number of deliberate decisions to really take this on with the understanding that I was going to finish it. Finishing it meaning to make sure that there was the kind of researched book necessary in a scholarly fashion that could really bring this story to light.

So I had done quite a bit of research before 2003, but for about ten years before the book came out – nine years anyway – I had to really stop doing everything else that I was doing and just devote myself to this full time.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** From the description of the different policy issues within the Kennedy administration, it's beautifully written. The thing I most enjoyed about it is it's integrated. You read different books on the Kennedy administration at that time and they focus on one particular

**“I had to write about it, and I had to write about it in such a way that it didn't take away in a large measure from the focus of the book, but that the reader needed to understand for the sake of truth how the author was able to come into relationship with this.”**





piece. But you have managed to go through most of them and integrate them in a very easy way so that someone who's not a policy wonk or interested in government or political science can really understand it. It's very accessible to the citizen who wants to understand the governance process. But when I read it, I realized this must have taken an extraordinary amount of research, because behind every paragraph I can see ten books being integrated. It's very integrating, and yet because I know the history of it and the way it's written is non-integrated, and so I can't imagine how much time and effort it took. It appears to just –

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, I was fortunate; having gone to Princeton, having really been introduced to what real scholarly research is about, having had some great teachers there. That's what helped me and that's what primed me in terms of understanding how to do a good job at historical research. There are a lot of books written about that era that while they may be entertaining to read, I just don't feel the research that the author has done really warrants them to make the kinds of statements that they do at certain times. I took this very seriously and decided that I knew how to do this; I knew what it looked like, but that it really was going to take a certain amount of dedication to do it in the way that I needed to.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** One of the reasons it's so powerful is because these were all people you or your family knew. You like them.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Good and evil become something other than “those people are bad and those people are good.” It's much more complicated than that.

**PETER JANNEY:** Exactly.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** You can't explain the dynamics of things by just saying, “Oh, those people are bad,” because they're not bad. They're struggling to operate within the machine, too.

One of the things I wanted to touch on before we close was one of the



things I struggled with is trying to explain. I was the kind of person, I only talked about things within certain clubs or restaurants, and everything was very private. Then I ended up as a much more public person talking publicly about the things we as the people struggle with. I've struggled with trying to explain to people that the rich and famous and powerful were not as rich and famous and powerful as everybody thought.

**PETER JANNEY:** Right.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** One of the things you see after Mary's death is the fear, the extraordinary fear of many people in the upper echelons of Washington society and government who are struck with terror as a result of watching Kennedy, Mary, and other people killed in this manner.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** You really see the sense of helplessness and the fear going through the upper echelons of society, and you begin to understand how personally dangerous their lives can be, too.

**PETER JANNEY:** Absolutely. This still holds true today.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** When some of these people come clean with what they were really up against it's very revealing in just the way you've just described.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, one of the reasons I encourage people to read *Mary's Mosaic* is watching you go through the process. I think that this is a process we all have to go through, because if you look at the extent to which America's economy is dependent on illegal activities, this is all of us. This runs through every family, every community, and every business. There is no away. I said to somebody, "It's like pouring food coloring in a swimming pool." There's no way you're going to avoid it.

**PETER JANNEY:** Right.



**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, tell us about now. Obviously this is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination. In my mind I see the Kennedy assassination as the pivotal moment when two models competed and one asserted dominance and has been running things ever since. The centralization of power is extraordinary. It's 50 years later and we're now struggling with the latest revelations of the NSA's sort of invasiveness into our lives. Tell us how you feel about the extent to which there is a natural evolution from that assassination and that day in Dallas to where we are today.

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, I think the kind of dysfunction that we are witnessing as Americans in terms of what's happening in government, what's happening in our country is both a direct and indirect outgrowth of what took place 50 years ago. Basically, as I maintain in my book, America's experiment in democracy ended on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1963.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** We've been playing picture book politics ever since and trying to pull the wool over people's eyes as to really what takes place in this country. It's so unfortunate because it could've been so different, but I am just saddened, for instance, by what has happened with the Obama presidency. I had a lot of hope for Mr. Obama when he came into office after George Bush left. As Oliver Stone summed it up early last week on one program that President Obama just does not have the backbone and the courage that President Kennedy had, and that he has in a sense been watered down in terms of his impact and potential effectiveness.

For some time now we've been in an era where our president is mostly a figurehead. The real decision-making apparatus that takes place in our country is made by some version of the military industrial intelligence complex in terms of how to keep the United States as the legitimate, de facto world number one power. There are a number of cracks in that armor. Certainly one of the biggest cracks is the awakening of our citizens. I am encouraged that the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kennedy assassination is, to me, coming to grips for more and more people. A



real large number of people understand today that they're not getting the truth from their government.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** We can thank Julian Assange. We can thank Edward Snowden, and Bradley Manning. People that have risked their lives in the last few years to bring the truth of what our government is really up to to bear for citizens to come to terms with. I think this is tremendously important. People like Daniel Ellsberg, I've heard, privately is really realizing that people like Lyndon Johnson were involved in the assassination of President Kennedy as was J. Edgar Hoover. This was a pervasive conspiracy.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right.

**PETER JANNEY:** Catherine, I think we can take a lesson from the country of Germany. Look, Germany really stepped up to the plate after World War II and confronted the Holocaust and they dealt with it. It's behind them. They accepted it. They dealt with it. They've moved on. If Germany can deal with a Holocaust, why can't we deal with the Kennedy assassination? Why can't we as a people and as a country come to terms with the truth? If we were to do that in such a way as I believe is possible, this could really take us on a whole new trajectory.

**“Germany really stepped up to the plate after World War II and confronted the Holocaust and they dealt with it. It's behind them. They accepted it.”**

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right. It would be a remarkable healing.

**PETER JANNEY:** It would. It would, and it would change things.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** We would look into the mirror and we would face ourselves.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes. We're not extraordinary, entitled people who are better



than everyone else in the world. That's the real lesson there. We're all down here together. Either we come together as a planet and citizens of a planet, or the quality of life is going to continue to deteriorate and there's going to be more and more suffering, and it's going to get very, very ugly, as it is already. Something has to happen to, in a sense, bring us all together. I'm encouraged by the fact that people are really beginning to understand that it's not enough anymore to just have a job, raise a family, and have a career. We have to become active citizens in a democracy, and that is a full-time job. It's just important for everyone to find what his or her niche is in that process.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** One of the things that I thought was so interesting, although it was a quiet moment, was the effort to build a national platform to go into Syria failed.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes! That was historic.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Right. It was an historic event because all the tricks of the trade that have been used for 50 years, they all failed, and not by a little bit. If you look at the polls, they failed by a lot. They couldn't get to first base, and that's a big deal.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** It forced us to the table. We got close to a deal with Iran, but that's a very big shift, and it will be interesting to see how that change in consciousness rolls out.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, it will, and I couldn't agree with you more. I think that was really an historic moment, and I actually credit President Obama for seeing the writing on the wall. That he was not going to be supported in this endeavor, and he stopped trying to push it.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** The American people finally told Israel to sit down and shut up.

**PETER JANNEY:** Yes, right! Right!



**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, tell us, Peter, your book is everywhere, before we close, tell us about the feedback.

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, I think the feedback has been mostly good. I am encouraged by the fact that more and more people are reading the book. I think there are over like 150 little reviews now on the Amazon page for *Mary's Mosaic*. The book is readily available in most bookstores. So I'm encouraged that the word is getting out.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** I expect that they'll turn it into a movie.

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, I do, too. The screenplay has been written; that's already done. I will be headed out to Los Angeles tomorrow. There are going to be a couple of meetings out there to take a look at this. People should know I've been down this road before and nothing's happened yet. It may take a little while longer, but let us not forget that next year, in 2014, will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mary Meyer's death. We've got another whole year here to really digest this, and there will be a few other things happening which I'm not at liberty to talk about now, which will I think make this case even more intriguing.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, Peter, is there any hope for you writing another book?

**PETER JANNEY:** Oh, believe me, yes, indeed.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Okay.

**PETER JANNEY:** I'm going to be getting back to a number of projects. I can't allow this to not reach its final home, its final destiny. If it takes another year, that's what it's going to take. This is a piece of history, Catherine, and I want people to have the opportunity to really know the truth of history, because ultimately that is our lighthouse. That is our savior if we are going to stop making the same mistakes over and over again.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Well, it is true, and you described it as you closed *Mary's Mosaic* that if we can bring the light of day to this one little story (and I





don't think it's a little story, but you're very humble in how you describe it), we can really achieve an important turn, because I think through this story you see what has happened and what we need to do about it.

Well, Peter, I can't thank you enough for joining us on The Solari Report. We are your devoted fan, and if there is anything we can do to support you and help you promote this book and get it turned into a movie, you have only to ask and we will do whatever we can to support you.

**PETER JANNEY:** Well, thank you so much. It's been wonderful to speak with you today, and I hope many of your listeners will find this story compelling and want to get acquainted with it.

**C. AUSTIN FITTS:** Okay, well, you have a wonderful day. Thank you so much.

**PETER JANNEY:** Okay, take care.

#### DISCLAIMER

Nothing on The Solari Report should be taken as individual investment advice. Anyone seeking investment advice for his or her personal financial situation is advised to seek out a qualified advisor or advisors and provide as much information as possible to the advisor in order that such advisor can take into account all relevant circumstances, objectives, and risks before rendering an opinion as to the appropriate investment strategy.