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RFK Must Die -- A Chat With Filmmaker Shane O'Sullivan

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Filmmaker Shane O'Sullivan isn't sure whom he should thank more for pumping up the publicity on his new documentary film *RFK Must Die*, which is currently showing at the **Pioneer Theater** in New York and debuts tonight on TV's WNYC 25 as well as airings on the **Documentary Channel**.

Presidential candidate Hilary Clinton deserves a shout-out for **awkwardly raising the spectre of Bobby Kennedy's assassination** in relation to the presumptive Democratic nominee Barack Obama. "Oh absolutely," says O'Sullivan from London, where he is based with his wife, who works in Japanese television. But Emilio Estevez deserves even more credit.

"Maybe the film *Bobby* started to bring Bobby Kennedy back into the public eye," says O'Sullivan about that acclaimed 2006 drama Estevez wrote and directed about Kennedy's last day.

O'Sullivan was working on a fictional film about that same subject before Estevez's project appeared. And coincidentally, the Japanese TV network O'Sullivan's wife contributes to does an annual special on all the JFK conspiracy theories. So maybe it's not so surprising that O'Sullivan slowly, almost reluctantly found himself questioning the official story that Bobby Kennedy was killed solely by an insane Sirhan Sirhan.

"We truly don't know who killed Bobby Kennedy, which is really greatly disturbing," says the 38-year-old filmmaker who insists he is no fan of **conspiracy theories**. But the questions continued to pop up for him, many of them raised by the people who were there at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles on June 4, 1968.

"The best example of that is Paul Schrade, a UAW leader," says O'Sullivan, who also has a book

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just out called *Who Killed Bobby? The Unsolved Murder Of Robert F. Kennedy* (\$24.95; Union Square Press). "He became convinced that more than eight bullets were fired and he led the push to get the case reopened."

O'Sullivan worked on the film and book for almost four years. He was scrimping and saving to get by when the BBC saw some of his footage and commissioned a feature for the TV show *BBC Newsnight*, the UK equivalent to *60 Minutes*. O'Sullivan also published a two page article in the *Guardian* the week it aired in November, 2006. This led to financing for the rest of his film and the book deal.

He tackles everything from the girl in the polka dot dress (who reportedly ran away shouting "We killed him!") and the idea that Sirhan was a Manchurian candidate hypnotized into killing RFK, a theory lent (some) credence by long-time Columbia University professor and world renowned expert on hypnosis Dr. Herbert Spiegel.

"It does seem far-fetched," admits O'Sullivan. Ask him if anyone - CIA, KGB, etc. -- has ever claimed to have hypnotized or brainwashed someone else into serving as an assassin and he says, "The short answer is 'no.'"

But evidence keeps coming to light: a new analysis of an audio recording made during the shooting seems to indicate 13 shots were fired (Sirhan only fired eight). O'Sullivan hopes to interview the expert soon and add that to an update for the eventual release on DVD. His next film is equally complex if less contentious.

"My next project is about three women involved in revolutionary fighting or terrorism of the 70s," says O'Sullivan, who is focusing on Germany's Ulrike Meinhof, Fusako Shigenobu of Japan and Palestine's Leila Khaled. "It's about these three revolutionary women and their stories seen through the eyes of their children."

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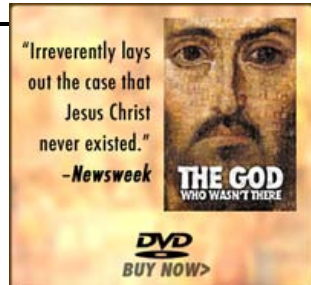
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I recommend that anyone thinking that in the confines of a hotel kitchen area all 5 men who captured Sirhan Sirhan somehow managed to not notice that some of the bullets were being fired by a second person read about analysis of the "Pruszyński Tape" at <http://hnn.us/articles/44466.html>. Also, the number of professional assassins whose weapon of choice is a .22 caliber pistol (which is definitely what killed Bobby) is zero.

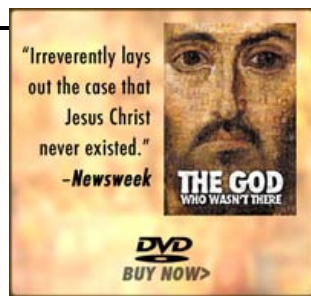
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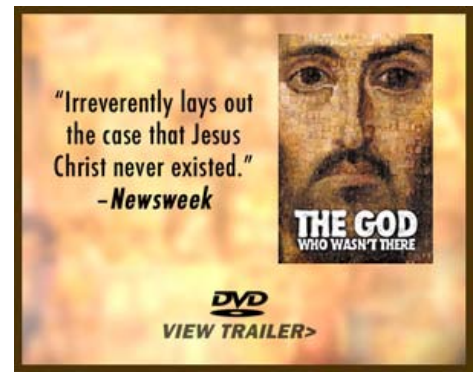
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