



Irv and Karyn Kupcinet



Irving Kupcinet, the son of a truck driver, was born in North Lawndale on 31st July, 1912. After graduating from the University of North Dakota he joined the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League. A serious shoulder injury resulted in him giving up football and in 1935 became a sports writer with the [Chicago Sun-Times](#).

In 1948 Kupcinet was given his own column for the [Chicago Sun-Times](#). Over the years, his column was distributed to more than 100 newspapers around the world.

In 1952 Kupcinet became a television talk show host on CBS. Five years later he replaced Jack Parr on NBC's [America After the Dark](#), which eventually became [The Tonight Show](#). He also appeared in two movies produced by Otto Preminger, [Anatomy of a Murder](#) (1959) and [Advise and Consent](#) (1962). His daughter, [Karyn Kupcinet](#), became an actress and appeared in [The Ladies' Man](#) (1961).

Irv Kupcinet knew [Jack Ruby](#) in [Chicago](#) in the 1940s. According to [W. Penn Jones](#) Irv kept in contact with Ruby and discovered that he was involved in a plot to assassinate President [John F. Kennedy](#). Jones argues that Irv passed this information on to his daughter Karyn. In his book, [Forgive My Grief](#), Jones reports that "a few days before the assassination, Karyn Kupcinet, 23, was trying to place a long distance telephone call from the Los Angeles area. According to reports, the long distance operator heard Miss Kupcinet scream into the telephone that President Kennedy was going to be killed."



[Karyn Kupcinet](#)

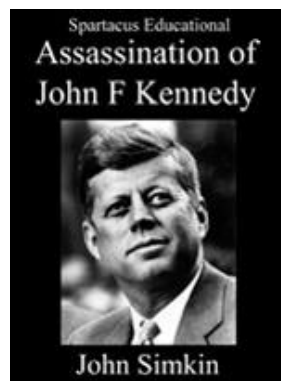


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Karyn Kupcinet's body was discovered on 30th November, 1963. Police estimated that she had been dead for two days. The [New York Times](#) reported that she had been strangled. Her actor boyfriend, [Andrew Prine](#) was the main suspect but he was never charged with the murder and the crime remains unsolved.

Some researchers claimed that there was a link between the death of Kupcinet and the assassination of [John F. Kennedy](#). It was argued that the conspirators were trying to frighten off Kupcinet from telling what he knew. Kupcinet rejected this idea. He wrote in the [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (9th November, 1992): "The NBC *Today Show* on Friday carried a list of people who died violently in 1963 shortly after the death of President John F. Kennedy and may have had some link to the assassination. The first name on the list was Karyn Kupcinet, my daughter. That is an atrocious outrage. She did die violently in a Hollywood murder case still unsolved. That same list was published in a book years ago with no justification or verification. The book left the impression that some on the list may have been killed to silence them because of knowledge of the assassination. Nothing could be further from the truth in my daughter's case."

Irv Kupcinet died of pneumonia in [Chicago](#), Illinois, on 11th November, 2003.



[Assassination of John F. Kennedy Encyclopedia](#)



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Primary Sources

(1) [Chicago Daily News](#) (23rd November, 1963)

A telephone company executive said that 20 minutes before President Kennedy was assassinated a woman caller was overheard whispering:

"The President is going to be killed."

Ray Sheehan, manger of the Oxnard division of General Telephone Co., said the caller "stumbled into our operator's circuits," perhaps by misdialing.

Sheehan said the woman "seemed to be a little bit disturbed." Besides [predicting the President's death](#), he said, she "mumbled several incoherent things."

(2) [New York Times](#) (1st December, 1963)

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Her body was found on its side, with flecks of blood on her face and a pillow. There were no notes or any indications of suicide, officers said... She had apparently been dead two or three days, sheriffs investigators said. Friends discovered her body when they came to her apartment... When her body was found, the apartment door was unlocked and the television set was on but turned down, according to the friends, Mark Goddard, actor, and his wife, Marcia. A bowl of cigarettes and a coffeepot had been knocked to the floor and a lamp turned over, they said.

(3) W. Penn Jones, *Forgive My Grief* (1966)

A few days before the assassination, Karyn Kupcinec, 23, was trying to place a long distance telephone call from the Los Angeles area. According to reports, the long distance operator heard Miss Kupcinec scream into the telephone that President Kennedy was going to be killed. Two days after the assassination, Miss Kupcinec was found murdered in her apartment. The case has never been solved.

(4) Neil Steinberg, *Chicago Sun-Times* (12th November, 2003)

Irv Kupcinec (Kup) was friendly with presidents, barbers and the top A-list of Hollywood. It wasn't a press agentish, fake kind of friendship. He stayed at their homes - at Jack Benny's, at Danny Thomas's, at Joan Crawford's. When he went on vacation, Bing Crosby might pitch in to write his column, or Mike Todd, or Betty Grable. Bob Hope spoke at the 1968 dinner honoring Kup's 25th anniversary as a columnist.

He appeared on television as early as 1945 and was a pioneering television talk show host - he started on CBS in 1952 with a late night news/interview program. In 1957, he replaced Jack Paar on NBC's "America After the Dark," which eventually became "The Tonight Show." His own television program ran from 1959 to 1986, syndicated at one point to 70 stations nationwide, and featured newsmakers from Richard Nixon to Alger Hiss to Malcolm X - with whom he forged an improbable friendship.

The show was known for its spontaneity. Carl Sandburg once walked off the set in mid-broadcast, declaring he had to "wee-wee." Radical Abbie Hoffman lit up a joint on the air and was asked by Kup to leave.

Ann Landers shocked the audience - and Kup - when, on a show that paired her with porn star Linda Lovelace, the advice columnist described in precise detail the act Lovelace was famous for.

The show won 15 local Emmys and the prestigious Peabody Award.

He was a close friend of Truman, who gave Kup and his family a personal tour of the White House while he was president. Eight years out of office, when Truman finally revealed why he had fired Gen. Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War, he gave the scoop to Kup: the general had been chaffing to attack communist China with atomic bombs...

The couple had two children, Jerry and Karyn, who was called "Cookie." Cookie was an aspiring actress and moved to Hollywood, where she died under mysterious circumstances, probably murdered, in 1963 at the age of 22. The crime was never solved.

Kup grieved the loss of his daughter for the rest of his life. In 1966, when the Tribune syndicate asked Kup to replace the recently deceased Hedda Hopper, dangling a "mind-boggling" offer that included Hopper's Hollywood home, Kup refused, largely because he and Essee did not want to move to what he later described as "the Hollywood that had sucked our daughter into its maelstrom."

(5) Irv Kupcinec, *Chicago Sun-Times* (9th November, 1992)

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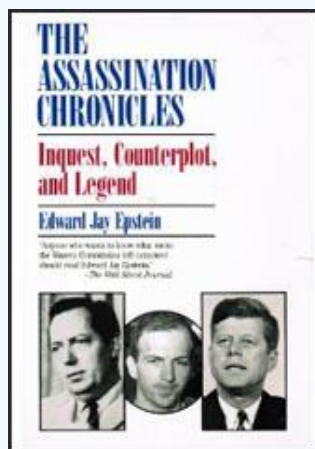
The book left the impression that some on the list may have been killed to silence them because of knowledge of the assassination. Nothing could be further from the truth in my daughter's case. The list apparently has developed a life of its own and for "Today" to repeat the calumny is reprehensible. Karyn no longer can suffer pain by such an inexcusable mention, but her parents and her brother Jerry can.



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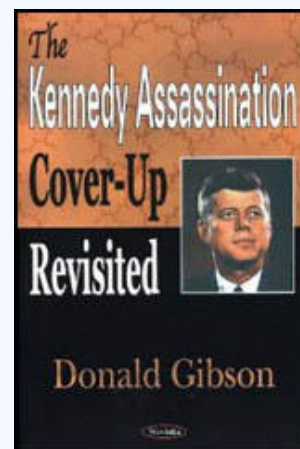


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