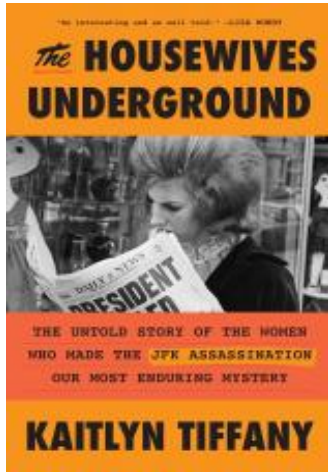


The Housewives Underground: The Untold Story of the Women Who Made the JFK Assassination Our Most Enduring Mystery

by Kaitlyn Tiffany



About the Book

The untold story of the women who debunked the Warren Report --- a riveting history of obsession, heartbreak and the myth of the great American century.

In the winter of 1967, the official account of the Kennedy assassination was beginning to unravel. A scattered group of Americans had pointed to major problems with the report prepared by President Johnson's handpicked Warren Commission. Many of the most serious criticisms of the government's work came from a source that surprised some: women who, within the community of critics, outnumbered the men two to one.

Politicians and reporters dismissed these women, referring to them as "scavengers" and suggesting they were eccentrics with murder-mystery fixations or crushes on the deceased President Kennedy. But in *THE HOUSEWIVES UNDERGROUND*, Kaitlyn Tiffany resurrects the story of Maggie Field, Shirley Martin and Sylvia Meagher, whose collaboration and friendship reshaped both their own lives and our national memory. Field hosted screenings of the Zapruder film and raised money to pursue new leads. Martin traveled frequently to Dallas, enlisted her children to help interview witnesses, and irritated J. Edgar Hoover with her "antagonistic" attitude toward the FBI.

And at the center of the story is Sylvia Meagher --- a born-and-raised New Yorker who was devoted to the ballet and the Mets, cultivated fierce friendships and firm grudges, and dedicated 25 years to her conviction that the whole truth of JFK's assassination had not been told.

Painstakingly researched and engrossing, *THE HOUSEWIVES UNDERGROUND* takes readers back to the turbulent 1960s and 1970s --- a time when Americans' belief in their government was eroding --- introducing readers to the so-called housewives who asked the first, hardest questions about one of the most shocking events in American history.

Discussion Guide

1. What drew you most to Sylvia Meagher, Shirley Martin or Maggie Field?
2. Which woman's story resonated with you most, and why?
3. How does the book challenge traditional ideas about who gets to be considered an expert? What qualities made these women effective researchers despite being dismissed as amateurs?
4. The women profiled in the book came from very different backgrounds and political perspectives. What do you think allowed them to form meaningful connections and work together despite those differences?
5. How did the women's investigations change their lives? Do you think the work enriched their lives, consumed them, or both?
6. The book repeatedly explores the differences among evidence, speculation and certainty. Did it change the way you think about how people reach conclusions or form beliefs?
7. Many of the women felt isolated before they found one another. What role did friendship, correspondence and community play in sustaining their work?
8. How does the book portray the relationship between ordinary citizens and powerful institutions? Did your sympathies shift as the story unfolded?
9. Several of the women became increasingly frustrated with how history was being written in real time. What does the book suggest about who gets to shape public memory?
10. The story unfolds against the backdrop of the 1960s, including the civil rights movement, the Cold War and the Vietnam War. How did these larger events influence the women's thinking and motivations?
11. By the end of the book, what do you think is the most important mystery being explored: who killed Kennedy, why people questioned the official story, or how these women found purpose through the search? Why?
12. The book follows people who devoted years of their lives to a single question. What do you think motivates that level of commitment? Is it admirable, troubling, or both?
13. What do you think the title *THE HOUSEWIVES UNDERGROUND* ultimately means? What does the "underground" represent in the context of the story?

Author Bio

Kaitlyn Tiffany is a staff writer at *The Atlantic*. She is the author of EVERYTHING I NEED I GET FROM YOU: How Fangirls Created the Internet as We Know It and THE HOUSEWIVES UNDERGROUND: The Untold Story of the Women Who Made the JFK Assassination Our Most Enduring Mystery. She is also the co-author, with Lizzie Plaugic, of the collection ON NOBODY FAMOUS: Guesting, Gossiping, Gallivanting. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

The Housewives Underground: The Untold Story of the Women Who Made the JFK Assassination Our Most Enduring Mystery

by Kaitlyn Tiffany

Publication Date: June 23, 2026

Genres: History, Nonfiction

Hardcover: 512 pages

Publisher: Crown

ISBN-10: 0593728629

ISBN-13: 9780593728628