

The New York Times

Judith Exner Is Dead at 65; Claimed Affair With Kennedy

By [Eric Pace](#)

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Editors' Note Appended

Judith Campbell Exner, who asserted in a 1988 interview in *People* magazine that she had been having an affair with John F. Kennedy when he was elected President, died late Friday at the City of Hope Cancer Center in Duarte, Calif., a suburb of Los Angeles.

She was 65 and lived in Orange County.

The cause was breast cancer, *The Associated Press* reported.

Over the years, Mrs. Exner gave varying accounts of her supposed relationship with Kennedy. But as Jeff Greenfield wrote in a review of Mrs. Exner's autobiography, "My Story" (1977), in *The New York Times Book Review*, she "sought no publicity, at least until after a Senate committee investigating C.I.A.-Mafia connections summoned her to testify and press reports revealed her supposed connections to Kennedy" and to Sam Giancana, a Chicago organized-crime figure.

Former aides maintained that Kennedy had not had an affair with Mrs. Exner, who was then Judith Campbell. Dave Powers, a Kennedy aide who Mrs. Exner said had assisted in setting up her encounters with the President, said in 1991, "The only Campbell I know is chunky vegetable soup."

In the 1988 interview, Mrs. Exner also said Kennedy had her arrange more than 10 meetings with Giancana, whom she said was also her lover. She said the meetings concerned, among other things, Kennedy's need for Giancana's help in the Democratic Presidential primary in West Virginia.

But Giancana's daughter, Antoinette, said that Giancana disliked Kennedy and that he never mentioned any contact with Kennedy while he was President.

Mrs. Exner also said that while Kennedy was in the White House she shuttled messages -- on topics including a plan to kill President Fidel Castro of Cuba -- between him and Giancana.

Kitty Kelley, who interviewed her for *People*, said Mrs. Exner received about \$50,000 for the interview.

In *Vanity Fair* in 1996, Mrs. Exner said she had ended the affair, which she said had lasted two years, because she did not like being dubbed "the other woman."

She also said she had an abortion after becoming pregnant with Kennedy's baby, almost a year before Kennedy was assassinated.

A native New Yorker, Mrs. Exner was born Judith Immoor and was reared in California. Her marriage to an actor, William Campbell, which ended in divorce after six years, helped her make contacts within the entertainment industry.

After her divorce, she dated Frank Sinatra, and through him she met Kennedy in 1960 in Las Vegas, Nev., said her lawyer, James Lesar of Washington.

She married a professional golfer, Dan Exner, in the mid-1970's and moved to Orange County. They reportedly divorced several years ago.

Mrs. Exner is survived by a son, David Bohrer; two brothers, Allen and Fred Immoor; and a sister, Joan Collingwood.

Editors' Note: *September 30, 1999, Thursday An obituary on Monday reported the death of Judith Campbell Exner. It quoted assertions she had made over the years that she had had an affair with John F. Kennedy before and after he was elected President. The article reported that aides of President Kennedy's, including Dave Powers, denied the affair. But it should also have reflected what is now the view of a number of respected historians and authors that the affair did in fact take place. The evidence cited by various authorities in recent years has included White House phone logs and memos from J. Edgar Hoover.*