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# The media and the Kennedy assassination: the social construction of reality

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**The media and the Kennedy assassination: The social construction of reality**

by

Ross Frank Ralston

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Sociology

Major Professor: Martin G. Miller

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

1999

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## ABSTRACT

The research problem was to take a major political event in American history—the John F. Kennedy assassination—explore major media coverage of the event, and then examine media construction of social issues.

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy has two official versions in our nation's history. The Warren-Ford-Dulles Commission came to the conclusion that, without assistance, a man in a building shot a man in a car. In 1979, pursuant to post-Watergate cynicism in government, the House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded there was a conspiracy and a second gunman fired from a different direction. However, high school textbooks have reified only the first version of history—that of a single lone assassin.

A content analysis of CBS and *Time-Life* coverage is made using Lasswell's methodology of surveillance, correlation, and transmission. CBS produced the most television assassination documentaries and *Time-Life* owned the Zapruder film which was crucial evidence. Of the four perspectives on media coverage (the Fourth Estate, Mirror Approach, Marketing, and Hegemony), only hegemony fits the consistent pattern of the media coverage.

Berger and Luckman's (1967) social construction of reality involves reification, legitimization, and institutionalization. As Kuhn (1962) notes in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, normally when the number of anomalies to a theory becomes too great, we are forced to switch to another explanation. However, this did not happen with the Kennedy Assassination. We must ask why. The *Fourth Estate* would predict the media pursue the story with a check and a balance of government by responsible investigative reporting, as the

*Marketing Approach* would give the consumers what they want. The *Mirror Approach* is where the media represents a neutral transmission of information while with *Hegemony*, the major media would dissipate the greatest possible doubt of a conspiracy in order to create the impression that the political structure was secure and legitimate to create an image of the stable institution of government. The study concludes that hegemony best explains media coverage of the event.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

On November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was murdered in the streets of Dallas, Texas, by gunfire which also wounded Texas Governor John B. Connally. Within hours, local police arrested Lee Harvey Oswald in connection with the shooting. Oswald steadfastly denied responsibility for the assassination and claimed himself to be innocent, but never lived to stand trial. Two days later, Jack Ruby, a Dallas nightclub operator, materialized in the basement of the city jail with a loaded .38 revolver and fired one shot into Oswald's abdomen. Within hours Oswald was dead. The possibility of a trial for him, replete with adversary proceedings, had been eliminated.

The same day that Ruby murdered Oswald, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover phoned the White House and spoke to President Lyndon B. Johnson's aide, Walter Jenkins, about a conversation he had with Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach. According to Jenkins' memo of the conversation, Hoover stated that "the thing I am concerned about, and so is Mr. Katzenbach, is having something issued so we can convince the public that Oswald is the real assassin" (Appendix to Hearings before the House Select Committee on Assassinations, 1979, 11HSCA411); hereafter referred to as HSCA). Katzenbach testified that he was reacting to repeated calls from the State Department that a no-conspiracy statement be issued to "quash the beliefs" abroad that conspiracy rumors were true (1979, 3HSCA726). The next day Katzenbach sent a memo to White House Aide William Moyers advising the formation of a presidential commission to investigate the assassination. In the memo he stated:

It is very important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad. That all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald is the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.
2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy of or (as the Iron Curtain is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Commies (see Appendix A, Exhibit 15; see also Davis, 1985, 553–554).

On November 29, “to avoid parallel investigations and concentrate fact finding in a body having the broadest national mandate,” President Johnson appointed the Warren Commission to “ascertain, evaluate, and report on the facts of the assassination” (Warren Report, 1964).

The Warren Commission deliberated for nine months and then concluded that one man, Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, murdered John F. Kennedy and that, as such, there was no conspiracy, domestic or foreign (Warren Report, 1964). There the matter could have ended, except that there seemed to be inconsistencies in the evidence which would not go away (Lane, 1966; Thompson, 1967; Meagher, 1967; Weisberg, 1966). The Single-Bullet Theory, the effect of the head shot in the Zapruder film, the majority of eyewitness accounts that shots came from a second gunman on the grassy knoll in front of the motorcade, the Dallas doctors' testimony, the suppressed evidence, the destroyed evidence, the testimony of Governor Connally among others—all pieces in a puzzle, all too familiar now. While it is not the intent of this review to discuss the status of the physical evidence, it is important to bear in mind that such inconsistencies have provided the groundwork for responsible theorizing into

the nature of the assassination and have been important in keeping the issue open. Perhaps because of these details, as of 1985, 80 percent of the American public did not believe the Warren Report (Hurt, 1985:34), and amazingly, there are two official government versions of the shooting.

### **Two Versions of History**

#### **Version One**

Commission member Gerald R. Ford began his defense of the Warren findings with his book *Portrait of the Assassin* in 1965, proclaiming that the work of the Warren Commission would stand like a “Gibraltar for all time.” It was an early work on the assassination which produced little in terms of discussing the physical evidence; Ford’s thesis is simply that Oswald was a Communist (Ford, 1965).

#### **Version Two**

In 1979, after completing a two-year, \$5.6 million investigation into the murders of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King, the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) concluded that a second gunman fired shots at Kennedy and that he was the victim of a conspiracy (HSCA Report, 1979). Their prime suspect—organized crime.

### **Research Problem**

The research problem is to take a major political event in American history—the John F. Kennedy assassination—explore major media coverage of the event, to examine how reality is socially constructed by the news media. In order to do so, it is my intention to view the



JFK assassination coverage as presented by two major media outlets: *Time-Life* Corporation and CBS News documentaries. *Time-Life* is significant because they owned the Zapruder film which captured the murder in moving sequence and was considered crucial evidence to the Warren Commission and HSCA. CBS News has had the most documentaries and special reports of any network. The televised documentaries were accessible to this author, at his residence, on videotape and were played in a VCR. *Time* and *Life* magazines were accessible in the library for viewing.

As Thomas Kuhn notes in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn, 1962), there are always some anomalies to a theory. However, normally when the number of anomalies becomes too great, we are forced to switch to another theory in order to explain them. This did not happen with the Kennedy Assassination. We must ask why. The only hypothesis capable of explaining the media persistence of the “Single-Bullet Theory” and lone assassin is a hegemony between the media and government.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reality, perceived or real, is constructed socially by human beings. In their landmark treatise, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman (1967) describe how human beings comprehend life as an ordered reality: society is a human product; society is an objective reality; man is a social product. In other words, people are the very products of the society which they create. In the process, they develop culturally shared meanings for objects, events, and situations. This is the social construction of reality.

Unlike animals programmed by instinct, man must create his own world since he has not a given relationship to it. He constructs a human world to make up for the instinctual relationship and drives for which he is biologically lacking. Man constructs patterns of behavior as he attaches meaning to his everyday existence (Berger, 1967:3–28). A given act is not inherently good or bad until meaning is attached.

Also in their treatise, *The Social Construction of Reality* (1967), Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman describe how human beings apprehend life as an ordered reality. To Berger and Luckman:

- Society is a human product
- Society is an objective reality
- Man is a social product. (Berger and Luckman, 1967:61)

So people are the very products of the society which they create. That creation is a social construction, with reality being the ongoing process of communicative interaction by which we collectively develop culturally shared meanings for objects, events and situations.

They note that “the world of everyday life is not only taken for granted as reality by the ordinary members of a society, but is also apprehended as an ordered reality. It could be

questioned, but we suspend that ability in order to live comfortably within it” (Berger and Luckman, 1967:19-28). Whatever objective reality is really out there is produced by people. Key elements of social construction follow.

### **Institutionalization**

People must produce what they need to survive and to interact with others. We need habits or it would be very difficult to find proper actions for each new situation. So institutions are created to “control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct” (Berger and Luckman, 1967:62). Institutions are “experienced as possessing a reality of their own,” one which is there and is external to individuals. More often the institutional world predates an individual’s birth and will be there after he dies. The actor finds that institutions are historical and confront him with undeniable objective facticities (Berger and Luckman, 1967:58–60).

### **Reification**

Berger and Luckman describe reification as “the apprehension of human products as if they were things.” Man is “capable of forgetting his own authorship of the human world” so that human products are perceived as if they were something else—“such as facts of nature, the result of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will” (Berger and Luckman, 1967:89). One could also say that reification can take the form of taking abstract ideals and treating them as concrete.

On a materialistic level in line with Herbert Marcuse, one would claim that we lose track of the fact that people create products and give them a life of their own (Marcuse,

1964). Like believing, “I’m a macho guy with the macho car”—with the object (car) defining the subject (person) as if it were a part of one’s anatomy and not a social product produced on an assembly line by people.

### **Legitimations**

“At some point the institutional world requires legitimations, that is, ways by which it can be explained and justified.” The transmission of the social world is a historical one which comes to a new generation as a tradition rather than a biographical memory (Berger and Luckman, 1967:61). Legitimation is the process of explaining and justifying the institutional traditions; hence legitimations justify the institutional order by giving a normative dignity to its practical imperatives (Berger and Luckman, 1967:93).

Jack Douglas has perceptively analyzed morals and concluded that:

Increasingly it is recognized that moral decisions are not, and cannot be, taken for granted, but rather must be purposefully constructed by the individuals for the purposes at hand. Increasingly it is recognized that moral experience is not imposed on man from outside, but rather is created by man out of his experience in everyday life...this situational nature of morality and of action means...that responsibility must be seen as interactional as partly individual and partly social. (Douglas, 1971:27-28)

In rejecting the conception of an absolute morality, Douglas is saying what is right or wrong in any given situation is problematic. Morals are not external to man and obvious to individuals in any given situation. Morals shift from individual to individual and vary with the situation as it is interpreted by that individual. To add an element of predictability in behavior and to effectuate a functioning social order, man has tried to legitimize or to restrain certain types of conflict.

Man has been conspicuously unsuccessful in acquiring resources, other than means of punishment or deterrence, for skillfully managing conflicts in his social relationships. The desire to shame into conformity is not likely to be successful when directed against those who are convinced of their superior inspiration and enlightenment. Indeed, shame will never resolve the underlying value conflict. It only imposes one viewpoint above another. The same limitations would hold for the use of legislation to resolve value conflict. It is an observable fact that *laws are written by people* (Quinney, 1970). Since laws define crime, crime is a definition of behavior created by society. Even societies that conspicuously tie their values to “God’s commands” will historically find that the interpretation of the spirit of God’s word changes over time.

For example, cows are fair game for the palate in the United States, but are forbidden as food in India. Alcohol consumption is restricted by law in some counties of the United States and yet it is legally sold in other parts of the nation. Infection of another person with venereal disease is punishable by law in Russia; not so in the United States.

Native American Indians increasingly found themselves judged not by their customary law but by the interests of European settlers. For example, special laws cropped up outlawing the sale of liquor to Indians. This is because *not all values are held by all people* (Quinney, 1970). This is certainly observable. We see some individuals as churchgoers and others as atheists. Some individuals subscribe to building nuclear weapons while others are for nuclear disarmament. The Vietnam debate and disagreements over gun control exhibit the underlying validity of this proposition.

Who then creates definitions of crime? It is the position of this observer *that those who have the power to transform their own values into law create definitions of crime* (Quinney, 1970).

### **Elite Inevitability**

The elite are the few who have power in society; the masses are those who do not. “Every people are governed by an elite, by a chosen element of the population. Inevitable elites arise because of the necessity of authority for order and organization in society” (Pareto, 1935:246). Someone must give the orders and then someone must carry them out.

While defending the existence of an elite, Alexander Hamilton wrote, “all communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The people seldom judge or determine right” (Hamilton, 1787, cited by Dye, 1986:2).

Mosca (1989:50) put it succinctly when he wrote, “In all societies from the very underdeveloped to the most advanced and powerful—two classes of people appear—a class that rules and a class that is ruled.”

Contemporary social scientist Robert Lynd echoed this sentiment when he observed:

It is a necessity in each society—if it is to be a society and not a rabble—to order the relations of men and their institutional ways of achieving needed ends... Organized powers exist—always and everywhere, in societies large or small, primitive or modern—because it performs the necessary function of establishing and maintaining the version of order by which a given society in a given time and place lives. (Lynd, 1957:3–4)

Robert Michels (1911) saw this phenomena as a basic reality of human nature that would assert itself however democratic its aims might appear—a rule he termed “the iron law

of oligarchy.” The result is an elite armed with special knowledge controlling organizations and their vast resources dominating society at large.

Looking at crime in three societies, I found a pattern appears to emerge. True to their religious background, the Puritan elite structured social order based on their spiritual beliefs. This was a religious state where *self-worth was to be measured in metaphysical terms*.

Available crime statistics show that after the Puritan code was written, the predominant type of crime from 1656 to 1675 were those against the Church (Erikson, 1966:175). These crimes include disturbing the congregation, absence from church, contempt of the ministry and so on. Since the church and government were one unit, with the religious elite holding political power, the requirement of being a member of the church in good standing was a prerequisite for citizenship.

In contrast, Ralf Dahrendorf claims the notion of a capitalist society is an extrapolation from economic to social relations; it assumes some formative power on the part of economic structures managed by capitalist elites (Dahrendorf, 1959:37). The ownership of private property is an essential principle.

A system based on private property in which self-worth is measured in economic terms will undoubtedly breed success symbols which can be measured by that yardstick. Or, stated another way, someone whose self-worth is measured in money and property is more likely to feel threatened and report economic breaches than to report religious or ideological ones. Conversely, in a system where religious ideals form the core of social control, it is to be expected that legal breaches will be found in that area. Hence, *the type of crime a society finds will be dictated by the values of those who have the power to transform their own*

*values into law* (Quinney, 1970). The major type of crime a society finds will be dictated by the dominant institutions of elites, and I would add that the dominant institution can likely be located by the type of crime a society finds.

For the United States the pattern is all too familiar. Property crimes, both reported and cleared by arrest, resoundingly outnumber all others. One could utilize data from the old Soviet Union to show the same pattern. Writing in his book, *Deviance in Soviet Society*, Walter D. Connor explains that the Soviet delinquent is more likely to be involved in “a variety of public order violations which the law lumps together under the term, hooliganism” (Connor 1972:81). Given a lack of statistical data from behind the Iron Curtain, he explains that it is hard to say “precisely how large the problem of hooliganism is” but that Soviet officials and criminologists show in writing it is “large enough.” Defined as “the committing of mischievous and purposeless acts accompanied by manifestations of disrespect for individual citizens or society in general,” (Chalidze. 1977:76) it would appear that a society based on extensive social engineering with its resultant economic control would concern itself with such a phenomenon.

The types of crime the Puritans found appear to show a major concern of the welfare of the whole over that of the individual. The reverse would seem to be true in today’s society. The Puritan experiment reveals another element of reality construction.

### **Boundary Maintenance**

Both physical and military force and, as we will see, a concept known as *hegemony*, are concerned with boundary maintenance: what is acceptable as an idea and what is not. But they are different edges of the same sword. Kai Erikson’s study of Puritan New England goes



to the heart of this matter. While the Puritans literally found the devil in people, the witch hunts set boundaries for acceptable thoughts and endeavors. The range of activity is limited, leading to patterns of constancy and stability which support the official structure of society (Erikson, 1966:10).

Deviants are cast outside acceptable limits or boundaries and conformists are encouraged. This would mean that boundaries show what we are by exhibiting what we are not. Society is thus drawn together by what Durkheim would say is a “collective conscience.”

Consider certain examples. The Joseph McCarthy Red Scare of the 1950s led to blacklisting of Hollywood figures, just as patriotism became a litmus test for extreme nationalism and ethnic/racial pride in Nazi Germany.

Again people and governments in some societies have a need to show what they are by exhibiting what they are not. The Ten Commandments define humanity in this way—Thou shalt not (kill, commit adultery, steal)—yet these examples cannot and do not tell us who we are, or who we should strive to actually be. What they tell us is what is unacceptable and albeit indirectly, what is. Hegemony on the other hand plays its hand at boundary maintenance with more subtle means of finesse.

### **Social Construction and Hegemony**

Writing at the Chicago School of Sociology, W. I. Thomas noted, “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas and Thomas, 1928:572). One could inextricably conclude that statements of political truth, the political definition of situations as real, which are social constructions of reality can, therefore, readily become the operating principles of institutions and their instruments.

The central idea contained in the concept of hegemony was stated by Marx. “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force” (Marx and Engels, 1947:39).

Conflict sociologist Antonio Gramsci noted that as sociologists we must deal with the structure of society and the actor. Writing in prison notebooks after being imprisoned by Mussolini for ten years, he noted that the domination of one class over others could be achieved by political force as well as by ideological means, with the latter being more significant. Institutions of civil society such as the church and newspapers play an important role as tools in this endeavor. The more prominent the institutions of civil society, the stronger the role ideology rather than force will play in shaping the path of society. To explain this, he coined the word, “*hegemony*” (Gramsci, 1971), and placed it into the social construction of political truth.

To Gramsci, *hegemony* referred to a situation where “a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society in all its institutional and private manifestations” (Williams, 1960:587). So the dominant class in control of economic and political institutions also possesses privileged access to major ideological institutions, such as religion, education, communications media, the economy and the like. Ideology serves as the unifying force, a means by which the ruling order remains dominant—reinforcing structural positions.

Key to the process is that hegemony leads to the ability to *define the parameters of debate* and legitimate discussion over alternative values or beliefs. The result of the

hegemonic process is that the majority of the population is largely unaware of alternative values and readings of history (Garson, 1973:164). To Garson, this leads to a situation where “satisfaction is perpetuated on a superficial but enduring basis by the absence of alternative models capable of raising expectations and the structure of control is able to continue unchanged” (Garson, 1973:174; Sallach, 1974).

Studies in political socialization have articulated that elementary school through high school textbooks are important in the formation of political orientations (Greenstein, 1965; Langston, 1969; Hess and Torney, 1968). Apple and Teitelbaum (1987) note that a typical sixth grade student will have spent 7,000 hours in school, while the instructor will have engaged in about 1,000 personal interchanges with students during each school day. Due to its universal mandatory nature, schools occupy a central and pivotal role as a social institution and dominant source of information in the United States.

Kane (1970), after studying 45 junior and senior textbooks in social studies, concluded, “A significant number of texts published today continue to present a principally white, Protestant, Anglo–Saxon point of view of America’s past and present, while the nature and problems of minority groups are largely neglected” (Kane, 1970:138).

Francis Fitzgerald (1979) echoed this sentiment and contended that this formula approach minimizes one type of risk, but creates another because life is presented as an ideal construct. After reviewing hundreds of U.S. history textbooks from the 1930s through the 1970s, Fitzgerald finds a pattern of ethnocentrism, nationalistic tendencies mixed with sexism, and a lack of analytical approaches. She notes this is not surprising “since the textbook

companies and (more importantly) local school boards do not permit authors the freedom to write their own books in their own way” (Fitzgerald, 1979:69). She concluded that:

The censorship of schoolbooks is simply the negative face of the demand that the books portray the world as a utopia of the eternal present—a place without conflict, without malice or stupidity, where Dick (black or white) comes home with a smiling Jane to a nice house in the suburbs. To the extent that the young people actually believe them, these bland fictions, propagated for the purpose of creating good citizens, may actually achieve the opposite; they give young people no warning of the real dangers ahead, and later they may well make these young people feel that their own experience of conflict or suffering is unique in history and perhaps un-American (Fitzgerald, 1979: 218).

Dawson and Prewitt (1969) write that “teachers are expected to, and do, propagate political views and beliefs appropriately labeled ‘consensus values’.” Rather than acting as conscious agents of a sinister process, like others, teachers are subject to hegemonic parameters and thus reinforce the overall process. Keeping the observations of Fitzgerald and Kane in mind, consider the high school textbook approach to the murder of President John F. Kennedy.

### **Reification—JFK’s Murder in Textbooks**

Even if we may never find a satisfactory conclusion to the JFK murder which is acceptable to a majority of citizens, we can learn about how government pronouncements can be reified in the face of contrary evidence and popular opinion.

Despite the public doubts, two different conclusions by official government investigations and suppressed evidence, high school and college textbooks have clung to a simplistic and reified account of the President’s murder.

In a content analysis, Terrance Ripmaster surveyed 20 high school textbooks and found a pattern of lone-assassin reification. Consider *A People and a Nation* by Clarence L.

Ver Steeg and published by Harper and Row. Here we read simply, “He was struck down by an assassin’s bullet. Lee Harvey Oswald was killed two days later by a Dallas nightclub owner. Jack Ruby” (Ver Steeg, 1977; Ripmaster, 1985:5). In *A History of the United States* by Joseph R. Conlin (1986) we find blind acceptance of the lone gunman. When referring to the Warren Report he teaches his pupils that “the Warren Commission, which spent 10 months reviewing the evidence, concluded that there was no evidence of a conspiracy: both Ruby and Oswald acted alone.” There is absolutely no mention of the House Committee’s conclusion of a second gunman. With the provocative title *America*, Scott Foresman & Co.’s entry in the U.S. History textbook sweepstakes simply claims, “On November 22, 1963, President Kennedy was shot and killed as he rode in a motorcade” (Ripmaster 1987:6).

On the college level, Ripmaster’s content analysis included the popular textbook *The Great Republic: A History of American People*. Published by Heath & Co., the book touches on the controversy over the second gunman, but then obfuscates it with the following: “For a long mournful weekend the prime suspect was Lee Harvey Oswald. Almost two decades later, with important questions about the assassination unanswered, millions could recreate those six seconds in Dallas” (Bailyn, 1981:892; Ripmaster, 1987:6). Robert D. Marcus *Brief History of the United States Since 1945* (St. Martins Press), informs us that Kennedy’s murder “facilitated the passage of civil rights bills” and then leaves the reader with the single gunman in the passage that “a sniper shot and killed him” (Marcus, 1975:126; Ripmaster, 1987:6). Ripmaster considers the most “convoluted” explanation to be Dorsey Press college text *America’s History Since 1865* by James A. Hernetta. This account reads, “Kennedy’s accused killer, Lee Harvey Oswald, a 24-year old loner, who spent three years in the Soviet

Union, was gunned down by Jack Ruby, a Dallas nightclub owner, on live network television” (Hernetta, 1985:879). Ripmaster’s study leads him to conclude, “I have not discovered a single high school or college textbook that presents a balanced, revised or historiographic explanation of the JFK assassination” (Ripmaster, 1987:6).

The reification process is consistent with the individualistic/great man theory of history. Former CIA Director Allen Dulles may have had this in mind when he suggested that past cases of political murder in America by individuals acting alone might hold the key to the solution of Kennedy’s fate:

*Dulles:* It’s a fascinating book, but you’ll find a pattern running through here that I think you’ll find in the present case. The last one is the attack on Truman. There you have a plot, but these other cases are all habitual going back to the attack on Jackson in 1835.

*Russell:* The Lincoln Assassination was a plot.

*Dulles:* Yes, but one man was so dominant that it almost wasn’t a plot.  
(Warren Commission Executive Session Transcript, December 16, 1963:52).

Europeans seem more likely to expect the manipulation of politics by hidden forces. In a subtle way, Dulles’ argument brings up one facet of American society that is so different from the prevailing attitudes of Europeans. Conspiracy is a word which does not carry the same connotation in Europe as it does in the United States. To have the process altered by one sharp shooting nut who got lucky one day makes reality a fluke—easier to live with, an exception that proves the rule. Only Latin American countries or banana republics can have the process manipulated by forces which do not fit into the fabric of democracy or pluralism. Why even raise the unanswered questions in textbooks? Why even mention two different official versions of the event exist, including the House Committee’s with a second gunman?

As Fitzgerald points out, there can be no nightmare because ordinary people can make a difference. They run their own lives yet they do not realize that this could be part of cultural hegemony and then feel it must be that it is their society which is getting sicker, that governments act in the people's own interests and that only people go astray. Even government will pursue lingering doubts on important social issues. In this way the reified textbook approach, devoid of pursuing controversy, wraps the world into one nice package.

Across the Atlantic, Raymond Cartier noted that Europe "almost in its totality" did not accept the lone gunman scenario nor that the slaying of Lee Harvey Oswald at the hands of Jack Ruby was "the chance encounter of an anarchist and an exhibitionist" (Schiem, 1988:1–2).

In 1964, the British edition of Thomas Buchanan's *Who Killed Kennedy* became a worldwide best seller. Featured in the book were quotations from distinguished British journalist Serge Groussard, extracted from *l'Aurore*:

The Chicago gangsters of 1963 are the men whom President Kennedy was relentlessly tracking down. Feeling themselves driven back, little by little, from the labor unions they controlled and other screens for their activities, and drunk with rage, they must have decided for many months to strike at the top—to kill the head of the Kennedy family. (Buchanan, British edition, 1964:139)

In addition, Buchanan noted in the British edition that Jack Ruby was a "front man for the underworld, or the Mafia, as you prefer" (Buchanan, British edition, 1964:137–138).

One element was conspicuously absent from the American edition, published later during the same year by Putnam: virtually all the many original references to organized crime were either deleted or watered down. Schiem documents the deletion of Buchanan's own conclusion that "gangsters were involved in this case." Other key words such as "the Mafia"

and “gangsters” were sanitized out, as were the phrases “a gangster murdered Oswald.” The statement “Ruby was one of the most notorious of Dallas gangsters” transformed itself into “Ruby was one of the best-known figures in that border world which lives under continual police surveillance” (Schiem, 1988:2; Buchanan, British edition, 1964:24, 137–139, 140–141, 135; American edition, 1964:25, 151–153).

Central to finding a social problem is the element of making claims.

### Claims

As people watch television news and view social images of events they can readily assign mental meaning to those illustrations. But do they agree on “mental meaning?”

Are social problems the social arrangements which do not work properly? Joel Best (1989) asked this question by studying the contents of various college textbooks on social problems. He discovered that the norm was to look at condition X, find out if it is harmful to either individuals or society and if it is, therefore it is a social problem. If condition Y did not meet the criterion, then there was no social problem. This is the objectivist (or objective) viewpoint since a social problem is seen in terms of objective conditions. A “common sense” approach.

On the other hand, 1) not all harmful conditions are considered social problems, and 2) the objective conditions in the makeup have little in common. Best notes that medical authorities have argued for quite a while that typical American diets contain undesirable levels of fat and cholesterol which plugs into most objective definitions, yet nutritional inadequacies rarely appear on lists of problems. This couples into the subjective nature of social problems—“Social problems are what people view as social problems” (Best, 1989).



Although sexual harassment, sexism and sex discrimination existed before 1970, it was not until consciousness raising groups brought these issues to the forefront of society with demonstrations, lobbying and articles that the issue began to be mentioned in social problems textbooks. Now they become objective. However, these “objective conditions” were not new, they had been in existence for a long time. The change was subjective (Best, 1989).

Other examples could include Black slavery, the current changing status of cigarette smokers and environmentalism. Pesticide companies, tobacco manufacturers and cigarette smokers all have disputed that there is an objective danger. The change in viewpoint was inexorably subjective.

Best concludes that objectivist definitions have two limitations: 1) They fail to recognize that the identification of any condition as a social problem is inevitably subjective; and 2) There is no guide for our collective thinking because each condition has so little in common with the other.

Spector and Kituse (1977) address the “social construction of social problems.” The emphasis is on the processes by which people designate some social conditions as social problems. At the heart of this perspective is claims-making, or the “activities of individuals or groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative social conditions” (Spector and Kituse, 1977:75). The conditions do not even have to exist, only that people make claims about them (Best, 1989). So the constructionist viewpoint of claims-making draws attention to something all social problems have in common—people making claims about them—filling a void the objectivist leaves out.

It is a cultural theory of perception. Considering that some have the powers of legitimation while others do not, an agenda is set.

Once upon a time, science and technology was considered a source of safety; now it has become a source of risk (Douglas and Wildavsky, 1983:10). Indeed, before World War II the permanence of life on earth was unquestionable, but after a bomb dropped on Hiroshima for the first time the permanence of life on earth became questionable.

Douglas and Wildavsky (1983) note that in Zaire the Lele people suffered many usual devastating tropical ills—fever, leprosy, pneumonia, tuberculosis and others. Being struck by lightning was their focus for the affliction of barrenness while bronchitis was attributed to differing types of immorality in which an innocent victim was inflicted by the force of a powerful leader or village elder. “Every society generates a type of accountability and focuses concern on particular dangers” (Douglas and Wildavsky, 1983:7). People make claims and all cultures must deal with risks. An assessment must be made about an appropriate course of action, whether to retreat or go around the bend. Sometimes these are not easy choices with clear-cut patterns of response. Consider the experience of island inhabitants cut off from World War II.

### **Social Construction of Reality and Media**

Walter Lippmann described an island, peacefully inhabited by the French, Germans and English before World War I. When a British steamboat landed with the news that the Germans had been fighting the British and the French for six weeks, the islanders, technically enemies, had acted as friends—“trusting the pictures in their heads.” His simple but important point is that we must distinguish between reality and social reality—which is “the world

outside of actual events” and our mediated knowledge of events because we think and behave based not on what truly is, but on our perceptions of what is (Lippmann, 1972; Shoemaker, 1991:28-29). Shoemaker adds that in ancient times people found what they needed to know was close at hand. This is because they rarely left their community. Yet complexities of modern societies dictate that one is affected by political and economic forces far beyond their communities. To Lippmann, since much of that which matters is beyond our direct grasp and must receive mediation, we are led into a “pseudo-environment” with mass media as the sources for the “pictures in our heads.” Logically, this leads us to ask the following: How closely does the media world resemble the world outside? Is the media a passive transmitter of events or more active in manipulating reality? (Shoemaker, 1991).

One could conclude that most of us have mental pictures of images, right out of central casting, of what people in certain roles are like. For example, if someone wanted to visit with a professor or see a physician, a certain vision of what that party will look like appears in the mind. Yet when one arrives, that socially constructed image might end up to be inaccurate. I suggest that perceptions of individuals in social roles contain socially constructed imagery brought on with inherent common denominators which guide social interaction, but cannot be taken as accurate.

Social realities are not concrete structures, but depend on reciprocal interaction and social construction of participants. They are fragile and can be disrupted in various ways and as people change, roles change. The permeability of realities then change (Mehan and Wood, 1975:6).

According to Thomas Jefferson, the ability of the voting public to cast their votes would be diminished if the press were hamstrung in its ability to inform the citizenry. His vision was incorporated into the Bill of Rights as he wrote, "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of the press." His view on the First Amendment and freedom of speech are characterized by his writings in 1787 when he inscribed: "Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate to choose the latter" (Cater, 1959:75).

Jefferson was elucidating a concept similar to Adam Smith's law of central tendencies. To Smith, the buyer and seller could, in an open environment, go elsewhere to get the benefit of their bargain. To Jefferson, an open market free press should lead to rational discourse and, if ideas were allowed to compete, the truth should emerge. A combination of free speech and the right to know, with the public assessing varied ideas, attitudes and opinions, would construct social reality in the United States.

Thomas J. Pasqua et al. (1990) note that in Jefferson's day more than 400 newspapers were created between 1783 and 1801. The Industrial Revolution, however, led to mass production of many products and replete with urbanization and consolidation of manufacturing commodities, newspapers became mass produced and shrunk in number. Business entrepreneurs developed newspaper chains and by the 1870s individuals such as Edward Wyllis Scripps and Joseph Pulitzer owned newspapers in more than 15 cities (Pasqua et al., 1990:18).

Pulitzer Prize recipient, Ben Bagdikian, notes that there are more than 1,600 papers currently in the United States, yet local monopolies without competition hold a captive

audience in 90 percent of the cities. Most of these publications receive news from their owners such as Gannett, which owns 121 newspapers including *USA Today* (Bagdikian, 1989). Pasqua et al. (1990: 10–23) note that as urban centers expanded during the 20th century, the numbers of newspapers decreased. Fewer publications and more readers meant a more concentrated mediated perspective on the social construction of reality. How then is content determined?

### **Perspectives on Media Content**

#### **Mirror Approach**

News content is an accurate reflection to the audience, with the journalist being neutral, someone who just gathers and transmits information. As Walter Cronkite would say at the end of his CBS news broadcasts, “and that’s the way it is.” Richard Salant, former President of CBS News, echoed the same viewpoint when he maintained, “We don’t make the news, we report it. Our reporters do not cover stories from their point of view, they are presenting stories from nobody’s point of view.” The logo on the top corner of the front page of the *New York Times* reads “All the news that’s fit to print.” This neutral journalist theory represents the news organization’s public point of view (Altheide, 1976:17).

In visualizing the media as such a channel, or pipes and conduits through which information flows, the journalist is viewed as a neutral transmitter of messages. Westley and MacLean (1957) discuss the model in terms of non-purposive messages which are those transmitted without any intent of the communicator to influence his or her audience. The guiding assumption is that nothing important happens to the message once it is in the channel.

Any effects to the audience are attributable to source or audience characteristics and not to anything which happened to the data or information while it was in the pipeline (Westley and MacLean, 1957:32–35; Shoemaker, 1991:29).

In this vein, studies by Paul Lazarsfeld at Columbia's Bureau of Applied Social Research made a finding that the heaviest media consumers were also the first to make up their minds on social issues such that the primary effect of mass media in political campaigns was to reinforce preexisting political attitudes and opinions (Lazarsfeld, 1948; Shoemaker, 1991:31). So early studies had more to do with how audiences respond to specific messages with the focus shifted away from what about the media causes content to be the way it is.

An offshoot of the Mirror Approach was provided more recently by Jack Young. Here the reason for the distortion-free content is because the journalist/reporter is tugged and pulled by counterbalancing forces such as liberals vs. conservatives, gun control advocates vs. National Rifle Association, into providing an accurate view of the world (Young, 1981).

So the Mirror Approach is the null perspective. The neutral journalist transmits events utilizing data in a disinterested way—like just reporting the score of a basketball game and the statistics of the players while it is the audience which sifts and sorts out meaning from that information.

### **Market Approach**

Give the audience (or consumers) what they want. The major media are corporations with stockholders and revenue is available through sales and clients who advertise. Jessica McClure was an 18-month-old girl who was trapped in an abandoned well in Midland, Texas, for a few days in 1987. The little girl, who might not survive the ordeal, united the

community in a successful effort to rescue her. Yet, Howard Rosenberg, writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, noted:

TV made it the story, made the plight of a single child bigger than the plights of the multitudes whose stories were not being covered. There were untold millions of dying and suffering children in October 1987, children whose stories were going untold, for whatever reasons. But the Jessica story was accessible. It was less complex. It had a discernible beginning and end. And it offered the opportunity for self-promotion, for stations to use this tragedy to ingratiate themselves to viewers. It was not enough for them to rely on the networks or CNN. They felt the need to send in their own personnel, in order to establish themselves as extensions of the rescue effort. Yet there are untold millions of dying and suffering children. (Lee and Soloman, 1991:4)

The Market Approach probably reached not only its heights in terms of profits, but also its lows in terms of responsible journalism during the late 19th century. This was a time-era when profits exceeded credibility. As described by De Fluer (1981) and Sandman (1976), this was a period when a truly mass-circulation newspaper industry was able to develop due to factors such as urbanization, immigration, industrialization and technological improvements. This industry produced media barons such as Randolph Hearst and, with a dose of zeal added on, empires were born and so was a new kind of journalism: the Yellow Press.

Defined as a “late nineteenth century type of newspaper publishing that placed profit above truthfulness and significance which emphasizes sensationalism and reader appeal at the expense of public responsibility” (De Fluer, 1981:508), stories were tailored to fit the needs and wants of an emerging mass audience.

As Sandman writes, when a newspaper becomes a business its owners begin to think like business executives. Meanwhile, the larger a paper gets, the more money it makes, the more it struggles to get still bigger and make more money (Sandman, 1976:55).

Because of institutionalized concern with revenues and audiences, changes in network format occur. A recent example being the teaming up of Dan Rather and Connie Chung on the CBS Evening News. But not only that, more importantly marketing research is done in order to diagnose network ratings in order to find the prescription to either cure the ills of ratings which are down or to enhance those which are in the interests and profits of the organization.

The tabloid press of today had its forefathers, chief of whom was Randolph Hearst. In his empire's zeal, the *San Francisco Examiner* reaped huge profits from the famous Fatty Arbuckle case. Arbuckle, a movie star, attended a Labor Day party of Hollywood celebrities in 1921. A 21-year old actress, Virginia Rappe, passed out and died of what the coroner determined was a case involving inflammation of the abdominal lining. Yet Arbuckle was accused of rape and causing her death. As newspapers around the country sent reporters and Extra editions were being published as a result of this prosecution, the *Examiner* took up the hue and cry for the actor's conviction. Ultimately, it would require the jury but six minutes to acquit him. Yet with Hearst's sensationalism his stock portfolios swelled and he was led to comment about the episode: "As long as this thing goes on I'll have no trouble in selling newspapers" (Kurtis, *American Justice, Arts and Entertainment Network*: November 17, 1995).

In modern times, it might be a fair question to ask about the mainstream media. By adding news consultants to shape a product, have broadcasters and journalists become followers rather than leaders of content?



Lacy (1988) found that an increase in intercity competition, such as having competing newspapers, encroaches on the suburban market which causes suburban newspapers to increase coverage of local news in metropolitan cities. While Carrol's (1989) analysis found that the market size was related to coverage of certain events: the larger the market size the more television stations focus on spontaneous news events, leaving smaller market stations to spend more time on features and other pre-planned type stories.

Utilizing the Market Approach, McCombs (1972) found that of the social system as a whole, the amount of economic growth is a determinant on news coverage. In terms of Gross National Product, he found that growth is relatively constant, but it's in relation to the proportion of available wealth. Here consumers and advertisers will spend more or less, depending on how much money they have so that "the media will expand and grow at a rate dictated by the general economy." Yet this caveat goes with it—spending on *new* media comes at the *expense* of the *old*, such that the proportion devoted to all media remains the same.

Broadcasting costs money, yet someone must pick up the tab. Financing means that broadcasters pay for programming and all equipment to maintain and transmit it. True, they are reimbursed by advertisers. However, this does not mean advertisers are "out of pocket" since they are reimbursed by viewers/listeners (Voelkner, 1975:12–13). But is the audience uncoerced? Are they voluntarily choosing anew each day which media to view or to purchase and to devote their time? Market perspective asserts that entrepreneurs appeal to the desires of making a good living and with it abandon their ethics in that pursuit. The next approach, that of the Fourth Estate, provides balance to news in an unbalanced marketplace of ideas.

#### **Fourth Estate**

This perspective posits that the media adds to the process of checks and balances between the three branches of government (Congress, Executive, and Supreme Court). As such the journalistic profession or its members wield influence in the processes of the nation by informing the citizenry and keeping a responsible and aggressive eye on government.

Rooted in the First Amendment, the notion of a free press is that Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech or of the press.

The Watergate case, which led to the resignation of Richard Nixon from the presidency, made folk heroes of *Washington Post* reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. In a Hollywood movie based on their endeavors they are seen pounding shoe leather to the pavement as they track down leads for a story which would astonish Americans.

During the Johnson years, a 47-volume report of American involvement in Vietnam, replete with secret cables, memos and other documents was compiled by the Defense Department. This history became known as the Pentagon Papers. Daniel Ellsberg, who worked on the papers, opposed the war and leaked them to the *New York Times* in the hope that they might influence public opinion against the war. Despite the fact that the documents were stolen as well as classified, the *Times* published a series of articles about them anyway. A legal uproar followed and the Nixon Administration went to court, arguing that publication endangered national security, and received a temporary restraining order to stop the presses. Later the Supreme Court overturned that decision, believing publication of the papers did not constitute a danger severe enough to suspend freedom of the press.

The Fourth Estate approach is derived from ideals of the Enlightenment and carries the belief that man is a creature of reason who wants to know the truth and will be guided by it, that he can find truth by applying his reason without outside restrictions while he is also born with inalienable natural rights and that he forms governments of his own volition in order to protect those rights and hence the best government is that which governs least (Voelkner, 1975:11).

The result is that the press must have a minimum of restraints imposed on it because man can find the truth with the free flow of ideas and then there are built-in corrections to government control. A free and aggressive press will uncover those other parts of the profession if they lie or distort. Remember, after all, man puts out all information and ideas to the cold calculus of reason. He may find some truth amidst falsehood or some falsehood among truth, but overall and in the long run truth will prevail. In other words, government should keep its hands off the press.

With this belief, if the press is not an instrument of government, it also does not speak for an elite ruling class. People discern between truth and falsehood, so it is essential that minorities as well as majorities; the politically weak as well as the politically strong should have roughly equal access to public opinion and the media.

With the Fourth Estate approach, the media as a check and balance on societal abuses by any of the three branches of government is charged with enlightening the public, carrying information and discussions on political issues. But not only that, its charge is to protect individual rights by sounding the alarm when events warrant investigation, whenever they are infringed upon or threatened. The press is in private hands which fits the tenets of Anglo-

American thought—government should stay out of communication, as the First Amendment proscribes (Voelkner, 1976:11-12).

At the turn of the century, Ida Tarbell began a 19-part series on “The Rise of Standard Oil Company.” The series revealed a number of secret agreements—kickbacks, rebates and the like between Standard Oil and the railroads. With an inflamed public at hand, the government brought suit under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and as a result of “the first great magazine crusade” Standard Oil was fined \$29 million (Sandman, 1976:34).

Early magazine exposes were embraced by then President Roosevelt in 1902, but then the exposes turned against him. With this turning of the tables, a frustrated Roosevelt labeled the writers as “muckrakers.” By this he elaborated that “there are those who plow through the dirt without ever seeing the positive side of life.” The public came to agree with Roosevelt and crusading magazines began to lose circulation (Sandman, 1976:54–55).

Sandman (1976) believes muckraking to be a cyclical phenomenon with ebbs and flows. He notes that although the public accepted Roosevelt’s denunciation of “muckraking,” the tide shifted. By 1915, the most typical front-page newspaper article was not an expose or a feature but a concise account of news supplied by the Associated Press wire service. In other words, with mass production, larger papers enjoyed increasing financial success which resulted in a corresponding growth of a conservative outlook, especially in the editorial columns, and as journalism became more and more a big business there was also a noticeable development in standardization (Sandman, 1976).

World War I, Prohibition, speakeasies and gangsters, the introduction of movies with name stars such as Mary Pickford and Fatty Arbuckle, and the cry against immigrants in the

United States, as in the Sacco and Vanzetti case and the Palmer raids would change this and suddenly the general public began to wonder about what goes on behind locked doors. Investigative reporting was back.

Then came the Depression. Newspaper revenues and circulation dropped dramatically. Radio became the mass medium for spot news. As Sandman (1976) relates, the vacuum tube had a tremendous advantage over the printing press: speed, it warms up faster, requires no typesetters, it could have a story on the air minutes after the event itself without delivery trucks while newspapers take hours. By the end of the 1930s, it was obvious to editors that the “scoop” and the “extra” were obsolete (Sandman, 1976:62–63).

Yet, another resurgence came some 60 years later from the time Teddy Roosevelt denounced the investigative journalist. Social disquiet and political scandal of the 1970s gave rise to a renewed spirit of investigative journalism. On the basis of this, Sandman argues that muckraking is a cyclical phenomenon and not a constant in American journalism (Sandman, 1976:55). Another example would be that during wars, new boundaries are set for acceptable print, such as the Sedition Act of 1918 which attempted to outlaw “any disloyal, profane, scurrilous or abusive language about the form of government in the United States or the Constitution” (Mott, 1962:623–624).

A study by Mark Fishman (1978) indicates another cycle of newsworthiness. That is once a type of crime is defined as news it will continue to be news. To Fishman, once the focus of media coverage on muggings of the elderly in New York City was raised as theme by one news organization, the trend set in with many of the others due to internal monitoring and copying of news. The result was the perception of a crime wave. However, there was no

actual increase in victimization rates whatsoever. By highlighting this activity from a wide pool of known crimes, the investigative effort highlighted a sudden epidemic (Fishman, 1978). I would add that this agenda-building becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy because with no actual increase in victimization rates, the rate will eventually rise due to either a burst of police energy or fear and panic of the elderly.

### **Hegemony**

This perspective asserts that media content is influenced by the ideology of those with power in society. Unlike in some countries where the media is known openly to be controlled by the state, media institutions serve a hegemonic function by continually producing a cohesive ideology, a set of commonsensical values and norms that serve to reproduce and legitimate the social structure. As key parts of the economic system are controlled by those with economic power, mass media carry an ideology consistent with those interests, which ensures that society will continue in its present form. The ability to define a situation gives the media its ideological power, setting boundaries of legitimacy through the determination of meaning.

Shoemaker (1991:194–195) observes that hegemonic values in news are said to be particularly effective in permeating common sense because they are made to appear natural and are placed there not by coercion, but indirectly through the normal workings of media routines and the interconnections between the media and other power centers. Indeed the relative autonomy of the media gives their messages more legitimacy and credibility than if they were directly controlled, as in the former USSR. Thus, by not appearing openly coercive, the control is all the more effective. This certifies the limits within which all

competing definitions of reality will contend. The frames of events imposed by officials are highlighted and voices that fall outside dominant elite circles are marginalized (Shoemaker, 1991:194–195).

Gitlin's (1980) study of media coverage concerning the New Left and the Students for a Democratic Society led him to the conclusion that by diffusing the message of political dissent an image is created that the system really works. The focus of coverage is restricted to single grievances which the system however reluctantly, can correct without altering fundamental social relations. As a result people in the event as producers of meaning have no voice in defining themselves. The context in which the media frames their activity gives the beneficiaries of the status quo and the dominant system the claim to general legitimacy.

Former *Washington Post* editor Ben Bagdikian relates that the war in Vietnam was more than 10 years old before a handful of reporters like David Halberstam and Malcolm Brown were able to break into the standard news with the truth about “national illusions.” Though on the scene in Vietnam, Halberstam found his pessimistic account was not considered by stateside editors who had received a more optimistic version from Pentagon and administration officials who were reluctant to contradict it. For a while the *New York Times* had a reporter in El Salvador named Raymond Bonner who reported in what was considered a professionally sound way the fact that the war in El Salvador was a civil war, that it had many ugly aspects to it on the government side as well as others and that Death Squads of the military were still active. He was recalled by the *New York Times* and replaced by a reporter who was much more influenced by releases of our embassy in El Salvador. “No memo needed to be posted that reports from places like Nicaragua and El Salvador that ran contrary to the

official view would produce pressure which would probably be acceded to” (Bagdikian, 1990).

One CBS reporter was in the process of putting together a sympathetic piece on “Chicago Seven” member Rennie Davis. It was to be five to six minutes long exploring how Davis, the son of one of President Truman’s Council of Economic Advisors, had grown into a radical leader. His hopes of bringing the account to fruition were dashed when the superiors at CBS management canceled the story—with the explanation that it was not balanced with a refutation by a spokesman of the HUAC type (Gitlin, 1980:174). Indeed Shoemaker notes that the events we remember from this period are often the exceptional like the 1968 Chicago riots at the Democratic National Convention because the media must not stray away too far from events the public knows are happening (Shoemaker, 1991:195).

In this view, editors rise to their positions only after internalizing the norms of the journalist program (Breed, 1955). In covering the social world newswriters seek certainty in consensus. This allows them to adapt standards of comparison which tend to be insular and self-reinforcing while also producing a modicum of certainty (Schoemaker:1991:101). This, in turn, reproduces like-minded people or the hegemony within which it exists. This can be seen in a quote from *Los Angeles Times* publisher Otis Chandler. When asked in 1977 about *Times* staffer Robert Scheer, former editor of the leftist publication *Ramparts*, Chandler retorted, “A radical? If that were true he wouldn’t be here” (MacDougall, 1988:12).

Lee and Soloman (1991) report on a content analysis involving 40 months of transcripts from *Nightline*. Over 10 million Americans watch the program on any given night. Most of *Nightline’s* participants are basically movers and shakers from powerful institutions.



interpreting the world for viewers. Almost absent from the guest list were representatives of civic and community organizations, popular social movements, minority communities and so on. The report found that “*Nightline*’s guest list is heavily loaded in favor of government spokespeople, assorted ‘experts’ and journalists” (Hoynes and Croteau, 1989).

Out of all U.S. guests, a full 80 percent were professionals, government officials or corporate executives. Only 5 percent spoke in favor of “public interest” (peace, environmental, consumer organizations, etc.). Even less than 2 percent were leaders of middle class, labor or poor people and their representatives. They were “provided virtually no opportunity to speak out.” *Nightline* thereby reinforces the notion that non-elites must play by the rules set by the upper classes which have the ability to define reality for society as a whole (Hoynes and Croteau, 1989).

The Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in the U.S.S.R. became a big story in April 1986. Yet, many other nuclear accidents have gone unreported: In 1986 there were 300+ documented incidents, an increase of more than 24 percent since 1984. Not reporting them strengthened the industry’s undeserved reputation for safety, while other reports of toxic dumping in Third-World countries which are considered allies is not covered (Schoemaker, 1991:95).

Censorship can involve overlooking a story or undercovering one. Among such suppressed stories were biological warfare research in university laboratories (Lee and Soloman, 1991:91), recycled radioactive metals in American households, the destruction of naval records at the National Archives, and inaccurate estimation of global oil reserves for corporate benefit (Phillips, 1999).

Still, a direct chilling example was provided by former Washington Post Reporter Carl Bernstein (1977) who revealed that, after World War II when the CIA was formed, publishers and executive management have eagerly volunteered their services for the benefit of that agency. His investigation discovered that over 400 American journalists “have secretly carried out assignments for the Central Intelligence Agency.” The journalists “provided a full range of clandestine services, from simple intelligence gathering to serving as go-betweens with spies in Communist countries.” Some were recruited to be paid CIA intelligence officers while others were conduits for money and carried messages to agents and operatives. Included among the reporters were respected Pulitzer Prize winners.

Some of this hegemonic relationship was an outgrowth of fighting global communism. In that struggle Bernstein perceptively notes “the traditional line separating the American Press Corps and government was often indistinguishable.” Media officials were sometimes paid for their CIA-related services while others only signed secrecy agreements.

On the FBI side of the coin, J. Edgar Hoover cultivated media outlets in order to “covertly influence the public’s perception of persons and organizations.”

The Bureau’s use of the news media took two different forms: placing unfavorable articles and documentaries about targeted groups, and leaking derogatory information intended to discredit individuals. (Senate Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations, book three, 1976:35)

In its final report issued in 1979 the House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded that there was a likelihood of conspiracy in the assassination of Martin Luther King. Although they could not determine the extent and nature of a probable plot, they were appalled at what they termed FBI “manipulation of the media” directed at King which might have created a climate for his murder. As an example the HSCA Report cites a memo

uncovered in 1977 as the result of a Freedom of Information Act request. The memo reveals that the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* was an *eager ally* in simply printing handouts of derogatory editorials the Bureau wanted published—a relationship they concluded to be “morally reprehensible, illegal, felonious, and unconstitutional” making them a “*media asset*” (HSCA Report, 1979:437, 441).

## CHAPTER 3. METHODS

### Lasswell's Method to Study Media

Archival research utilizing content analysis can be useful in allowing one to explore the social construction of reality. Shoemaker (1991) observes that there are two approaches to this methodology—qualitative and quantitative. He observes that “reducing large amounts of text to quantities does not provide a complete picture of meaning and contextual code, since texts may contain many other forms of emphasis besides sheer repetition.” Furthermore, qualitative methodology:

- Is a highly useful tool in revealing the focus of individual, group, institutional or societal attention and interaction (Berelson, 1952). It is a powerful indicator pointing to a state of beliefs, values and ideologies (Rosengren, 1981).
- Allows one to “tease out” determining but hidden assumptions which in their unique ordering remain opaque to quantitative content analysis (Gitlin, 1980:303).
- Allows flexibility; aspires to a level of complexity that remains true to the actual complexity and contradictions of media artifacts (Gitlin, 1980:303).
- Allows subtlety, which can be lost in quantitative studies (Gitlin, 1980:304).
- Allows one to look more closely at political moments (Gitlin, 1980:304).
- When applied to content analysis of documents, is superior to techniques such as interviews in that [qualitative methodology] usually yields unobtrusive measures in which neither the sender nor receiver of the message is aware that it is being analyzed. Hence, there is little danger that the act of measurement itself will act as a force for change that will confound the data (Webb et al., 1966).

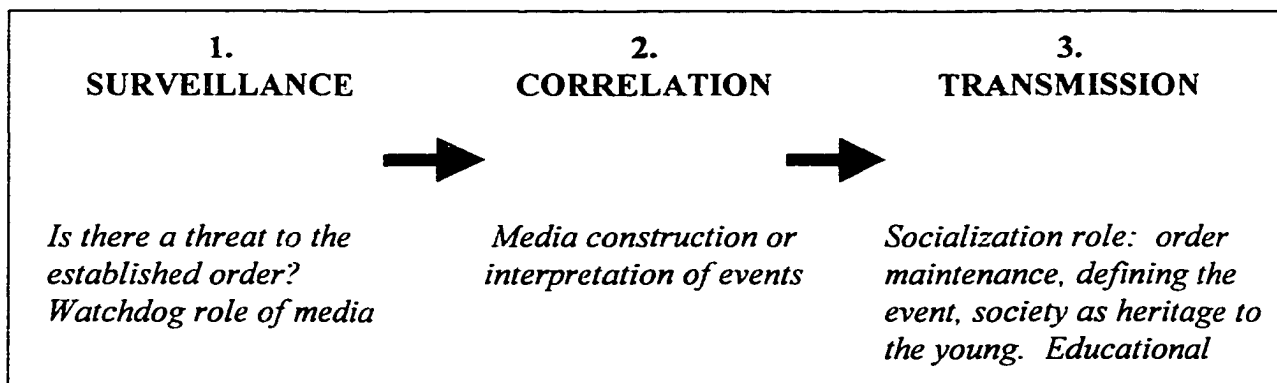
Gitlin (1980:305) notes that it is late in the day for methodological exclusivity in the act of interpretation and criticism of sociological phenomena. We should be careful not to harness ourselves exclusively to quantitative methodology.

### Lasswell's Elements of Media

One approach to analyzing media content was designed by Harold Lasswell (Shoemaker, 1984:24). In an essay published shortly after World War II, he developed a three-stage approach, involving the fundamental elements:

Surveillance of the environment, the watchdog role of the media;  
Correlation of parts of society in response to the environment in order to produce an interpretation of reality;  
Transmission of social heritage from one generation to another.  
 (Lasswell, 1948:118; Wilson and Gutierrez, 1985:32-36; Wright, 1975:8-9)

Lasswell, therefore, notes that the communication process begins with 1) a survey of the environment, resulting in 2) a response which then is 3) transmitted through socialization (Lasswell, 1948:119). This process is schematically represented in Figure 1 below which includes his elements and approach to analyzing media.



**Figure 1. Lasswell approach to analyzing media**

To Lasswell and Wright *surveillance* is the handling of news, while *correlation* represents interpretation of conduct resulting in the *transmission* of cultural values, knowledge, and norms as a result of it (Lasswell, 1948; Wright, 1975:8-9).

Wilson and Gutierrez provide two examples of this:

Applying Lasswell's functions, it is not surprising to discover that most people in the United States know very little about Native Americans. The news media historically treated the Native population as parts of the *surveillance* function, watching the horizon and reporting on them as they defended their lands and culture from the intrusion of the westward-moving Europeans who came to the American continent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In terms of *correlation* they were defined as primitive and pagan people who blocked the manifest destiny of the whites destined to populate the North American continent. The native population was worthy only of annihilation, subjugation, or consignment to reservations. Finally, the social inheritance of the continent—the true American culture—was defined by the European settlers as the culture developed, not by the Native American inhabitants; exemplifying *transmission*. (Wilson and Gutierrez, 1985:33–34)

Looking toward other minority groups such as blacks, Asians, and Latinos, they mentioned that stereotypes dominated the entertainment media, such as movies and radio, then they write:

Similarly, news media rarely covered activities in these communities unless, in accordance with their surveillance function, they were perceived as posing a threat to the established order, or in accordance with the correlation function, they were covered during colorful cultural festivals. Thus the mass audience only saw a slice of minority communities, one that did not jar their perceptions of these groups. In fact, the media portrayals probably helped legitimize and reinforce such preconceptions. In the absence of alternative portrayals and broadened news coverage, one-sided portrayals and news articles could easily become the reality in the minds of the audience. Whites might be seen in a wide range of roles, in a movie, ranging from villains to heroes. In contrast, blacks were seen as lazy, shuffly no-goods. There were no alternative portrayals to counter the stereotype. (Wilson and Gutierrez, 1985:41–42)

### Research Question

In order to examine news media construction of social phenomena on major issues, this study involves an examination of the Kennedy assassination. It utilizes Lasswell's elements of analyzing media through the lens of the four perspectives on media content:

The *Market Approach* would predict that the major media would give the consumer audience what they want. Since a clear majority of Americans have rejected the lone gunman theory, the idea of the second gunman in media content would sell copies, appealing to profits.

The *Fourth Estate* conception would predict that as a monitor towards checks and balances, the major media would pursue the story with responsible investigative reporting, being careful not to sensationalize.

*Hegemony* would predict, in light of both the Katzenbach memo and the conversation between Lyndon Johnson and Earl Warren, that the major media would absorb and neutralize the greatest possible doubt of conspiracy in order to create the impression that the political power structure is secure and legitimate in the wake of JFK's murder, so that reality would be constructed to create an image of the stable institution of government—what the new President and Katzenbach believed to be a necessity.

The *Mirror Approach* would predict that the major media would just gather and transmit information with the journalist being neutral, like a television camera pointed at the eye of an event.

Lasswell asked the question: “Who says what, to whom, and with what effect?” (Shoemaker, 1991:9). Babbie observes that content analysis is “particularly well suited towards answering this classic question of communications research” (Babbie, 1986:268).

The elements of this study involve:

- *Surveillance*: What is regarded as newsworthy and what is left out? Is the official record distorted or not? Are there preconceptions?

These elements can provide the reader with an opportunity to observe handling of information in order to assess agenda-setting, and with it, aspects of the social construction of reality both with the Katzenbach memo or with two official versions of history in mind.

- *Correlation*: What is the opinion of the editors and publishers expressed in editorials? What are the themes of headlines and labels ascribed to the assassination? What pictures are chosen?

These elements can provide the correlation role by connecting interpretation of phenomena in a systematic way.

- *Transmission*: What is the overall world view or outlook presented to the public? What approach best explains the manner in which the media’s role in socializing the public took shape?

### **Emergence**

Skocpol advocated studying “existing historical arrangements at selected strategic points in time” (Skocpol, 1984:366). The sample would be a purposive one which views the event at strategic window frames in time. With purposive sampling, the researcher uses his judgment to pick subjects which represent the population (Berg, 1989:110, 177)—much like



election predictions based on average or common denominators of an election district (Bailey, 1978:83). The researcher picks the sample that will yield the most comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (Babbie, 1986:246–247). As Krippendorf explains, one samples by “sampling units until the sample can be judged sufficiently representative of the universe” (Krippendorf, 1980:177). The CBS videos aired in 1967, 1975, 1988, 1992 and 1993. The significant “window frames” for *Time* and *Life* are summarized in Figure 2.

Year		Reason
1964	Version one emerges	The release of the Warren Report
1966	Growing doubts	A rise in interest as people finally assess the Warren Report. The first significant books which analyze the 26 volumes of evidence are released. Public opinion has shifted from acceptance of the Warren Report to dissension. As Blakey relates: “A Louis Harris poll published on October 19, 1964, revealed 31 percent of the people doubted Oswald had acted alone. That figure would double in just a few short years” (Blakey, 1981:40).
1975	How much of our history do we really know?	Post-Watergate and a rise in cynicism about government.
1977	Investigation reopened	House Select Committee on Assassinations is formed (HSCA).
1979	Version two of assassination emerges	Release of the HSCA report that concludes the existence of a second gunman behind a grassy knoll. Now there are two equally official competing versions of our history.
1983	Anniversary	Twentieth anniversary of the event.
1988	Anniversary	Twenty-fifth anniversary year.
1993	Anniversary	Thirtieth anniversary year.
1998	Anniversary	Thirty-fifth anniversary year.

\*Years and their reasons for inclusion in purposive sampling.

**Figure 2. Important years of *Time/Life* publications regarding the JFK assassination\***

Holsti writes, “content validity, also referred to as face validity, has most frequently been relied upon by content analysis. If the purpose is a purely descriptive one, content validity is normally sufficient” (Holsti, 1969:143). The CBS documentaries and issues of *Time* and *Life* magazines have face validity.

Reliability is achieved with the use of a second coder (Stempel, 1981:127). Babbie writes that if the two were to spend some time reaching agreement on evaluation they “would probably be able to do a good job of classifying documents in the same way independently,” a process known as intersubjectivity (Babbie, 1986:46, 112). Stempel believes that with briefings between coders as the study progresses, reliability can be achieved (Stempel, 1981:127–129).

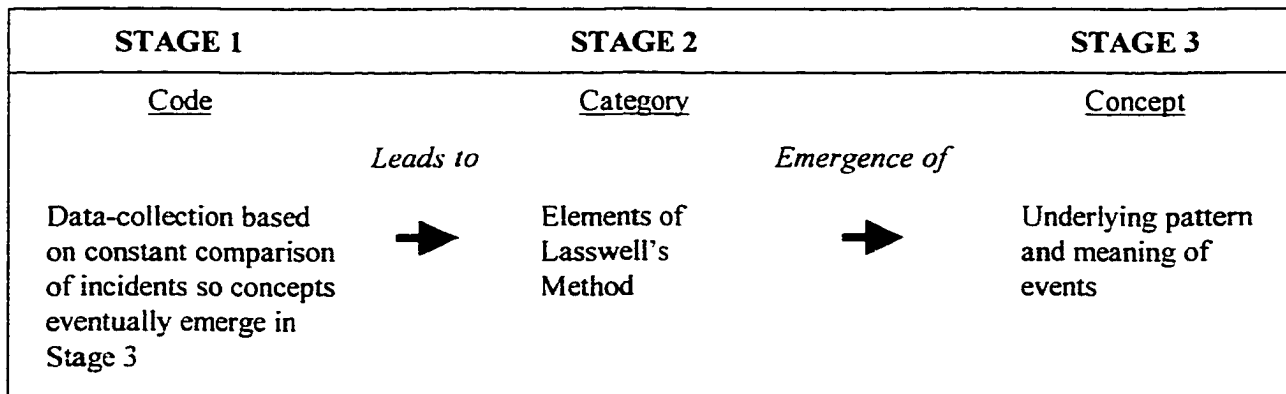
Content analysis allows one to study processes occurring over long periods of time (Babbie, 1986:282). The CBS documentaries and issues of *Time* and *Life* magazines were viewed in a descriptive longitudinal fashion not tied down to (nor necessarily excluding) counting numbers, since the items which most often appear may not be the most important ones and that one must take emphasis into account (Gitlin, 1980:305). With induction, general principles are developed from specific observations. An inductive approach to the contents allows the messages to guide the analysis rather than preexisting themes created by the researcher (Berg, 1989).

Unlike field research where there is probably nothing one can do after the fact to ensure greater reliability in observation and categorization, re-coding can be done for consistency if necessary, as the tapes and periodicals can be viewed again (Babbie, 1986:282). This allows the researcher to conduct a fluid longitudinal study, not one trapped in a straight

jacket of preexisting categories since messages are guiding the analysis (Berg, 1989). A technique echoed by Glaser and Strauss as being a “good idea” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:107-108).

Therefore, the analyst starts out with no preconceived codes—he remains entirely open, a process known as open-coding. Glaser (1992) refers to this as a basic “grounding approach” which leads to emergent discoveries since concepts are derived from the data and not forced on the researcher in advance as in survey research. A choice was made in this study between an emergence versus forced pattern, finding emergence to be deemed the most appropriate course of discovery.

Glaser (1992) writes that in this way, by constant comparison of incident to incident or item to item, we find that when the underlying pattern emerges one goes on to follow the pattern, keeping in mind that “systematic regularities in content result from stable underlying structural factors” (Shoemaker, 1991:24). They reflect the behaviors, attitudes and values of those who created the material (Berger, 1991:25; Krippendorf, 1980:171). This process involves three steps (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Emergence as a method of discovery**

Glaser (1992) believes that forcing the categories on the researcher can ignore other properties which, in contrast should be allowed to emerge. Shoemaker (1991:24) notes that systematic regularities in content result from stable underlying structural forces, reflecting the behaviors, attitudes and values of those who created the material.

The explanation of emergence is that properties derive from structure and that explanation of phenomena cannot be reduced to laws of chemistry determined in advance (Pokinghorne, 1983:56). The process then becomes a fluid study.

With such grounded research an inquiry is made for a set of highly relevant elements in order to avoid a “helter skelter of too many groupings with properties that yield no analysis” (Glaser, 1992:40).

In other words, a grounded research approach includes the two prime criteria of “good scientifically inductive practice,” those of parsimony and scope. This is because it can account for as much variation in the action scene (scope) with as few elements for categories as possible (Glaser, 1992:18). The fit emerges from the data as a result, with forcing corrected by constant comparison of the data between coders to discover underlying patterns (Glaser, 1992:18).

In this study, Stempel’s method was employed. First the coders spent a few weeks conducting trial runs. Then the responses were compared in order to reach a common frame of reference by comparing responses. As the coding progressed, spot checks were made to be sure the reliability level was not deteriorating. The researcher’s codebook (Appendix B) was structured, with categorization focused on significant issues in the case. Conferences were then held as each article or broadcast was discussed and analyzed until intersubjectivity

reached the point of direct comparison and scrutiny. In this way, categories were discovered by an examination of the data. As Berg (1989) relates, such an inductive approach allows messages to guide the analysts, keeping in mind that “systematic regularities in content result from stable, underlying structural factors” (Shoemaker, 1991:24). At the end, each coder check-coded the other’s work on each article or broadcast for the finished product.

While we agreed over 90 percent of the time after trial runs, when disagreement ensued, the concerned item was discarded or omitted after consultations between coders (Stempel, 1981:127–128) in order to follow the “systematic regularities in content” which Shoemaker writes “result from underlying structural factors” (Shoemaker, 1991:24). We explored the data according to Lasswell’s method looking for the three elements: 1) Surveillance (What is newsworthy and what is left out? Were there preconceptions? Is the official record distorted or not?); 2) Correlation (What are the opinions of editors, publishers and editorials? What are the themes of headlines and labels ascribed to the assassination? What pictures were chosen?); and 3) Transmission (What is the overall world view presented?) We found systematic regularities in content.

All studies have limitations, if not for any reason but for the fact we are human. Writing in the *Practice of Social Research*, Babbie says that “probably the greatest advantage of content analysis is its economy in terms of both time and money. A single college student could undertake a content analysis” (Babbie, 1986:281–282). Of course, the more support one has through cross-checks by qualified others, the better, hence a second coder was utilized in this study.

Babbie notes that content analysis is limited to the examinations of recorded communications (Babbie, 1986:282). That which is not recorded is therefore irretrievable. Further, we can find support for a model, but support, like correlation in statistics, is not absolute proof.

**CHAPTER 4. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF *TIME/LIFE***

On November 22, 1963, Abraham Zapruder was a 58-year-old, middle-aged businessman who manufactured and marketed his own line of women's and young ladies' clothing. Located at 501 Elm Street in Dallas, his shop, "Jennifer Juniors, Inc. of Dallas," was located on the northeast corner of Elm and Houston Streets in a section of the city known as Dealey Plaza.

That morning, President Kennedy was due to arrive at Love Field and a motorcade would take him to the Trade Mart where he was scheduled to deliver a speech at a luncheon hosted by business and civic leaders. Since the parade was scheduled to pass through Dealey Plaza, as it carried the President, Zapruder considered utilizing his 8-millimeter camera to capture the moment for his home video library.

But, alas, the weather did not seem to cooperate and with overcast skies and threatening rain, the day seemed poor for picture-taking. So he left his camera at home and headed for the fourth story office, only to be asked by his secretary, Lillian Rogers, about his camera. He responded that he left his camera at home because "I wouldn't have a chance even to see the President." After some prodding, he reconsidered since the President did not go by the office every day and returned home to retrieve his 8-millimeter Bell and Howell movie camera. It would be a decision that would end up immersed in profound social consequences.

Nature ran its course, the clouds lifted as Zapruder drove home and the bubbletop to the Chief Executive's car would definitely not be used, affording Zapruder a rather optimum day for photographing. At first he considered filming from his office window, but decided

that the camera angle was too narrow, so after experimenting with another location, he finally opted for a four-foot pedestal on a rectangular block of concrete. To his left was the Texas School Book Depository, 200 feet away, and to his right a sloping grassy hill or knoll with a picket fence behind which was a parking lot (see Appendix A, Exhibit 1a & b).

Although the parade was late, when it finally arrived at 12:30 p.m. C.S.T., Zapruder would preserve on film one of the most gruesome and significant events in recent American history—the murder of John Fitzgerald Kennedy in sordid color.

Describing the moment, he would later testify before the Warren Commission that with the first shot President Kennedy leaned over and grabbed himself in the chest area; a reaction he took as a joke, saying “Oh, he got me.” Zapruder continued to relate the moment, testifying that he thought “the President isn’t going to make jokes like this” and before he had a chance to organize his mind, he “heard a second shot and then his head opened up and blood and everything came out—I can hardly talk about it,” after which the record notes Zapruder started crying (7H570).

This film would become a primary piece of evidence, recording the crime as no eyewitness possibly could describe in words, to be replayed and analyzed over and over again by investigators, scholars, independent researchers and critics. Frame by frame it froze in motion the movements and reactions of the principals who were hit by gunfire as the event progressed and in the process setting important parameters surrounding the dimensions of the shooting.

Vital as this evidence was, the authorities would not obtain possession of the original film. As Trask (1994) relates in his book, *Pictures of the Pain*, the film was developed at



Eastman Kodak along with three first generation copies, after Zapruder received assurances at the processing lab that no additional copies would be bootlegged. By the evening of November 22, two first generation copies were in the possession of the Secret Service, obtained through the efforts of Agent Forrest Sorrels (Trask, 1994:81, citing U.S. Secret Service memo dated 1/22/64, Sorrels' memo to Inspector Kelley #CO-2-33-030).

With the original still in Zapruder's possession, *Life* magazine editor Richard B. Stolley contacted the photographer, inquiring about the footage. As Zapruder confirmed that he had the film and that it did indeed show the assassination, Stolley made several offers to buy the footage. Eventually he succeeded in purchasing "print rights only" along with possession of the original movie for \$50,000 (Stolley, *Esquire*, 11/73:134-135; Trask, 1994:85).

This left Zapruder with the option of negotiating a business deal for "motion picture and telecast" rights. Back in New York, boardroom executive C. D. Jackson proposed that *Time, Inc.* purchase all rights. As Stolley carried out these instructions on behalf of his employer, he found Zapruder more eager to make a deal with him rather than beginning the uncomfortable process of negotiating a sale with strangers. Trask and Stolley relate the contract called for Zapruder to sell the original and the three first-generation copies along with all "rights, titles, and interests" to *Time/Life, Inc.* for \$150,000, with one installment of \$25,000 to be paid immediately and the rest to be allotted each January 3rd until the final disbursement was received by Zapruder or his heirs on that date in 1968 (Trask, 1994:91; Stolley, *Entertainment Weekly*, 1/17/92).

Although it is not the intention of this treatise to examine the first early issues of *Time* or *Life*, it is important to note that early themes of correlation were put in motion quite rapidly. *Time* pronounced Oswald guilty in its December 6, 1963, issue, which was released just days after the shooting with the headline, “The Man Who Killed Kennedy.” Likewise, Jack Ruby was a loner, pictured as a man who could not forget how Jackie had suffered “so he took his gun and killed Oswald.” He was also a man who “big timers never even knew existed.”

*Life's* take on Oswald was remarkably similar. In its November 29, issue, released within hours of Oswald's death, he was pronounced guilty without any adversary testing of the evidence with the title theme, “Assassin: The Man Held—And Killed—For Murder.”

With reports of eyewitnesses circulating about gunfire emanating from the front of Kennedy's vehicle, and the opinion of Parkland doctors that JFK's throat wound was one of *entrance* (Meagher, 1967:149–159), the specter of a second gunman was raised since the “Oswald window” was behind the President. Speculation of a larger plot loomed on the horizon. Yet, with *Life* in possession of the Zapruder film, the public would have to trust *Life's* interpretation of what it depicted. To Paul Mandel, writing under the definitive headline, “An End to Nagging Rumors” in the December 6, 1963, edition, the film “shows the President turning his body far around to the right as he waves to someone in the crowd. His throat is exposed to the sniper's nest just before he clutches it” (see Appendix A, Exhibit 2; excerpt from Paul Mandel's article in *Life* magazine).

As Policoff (1975:30) put it, “Such speculation presented no problem for *Life*,” since ironically, Sylvia Meagher (1967:461) pointed out, buried in the same issue were published

frames of the movie showing he was facing forward throughout the crucial time span and never turned around as Mandel claimed. In line with the surveillance function this was a distortion of the film's actual content as Kennedy is clearly facing forward during the entire shooting sequence, but it did have the virtue of explaining away a second gunman from the front.

### ***Life*, October 2, 1964 – Release of Warren Report and Version One**

The Warren Commission issued its report on September 27, 1963. Their conclusion was that Lee Harvey Oswald, alone and unaided, murdered President John F. Kennedy and, as such, there was no conspiracy, domestic or foreign. Simply stated, the government's case was that a man in a building shot a man in a car. Although the 26 supporting volumes of evidence would not be released by the Government Printing Office until months later on November 24 while the bulk of evidence would be suppressed, *Life* wholeheartedly endorsed the document in the October 2, 1964, edition by claiming "the major significance of the report is that it lays to rest the lurid rumors and wild speculations that had spread after the assassination." Further, the Report "confirms the basic facts assumed since that tragic Nov. 22"—"Oswald did it alone" while "Jack Ruby acted entirely on his own." The assassination was the result of bureaucratic blunders. Of course, there was no way to check out footnotes, citations and references which might support this since the 26 volumes of evidence had yet to be released.

In their outright endorsement of the report, *Life* notes that "20,000 pages of testimony were taken" with "15 staff lawyers spread out all over the U.S.," "aided by the full investigatory forces of the U.S. and Texas." This "quest for every available shred of

evidence” was “a monumental and historical task,” as if the volume of evidence can somehow be equated with the accuracy of the report.

The assassination was the cover story which carried four inconsequential Zapruder frames alongside the words, “The Warren Report. How the Commission Pieced Together the Evidence. Told by One of its Members.” That member was Gerald R. Ford of Michigan. In reality, at least two different versions of this issue were published. The Zapruder film, of course, shows the President struck in the head by the fatal shot at frame 313, whereupon his body is violently thrust backward leaving the impression of a shot fired from the front by a second gunman. The first edition carried frame 323 with the accompanying caption reading that the bullet “snapped his head to one side” (see Appendix A—Exhibits 3, 4 and 5). This version of the shooting was quickly withdrawn and replaced by a second version in which Frame 313—the impact frame of the fatal head shot—was utilized with a new caption. The corresponding text was altered to read that “the direction from which the shots came was established by this picture taken at the instant the bullet struck the rear of the President’s head, and passing through, caused the front part of his skull to explode forward” (Policoff, 1975:30). When the changes were brought to the attention of Ed Kerns, a *Life* editor, by Philadelphia attorney Vincent Salandria, Kerns replied in writing that:

I am at a loss to explain the discrepancies between the three versions of *Life* which you cite. I’ve heard of breaking a plate to correct an error. I’ve never heard of doing it twice for a single issue, much less a single story. Nobody here seems to remember who worked on the early Kennedy story. It was a team effort with several researchers and the researchers who worked on it have either left or been shifted to jobs in bureaus overseas. (Policoff, 1975:30)

Of course, one could ask Ford who he worked on the story with, but to my knowledge no one has ever done so. While *Life* consumed almost the entirety of their coverage with the

eight Zapruder frames, blown up, two on a single page, the bulk of the article was Congressman Ford's description of "piecing together the evidence." Since Ford is a principal in this case, his account naturally is newsworthy—and *Life* paid him \$3,000 for his exclusive, so I will not critically analyze it except to say that it is his opinion and is newsworthy. Yet, *Life's* commentary on that account amounted to a few paragraphs, but is significant in terms of this study, for it represented an early endorsement of the Report which paralleled that of their sister publication *Time Magazine*.

### ***Time*, October 2, 1964 – Release of Warren Report and Version One**

*Time* agreed with *Life Magazine* in its coverage of the Warren Report's release. Their October 2, 1964, edition editorializes that "in sum and substance" the Commission "reaffirms almost everything that was already known and understood by most knowledgeable people." The Report's "great value comes from the thoroughness with which the Commission carried out its investigation" by laying to rest "malignant rumors and speculation" in such "fascinating wealth of detail by which future historians can abide." This deduction is followed by an abridged version of the Report, again written and published before the release of the 26 volumes that are necessary in order to assess the footnotes and citations.

After the 26 volumes were issued, *Time's* endorsement of the document continued with their December 4, 1964, issue. While the article consists only of paraphrasing the testimony of six witnesses (Jackie Kennedy, John and Nellie Connally, Lady Bird Johnson, Kenneth O'Donnell [see Appendix A, Exhibit 14], and Marina Oswald), no critical analysis is made of the physical evidence or the case itself. It was a human side of the event. There are, however, two lead-in paragraphs about the investigation, conspicuous in the fact that they

elaborate on the volume of testimony (“interviews with 550 persons”), the release of the 26 volumes (“totaling 17,741 pages”), with many exhibits (“more than 3,100 exhibits”), similar to *Life's* description of an exhaustive investigation. While noting how much information is made public, what is left out (surveillance) is mention of the fact that at this juncture most of the evidence is suppressed under lock and key until the year 2039.

***Time*, September 16, 1966**

As the growing wave of public doubt mounted concerning the accuracy of the Warren panel's conclusions (Blakey, 1981:40), *Time* ran three articles off its presses in 1966. The first was a short essay published on September 16. It begins with a comparison of the Report with skepticism over the disappearance of the Holy Grail and forewarnings of an impending attack on Pearl Harbor. Such skepticism is considered ironic by the editors since “never before has an investigation been launched so promptly for the express purpose of dispelling uncertainty.” *Time*, of course, had certainty within weeks of the crime and before the Commission had called its first witness in their December 6, 1963, issue. Again reference is made to the volume of paper produced by the Commission with the help of the “investigative talents and tools of the Federal Government,” while the panel conducted “painstaking detective work.”

***Time*, November 11, 1966**

The November 11, 1966, issue of *Time* concerns the transfer of autopsy materials from the custody of the Kennedy family into the National Archives. The transfer involved “carefully guarded X-rays taken during an exhaustive autopsy.” While that is newsworthy,

what is left out is the fact that this exhaustive medical examination did not produce a bullet path through President Kennedy's neck. Indeed, the neck wound was never even dissected, making the autopsy incomplete (No bullet path, 2H361; FBI Supplemental Report, January 13, 1964). Part of the government's case hinges squarely on a single bullet passing through Kennedy's body and wounding Texas Governor John Bowden Connally. One reason for this is that the Zapruder film reveals both men were struck before the bolt action Carcano rifle could be operated in order to allow a gunman to fire a second round (see Appendix A, Exhibit 6a-1). So either one bullet passed through Kennedy's body in order to wound Governor Connally or there had to be a second rifle in Dealey Plaza, and with it a second gunman.

Other reasons exist for the necessity of a single bullet to transit Kennedy's body and then wound Connally, such as the fact that the government's case is that only three shots were possible in the given time frame with the bolt action rifle. One shot clearly hit the President in the head at frame 313 causing his death, while a second shot missed and striking a curb caused concrete to fly into the air cutting James Tague in the cheek. The remaining third shot must then cause all the additional wounding—both on Kennedy and Connally. This has come to be known as the *Single-Bullet Theory*. A bullet path through JFK's body is a necessity—but is only surmised by the Warren Commission. What *Time* labels an exhaustive autopsy found no such bullet path through the body, and the neck was never dissected (2H361; FBI Supplemental Report, January 13, 1964).

Furthermore, the autopsy was exhaustive to the point of eliminating information. Dr. Humes, the prosector in charge of the autopsy, had certified in writing and later admitted in his 1964 testimony which was published in the 26 volumes of evidence that he destroyed the

original autopsy report “by burning in the fireplace of my recreation room” (2H373). The autopsy report does not mention any dissection of the brain for fragments, powder burns or bullet paths—standard procedure in such cases—simply because the brain was never dissected (Warren Report, 1964:538-546; see also Wecht, 1993:25). *Time* makes no mention of these things, but it makes one begin to wonder how sloppy an “un-exhaustive autopsy” would actually be.

We learn the doctors gave “minutely detailed testimony.” Yet it was so minutely detailed they never even saw the autopsy photographs which are the subject of this *Time* article and the Commission never got around to asking Humes why he burned some of the record.

This short article, carried under the headline theme, “Historical Notes” implies directly that a murder case less than three years old is somewhat irrelevant to the immediate present despite the fact that the *official* FBI posture at the time happened to be that the case was to remain open (1979, 11HSCA245; the House Committee also notes that despite this official pledge to investigate information it received in years to come, that this promise “was not kept”).

Critics of the Report are labeled under the remaining section’s headline as “Mythmakers,” (correlation), and later on as “conspiracy theorists.” It might be considered peculiar that one who supports the official viewpoint is not a “single-bullet theorist.” Yet only one critic is mentioned, Penn Jones, Jr., whose approach was that mysterious deaths of witnesses related to the case were part of a larger plot (post-assassination domino theory). It was an early indication of things to come.



***Time*, November 25, 1966**

Two weeks later, the November 25, 1966, edition of *Time* magazine was released. The short article is largely editorializing. In a piece entitled “The Phantasmagoria,” *Time* directs its focus on government critics of the official version of the murder. *Time* believes that “discrepancies real or imagined surrounding the assassination are increasingly obsessive.”

Labeling private citizens as “amateur Sherlocks” one begins to wonder whether the magazine had an investigation of their own underway. Could this mean that since a citizen is not paid for their patience and time in going after evidence that the FBI (as professionals) does not make mistakes? For now, *Time* conveys that amateurs are “hoping to trip over some bypassed pebble of evidence that will crack the case wide open.”

The simplistic notion of pebbles bypasses the well known fact that evidence is still being suppressed—ultimately which would include items such as CIA plots to murder Fidel Castro utilizing anti-Castro Watergate operative-type Cubans alongside Organized Crime.

Getting around these pebbles may not be so easy in the future. But for now, the government’s report is a document of “10,400,000 words”—which implies completeness. Again, what is forgotten here, is that more is suppressed.

After utilizing the theme “minutiae and half truths,” *Time* records that Connally has “never read the Warren Report” but believes a “separate shot struck me.” This is the antithesis of the essential government Single-Bullet Theory, of which *Time* notes, “of course nothing Connally has said has added an iota of new evidence.” Yet this begs the question. Without discussion of it, it asks one to accept that there is nothing wrong with the old

evidence which “amateur Sherlocks” pore over while ignoring without mention the fact that there is still suppressed evidence.

*Time* concludes that “lacking any new evidence, there seems to be little valid excuse for so dramatic a development as another full scale inquiry.” Yet with suppressed documents and without the ability to grant immunity and funding, where would this evidence come from?

### ***Life*, November 25, 1966**

Only once would there be a departure from the lone-assassin theme. This happened in *Life* magazine on November 25, 1966.

#### **The Anomaly**

Using the theme, “A Matter of Reasonable Doubt,” as a banner headline for its cover story, *Life's* November 25, 1966 edition was far different from its sister publication dated on the same day. This is the only point in their histories where either would question the government’s investigation or conclusions—a Fourth Estate approach.

In this issue, Governor Connally, himself a victim of gunfire in the volley of shots, studies the Zapruder film, which *Life* owned, under a magnifying glass. Here he claims to find more detail in viewing still frames than when the film was run for him in motion and concludes that the experience confirmed in his own mind that he was struck by a second bullet and not the one known as the single-bullet. This is his position in support of and consistent with a second gunman still at large. It is noted that the Governor’s testimony in 1964 “shook the Warren Commission.” What follows are key frames from Zapruder’s 8–millimeter film in a

sequential pattern. *Life* observes that the “head shot is not shown here because it doesn’t bear on this part of the controversy.”

The Commission, of course, maintains that Connally was hit at the same time and with the same projectile as JFK. Yet Connally testified to the Commission differently, as *Life* relates:

I heard this noise which I immediately took to be a rifle shot. I instinctively turned to my right... but did not catch the President in the corner of my eye... Failing to see him, I was turning back to look back over my left shoulder... but I never got that far in my turn. I got to the position I am facing you, looking a little bit left of center, and then I felt someone had hit me in the back.

Mrs. Connally, also riding in the motorcade, agreed as her testimony from the 26 volumes is cited by *Life*: “I heard a frightening noise and it came from my right. I turned and saw the President hit over my right shoulder. He made no utterance, no cry. And very soon, a second shot hit John” [Connally].

In *Life's* chronicle of events, it is added that Connally’s recollections of a second bullet find support from each of the pathologist physicians who resuscitated him back into consciousness in trauma room two at Parkland Memorial Hospital, where, in an adjacent room, the President gave up his life with his last gasp of air. Doctors Robert Shaw and Charles Gregory maintain, as they did to the Warren panel, that they doubt the lone gunman thesis based on the evidence, providing support for the Connally position on a second bullet as casting forensic doubt on the stability of the lone gunman position. *Life* notes that “a separate FBI report on the assassination maintained that Kennedy and Connally had been struck by different bullets.”

Although the pristine condition of Commission Exhibit 399, the single bullet, is not pictured or discussed, *Life's* editorial team concludes that the Zapruder film “bears out” [Connally’s statements] and “raises a reasonable doubt” as to the validity of a second gunman. Connally’s response is cited as, “No question about it; I haven’t been hit yet [with the single bullet]. There were two or three people involved, or someone firing with an automatic rifle.”

With the notation of Connally’s physicians in mind, *Life* concludes with an endorsement of Connally’s contention of a later hit—an act antithetical to the lone gunman thesis, while endorsing the point made a few pages earlier by the editor that “the Zapruder film bears this out and raises a reasonable doubt.” Later they endorse John Connally’s belief in a later hit while reminding the reader that in conjunction with the physicians and photographic slides, his recollection is that he “recalls hearing the first shot before the bullet hit him.” Of course so did his wife, Nellie, and that since bullets travel faster than the sound (i.e., supersonic bullet) he should have been struck before he and his wife respond to the sound of alleged gunfire from a single location if he were struck by the bullet which also hit Kennedy.

This article, which was preceded by an October editorial is an *anomaly* compared to future pieces by either *Time* or *Life* and is an example of Fourth Estate journalism, yet it is the only one. The conclusion reached at this point in time is that “the case should be reopened.” However, when questioned about the disparity between *Time* and *Life's* positions at this crucial point in the case, Headley Donovan, editor-in-chief of both *Time* and *Life*, stated that “*Life* advocated a new special investigation, while *Time* questioned whether a full-scale inquiry would achieve anything without new evidence. We would like to see our magazines

arrive at consistent positions on major issues and I am sure in due course we will on this one” (Policoff, 1975:35–36).

The prophecy came true. Indeed, from then on through 1975, when *Life* relinquished the footage of the President’s murder, the uniformity between magazines would be apparent. *Life* would temporarily cease publication in the 1970s, however, when *Life* had an inclination to reopen the investigation, I wrote to them about doing it. The date was November 3, 1969—three years later. The reply was very short, and is included in the appendix:

Many thanks for your letter suggesting *Life* reopen the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy. We’re sorry to disappoint you, but the project is not feasible for us. (see Appendix A, Exhibit 9: Letter to Ross F. Ralston from *Life* magazine, November 3, 1969)

### **The Fate of the Zapruder Film**

*Life* cooled its heels on further investigative inquiry of the Zapruder film and the murder it depicted after the November 25, 1966, anomaly issue. So much so that when Josiah Thompson, an assistant professor of Philosophy at Haverford College, who was an integral part of *Life*’s 1966 study, brought his work, *Six Seconds in Dallas*, to Bernard Geis and Associates for publication the following year, *Life* made a strenuous effort to block publication of frames from Zapruder’s film by refusing to grant reproduction rights to it (Trask, 1994:115; *Publishers Weekly*, 12/25/67).

Thompson’s work contained many never before published photographs and charts. He also had copies of Zapruder frames from the original film. His conclusions were that four shots were fired, thus involving a second gunman and that as *Life* had concluded in their one

of a kind article a year earlier, that the Single-Bullet Theory was also untenable (Thompson, 1967, 1976:9–11). A conclusion that *Life* would not only never again repeat but also ignore.

Thompson's publisher then offered to *Life* all profits from the book in exchange for publication rights to the film. Indeed, after viewing the government's copy in the archives and comparing it to *Life's*, he noticed the magazine's images were "infinitely more brighter and clearer," as were his transparencies allowing for more clarity (Thompson, 1976:9–11).

After the offer was rejected by *Life*, Thompson settled for using an artist's charcoal drawings which depicted the content of individual frames. *Life* then brought suit to stop the sale and distribution of the book and to recover damages ("*Life* sues to Enjoin Book on Assassination of Kennedy," *Publisher's Weekly*, 12/25/1967; Trask, 1994:115).

Ultimately, Federal Judge Inzer Wyatt issued an opinion favorable to Geis. The copyright had not been violated. Writing in his opinion he stated this about *Life's* lawsuit to stop sale and distribution of the book for its use of charcoal drawings:

There is a public interest in having the fullest information available on the murder of President Kennedy. Thompson did serious work on the subject and has a theory entitled to public consideration. The book is not bought because it contains Zapruder's pictures; the book is bought because of the theory and its explanation supported by Zapruder's pictures. (*Publisher's Weekly*, 10/14/1968:39; Trask, 1994:115)

He further found that the book and magazine were not in competition and if anything, the book enhanced the copyright value of the film (*Publisher's Weekly*, 10/14/1968:39). In 1975, after Watergate led to a rise in cynicism about politicians and government and some politicians were lining up to reopen the Kennedy case while a Senate inquiry concerning CIA/Mafia plots to kill Fidel Castro was getting underway, a curious thing happened to the Zapruder film.

The general public had not been allowed to see the film in motion and only a few frames of footage were actually published. At this point, if not before, a Fourth Estate approach would reach for showing the film, if not doing some computer enhancement while printing frames. Instead, *Life* magazine sold the film back to the Zapruder family for the sum of one dollar. This is incredible because Stolley called the film an “invaluable asset of *Time, Inc.*” in 1967, a few years after *Time*'s sister publication *Life* paid out \$150,000 in 1963 dollars for the footage (Thompson, 1967, 1976:17; Trask, 1994:121, citing *New York Times*, 4/10/1975).

### Post Watergate

#### *Time*, October 19, 1975

*Time* would apparently find un-newsworthy and not report the fact that the first non-governmental pathologist to view the autopsy photographs and X-rays of the late President's body led him to conclude that a second gunman was involved. Cyril Wecht, both an attorney as well as coroner of Allegheny County (Pennsylvania) besides being former President of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, so concluded.

The Senate in Resolution 21 had already voted on an order to examine the conduct of intelligence agencies in the wake of Watergate. A disclosure had been made in the *Dallas Times Herald* that a few weeks prior to the Kennedy slaying, the accused, Lee Harvey Oswald, had actually walked into the offices of the Dallas FBI and hand delivered a note. Within hours of Oswald's demise at the hands of Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas Police Station, that note was destroyed by agents of the Bureau.

A note in the handwriting of the man accused of murdering President Kennedy. What did it say? Was it to warn of a plot to kill the President? Was it threatening in nature? Or was it perhaps irrelevant?

*Time's* article was but five paragraphs long, yet within one week of the disclosure they inform their readers that it was a "threatening note." Acknowledging that it was destroyed, they do inform their readership that the FBI "withheld all knowledge of the affair from the Warren Commission." The implications of this are not examined or discussed.

*Time* reassures its readers that the Bureau is investigating. The Oswald note to the FBI was delivered prior to the assassination. And utilizing FBI sources, their conclusion, one week after the disclosure, is that the letter was "threatening." An interesting conclusion reached very hastily without the advantage of an independent Senate inquiry. Curiously enough, the Senate Intelligence Committee (1976:95) reached a different conclusion: "It could not be determined whether the note was threatening in nature."

However, two weeks later and months before the Senate inquiry is made, *Time* did inform its audience that Oswald was the "assassin" and that the note was destroyed only because "FBI officials wanted to conceal the embarrassing fact that they had ignored the threat" and that it was a matter of being a "clear case of bureaucratic self-protection." In the November 2, 1975, issue this is given as fact and not speculation. The article does mention that Senator Schweiker of the Committee believes the late J. Edgar Hoover was "lying" and "hiding something" but that it is an unlikely event that the subcommittee will turn up any solid evidence that discredits the Warren Commission.



Yet, what about the implications for the rest of the investigation? Destroying that communication certainly was “hiding something” by someone. A “Fourth Estate” approach to media might well delve into this, as well as consider the Gemberling Pattern which follows.

Since some of the entries in Oswald’s address book were written in Russian and a typewritten list would be more legible than the handwriting in that address book, FBI Agent Robert Gemberling was assigned the job of itemizing the list of entries. His report, dated December 28, 1963, contained every entry except one, curiously it was that of their own FBI Agent, James Hosty (17H803; Meagher, 1967:211–212). The Gemberling report, which was given to the Warren Commission as an investigatory document, never mentioned that FBI agent Hosty’s name, address and license plate number was in Oswald’s address book, thus concealing this from the Commission for whom they were investigating in order to help solve the crime. Oswald left the note for Agent Hosty. It was Hosty who destroyed the note.

***Time*, November 24, 1975**

The November anniversary brought another entry carried under the headline theme, “Who Killed JFK—Just One Assassin.” A revival of doubt stems mainly from what Americans have since learned about their government. Examples given include Watergate and the Vietnam War. It also mentions the Oswald note to the FBI which Agent Hosty destroyed, only to abruptly conclude that this was “apparently done only to save the agency from embarrassment.” A genuine Fourth Estate approach would ask, “What else is missing?”

The Warren panel members’ names are listed with the notation that a “mass of evidence was gathered” equating *volume* with *completeness*. Interesting, because they just mentioned in the previous paragraph both the FBI’s destruction of the Oswald note and that

former CIA Director, Allen Dulles (himself a Commission member), never told his colleagues about the CIA/Mafia plots to assassinate Fidel Castro.

We are told this is “not a record of investigators refusing to listen to witnesses who might disturb their conclusions.” Of course, one might ask, why then was no council provided for Lee Oswald during the Warren hearings despite his family’s request? This lack of action effectively eliminated an adversary proceeding in which the evidence could have been tested. Also ignored was the fact that this panel suppressed evidence such as the Edgewood Arsenal bullet report and that there were no public hearings.

The Edgewood bullets were the result of experiments at an Army firing range, where the alleged murder weapon was used to fire bullets into the wrists of cadavers in order to see if a 6.5 mm Carcano bullet could penetrate a wrist and remain in unscathed condition like single-bullet CE399. In each and every instance, the bullets were deformed, mutilated, or mushroomed (see Appendix A, Exhibit 7a, b, & c). In order to have a plausible lone gunman, each one of the above test bullets would also be expected to pass through a human neck and ribcage even before smashing a radius bone in the wrist. Despite the “mass of evidence that was gathered” only one experimental specimen was admitted into evidence and was not in pristine condition but was badly mutilated while the others along with the report of the study were hidden by the Commission (Roffman, 1975:141).

*Time* presents “an array of questions, many of which are readily answerable.” Some of these questions are straw men set up in advance of being readily torn down. They ask, were Watergate burglars E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis photographed in Dealey Plaza when Kennedy was killed there? Their answer is No. While this is probably true it leaves out the

fact that the individuals in a series of photographs taken by a Dallas *Morning News* photographer and another reporter more specifically shows three men being led away from the parking lot behind the grassy knoll by uniformed officers with rifles in their hands. By being in a suspicious place at a suspicious time and taken away under such conditions they would at the very least be considered important witnesses and are even considered suspects by other people. In claiming that the individuals are not Hunt and Sturgis, *Time* shuts the door on the entire subject without pursuing the lead of who they really are and why they are being led away by authorities as if to dispose of the matter.

In a similar vein, *Time* posits a question concerning another photograph asserting that a claim has been made that Oswald was photographed outside the building watching the shooting from the doorway of the Texas School Book Depository Building (TSBD). *Time* concludes the man in the photograph, taken by AP photographer James Altgens is really Billy Nolan Lovelady, a co-worker with Oswald at the TSBD and that Lovelady testified to this effect before the Warren Commission.

Lovelady was indeed on the steps, as fellow workers point out and bears a chilling resemblance to Oswald. *Time* appears to be correct in its assessment, and what was really a non-issue when the article was published is set up and then swept away. Yet, to say yes, it was Lovelady is not the important point, which is that it was not the Warren Commission's evidence which could be the source of establishing this. The Commission asked Lovelady to wear the same shirt he had on that day. It was the exact opposite of the one worn by the man in the doorway, which in the black and white photograph is very much like Oswald's. Lovelady's was a short-sleeve, red/white striped shirt, not a long-sleeved dark one like

Oswald wore that day and which appears in the pictures. Even though parts of the whole investigation of the shooting and Oswald would turn on this question the Warren Commission disregarded this discrepancy between shirts. When the FBI conducted its re-enactment of the Altgens' photo as Commission Exhibit 900 they did not even bother to pose Lovelady wearing his short-sleeved shirt as one might have expected in a re-enactment photo (Meagher, 1967:363). So the investigation had left a man resembling Oswald wearing a short rather than long-sleeved shirt which was not dark but had red and white stripes. The Warren Commission ignored the discrepancy which in itself speaks volumes for the quality of their inquiry which could either stand or fall on the basis of this outcome alone. That was the reason why some critics in 1975 even mentioned the subject. *Time* however does not reflect at all on how this measures up to what they posited as a thorough investigation.

*Time* included in its array of questions raised about the official version of events that it has been contended that Oswald was able to get a hardship discharge from the Marine Corps in just three days. To which they conclude that he did not receive it that rapidly because "He applied for the discharge on Aug. 17, 1959; he was released from active duty only three months before his discharge was to have expired. He claimed to have had to support his ailing mother."

Where and who has made this charge is unclear, and the allegation that this is somehow prominent in the critical literature would be far fetched. Yet *Time's* answer to even this straw man is indicative of the article's craftsmanship in general. Three days is the amount of time he spent with his mother which is then built into the allegation, wherever it came from, as the span in which it took to receive the discharge (Warren Report, 1964:689). While it is

true, as *Time* relates, that the discharge came three months before his enlistment expired, the speed with which he got it (26 days) is what amazed his roommate, Nelson Delgado. Delgado told the Warren Commission that it usually took others “so long a time to get a hardship discharge” (8H257).

Still, *Time*'s response to this spurious allegation is convoluted even further. While the discharge took longer than three days, it was still early and was for a fabricated injury his mother received at work the previous year. At the same time he applied for a passport in which to travel to Russia and Cuba, the Marines raised no question about how that squared with helping his allegedly ailing mother in Texas (Summers, 1980:149). *Time*, in raising a non-entity for an example of criticism against the Warren Report, does not even come close to dealing with the circumstances surrounding the discharge itself.

A major point the critics have raised is that in less than one-half second President Kennedy's head and upper body are violently thrust backwards against the rear seat of the limousine with the impact of the fatal shot on the Zapruder film. “Why, if Kennedy was struck from the rear, does his body move sharply back,” or towards the bullet which is passing through him, asks *Time* magazine? Their answer is that a forward expulsion of brain matter created a jet effect which propels him backwards in the opposite direction as the matter escapes so that the body does not move in the bullet's direction of flight. For this, *Time* draws upon an experiment by urologist John K. Lattimer who fired an “Oswald-type gun and ammunition into the rear of human skulls packed with gelatin.” On the basis of this rifling experiment *Time* claims “he has films to show that the skulls toppled backwards off their stands, never forward.”

Topple is a good word for it accurately depicts what Lattimer's films show. However, both Kennedy's head and body are violently thrust backwards. Unfortunately, Lattimer's experiment ignores a crucial intervening variable—the pedestal on the ladder in which his skulls were placed. With the gelatin-filled artifact set on its platform when driven in a downward direction by a bullet fired above and behind, it will hit a solid object. Kennedy had no such object in front of him and his head and body were both anatomically fastened to his neck and body, both of which were propelled backwards. The skull cannot go in the direction of the bullet if the direction is both forward and downward. The ladder is in the way. Milicent Cranor, David Mantik and many others including myself have seen Lattimer's films. It is clear from observing them that the ladder definitely moves forward taking up energy and complicating the experiments as the melon simply topples backwards (Cranor, 1996:28).

*Time* mentions in the article that a bullet “went through Kennedy's neck” when no one ever dissected the wound or detected, much less saw, a bullet path (2H361; FBI Supplemental Report, January 13, 1964). This is one reason why the Single-Bullet Theory is labeled a theory. Here, *Time* had elevated that theory into fact without the basis of having a bullet path. If not seeing is believing, then it is indeed curious that *Time* discounts the notion of a second shooter in claiming “no one on the grassy knoll saw a gunman.” This amounts to three people who, in the process of being there to watch the President, had their backs turned away from the knoll which was behind them as they focused their attention on the individual they had come there to see and who happened to be riding in the limousine.

The identities of two of them are unknown even to this day so they have not been questioned about their observations at all and they dropped to the ground, perhaps to avoid

being hit by gunfire rather than go sightseeing. The third, whose identity is known, is the groundskeeper Emmett Hudson who believed the shots came from the picket fence on the knoll. While shrubbery could provide camouflage as cover anyway, what is amazing is that the witness with the best view was on top of the knoll in the railroad signal tower behind the fence. The switchman for the Union Terminal Railroad, the late Lee Bowers, did tell the Dallas police before a notary on the day of the murder as well as to the Warren Commission, under oath, that two men were indeed standing side-by-side, right in back of the fence (24H201; 6H286–8). *Time's* statement would be more accurate if it read “those who are known to be on or behind the knoll and have voiced an opinion based on sound or sight either believed there was a gunman or saw individuals behind the fence on the knoll.”

Meanwhile, claiming that “no evidence of shooting was found on the grassy knoll,” which is in *front* of the President, *Time* publishes a diagram/map of Dealey Plaza with the grassy knoll located *behind* the President. This is a major gap since the newcomer to the case would view both a knoll shot as well as one from the Texas School Book Depository building as originating from the same direction, so perhaps there is less controversy about the direction of shots. Small wonder the conclusion is that “no physical evidence of any such shooting was found” on the knoll. One has to know where to look and those first witnesses to reach the picket fence there, including Dallas policemen, smelled and detected what was gunfire according to Commission Document 205, (cited by Thompson [1967] after that internal Warren Document was declassified; 1976:164).

*Time* does, however, claim that an examination of autopsy photographs reveals that they do indeed show that Kennedy was struck only from behind. This is crucial to the case

and is surely worth noting and pursuing. But, it also will be questioned on many grounds later by qualified others who will be ignored by *Time*. On its surface this could help out the Warren Commission's findings about the head shot. While embracing these conclusions, *Time* does not mention that it now becomes the third medical description for a single set of wounds. Not mentioned is that the autopsy doctors would be a full four inches away from locating any such head wound even remotely close to that location or the testimony of the Parkland physicians who placed a massive exit hole instead in the rear of the skull and not a small entry wound in that location (McClelland 6H33, 6H35; Akin 6H65, 6H67; Jones 6H56; Perry 6H11, 6H16; Baxter 6H40-42).

When mention of the other autopsy materials is made, *Time* concluded "not much is missing, only some tissue and the brain." Yet, it is not the amount but the quality and importance of the evidence which is relevant. The brain is very important here because it was never dissected, and would contain bullet fragments (Warren Report, 1964:538-546; see also Wecht, 1993:25). Such fragments could have been analyzed and matched with the Carcano missiles or other types of ammunition as well as spectrographically examined to determine metallic content and consistency.

With tissue slides, identifying entrance and exit bullet wounds would have been easier since entering bullets burn tissue. The determination of entrance or exit wounds could have been brought out by trustworthy scientific means.

### ***Time*, 1977**

In 1977 the United States Congress was debating a budget for the newly constituted House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA). With Richard Sprague as Chief Council



at the moment, *Time* ran a short piece on January 10, 1977, reporting on Congressional bickering about the size of that budget. The very next month, Sprague who was seen as abrasive and aggressive towards Congressmen, resigned and the Committee was allowed to continue. This too was reported in another small piece in the February 14, 1977, edition. On April 11, 1977, when Oswald's friend George DeMohrenschildt committed suicide with a gun just before he was to be interviewed that day by Committee staffer Gaeton Fonzi, *Time* reported on this. These articles, however, do not touch on the physical evidence of the case or the actual shooting of JFK. Yet at the end of the year 1977, when the FBI was "ordered by the Justice Department" to release a pile of documents amounting to 80,000 pages, *Time* magazine's December 19, 1977 narration of the event entitled, "The FBI Story on JFK's Death" carries the theme, "Improbable leads, new insights, and an old theory vindicated."

They do relate that *half* of that massive archive of documents will *not* come out until next month. Yet the headline is "an old verdict vindicated," so that with one-half of this evidence still being processed for release, the preconception, without the benefit of at least 40,000 pages, is that this somehow explains discrepancies in the Warren Report.

Furthermore, we still have other evidence suppressed as well as a seven-page list of documents which "are among the items which are missing from the Warren Commission records in the Archives Building in Washington" (National Archives-Security Problems Involving Warren Commission Files and Other Records, House Subcommittee on Government Information, 1976; Fensterwald, 1977). This is not even mentioned, but it raises an important question: How fast can anyone or a team of analysts read half of 80,000 pages in one week

and correlate them together, and reach a conclusion without seeing one-half of that massive pile of documents?

Still, the theme remains that the “FBI investigation was thorough in the extreme.” *Time* illustrates this by reporting that the FBI went out to interview a woman who allegedly predicted the President’s death by reading tea leaves. While speaking about this, *Time* ignores any mention of the fact, admitted to by the FBI, that a note in the handwriting of the man accused of murdering the President was delivered to their very own headquarters and destroyed by one of their agents after Oswald’s demise, or the Gemberling FBI Report to the Warren Commission which omitted FBI agent Hosty’s name from the list of entries in Oswald’s address book. By this standard, it would indeed be interesting to find an inquiry which is not thorough. Yet, one year earlier, a committee of Congress in the “Schweiker Report” went on record with their analysis of “thoroughness”:

The Committee has found that the FBI, the agency with primary responsibility in this matter, was ordered by Director Hoover and pressured by high government officials, to conclude its investigation quickly. Rather than addressing its investigation to all significant circumstances, including all possibilities of conspiracy, the FBI investigation focused narrowly on Lee Harvey Oswald. (Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate, 1976:6)

The very next page of this report, which is not mentioned here, is that the FBI’s efforts did not “allow for full investigation” and that “this course” was taken because the Bureau “viewed the Warren Commission in an adversarial light.” The result was that they “permitted the Warren Commission to reach its conclusion without all the relevant information.” This report was released one and a half years earlier and amazingly these FBI documents reveal that a film was taken that day in Dealey Plaza by photographer Bronson which shows the sixth

floor windows of the Texas School Book Depository a few minutes before the shots were fired, at a time when the government's case hinges on a lone sixth floor assailant constructing a sniper's nest out of a shield of boxes, assembling the Carcano rifle and building a gun nest. The FBI Report overlooked this (Trask, 1994:288–289). When a photographic consultant to the HSCA was able to analyze the film a few years later, he concluded that it reveals human images in two of the windows (1979, 6HSCA309).

No mention of the Schweiker Report of Congress is made here although *Time* notes that “after exploring the mountains of transcripts, memoranda and telex messages, *Time* correspondent Hays Gorey sent this summary of the 40,001 pages of FBI documents”: Pretty fast reading.

### **House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA)**

***Time*, January 4, 1979**

When the HSCA concluded there was a second gunman on the grassy knoll, two official alternatives to history were presented to the American people. *Time* magazine ran barely over one column on this development in the January 4, 1979, edition. This is contrasted with eight full pages when they endorsed the Warren Report in 1964. Under the heading, “A Fourth Shot?” punctuated with a question mark, this short article contains little information but does mention that “a photograph made at the time showed a policeman running toward the knoll rather than toward the President.” This is amazing, because the Presidential limousine was gone as it rushed to Parkland Hospital. The photographs of the knoll, published by Groden (1993:50–54) reveal more than a singular policeman running up

the hill and there was already an agent of the Secret Service who did run toward the wounded President and he was on the rear running board of the car as it sped away moments earlier.

*Time* would wait until the House Committee's report was released that summer to again publish a second article on this topic. The July 30, 1979, issue contains even less column inches to the story. Under the headline, "Supposition," the author writes that "the Committee's conclusion appears to have outstripped the evidence." Even though a majority of the panel felt otherwise, *Time* concludes, "nothing was found to overturn the basic conclusion of the Warren Commission 15 years ago that Oswald acted alone." At this point, rather than taking the "Fourth Estate approach," *Time* tabled the entire issue.

### ***Life*, 1983**

After being a defunct publication throughout most of the 1970s, *Life* was reconstituted and put out a 20th anniversary edition in November, 1983. *Time* would remain mute on this subject that year.

The piece begins with commemoratives such as "Of the 135 million Americans now living who can recall the events that began on November 22, 1963, most know exactly what they were doing when they heard about the shooting of John F. Kennedy."

At Parkland Hospital, Nurse Doris Nelson recalls talk among friends about "what would happen if President Kennedy was in a car wreck or something." This was a few minutes before she heard the President had been shot, and before she could contact two doctors about this they were rolling Kennedy in on a stretcher. When Jackie Kennedy wanted to go into the emergency room during the emergency procedures, Nelson suggested that the First Lady wait outside.

Curiously, this narrative uses Eastern Standard and not Dallas time. In addition, *Life* obtained the rights from Zapruder's family to print 11 Zapruder frames. The film is labeled "the most intensely scrutinized 478 frames in the history of the film." Yet it is not scrutinized by *Life* for this issue, except for the blanket statement that "the fatal shot struck the right rear of his skull." Correspondingly, there is no mention of the Single-Bullet Theory or the conclusion of the HSCA.

In relating to Oswald, again without a trial, the headline is used with corresponding pictures, "Capturing the Killer." This theme, albeit consistent with no shots from the knoll, and a lone assassin, neglects to use the word "alleged." There was no trial in which to check the evidence with a standard of reasonable doubt and cross-examination.

A photograph of items deposited in evidence at the National Archives is presented with the caption, "Artifacts of Infamy." Included is a shirt worn by Lee Harvey Oswald and a picture of Archivist Marion Johnson standing behind the damaged windshield from the Presidential limousine. Also included is the alleged murder weapon, a Manlicher-Carcano rifle from World War II with the serial number C2766 which was found on the sixth floor.

Commission Exhibit 399, the single bullet, is shown with only a caption that it is the "bullet which presumably hit Kennedy and Connally." This statement would have been better presented with a qualifier such as: "according to the Warren Commission," since Connally's doctors and the Edgewood bullet experiments have left the matter open to considerable controversy and doubt.

Meanwhile, Kennedy's shirt is shown on the front side and not the backside where a bullet hole resides six inches below the shoulders and two inches to the right of the spinal

column. This is about half a foot below where the Warren panel placed the wound in their Report for a bullet which would have to exit his throat (see Appendix A, Exhibit 6c-2).

We are also told that “conspiracy theories (agents of China, Russia, or Cuba) waned in the late 1960s and then drew fresh life from 1973 Watergate revelations of FBI and CIA misconduct.” This is despite the conclusion of the Chief Counsel for the House Committee on Assassinations that Organized Crime murdered JFK (Blakey, 1981).

Indeed, the only mention of the HSCA is that “Congress reopened the case in 1976, its members relied on evidence from Marion Johnson’s windowless and obscure stock room” at the National Archives. No mention is even made of the House Committee’s conclusion of a second gunman.

***Time*, November 28, 1988**

On the 25th anniversary, *Time* in its November 28, 1988 edition found intriguing the theory that Oswald was attempting to kill Governor Connally and missed, assassinating Kennedy instead. The theme of the Tragic Miss Theory is succinctly stated on the cover: “JFK’s Assassination: Who was the Real Target?” What follows in the article are excerpts from a forthcoming book by journalist James Reston. Afterwards is a piece detailing Robert Kennedy’s War on Organized Crime, only to dismiss the idea that this motive played a role in JFK’s demise.

The Warren Commission in its single gunman scenario admitted they could not make any definitive determination of Oswald’s motive. Instead the Commission chose to isolate factors which they speculated might have influenced his decision to assassinate President Kennedy. There were five of them, each of which contributed to Oswald’s capacity to take

the risk he allegedly did. They were (1) his resentment to authority coupled with (2) his inability to enter into meaningful relationships with people which led him to (3) an urge to find a place in history because he (4) had a capacity for violence and (5) an avowed commitment to Communism (Warren Report, 1964:23).

To the Commission there was no singular motive and Oswald's personality had many dimensions in which to fathom into an equation. To journalist James Reston, however, the murder boiled down to one quotient. Oswald was angry at former secretary of the Navy, John Connally, for the fact that he was given an unfavorable discharge from the Marines after his trip to Russia. So he decided to vent his anger at the source of his frustration who would be riding in the Presidential limousine on Friday, November 22. Not only was Oswald unlucky, but he killed Kennedy instead of Connally, managing only to wound his target after hitting John Kennedy with a missed Carcano round.

While *Life* did not include the mob on its list of vital suspects in their 1983 edition, its sister publication *Time* believes in 1988, "the trendy theory" is that the Mafia arranged the President's murder and the silencing of Oswald. This label implies a passing, momentary fad nature and lack of scholarship to the idea since fads are believed to exist because of their ability to "catch on" with the public, not because of their intrinsic value.

*Time* observes that an organized crime hit on Oswald clashes with the Warren Commission's conclusion that Ruby killed Oswald in order to spare Jackie Kennedy the ordeal of a trial. Unmentioned is that the Warren version of history clashes with the House Committee's evidence of a note in Ruby's handwriting addressed to his attorney, Joe Tonahill which reads, "Joe, you should know this. Tom Howard told me to say that I shot Oswald so

Caroline and Jackie Kennedy wouldn't have to come to Dallas to testify. OK?" (HSCA Report, 1979:158). To the House Committee, Ruby's sorrow and grief was a fabricated legal ploy. The article mainly concerns itself with assassination motives, as it is a follow-up to Reston's "tragic miss" article. Interestingly, version one of the Warren Commission is considered a "conclusion" while the House Committee's version two of our nation's history is regarded as "a theory."

*Time* mentions that physicians who have viewed the autopsy photos believe Kennedy was hit only from behind. Still we are on the verge of others viewing that evidence who reach a different opinion. In the years leading up to this article, attacks had been launched from a panel of scientists concerning the validity of the acoustics evidence developed by the House Committee's experts. An open microphone on a police motorcycle in the motorcade recorded gunfire from at least two locations in Dealey Plaza revealing the existence of a second shooter according to the House Committee's report. Their scientists, from Bolt, Beranek and Newman Associates, whose expertise in court was accepted in both the Kent State shootings and the 18 1/2-minute gap in the Watergate tapes, compared test firings of sandbags in the Plaza with the impulses recorded by the police microphone. The House Committee panel claimed to have found an electronic fingerprint of a grassy knoll gunman.

When musician Steve Barber listened to the tape he could detect cross-talk or conversation coming from another police radio channel ordering all men into the grassy knoll area to see "what and where it happened down there" and to "hold everything secure" in that area. While the transmission itself shows that Sheriff Bill Decker, talking into the microphone



believed a second gunman to be posited in that area, he could not have been talking until after the gunfire.

*Time* was correct in bringing this finding to its audience since it reveals a contradiction in that piece of evidence. The experts are still engaged in a tug-of-war on this subject with James Barger responding that Decker's transmission does not address the impulse patterns on the tapes themselves which match exactly the sound of gunfire recorded in the re-enactments. He further suggests the genealogy of the dictabelt be assessed because needles in old-fashioned dictabelts are known to skip, and that it is the impulse pattern of gunfire on the tape which needs to be addressed by critics such as Barber since it is an acoustical fingerprint recorded on site. Clearly, this is an area for further study to resolve the matter.

***Time*, June 28, 1993**

Another book formed the basis for a story in 1993—excerpts from the memoirs of John Connally in the June 28 issue of that year. *Time* devotes two paragraphs to introduce a segment of the Governor's work. The first is a biography where the reader is informed that the FBI sought permission to remove fragments from the late Governor's wrist to compare with metal from the single bullet. *Time* claims that the FBI's "aim was to settle once and for all the perennial question of whether Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone." This is somewhat misleading. The request originated with attorney Jim Lesar and pathologist Cyril Wecht who asked the Justice Department to pursue the matter. The FBI did not initiate the action as they were ordered by Attorney General Janet Reno to do this, and then they waited until the funeral was in progress to approach Connally's widow. The family turned down the offer (Benson, 1993:86). Secondly, even if it were their aim to do this, a comparison of the

fragment, while it could invalidate the Single-Bullet Theory, it might at best only lend some support to any single-bullet scenario. It could not “settle once and for all” if any single individual acted alone as *Time* suggests. The rest is Connally’s words on the changing Presidential political scene in America over the years.

### ***Life*, September 1998**

Thirty-five years ago a Dallas dress manufacturer made a home movie of the Kennedy assassination relates former *Life* magazine editor, Richard Stolley in a brief anniversary piece. The focus of the article by Stolley is that the Zapruder film is back in the news. Stolley notes that he was the first journalist to view the footage and became quite interested in it and negotiated an agreement with Zapruder to purchase all rights to the film for \$150,000.

*Life* eventually sold it back to the Zapruder family for one dollar in 1975 and those 26 seconds of images graphically frozen in sequence were now the subject of bargaining between Zapruder’s heirs and the federal government. Stolley reports that while the family wanted \$18.5 million, the federal government was offering \$3 million for ownership rights. Later the family increased its asking price to \$30 million. A \$16 million figure would later become the final tender on the transaction, but Stolley reminisces that Zapruder had nightmares about his brief role on the stage of history because the graphic nature of the event itself made an appalling sight.

Acknowledging that a clear majority of Americans do not accept the one-man alone thesis, he admits that *Life* refused to allow examination of the film but did supply copies to the Warren Commission and other government agencies. Believing that it is the single most

important piece of physical evidence to the crime, Stolley reveals part of the reason not to allow the film's use by others was for "competitive reasons."

These *competitive reasons* would sound like a Market Approach at first glance except for the fact that *Life* sold it away for the tidy sum of one dollar back to the Zapruder family in 1975 while not using it to sell magazines. Competitiveness could not be a Mirror Approach when the pictures in the Mirror are not even there, while a Fourth Estate Approach would demand scrutiny of such important evidence.

## CHAPTER 5. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF CBS NEWS

In 1967, with public doubts surrounding the lone gunman scenario proliferating, CBS began its chain of documentary programs. These would continue through the years, reviewing the claims of the Warren Commission Report and reaffirming the official government version of reality.

When the Warren Commission concluded that the shooting occurred within a time span of 4.8 to 5.6 seconds or between Zapruder frames 210–313, it became essential to show both that (a) The Carcano rifle could indeed be fired with the speed and accuracy of scoring two hits on the target and (b) That a 6.5 mm bullet could penetrate two human beings while remaining virtually intact (see Appendix A, Exhibit 6a–1 and Exhibit 7a).

With this in mind, CBS proceeded to conduct firing tests with “*a similar Carcano rifle*” in order to determine if a lone assassin could fire *the* “Oswald Carcano” with the speed and accuracy attributed to the Depository gunman by the Warren Commission. Accordingly, CBS constructed a wooden tower and placed their rifle into the hands of shooters who would then fire at a target moving at a uniform speed. The results of this 1967 study would also be included in future documentaries.

Before looking at the results we must first ask ourselves, Does this test have meaning? Can one take a similar gun, which was not even in Dallas on November 22, 1963, and prove that *the* gun found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository by Officers Boone and Weitzman could be fired just as fast? Guns, like any other piece of mechanical equipment, age with time and use. In other words, can a comparison be made between two different rifles with the assumption that they will perform identically?

### **Watchdog Function**

One theory of the media is that it performs a Watchdog function critically scrutinizing government and politicians. CBS does not appear to take this role in its television documentaries. Indeed, it does the opposite. It takes the role of government apologist attempting to justify the findings of the Warren Commission Report and refute all criticisms.

### **1967 Documentary Program**

#### **The Rifle Test**

This becomes apparent when CBS unabashedly tells its viewers that the network's similar rifle was fired three times in 4.1 seconds. The "Oswald Carcano" in tests conducted for the Warren Commission required "at least 2.3 seconds between shots" (Warren Report, 1964:97). The 2.3 second time is firing the rifle "as fast as the bolt will operate" (3H407). CBS did not have a "similar gun" as advertised but a "*better gun.*" It could be fired over 1/2 second faster *while* aiming at a moving target than the actual Carcano could be fired.

CBS' "better gun" did not have a defective scope and staggered firing pin, as did CE139 (the Manlicher Carcano rifle found on the sixth floor). When the FBI tested the weapon, according to J. Edgar Hoover, the "telescopic sight could not be properly aligned with the target since the sight reached the limit of its adjustment before reaching accurate alignment" (26H104). This required the addition of three metal shims to "determine the possibility of scoring hits with this weapon on a given target under rapid fire conditions" (3H444). While the scope on the "Oswald rifle" was defective and required the addition of metal shims to the weapon, which had the effect of strapping it down and keeping it in

alignment, the trigger would also meet resistance during the operating procedure (3H443–447; 3H450–451; 26H104). The CBS weapon may have resembled Oswald's, however, it was clearly superior (Lane, 1967).

Even with all that aside, Lane (1967) notes that CBS supplied 11 marksmen with their rifle, allowed them to practice and then had them shoot 37 firing runs each at a target meant to simulate the President. Seventeen of the firing runs were eliminated from their statistics, Cronkite tells his viewers, because of “trouble with the rifle.” This could be interpreted to mean that the gunman required more than 7.5 seconds to squeeze off three shots before the moving car reached the end of the trolley, or the shooter had trouble with the rifle. Once these “no times” were eliminated the viewer is left with the average of the fastest efforts.

The average time for the remaining rounds was identical to the *maximum time* a lone assassin would require. CBS did not announce the average for the accuracy of their gunmen. However, Thompson (1967, 1976:378) discovered the CBS marksmen averaged only 1.2 hits compared to the 2.0 required for the hypothetical lone-assassin.

Oswald barely qualified as a marksman in the Marine Corps, scoring 191 or one point above the minimum level required for that designation (11H304). However, Oswald was not an expert. Nevertheless, at the conclusion of the firing tests, the CBS narrator states that it “seemed reasonable to say than an expert could fire the rifle in five seconds.” Then he adds, “it seems equally reasonable to say that Oswald under normal circumstances, would take longer. But the circumstances were not normal. He was shooting at the President. So our answer is probably fast enough.”

At this juncture the rifle can be fired “probably fast enough.” At the end of the broadcast the commentator sums up the gun test effort with these words: “How fast could Oswald’s rifle be fired? Fast enough.” Thus, regarding speed, what originated as “*probably fast enough*” was later transformed into “*fast enough*,” while omitting to add that CBS originally stated “under normal circumstances it would take longer” if he were not shooting at the President.

### **The Single-Bullet Theory**

Because the Zapruder film provided a chronometer of events that clocked the murder sequence, it not only froze the principal figures in time but also became essential in reconstructing the crime. Since Kennedy and Connally were both struck before the bolt-action rifle could be operated to allow a lone assassin time to squeeze off two shots—either there had to be a second gunman firing in Dealey Plaza or both men were hit by the same bullet. The Warren Commission with its lone gunman scenario opted for the latter. This hypothesis became known as the Single-Bullet Theory.

Cronkite put it concisely when he noted “the Single-Bullet Theory is essential to its [the Warren Commission’s] findings.” If the theory is to be considered factual then one bullet (Commission Exhibit 399) must inflict seven non-fatal wounds on two individuals. The projectile must first go through the President’s neck and then enter the Governor’s back, shatter his fifth rib, fracture his wrist and then enter his thigh. In addition, bullet 399 must remain unscathed throughout its journey (see Appendix A, Exhibit 6a-2 and Exhibit 7a).

Dr. Alfred Oliver supervised the test firings at Edgewood Arsenal for the Warren Commission in 1964. These tests, using a cadaver’s wrist to simulate the possible bone

density in the human body, revealed that none of the test bullets even came close to reproducing the condition of CE399 (see Appendix A, Exhibit 7b & c). This is the “deformity issue.” Could a bullet inflict so much damage and still remain intact?

CBS asked Dr. Oliver to conduct a test of their own with four objects of “the same thickness and density” as the two bodies. CBS correspondent Dan Rather described the experiment by announcing that a “gelatin block five and one-half inches thick, with cloth added was utilized in order to depict Kennedy’s neck.” “Two or so feet away was a 12-inch block representing the Governor’s chest also with appropriate clothing.” The wrist was inset with masonite to represent bone with more gelatin added to stand in for his thigh.

After conducting the experiments CBS concludes, “our tests confirm that a single bullet could indeed have wounded both men.” But what did the bullet look like? Do not ask CBS because *they never show any test bullets or discuss their condition on the program* (Lane, 1967). Yet this is the question these tests were supposed to answer.

While maintaining a bullet could have penetrated such objects, one might wonder why Dan Rather for CBS did not define what the “12-inch block representing the Governor’s chest” consisted of. Although CBS does not elaborate, the answer slips out from Dr. Oliver when, later in the broadcast, he is heard to say the bullet, after exiting JFK’s throat, created a “much larger track in the gelatin block, which represents a more serious wound,” than the “Governor received.” In his own words he states “of course, we have no rib here, but it still simulates it passing through the flesh.”

Despite this “completely valid test” which CBS contends they conducted, another important ingredient is left out—no bullet path has ever been found in Kennedy’s body



(2H361; FBI Supplemental Report, January 13, 1964). This supposition by the Warren Commission, which lacks support from any single physician who viewed the body is quite crucial to the case and yet it is not even addressed by CBS.

CBS presents Dr. Malcolm Perry who says that, at the time the President was in the operating room, he did not give the character of the throat wound much thought. He acknowledges that without a bullet tumbling upon exit, wounds from a bullet can look very similar. CBS acknowledges that he told the press on November 22 that it looked like an entry wound and pointed to the front of his neck, but that the scene was "turbulent and disordered," leaving the viewer with the belief that the doctors did not give it much thought, when as a group they had discussed the wound on November 22nd, and thought it was one of entrance (6H35; Meagher, 1967:150-151).

At Bethesda Naval Hospital, Captain J. J. Humes, who performed the autopsy, did not view the throat wound since it had been obliterated by a tracheotomy incision made in Dallas. Since then he was allowed to view the autopsy photographs. Most certainly, this is a dramatic development and Humes certifies to CBS that they confirmed his testimony before the Warren Commission. While some will not find this surprising, and it will be challenged later as qualified others outside the government are allowed access to this material, it was indeed valuable to present the interview over the airwaves, especially since this is the first light of day for the pictures. CBS neglected to query Humes on the destruction of his original autopsy report, neither did they ask about the lack of finding an actual bullet path through the body.

### **The Fatal Head Shot**

CBS could not show the Zapruder film on the air due to the policy of *Life* magazine who held the copyright and would not even allow a single still frame to be published by anyone. Yet the question of the fatal head shot remains. Did it come from behind or from a second gunman firing from the grassy knoll in front of the motorcade?

Clearly, Kennedy's head and body are thrust backwards upon impact of the bullet. This is acknowledged by CBS and would seem to indicate a projectile entering the right temple of the President and throwing him backwards in the direction of flight as it transfers its momentum to the body, consistent with Newton's second law of motion.

The epicenter of an explosion in the President's head is clearly seen on Zapruder frame 313, which is known as the frame of impact. There is a halo of blood as the President's body begins to be thrust violently backwards.

In discussing this matter, CBS presents "a picture that might explain" what happened to JFK "just a little bit more clearly." It's "a thirty caliber bullet being shot through an electric light bulb." Then the audience witnesses a bullet transversing through a secured light bulb. Of course with the light bulb being a fixed object tied into a socket, some particles fly forwards (Lane, 1967).

Yet, no one tied Kennedy into the limousine and he was not a fixed object. As we check the historical record we know that a great deal of debris flew backwards as well, splattering motorcycle officers Bobby Hargis and B. J. Martin with blood and brain matter. This led Hargis to abandon his motorcycle and rush up the hill on Elm Street in front of the President in an attempt to find the assassin (6H292; 6H294). Later that afternoon, Deputy

Sheriff Seymour Weitzman found a sizable piece of skull along the south curb of Elm Street in an area behind where the Presidential limousine was at the moment of impact (7H107). These facts are not stated or acknowledged by CBS. The light bulb experiment would, if valid by CBS standards, also indicate the presence of a second gunman firing from the front, since blood and brain tissue also went backwards. Of course light bulbs are filled with air and not brain matter, yet there is absolutely no comment on the backwards head movement, which is the question they set out to answer. CBS also presents a “jiggle theory” concerning the Zapruder film and the timing of the shots which will be discussed later.

At the very end, the anchor relays the network’s conclusion that we may not be “entirely comfortable” with the Single-Bullet Theory but that “measured against the alternatives, the Report is the easiest to believe.” It is the “best account we are ever likely to have of what happened in Dallas” and “that all objections that go to the heart of the Report vanish when exposed to the light of honest inquiry.”

### **Johnson’s Doubts**

In 1969, right after he left office, President Johnson was interviewed by Walter Cronkite of CBS News. In that interview, the man who established and appointed the Warren Commission revealed that he had never believed their conclusion. In Johnson’s words he said, “I never believed Oswald had acted alone.”

He added that “he was quite a mysterious fellow and did have connections that bore examination.” “I don’t think that they [the Warren Commission] or me or anyone else is absolutely sure of everything that might have motivated Oswald *or others* that could have been involved.” Upon reflection, Johnson felt his remarks were better kept secret so he asked

CBS to delete the remarks on grounds of “national security,” which they did (Summers, 1980:131).

It is interesting to imagine what impact such a concession would have from an individual who not only witnessed the assassination but also conceived of the Commission and gave them their charter and mandate while being President would have on the American people. Admitting that at the start, he doubted the basic conclusion of the Commission, Johnson’s statement was certainly most newsworthy. Nevertheless, CBS complied with the President’s wishes and that part of the interview hit the cutting room floor, not to be broadcast for the digestion of the American public.

It would, however, be broadcast later in the CBS 1975 documentary, after Johnson’s death, which was then six years after the interview and 12 years after the murder, without any real commentary or explanation of this mysterious act of self-censorship. However, by this time, its existence had become known as Leo Janis (1973) had published Johnson’s doubts about the assassination in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

## **Post Watergate**

### **1975 Documentary Program**

Advertised as a “definitive probe” of the Warren Commission’s conclusions, CBS aired “The American Assassins” in 1975. This came in the wake of Watergate and on the threshold of future Congressional probes into CIA-FBI misconduct which infringed on the rights of law-abiding citizens. These Congressional inquiries would incidentally establish that

the FBI conducted, as a matter of policy, a campaign to impair and discredit the civil rights movement and Martin Luther King. Faith in government had been slowly eroded.

The program began by assuming Oswald's guilt. With that in mind, the broadcast exhausts its initial airtime by going over the same firing tests presented in the 1967 documentary. In other words, the "similar gun" is paraded out replete with gunman shooting at targets on a firing range with 17 of 37 test firings eliminated and a rifle which could be fired three times in 4.1 seconds with aiming at a moving target when the Dallas Carcano requires 4.6 seconds to operate the bolt (Warren Report, 1964:97).

CBS concludes, like the Warren Commission, that the first shot was fired between frames 210-225. The reasoning is that JFK is behind a tree from the vantage point of a sixth-floor assailant until frame 210. However, there is no way the line of fire from the sixth floor window could rule out the possibility of a shot fired by another assassin on the grassy knoll prior to frame 210, when he had a clear range of fire.

In fact, by ruling out any discussion of a throat shot (at say Z-189, when Kennedy's vertical hand movement becomes lateral), CBS ignored the Warren Commission's own evidence which includes witnesses Hugh Betzner and Phil Willis. Betzner snapped his photograph congruent with the report of rapid gunfire. Betzner's photograph was taken at frame 186. Phil Willis stated that the sound of the first gunshot caused him to squeeze the shutter. His picture of the images in this carnage occurred at frame Z-202, or when JFK was obstructed by an oak tree from the viewpoint of any lone sixth floor Depository assailant (Sprague, 1970:51; 6HSCA44, 50).

In fact, the very reports out of Dallas that day from Parkland Hospital were that the wound in JFK's throat was one *of entrance and not exit as the Single-Bullet Theory* would proscribe. Even though it is not mentioned or even discussed, it is important to note that the physicians who attended the President at Parkland formed the opinion that the throat wound was one of entrance (listed in Meagher, 1967:150-151; Thompson, 1967, 1976:62). These were the only doctors to view the anterior throat wound because it was obliterated by a tracheotomy incision soon after in an attempt to save the President's life. Also, *no bullet path has ever been found* which goes through Kennedy's body to connect the throat wound to the back of JFK (2H361; FBI Supplemental Report, January 13, 1964).

If one were pre-disposed to the concept of a lone-gunman, that person might ask how to explain the throat wound and maintain that it is one of exit. If the throat wound was an exit wound, the shot could have come from the Texas School Book Depository. If it was an entrance wound, the shot came from the direction of the Grassy Knoll. Even the FBI recognized this problem when four days after the assassination the *New York Times* revealed that:

The known facts about the bullets, and the position of the assassin, suggested that he started shooting as the President's car was *coming toward him*, swung his rifle in an arc 180 degrees and fired at him at least twice (*New York Times*, November 27, 1963). [italics added for emphasis]

The *Times* would subsequently cease to report this. No longer would the President be described as being shot while approaching the Texas School Book Depository.

The throat wound has always been a thorn in the single-gunman analysis. Remember that at this point in time, Paul Mandel, in his 1963 *Life* magazine article, "An End to Nagging Rumors," would inscribe that the President "turned his body far around to his right as he

waves to someone in the crowd” and his throat is exposed toward the sniper’s nest. The film does not show President Kennedy turning around, so this statement has become inoperative. CBS assumes the first shot had to be fired at Z-210 because the oak tree obscured the hypothetical lone-gunman’s line of sight prior to that frame. That shot would have to go through the President’s neck. An earlier shot did not happen according to the Warren Commission’s version, as the depository gunman did not have a clear line of sight.

What could establish this? Certainly not a discussion of Oswald’s guilt or innocence by CBS since that was not addressed. Most certainly the medical data could not be the source which established this, since the Parkland Hospital doctors’ opinion on the throat wound before it was obliterated by a tracheotomy incision was that the shot came from the front. If the photographic evidence was utilized it would have to include Betzner’s image at Z-186 and Willis Z-202, and the Zapruder film itself. Yet, none of the Zapruder frames prior to Z-210 are even studied much less scrutinized on the program!

Yet, not even confronting the paradox, CBS frames the issue in terms of JFK’s *visibility* from the viewpoint of a sixth-floor assailant—which is totally *irrelevant* to an examination of the throat wound.

Still, could this wound solve Oswald’s marksmanship problem? After rehashing the 1967 firing tests, Dan Rather comes to grips with this dilemma when he announces:

Some of Oswald’s fellow servicemen didn’t consider him an expert although he did attain a rating of sharpshooter—the second highest rating given by the Marine Corps, an organization which prides itself on excellence in riflery.

How does this establish Oswald’s rifle proficiency? Could it be that the Marine Corps priding itself in riflery can alter the initial facts included in the first part of the passage—that he

was not considered an expert and did not attain the proficiency of CBS own expert marksmen?

After a commercial break, CBS quotes Governor Connally as saying that shots come from over his right shoulder. This implies that he agrees with the conclusions CBS is making and does some distortion to his original testimony. Even *Life* magazine's accounting of it in their anomaly issue of November 25, 1966, cited him as saying "the thought immediately passed through my mind that there were either two or three people involved." When questioned about the single-bullet issue, Connally exclaimed: "they talk about the one-bullet or two-bullet theory, but as far as I'm concerned, there is no theory. There is my absolute knowledge, and Nellie's [his wife] too, that one bullet caused all the President's wounds and that *an entirely separate one struck me.*" Further, "It's a certainty. I'll never change my mind." Since the lone-assassin thesis rests squarely on the Single-Bullet Theory, the former Governor's impressions rule out the very conclusion *CBS implied he reached.*

CBS presents Dr. James Weston who has viewed the autopsy photos and confirms that they do show the head shot coming from behind. This is newsworthy yet will be challenged later by qualified others who will be ignored by CBS. CBS then moves on to another aspect.

That aspect would be a study of the head shot on the Zapruder film by Itec Corporation. CBS labels Itec as "world renowned for film analysis." But renowned by whom? Itec is no stranger to this case—they "analyzed" a figure-like image behind the concrete pagoda on the grassy knoll at the request of UPI in May 1967. In its public report Itec claims to have found nothing; although Maurice Schoenfeld, a former UPI executive working on the Itec-JFK project admitted in an article published in the *Columbia Journalism*



*Review* that Itec's President and chief company executive were CIA agents. As Schoenfeld quite pointedly stated, "I love to tell the story on myself, and maybe on all of us, of how in the end, the only people I could get to investigate a picture that might (by a stretch of conspiratorial imagination) involve the CIA were people who worked for the CIA" (Schoenfeld, 1975:47).

To CBS, this organization which is "world renowned for film analysis," "examined" frame Z-313 (the fatal head impact frame) and concluded that "*all* the major particles from the President's head traveled away from him and forward." This cursory examination leaves much of the official record lacking.

CBS ignores the testimony of Officers Hargis and Martin (6H290; 6H294-295) who on their motorcycles behind the President were splattered with blood and brain matter, as well as the skull fragment which was found behind the limousine and Secret Service agent Clint Hill who climbed on the trunk of the vehicle as it sped away and observed that "there was blood and bits of brain all over the entire rear portion of the car" (2H141).

This "CBS Investigation" merely borrowed the Itec study from the publicly available Rockefeller Commission Report where it was published earlier in 1975. What this "investigation" shows is that if something does not exist or show up on frame 313 (the fatal head shot) then it does not exist. Officers Billy Hargis and C. J. Martin were splattered with blood and brain matter. They were riding motorcycles behind the President at the time and testified Jackie Kennedy would climb onto the trunk of the limousine immediately after the fatal shot. Not only were the officers covered with blood but so were the windshields and motors of their cycles.

Nevertheless, what about the backsnap of JFK's head in response to the fatal shot at Z-313? CBS' conclusion is that Jackie pushing JFK "could account for some of the backward movement of his head and body." This insight contradicts Jacqueline's own testimony which matches the Zapruder film, as well as each and every eyewitness to the event. CBS has yet to come to grips with the essential issue—how could she thrust him backwards so fast when the bullet is traveling in the opposite direction? It is interesting to note that CBS would not report this "finding" in any future documentary.

For its finale in the 1975 video, CBS attempts to analyze the Zapruder film in terms of the Single-Bullet Theory. CBS then begins with the assumption that Kennedy was first struck while behind the Stemmons Freeway sign during the interval of frames 210–225. This, one might recall, was after the point when the President was obscured by an oak tree from the vantage point of a sixth floor gunman, yet ignores the fact that he was still visible from the front and that his throat wound before the tracheotomy incision was described as one of entrance by Parkland physicians.

However, Dan Rather continues, "But we believe no one can tell when Connally was hit." How interesting! CBS *concludes* that John Kennedy is struck when you cannot even see him because of the traffic sign (Z-210–225), and then says no one can tell when anyone was hit on the film.

With that clearly stated, later on CBS proceeds to do what they claimed was impossible—analyze Connally's movements to determine the frame of impact. For CBS, this is a job for Itec. Accordingly, five photo interpreters are assigned the task of finding "anything unusual," even though the broadcast was aired on November 25, 1975,

Schoenfeld's article in the *Columbia Journalism Review* (mentioned previously) was published months earlier in their July–August 1975 edition about Itec credentials. The “unusual” amounts to a twisting of Connally's hat and wrist at Z–228. After this is said one must wonder, if it could be earlier stated that they believed no one could project when Connally was hit, how an impossible estimate can “lay serious doubt that Connally was hit as late as the Commission critics claim.”

### **1988 Documentary Program**

The twenty–fifth anniversary of the shooting brought a commemorative documentary which looked back at the crime. Its purpose was stated concisely by the commentator: “We have no comment on the past, only to bring it back.” Accordingly, footage of Walter Cronkite abruptly interrupting the TV soap opera, *As The World Turns*, Lee Oswald being led into police headquarters upon arrest and the casket being unloaded from Air Force One onto a hearse are revisited but the controversy surrounding the event is not discussed.

We learn that the film in those days was on wet-stock and not videotape, as well as the fact that broadcast signals moved from hard-wire rather than by satellite. A typical example of this program is CBS newsman Harry Reasoner reflecting that “people will remember today as a day to date things in their lives as they did when Franklin Delano Roosevelt died” and that they will remember where they were when they first heard the news.

### **1992 Documentary Program**

It came to my attention during the course of research for this study that an extended version of this broadcast was produced by CBS for public sale. Because the initial broadcast

reached millions of households and more viewers it was decided to confine the analysis to the larger and immediate audience at the time it was produced and aired.

February 5, 1992, was the broadcast date of a CBS documentary on its prime time program, *48 Hours*. With Dan Rather as narrator, the broadcast pledges to be a “special [in which] we *build* on 28 years of reporting, including investigations by CBS News.”

That stated, the categorical statement is announced that the Warren Commission version “still stands as the official record of what happened”—shades of the high school textbooks reviewed earlier. In one fell swoop the equally official version two of a second gunman contained in the Report of the Congress is swept under the rug as somehow either being non-existent or unofficial.

After explaining the Single-Bullet Theory with its prerequisite of seven non-fatal wounds sustained by two individuals as being absolutely essential to a single lone gunman operating in Dealey Plaza, the narrator concludes that the “Single-Bullet Theory is, perhaps the most debated piece of evidence in the assassination case.” Suddenly, a theory has become evidence, an incredible leap.

A former Warren Council member claims, “the fact is that when the bullet passed through President Kennedy’s neck ... we know that it exited the neck at 1,800 feet per second [and] the question is: if it didn’t hit Governor Connally, where did it go?” Since no bullet path has ever been found in Kennedy’s neck and the wound was not even dissected at autopsy, it would be interesting to find out upon what basis “we know” it even transited the body. If the theory of the single-bullet is *evidence* as was just claimed by CBS we might

know this, but the statement still goes on the air without further comment or commentary (2H361; FBI Supplemental Report, January 13, 1964).

CBS mentions that physicians who have viewed the Kennedy autopsy photos believe that they reveal an entrance wound in the back of the head and that Dr. Wecht disagrees. While experts indeed differ on what the photographs show, the focus of the debate and discussion is not all that narrow. The authenticity and handling of these items is crucial for perspective on the case as well as the merits of their evidentiary value. While CBS points out that the President's brain tissue is not in the Archives collection, this is not a singular disappearance. In reality, the entire brain itself is gone and with it more bullet fragments. Also, photographs of the interior chest cavity, X-rays of the President's skull, all photographs of the brain taken at the supplemental autopsy are missing and one roll of film taken during the autopsy was ruined and exposed to light. Furthermore, the brain was never dissected making the autopsy itself incomplete, nor was the throat wound through which the single bullet must travel dissected either (Kurtz, 1982:89, 100).

However, that entire issue is glossed over as the narrator states, "nevertheless a Commission lawyer says ballistics evidence proves the shot came from behind." His proof, as stated on the air, amounts to three elements: That there are bullet fragments which can be identified, a gun found in a building, and a test shows "that bullet" came from "that rifle."

He is referring to a neutron activation analysis performed by Dr. Vincent Guinn for the House Committee's investigation in 1978. In 1964, the FBI had performed a similar test for the Warren Commission utilizing the less refined technique of spectrographic analysis. At that

time the tests were inconclusive and by using the newer more advance equipment he could state that the Archive fragments tested in 1978 with new apparatus produced a match.

However, Guinn also admitted that these were not the same fragments the FBI tested in 1964. He explained to the House Committee that Archives had assured him he had “been given the only lead bullet fragments from this case still present in the Archives.” Yet, when he weighed them, Guinn found that none of the individual weights corresponded with the 1964 fragments. He concluded that these were different fragments from those originally tested and testified that presumably these missing fragments “are in existence somewhere” and “where they are I have no idea” (1979, 1HSCA562–563). Although it has never been clear what happened to the original specimens, Henry Hurt explains that now “there is no way to be certain just what Guinn was testing” except that the original fragments are missing, only to be replaced by different ones (1979, 1HSCA562-563; Hurt, 1985:83). CBS makes no comment on this new addition of evidence that is missing from the Archives.

Each CBS News documentary about the evidence presents the now familiar “similar rifle” firing tests which were performed in 1967. After 25 years CBS still believes and advocates the accuracy of this experiment. As discussed above, it is seriously flawed and unscientific. Yet, the conclusion is still that “it can be done” with the speed and accuracy of a lone gunman. Without commenting again on the deficiencies of the similar gun study, one must wonder if it can be done, then “with which rifle.” Certainly not the one found on the sixth-floor which was tested by the FBI at Edgewood Arsenal in 1964.

The program continues with items which were not considered significant since they did not deal with the actual shooting itself such as the manhunt for Lee Harvey Oswald by the

Dallas Police, Oswald's childhood, and marriage to Marina as well as a list of parties who some suspect might have been involved if it were not committed by Oswald acting alone. While it is not my purpose to identify anyone who may have been involved in the shooting, one episode stands out and deserves comment since it exemplifies the nature of the program. The broadcast claims an "explosive charge" has been made that the CIA was responsible for Kennedy's death. "No," says CBS. Their evidence—Correspondent Richard Schlesinger holding a microphone in front of former CIA Director of Covert Operations at the time of the assassination and later Director of the Agency itself—Richard Helms, who denies it.

### **1993 Documentary Program**

In 1993, upon the 30th anniversary of Kennedy's murder, CBS News presented another documentary program about the assassination. This one was entitled "JFK: The Final Chapter." While they might wish it were final, Dan Rather admits that, "Yet JFK files, due to the Assassination Disclosure Act of 1992, will require release of new info."

Even in putting this discrepancy aside, Dan Rather, drawing from the "old evidence" states that, "while John Kennedy lay in Parkland Hospital, Dallas Police surrounded the Texas School Book Depository" and that "only one man left the building."

What is interesting to note here is that the Dallas Police never sealed off the building—leaving anyone able to leave at will through the loading docks and rear entrances (7H348). If "surrounding" the building has another connotation, what is it meant to convey?—That "only one man left the building" and that "the radio blared his description."

This statement has two elements: First, more than one employee left the building, including an ex-convict named Charles Givens (6H321). Second, even if the "radio blared

out” one of these people’s descriptions, it was not that of Lee Harvey Oswald. The description reads, “Attention all squads. At Elm and Houston reported to be an unknown white male” who is “approximately 30, slender build, height 5 feet-ten inches, weight 165 pounds” (23H843).

One hundred sixty-five pounds? CBS, in the process of making three quick misstatements about the historical record, is concluding that Oswald could almost qualify to be a light-heavyweight boxer in addition to being an excellent gunman. When considering those three statements, and again noting Dan Rather’s remark that “Dallas Police surrounded the Texas School Book Depository,” it is almost apparent that “surrounding the Depository” is not the same as “sealing it off.” The next statement is that “only one man had left the building” when several employees were not accountable. The third is that “radios blared his (Oswald’s) description” when that very *description* was approximately 10 years off in age and 35 pounds off in weight!

Meanwhile, Walter Cronkite is heard to say in a soundbite taken from CBS’ own broadcast on the day of the murder that “regarding the probable assassin, the Sheriff’s office has taken a young man into custody.” Besides being innocent until proven guilty this “probable assassin” message not only shows extreme reliability on behalf of the news agency on local sheriff’s office on the very day of the assassination but also a lack of concern by CBS in using it years later that Oswald does not match the description that was put out during the manhunt.

Before the commercial break, Dan Rather warns the audience that “when we return Oswald meets his fate.” Despite the verbiage, there is no discussion of how Jack Ruby



entered the basement of the police station, only that “He [Ruby] visited Havana the year that Castro took over, but apparently only to have a good time.” The “good time,” if that’s what it was, according to the House Select Committee’s Report in 1979 was to visit New Orleans crime boss Carlos Marcello in a Cuban jail (HSCA Report, 1979:173).

Nicholas Katzenbach is asked about his memo and he repeats his public statement to the House Committee on Assassinations:

What I meant was that if you don’t put all of the facts out and they don’t have all of the facts and there are some facts that are concealed, you are never going to get rid of – to believe that Oswald did it alone, even if that is your conclusion.

The surprising thing is that CBS presents the memo within the context of their own belief that it urges a thorough investigation without conducting any follow-up questioning of Katzenbach’s interpretation. A critic is heard to say that it “sounds like some kind of cover-up.” Then the matter is dropped all too quickly.

In summing up the physical evidence by saying that “distrust of the Warren Commission’s single gunman theory is often tied to the testimony of three self-proclaimed witnesses,” the narrator seems to believe that these witnesses are, in fact, representative of the larger whole. To set up the believability of over one hundred eyewitnesses on the basis of “three self-proclaimed witnesses” is to use a barometer of extraordinary calibration. And yet, the misleading statement comes from the first part of the sentence. The syntax reads, “distrust of the Warren Commission” is often tied to three witnesses and ignores entirely the House Committee’s version two (conclusion of a second gunman) in 1979. Even so, available public opinion polls revealed that “distrust” in the Report preceded two of these people and their accounts. The third witness was Jean Hill, who testified before the Warren Commission

(6H207) and stood with Mary Moorman while she snapped a black and white Polaroid picture of the shooting which was carried in newspapers across the country the following day. A notarized statement containing her account of the murder was published by the Warren Commission. In that statement taken on the day of the crime she said, "Mrs. Jean Hill and I were standing on the grass by the park on Elm Street" beside Ms. Moorman when she took her picture (19H487). Jean Hill could hardly be a "self-proclaimed" witness as CBS characterized her.

After mention is made of the flawed rifle tests which CBS conducted in 1967, Gerald Posner appears on camera to announce that "Oswald, in fact had eight and half seconds for all three shots." Posner, the author of a manuscript entitled *Case Closed*, believes that the first round was fired when a sniper could not even see Kennedy from the vantage point on the sixth floor. An oak tree blocked a clear shot to the President at that point in time. Posner believes the shot was "deflected by a tree" and that an analysis of the Zapruder film provides the answer. To CBS this is a "filmed discovery." But, where does Posner get his information for this "filmed discovery?"

A little girl named Rosemary Willis stops running and looks toward her right, in the general direction of the Depository Building, at frame 166. If this were in response to an earlier shot, then the gunman would have a full three seconds in which to work the bolt of the rifle after firing blindly into a tree.

It is true that the 10-year old girl, who happened to be running alongside the Presidential limousine, looked to her right towards the Book Depository warehouse where the alleged single gunman would have had to be at that point in time. Still, there is some

confusion on this point. Posner's source for this is a newspaper story which ran in a 1979 edition of the *Dallas Times-Herald*, wherein the girl said she stopped running when she heard the sound of the first shot. Her mother, Marilyn Willis, maintains that because of the child's exuberance, she yelled out for her to stop, and her 10-year old daughter turned right, towards that sound—in response to her mother's voice and not the shot which the mother also heard (Brown 1995:183). As for turning her head, which Posner cites, her recollection is vague as she stated, "I *think* I *probably* turned to look toward the noise, toward the Book Depository, leaving unclear what was going through her mind (Weisberg, 1994:28-29). No one else responded at all in this manner. The girl's movements are his sole source for this "discovery"—the recollection in a 10-year-old's mind of contemporaneous action between the voice of the mother and the noise of the shot 13 years later. Ignoring the mother's account, Posner goes on to claim "Oswald had eight and a half seconds for all three shots." To Dan Rather and CBS News, we have "a filmed discovery" because eight and a one-half seconds are "Enough time to readjust your sight and your aim is what makes all the difference in the world."

Small world! The last time anyone checked on the condition of the Carcano rifle which was at Edgewood Arsenal, readjusting the site required the addition of metal shims for a firing test in which even the experts could not "re-adjust."

CBS sees fit to abandon its earlier explanations for the violent movement of President Kennedy's head and body with the impact of the fatal head shot. It is true that the body moves backwards as seen on the film, but Posner adds a caveat for CBS: "Kennedy's head first goes slightly forward." But, this is between frames 312 and 313. Measurements on the

Zapruder film were made back in 1967, and they were in Thompson's book (1967, 1976:115–117). The head does move forward between frames 312—the frame prior to the bullet even hitting the head—and in 313 which is the frame of the bullet's impact, where the head violently explodes in a *mass of brain and tissue matter*. In each subsequent frame the movement is backwards. At no time after the impact of the bullet at frame 313, where the head explodes, does it move forward. Then, with the succeeding frame and in each one after that, it is driven backwards at an increasing rate of acceleration in that direction before striking the cushion of the seat (Thompson, 1967: 1976:117). What is indeed ironic is that when the Warren Commission published these frames as black and white exhibits in their volumes of evidence, frames 314 and 315 were transposed and mislabeled. These were the only frames juxtaposed, which might give the impression that the head indeed goes forward. Nevertheless, in a statement released on December 14, 1965, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover described the switch as a “printing error” (Meagher, 1967:22; Thompson, 1967, 1976:115; Lifton, 1980). This is the only switch in the printing of 163 Zapruder frames in the Warren Commission exhibits and the effect is to make a backward movement look like a forward one (Thompson, 1967, 1976:115).

Concerning the autopsy photographs, CBS was content to interview Dr. Humes and Weston on earlier broadcasts when they stipulated that the pictures indicated Kennedy was hit from behind. In the intervening years prior to this broadcast, additional physicians had viewed those materials. Dr. Robert McClelland identified a flap of scalp and hair which he observed in Dallas while he attended to the President. It had been split open and thrown backwards around the base of a large gaping exit wound in the back of the President's head. He told

reporter Sylvia Chase of KRON-TV San Francisco, that this loose flap of scalp could be seen being held in such a manner so as to obscure the exit wound. He further commented that “Somebody is concealing the whole plot”...“There was somebody on the grassy knoll who shot the President and blew his brains out.” Anthony Summers comments that “this is a remarkable statement coming from Dr. McClelland. It is likely to reverberate for a long time.” Summers believes his explanation goes a long way to resolving an apparent discrepancy (Summers, 1989:484–486). Dr. Cyril Wecht (1993:36–37) also believes this could “very easily be an exit wound.”

In addition, Physician Fouad Bashour who was at the emergency room in Dallas and Dr. David Mantik also had seen the materials and publicly reported their findings of a frontal head shot from a grassy knoll gunman prior to this broadcast. Mantik supported his findings by being the first person allowed to perform a technique known as “optical densitometry” on the X-rays (Summers, 1989:481; Fetzer, 1998:11–14). However, CBS who in earlier years was so eager to interview Humes and Weston about autopsy photographs seems no longer willing in 1993 to pursue this evidence.

Next, the Zapruder film is utilized by CBS and Posner to explain that when Zapruder jiggled his camera “the reaction is obvious” because “the blurs in the film they [*sic* – he] took occur at the same times as [gunshots] in the Zapruder film.” He concludes that Zapruder must have “jiggled” his camera with the sound of each shot fired. Posner’s “discovery” here is nothing but a retread of CBS’s own 1967 documentary, while others, not mentioned, including the House Committee, have studied the *jiggle theory* angle with different results.

Philosophy professor Josiah Thompson (1967) intensely examined the Zapruder film for his landmark study on the photographic evidence entitled *Six Seconds in Dallas*. In his tome he referred to the CBS conclusions on the *jiggle theory*.

It is true, as CBS maintains, that the President was unequivocally struck in the head at frame 313. This is when the head explosion occurs, and five frames after this fatal moment the film blurs for the next two frames.

Then CBS claims to have located two additional blurs—one at Z190 and another at Z227. To CBS three blurs at frames 190, 227 and 318 are the result of gunfire and represent reactions to the lone gunman's shots. However, there are additional blurs occurring before Kennedy's limousine turned the corner onto Elm Street, where the fatal shots were fired, while another one occurs of greater magnitude during the shooting at Z197. In addition, other frames exhibit the same phenomenon, which are present in Z210 as well as Z331. None of these are mentioned. Thompson continues to note that the Z227 blur, singled out by CBS as supposedly depicting a bullet which struck JFK and Governor Connally, is not caused by a jiggle since the background in the photo is still clearly in focus (Thompson 1967, 1976:374–375).

By counting blurs between frames 170–334 alone, there would have to be at least six shots, and this is not counting the ones which occur well before the shooting when the vehicle was on Houston Street or even later after the car was streaking away at elevating speeds as it headed toward the underpass on its way to Parkland Hospital with the mortally wounded 35th President. Thompson suggests that because some frames are remarkably clear and others blur

momentarily that perhaps an imperfection of the camera mechanism might be the cause (Thompson, 1967, 1976:374–375). Thompson found this in 1967.

Remarkably, years later and before this 1993 documentary, the House Select Committee on Assassinations would scientifically test the camera, correlate it with the film and reach the same conclusion. As panel members William Hartman and Frank Scott concluded, the film is littered with blurs (Trask, 1994:135–6) which might then indicate the shooter utilized a machine gun instead of a bolt-action Carcano rifle on that fateful afternoon.

At the very end of the broadcast while endorsing the Warren Commission's conclusions, the commentator reassures the audience that "accuracy dictates what we say," yet if gaps can be filled by ignoring them, then perhaps anything can happen, whether it is jiggles on a film, or the use of a different weapon of superior quality in conducting firing tests, or the outright suppression of President Johnson's doubts. Quoting Posner, to CBS because the driver did not speed away immediately, "he has inadvertently given Oswald easy shots" and CBS has stretched the imaginations of all but careful viewers.

## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

Lasswell (1948) viewed the news media as having an increasingly important role in socializing the public. This is accomplished *via* avenues of surveillance and correlation. As norms are defined, common values are accepted and integrated into the social structure, acquainting each generation with accepted doctrine.

At the outset of this endeavor we looked through the lens of the four perspectives on media content by noting:

The Market Approach would predict that the major media would give the consumer audience what they want. Since a clear majority of Americans have rejected the lone gunman theory, the idea of a second gunman would sell copies, appealing to profits.

The Fourth Estate conception would predict that as a monitor towards checks and balances, the major media would pursue the story with responsible investigative reporting, being careful not to sensationalize.

Hegemony would predict, in light of both the Katzenbach memo and the conversation between Lyndon Johnson and Earl Warren, that the major media would absorb and neutralize the greatest possible doubt in order to create an image of the stable institution of government—what the new President and Katzenbach believed to be a necessity.

The Mirror Approach would predict that the major media would just gather and transmit information with the journalist being neutral, like a television camera pointed at the eye of an event.

Hegemony is the perspective that would best explain transmission of this event. This transmission is the third step in Lasswell's methodology. The intended end result or



worldview presented not only in our high school textbooks but also with two other major players—*Time* /*Life* which owned the crucial Zapruder film depicting the shooting in moving sequence, and CBS News through its series of televised documentaries (see Appendix C).

### Surveillance and Correlation

Upon the release of the Warren Report *Time* magazine began its analysis of the report by endorsing the conclusions “in sum and substance” claiming the Report laid to rest “malignant rumors and speculation.” Yet, the 26 volumes of supporting evidence were still being printed by the Government Printing Office and would not be released until a full two months later. Quite an act of clairvoyance considering they could not check out a single footnote or additional evidence. *Time*, after endorsing the Report “in sum and substance,” would never even question it even while its sister publication *Life* was withholding the crucial Zapruder film.

Consistently, this preconception would resonate throughout their pages with the volume of testimony taken by the Warren Commission being cited as proof of thoroughness without mention or curiosity about suppressed evidence. They would also turn a deaf ear away from curiosity about missing evidence at the National Archives.

The autopsy is a good example. In 1966, two years after the release of the 26 volumes, it is considered “exhaustive” despite the fact that it reveals there was no dissection of the brain for bullet fragments. No bullet path was ever found through the body that the single bullet would have to go through in order to have a lone gunman in Dealy Plaza, nor could anyone see the autopsy notes which were burned by Commander Humes in the fireplace of his recreation room. The only medical document which survived (CE 397, see Appendix

A, Exhibit 6b) was taken home by Dr. Boswell, and it was this autopsy report that not only showed the back wound to be too low in order to transit the neck, but also in the exact place JFK's shirt and coat had a bullet hole (see Appendix A, Exhibit 6c-1 & 2).

Pre-Watergate surveillance implied thoroughness by stressing the size of the Warren investigation with such language as, the Report and its volumes of evidence are "10,400,000 words" long. However, this bland acceptance of the official position is clearly not an investigative Fourth Estate approach, nor is it even designed to sell copies in a Market perspective. When the House Select Committee Report was released with version two of a second gunman, only one column was required to mention it in *Time Magazine* as compared with a full eight *pages* for a wholehearted endorsement of the Warren Report the week it came out.

Correlation in Pre-Watergate involved themes such as "phantasmagoria" or labeling researchers and investigators as "myth makers." This labeling would almost cease after Watergate but in 1966 the three-year-old murder case is already carried under the headline "Historical Notes," consigning doubts or further investigation to the category as being frivolous. This would match the editor's headline to the second, more costly, even longer investigation of the House Committee's second gunman conclusion. The headline of that news story reads "Supposition" this time, a full eight months before the Report or its evidence has even been released. A Fourth Estate approach would scrutinize the House Committee's volumes of evidence first when they come out eight months later before reaching this determination, while the Market Approach would be exploiting the tragedy. The pattern appears to follow from the 1977 article concerning the release of 80,000 new pages of FBI

files where the theme of the headline reads, “Improbable leads, new insights and old theory vindicated,” when buried in the article is the astonishing admission that “half of this massive evidence will not come out until next month.” The theme remains that the “FBI investigation was thorough in the extreme” even though items such as the Oswald note to the FBI was destroyed by them, or that a Senate Committee had gone on record over a year earlier as finding that the FBI’s efforts did not allow for a thorough investigation.

When *Life* magazine bought the Zapruder film of the assassination that fateful weekend in Dallas, it was certainly newsworthy. Yet they never allowed the film to be shown in motion to the public, instead it rested in a vault with only a few selected frames printed for public consumption.

Except for the single anomaly issue in 1966, *Life* would follow the same path as its sister publication. At the inception of the Report’s release in 1964, like *Time*, *Life* endorsed it without the benefit of being able to check out the references. This would only first be possible two months later, upon publication of the 26 volumes. Again, the number of pages was equated with thoroughness and accuracy, as the Report was a “monumental and historic task.”

The preconception is that the 26 volumes will live up to the Report and not contain any significant contrary material or anomalies, while evidence which is suppressed and classified is irrelevant to a final conclusion. This is not a Fourth Estate or Market Approach.

What does happen, is that two different versions of the same issue are published concerning the fatal shot. Exhibits 3, 4 and 5 (see Appendix A) show the text and pictures have been changed. Eliminated is the backward snap of the President’s head with an altered caption.

The anomaly article of *Life Magazine* in 1966 was the only instance in which either *Time*, *Life* or CBS ever conducted a Fourth Estate approach. Utilizing Governor Connally, the essay was entitled “A Matter of Reasonable Doubt.” Focusing on the Single-Bullet Theory, *Life* found newsworthy the pristine condition of the projectile, the fact Connally’s physicians, Dr. Shaw and Gregory maintained doubts, and other crucial anomalies. Connally viewed still frames from the original copy of the film and many key frames from the non-fatal wounding were published. Indeed *Life* argued the “case should be reopened.” It would be the only time that this would happen. Struck by this difference in editorial stance, *Time* editor-in-chief Headly Donavon would answer, “in due course we [*Time* and *Life*] will arrive at one position” (Policoff, 1975). They did, and this would be the only occasion that a Fourth Estate approach entered into their coverage.

*Life*’s anomaly issue is the exception which shows the rule. It is an example of what a Fourth Estate approach would be doing, and the Zapruder film was central to their analysis. What would happen later in the next year with the Zapruder film shows how *Life* abruptly switched back to its original stance.

### **Strange Odyssey of the Zapruder Film**

The Zapruder film had a strange odyssey when in the hands of *Life* magazine. Having purchased the film for \$150,000 they would later sell it back to the Zapruder family after Watergate for only one dollar. Hardly the best or the most lucrative deal on the block and one which cannot be considered Fourth Estate or a Market Approach by any stretch of the imagination.

Meanwhile, *Life's* lawyers would go to court in 1967 to prevent even the publication of charcoal drawings of any frames in a book written by Josiah Thompson. The public could not see the film and no one else could publish even its likeness. At that time, their position was that the footage was an “invaluable asset” of the owner (Thompson, 1967:1976:17). After Watergate, with questions being asked which would lead to a re-opening of the case by Congress, this invaluable asset’s value plummeted in their eyes to one dollar as they sold it back to the family, just as some were beginning to ask why it was never shown to the public.

*Life* would become defunct and cease publication in the 1970s. When they reconstituted the enterprise years later it would go monthly and no longer be a weekly magazine. The 20th anniversary of the shooting would provide a commemorative edition.

In that issue *Life* reports that the Zapruder film is “the most intensely scrutinized film in history.” Odd, since it was *Life* which kept the film under lock and key and sought an injunction to enjoin any publication or use of it as an invaluable asset. Indeed, the film was not even scrutinized in this commemorative issue, except for the blanket statement, “the fatal shot struck the right rear of his skull.” Any references to the House Select Committee on Assassination’s second gunman or the Single-Bullet Theory are left out. Even though the House Committee suspected elements of organized crime, the main suspects of the critics are reported to be agents of China, Russia, or Cuba.

### **Cultural Gatekeeping**

In 1949, researcher David Manning White studied the actions of a Midwestern daily newspaper editor named Gates. He concluded that Gates would toss news and information that he disagreed with into the trashcan and publish only material with which he agreed. In

explanation of this phenomenon, White coined the phrase “gatekeeping” (Sandman, 1972:103).

Cultural gatekeeping is certainly a form of boundary maintenance. It results in some stories being in the news and others not while elements of surveillance (what’s newsworthy) with distortion can enter in. This is especially apparent in the cases of *Life* magazine and CBS.

Leon Festinger (1957) found that when people find dissonance or lack of fit between attitudes and behavior unacceptable to them, they will try to reduce the uncertainty by either ignoring their cognitions or by modifying them. With cognitive dissonance the situation becomes less threatening, the world more safer and more orderly, and as it falls into place a balance is achieved. The same can be said for some political and social systems.

### **Dual Nuts and Gatekeeping**

The most blatant example of this probably occurred in the *Washington Post* on January 6, 1979, after release of the House Committee’s version two conclusion of a second gunman:

If the Committee is right about a fourth shot from the Grassy Knoll could it have been some other malcontent whom Mr. Oswald met casually? Could not as many as three or four societal outcasts, with no ties to any organization have developed in some spontaneous way a common determination to express their alienation in the killing of President Kennedy? Is it possible that two persons acting independently, attempted to shoot the President?...Most large conspiracies unravel because someone leaves a clue somewhere. It is the inability of the Committee to present even one such clue that enables those who believe Mr. Oswald acted alone to rest their case. (*Washington Post*, January 6, 1979:16A)

The non-sequitor, indicative of cognitive dissonance, is that this “dual nut” theory of the *Post* is irrelevant to finding justice. One malcontent simply finds another one. Yet, it still begs the questions: What else could this nut do? Where is he? What is he up to? And still, this strange editorial, exemplifying correlation, represents not only a non-Fourth Estate approach but also an assumption that there is no social meaning involved. This speculation is made on the basis of absolutely no evidence, since such a gunman has not even been identified by name, only actions—actions could hurt someone else in the future, until the identity of that figure can be established.

#### **Elite Boundary Maintenance—The Co-Existence of Fourth Estate and Hegemony**

Early television news coverage of the Vietnam War was routinely put into scenarios of progress by American forces before the TET Offensive in 1968 (Epstein, 1975:219). Stanley Karnow in his probing study of the Vietnam War notes that the primary reason America was caught off guard during the TET Offensive was because intelligence analysts presumed that the Communists would not court the risk of alienating the population by violating a truce called for during the sacred lunar holiday. Intelligence officials, removed from the Vietnamese cultural heritage, did not understand the history of violence in the past surrounding the lunar holiday and found themselves shocked by the turn of events (Karnow, 1983:583–584).

As Epstein relates, the coverage of all three major news networks focused on scenarios of American progress such as descending on “enemy hold” areas, and bombings of an invisible foe in the far distance. American forces were pictured as “builders” not “destroyers.” Before TET, American reporters were shepherded to preselected battle sights

and dependent on only military transports to hear word from combat zones (Epstein, 1975:219–220).

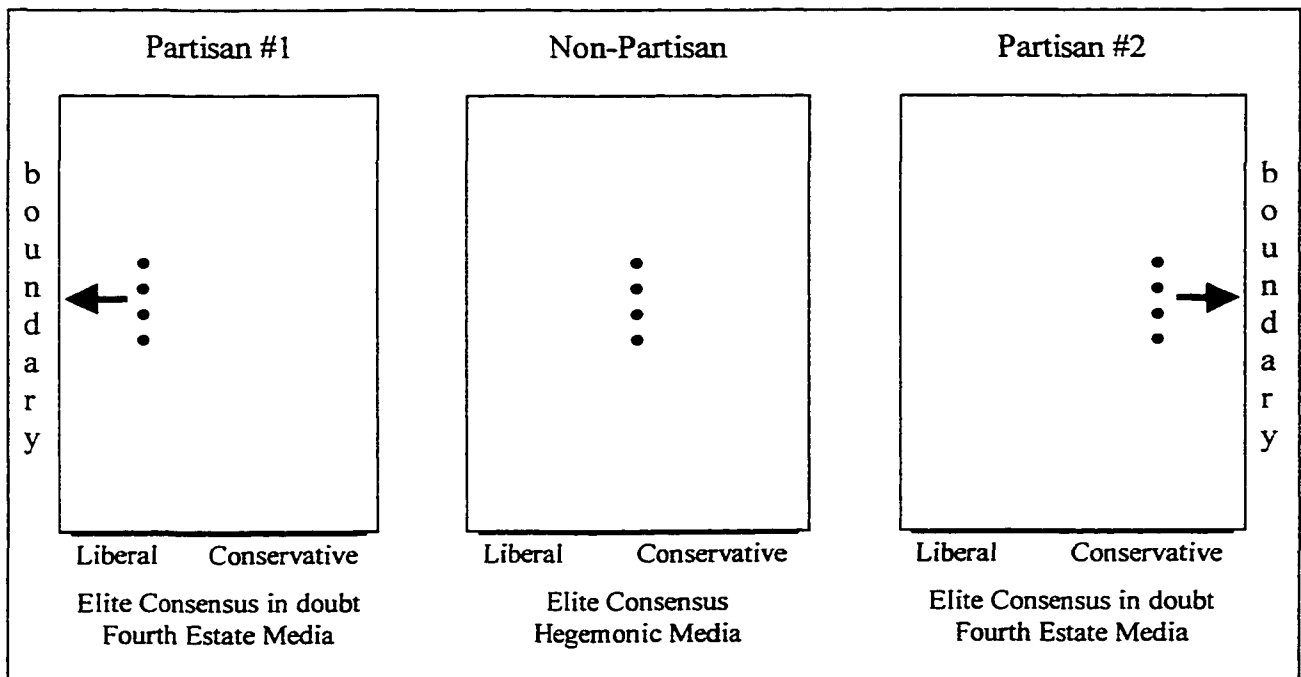
Yet, when reporters from several other nations were quartered in Saigon, where the military onslaught took place not all could be kept in dark hotel rooms. With footage going out to several news agencies in places such as Tokyo and England the graphic footage was out, while editors in the United States, such as NBC news producer Robert J. Northshiled requested certain footage be excised as being “too strong” there “was no time for re-editing of the tapes” which included scenes such as a Vietcong man being executed at gunpoint on the city street (Epstein, 1975: 221–223). And when the war protest hit the very streets of Chicago during the 1968 Democratic Party Convention, the war came home. In early 1968, the *Boston Globe* surveyed 39 major American newspapers with a combined circulation of 22 million. Not a single one had called for U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. The dramatic break in casting doubts in the press on the war effort or government proclamations about the light at the end of Vietnam’s tunnel came after the TET offensive (Lee and Solomon, 1991:107–108). Even then correspondents at NBC news were told by producers to concentrate on “timeless pieces” such as helicopter patrols, prisoner interviews and to “be careful about filming pieces which might date themselves” (Epstein, 1975:225).

This would be the last stand for hegemony on this issue, as elite cleavage enters in. Lyndon Johnson had walked away from it by announcing not to run again, public opinion was clearly shifting and now respectable anti-war candidates were receiving public support. The war had now become a volleyball in the court of elites, and what was once a non-partisan consensus about it had come apart. This partisan/non-partisan difference of elites may allow



us a clue to focus on, providing an exemplar of cleavage in which a media approach on an issue can be visualized and explain how a Fourth Estate response can exist in tune with Hegemony.

The more there is agreement on an issue among liberal and conservative elites who occupy the same general hegemonic boundary, the less cleavage there is among them. This brings about less chance that the media will contest an issue. But, if a tug-of-war exists between the two, then the center will be dragged between one boundary or the other as both seek to re-establish their side of the hegemonic boundary as the consensus in the debate. This precipitates a Fourth Estate Approach by the media (see Figure 4).



Boundary maintenance can be maintained without media friction if an issue is non-partisan among elites as the early cold-war consensus on Vietnam indicates. After the TET Offensive, elite consensus broke down as both sides attempted to re-establish the center to their side and, as in Watergate, the Fourth Estate approach entered in. A Fourth Estate would be indicative of elite cleavage. Consensus with no-contest among elites brings on media hegemony.

**Figure 4. Boundary maintenance/coexistence of hegemony and Fourth Estate**

If this converges on social construction, it would become truly an intriguing tool by which to view and interpret some unfolding events as they happen. The Fourth Estate can exist alongside Hegemony with routine harmony if the partisan/non-partisan view of elite cleavage is brought in. If the deviance in cleavage does not stray too far out to pasture then, with only minimal yardage in dispute, consent is still maintained. Put another way, a Fourth Estate approach on an issue is probably a good indicator of elite cleavage. Remembering that both political parties had members on the Warren–Ford–Dulles Commission which issued their Report which was accepted by Lyndon Johnson, the solution to the murder of JFK was a non-partisan issue, without open dissent or discussion about secret documents (see Figure 4).

With JFK, it is important to note that it does not matter what year or who wrote the story in question, except that a pattern of distortion and gatekeeping takes place, especially with *Time/Life's* handling of the crucial Zapruder film. If the film is not considered newsworthy or is presented with distortions, then surveillance by gatekeeping enters in, for *Time–Life* was not going to promote or realistically engage in the debate. Selective cognitive filters are also exhibited by the publishers of high school textbooks that consistently ignore the House Select Committee on Assassinations conclusions of a second gunman.

With correlation, except for the single anomaly issue of *Life* magazine, the pattern remains true to form over time. While endorsing the Warren Report before it had even been published, and with many documents still classified, a non–Fourth Estate approach is at hand. Considering CBS News, when the Cronkite interview of ex-President and assassination eyewitness Lyndon B. Johnson, questioning the Warren Report, hit the cutting room floor and

was not broadcasted at Johnson's insistence, gatekeeping and a non-Fourth Estate, non-Mirror, non-Market approach was operative.

Cognitive dissonance is built into a hegemonic social order. To exist as world view, hegemonic values require repetition. The same holds true for political and historical explanations.

A theory is supported by the accumulation of evidence or knowledge. Then, if anomalies crop up, they can be discarded. Theoretical bases for reality can be legitimated and accepted as such if they bear an official stamp of approval from either a government or a scientific institution in its own domain. The border of a theory can be revealed by its anomalies. If theoretical boundaries are maintained shifts can be avoided or prevented. If a case is problematic for a theory repair work should be observable as the theory undergoes defense and reaffirmation. As Thomas Kuhn (1962) notes in *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, when the number of anomalies to an accepted theory becomes too great, we are forced to switch to another explanation. Yet, in the Kennedy assassination, that did not happen. It did not matter who wrote the story or in what year it was written—anomalies were never acknowledged in the media or in textbooks, except for the November 1966 edition of *Life Magazine*. Since “Systematic regularities in content reveal underlying structural forces” (Shoemaker, 1991:24), the anomalies never added up to a Fourth Estate approach despite two official versions of the event—one with a lone gunman and the other with a second assassin.

Viewing the murder as a crime, it was a violation of legal code. A man in a building shot a man in a car. He did not confess, but the police got their man and he was dead. There

was no social problem. The assassination fit the objectivist criterion of elimination for status as a social problem since condition X was no longer harmful to either individuals or society.

When claims were made which cast doubt on that theory, whether it would now qualify as a social problem became a matter of cultural perception. The actual conditions for any social problem do not have to exist, only that people make claims about them. What elevates them in status is ratification. A problem must be interpreted as such in order to become one. Considering that people as an aggregate do not always agree on mental meaning and that only some hold the power of legitimation while others do not, an agenda either way would have to be set. The claim must be translated into being an issue, and if it borders on a cherished conviction then it may require an ingenious defense if hegemony is at work.

In the Kennedy case, the construction of ingenious defenses was presented not only in the media but also by the media. This was evident throughout this study, as follows:

Erroneous comparison – The CBS rifle test involved use of a different rifle which had a faster firing time than the “Oswald Carcano.” Even then the results were misrepresented. CBS used masonite to represent a wrist while using a gelatin block to simulate a rib cage. They maintained a single bullet could penetrate both a wrist and rib cage when it only went through masonite and gelatin. Then they did not reveal the condition of the bullets.

Suppression – A most vital piece of evidence in the case was the filmed record of the event itself. It was the sole possession of *Time/Life*. Not only did they not allow access to it, they concealed the very evidence they were reporting on. Beyond that, rather than allow for a clear discussion of issues, a telling point to their approach was that they commenced litigation

to block access to even charcoal drawings of its likeness. In a Fourth Estate approach, legal action is designed to free up information and not to conceal it.

Trivialization – With regard to autopsy materials *Time* concluded in their 12th Anniversary (1975) issue, that “not much is missing, only some tissue and the brain,” relegating the status of missing bullet fragments in the brain to minutiae. While the missing slides from the aforementioned tissue are also gone, they could be examined for powder burns to differentiate between entrance and exit wounds in order to help distinguish the direction of gunfire.

The same technique of problem solving was evident in 1977 when *Time* considered the FBI investigation to be “thorough in the extreme” without any mention of the bureau's destruction of the Oswald note or the deletion of Agent Hosty's name, address and license plate number from their report of the itemized list of entries found in Oswald's address book which they submitted to the Warren Commission.

Change of interpretation – After conducting the rifle tests, in the 1967 broadcast the CBS anchor concluded that “under normal circumstances, Oswald would take longer [than an expert]. But, circumstances were not normal; he was shooting at the President. So our answer is probably fast enough.” At the end of the broadcast this statement was presented as, “How fast could Oswald's [rifle] be fired? Fast enough.” What was once “probably fast enough” had become “fast enough” and then it was only because the circumstances were not normal.

Media explanation of the head snap changed on separate occasions without acknowledging that the earlier version had been abandoned. At separate points in time, it was

the result of either a jet effect, Jackie Kennedy pushing him backwards, or irrelevant because some fragments flew forward, but never the result of gunfire from the grassy knoll.

Syntax adjustment – In confronting Oswald’s marksmanship problem in the 1975 documentary, by using a verbal slight of hand CBS concludes Oswald could match up to the feat of a hypothetical lone gunman:

Some of Oswald’s fellow servicemen didn’t consider him an expert although he did attain a rating of sharpshooter – the second highest rating given by the Marine Corps, an organization which prides itself with excellence in riflery.

In this instance the last part of the sentence construction negates the first part of the verbiage. CBS concludes that the Marines priding themselves in riflery can alter Oswald’s proficiency with a rifle.

Straw men – When Dallas newspaper photographers took photographs of three men being led away from the Grassy Knoll at gunpoint after the assassination by Sergeant Harkness and other members of the Dallas police force, *Time* framed the issue in terms of whether or not they were future Watergate burglars E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis. After responding negatively to that question, they proceeded to shut the door on the entire subject of why they were being detained, what they saw or did behind the Grassy Knoll, and who they really were. The matter was disposed of and swept away by leaving the issue still open.

Merit by Analogy – *Life’s* surveillance by preconception included endorsing the Warren Report when it was released, calling it “a monumental and historic task” supported by “20,000 words of testimony” that “lays to rest lurid rumors and wild speculations.” This was done even before that testimony was made public. *Time* also endorsed the report “in sum and

substance” as it was released. This posture continued three years later in 1966, when *Time* categorized it as “a lucid, tightly written 888 page report that was a compendium of 26 volumes (17,815 words) of testimony and evidential exhibits gathered over ten months.” Both publications equated the volume of pages as a barometer of accuracy.

### **Hegemony and Cognitive Dissonance**

On a systems level hegemony requires cognitive dissonance propelled by repetition in order to thrive. This is because, as an organizing principle, it structures our world view. As that world view becomes dominant it shapes our understanding and experiences.

From the beginning our experiences within institutions of socialization are not politically neutral. Gramsci (1971) believes they introduce us to manners of thinking, schools of thought and an outlook which is seen as natural and, therefore, right. As he notes, aspects of our life that appear civil, apolitical or that seem insignificant to maintenance of the state order are actually important in understanding political consensus.

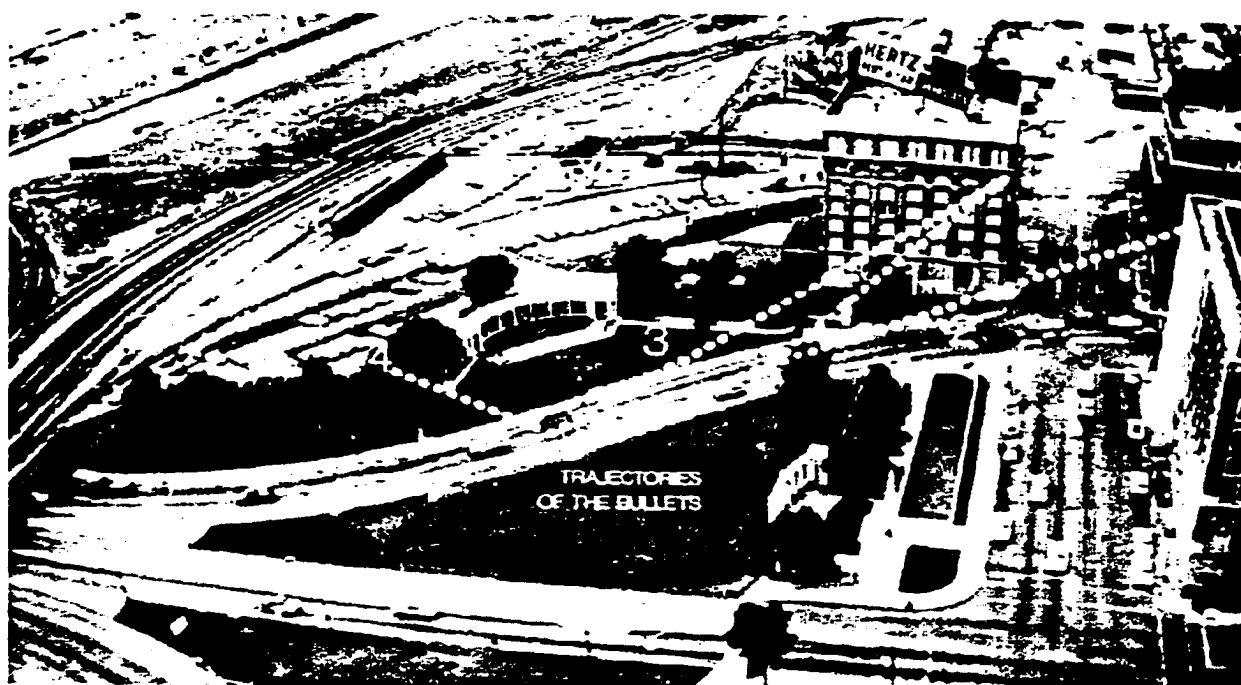
Berger and Luckman (1966) related that our socialization gives us the tools in which to grasp our existence in the constructed reality around us, its nuts and bolts, and its given or taken-for-granted parameters. It is not by reasoned thought but by repetition and routines that we come to perceive and accept things as they are. As the dominant world view shapes our understanding and experiences it becomes the normal way of apprehending reality. So constructed, relations appear beyond human control because they have a fixed-thing like quality and are seen as natural or reified. Once in that capacity, what is natural is then a means of control as it guides our perceptions of the world and our place in it.

Alternatives become unnatural, so they lack legitimacy. They cannot explain a social world that has already been justified. The parameters of the debate will not allow for it. Once we forget our own authorship of that world, accountability lies elsewhere. Its escape is through boundaries of repetition and cognitive dissonance set by hegemony.

Ideological hegemony reproduces itself as it is passed on by maintaining a predominant influence through institutions of civil society such as the news media and primary public schools. Once in that reified capacity, consensus within a dominant hegemonic order has profound effects on human potential with its influence on the perception of social values and choices. What is natural becomes what is humanly possible and it eliminates the vision of possibility itself. When this is done through the cancellation of competing ideas as somehow unnatural, it can then preclude the notion of accountability as well.

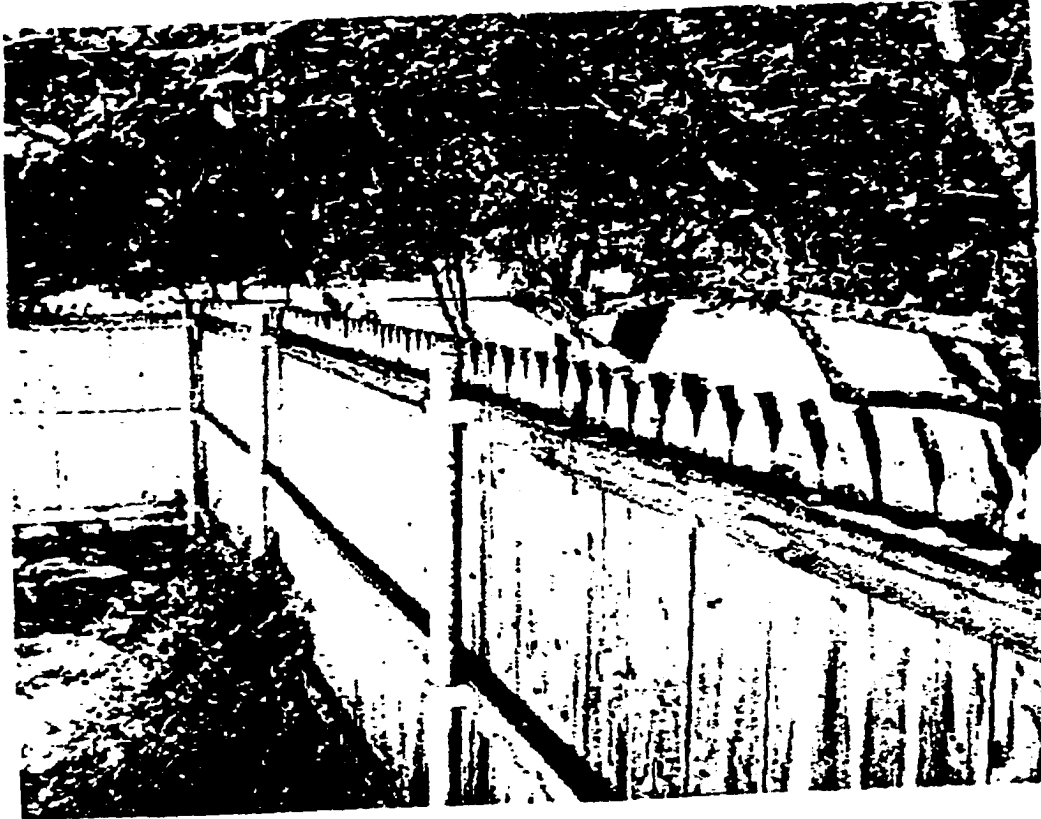


APPENDIX A. EXHIBITS



(1) Texas School Book Depository; (2) Records Building; (3) Texas School Book Depository; and (4) Grassy Knoll

**Exhibit 1a. Aerial view of Dealey Plaza with possible bullet trajectories discussed by CBS, *Time/Life*, and Warren Report critics**



**Exhibit 1b. Area behind stockade fence on the grassy knoll**

Committee plans to examine the double murder. Even Texas wasn't. The state's attorney general has ordered an inquiry. The public especially wasn't satisfied and, accordingly, it was a week of breathless rumors: that Oswald had been a hired killer; that Oswald had used an accomplice; that Oswald had not killed the President at all; that Oswald had been framed and then shot to silence him. The rumors grew because the best evidence which could dissolve them, the contents of Oswald's mind, was now irretrievable. But even though the investigations were just under way, there was already enough other evidence on hand to answer some of the hard questions.

#### Was it really Oswald who shot the President?

Yes. The evidence against him is circumstantial and it received an incredibly bush-league battering around by the Dallas police, but it appears to be positive.

Three shots were fired. Two struck the President, one Governor Connally. All three bullets have been recovered—one, deformed, from the floor of the limousine; one from the stretcher that carried the President; one that entered the President's body. All were fired from the 6.5mm Carcano carbine which Lee Oswald bought by mail last March.

The murder weapon, although subsequently manhandled for the benefit of TV, still showed Oswald's palm print. His own carbine was missing from its usual place. A witness had seen him bring a long, gun-sized package to work. And threads from Oswald's clothing were found in the warehouse sniper's nest.

Many rumors have grown out of the presumed difficulty of firing three accurate shots in the time Oswald had

Oswald was an ex-Marine sharpshooter, and he was firing from a perfect sniper's position. He had piled some boxes to prevent being seen from an adjoining building. He had put another box off in a corner so he could sit on it and look out the window—again so as not to be seen. Finally, in front of the window he had stacked three boxes as a rest for his carbine. Two big pipes ran vertically along a wall near his window, natural braces for a shoulder. His position while shooting at a car going away to his right would have been comfortable and rock-steady, and Oswald had both the time and the ability to zero in three times.

The description of the President's two wounds by a Dallas doctor who tried to save him have added to the rumors. The doctor said one bullet passed from back to front on the right side of the President's head. But the other, the doctor reported, entered the President's throat from the front and then lodged in his body.

Since by this time the limousine was 50 yards past Oswald and the President's back was turned almost directly to the sniper, it has been hard to understand how the bullet could enter the front of his throat. Hence the recurring guess that there was a second sniper somewhere else. But the 8mm film shows the President turning his body far around to the right as he waves to someone in the crowd. His throat is exposed—toward the sniper's nest—just before he clutches it.

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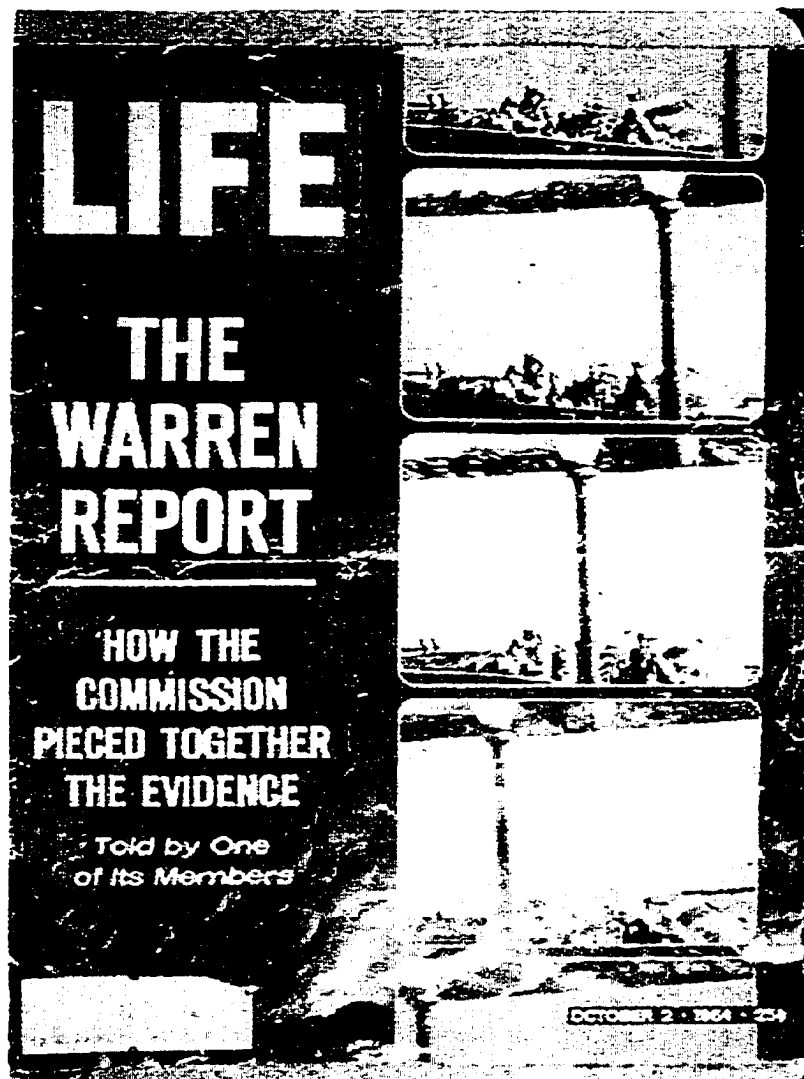


Exhibit 3. Cover of the October 2, 1964 issue of *Life* that contained two different versions of the fatal head shot within the same monthly publication. The initial issue was recalled by the publisher; then another was reprinted during the same month and sold on newsstands. The second version eliminated the phrase “snapping his head to one side.”

**Exhibit 4. *Life* magazine captions (during the same monthly issue) and the Zapruder frames published to exhibit two varying descriptions. The first version mentions the bullet snapped Kennedy's head to one side. This was deleted when the magazine was recalled and reprinted. Notice that the frame order of the head shot also changes from the initial story to the one it was replaced with in order to eliminate the backward thrust of Kennedy's body.**

# shows how the President was killed

before the first bullet... sion believe the governor was struck

## President was killed

ed to see if... is still not... bullet hit... he believes... the second... commission... about this... through

just before the assassin fired again.

**6.** The direction from which shots came was established by this picture taken at instant bullet struck the rear of the President's head and, passing through, caused the front part of his skull to explode forward.

**7.** As the President lay dying beside her, Mrs. Kennedy pulled herself out of the seat.

**8.** Crawling across the rear deck

fore the assassin fired another bullet.

**6.** The assassin's shot struck the right rear portion of the President's skull, causing a massive wound and snapping his head to one side.

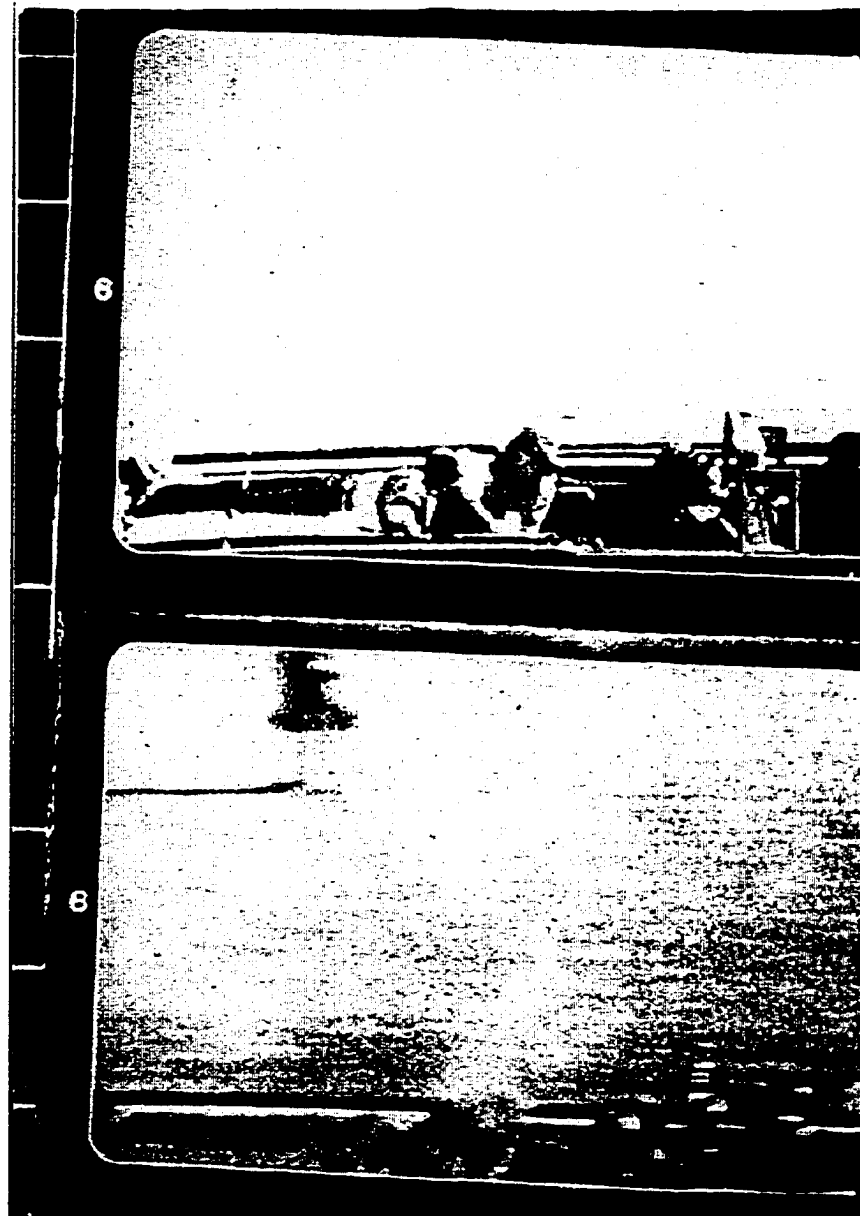
**7.** As the President lay dying beside her, Mrs. Kennedy pulled herself out of the seat.

**8.** Crawling on her hands and knees across the rear deck of the limousine, Mrs. Kennedy reached out to Secret Service man Clinton Hill, who leaped aboard. He pushed Mrs. Kennedy back into the car and the driver raced to the hospital, 3.4 miles away.

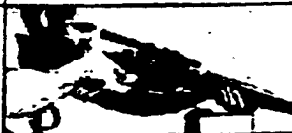













Zapruder Frame 313 (published second)



Zapruder Frame 323 (published first)



**Exhibit 5. Zapruder frame 323 published first (top) and replaced by Zapruder frame 313 (bottom) in the initial and revised editions of *Life*, October 2, 1964. The effect was to eliminate the backward thrust of Kennedy's body.**

ZAPRUDER FRAME NO.	TIME FROM 1ST SHOT	COMMENT	REENACTMENT FRAME	ZAPRUDER FRAME
220	0.0 secs.	FIRST SHOT POSSIBLE		
222	0.656 secs.	CONNALLY TURNING LEFT		
225	0.830 secs.	KENNEDY REACTING		
230	1.093 secs.	KENNEDY HIT. CONNALLY UNINJURED		
238	1.530 secs.	CONNALLY HIT		
244	1.858 secs.	CONNALLY OBVIOUSLY HURT		
252	2.295 secs.	SECOND SHOT POSSIBLE		

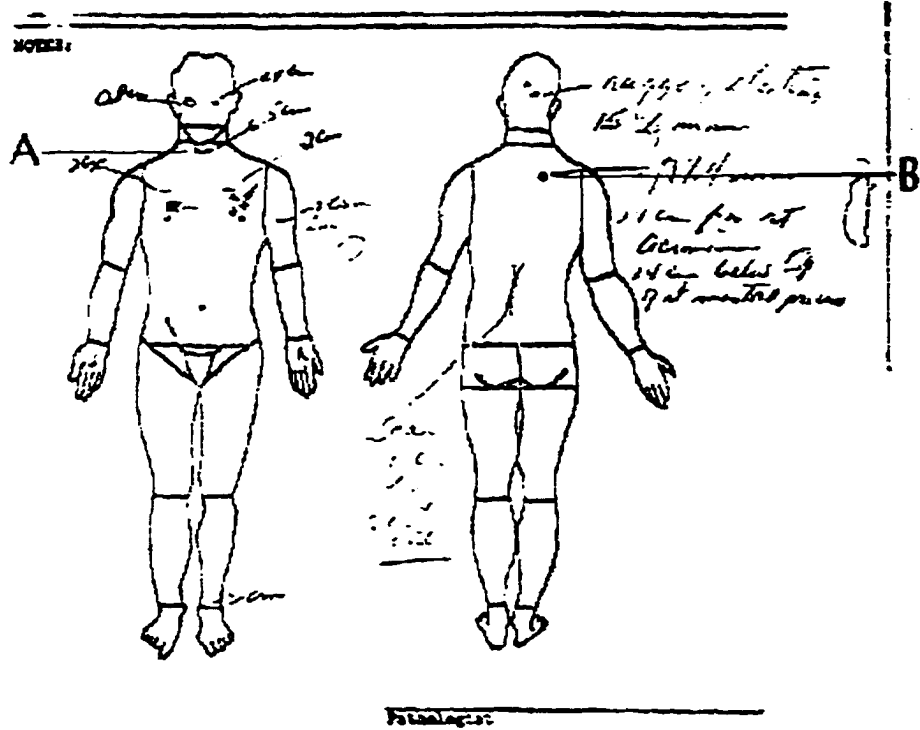
### The Single Bullet Theory

Exhibit 6a-1. Crude firing time of a Manlicher-Carcano rifle alongside corresponding Zapruder frames illustrating the impossibility of shooting even two bullets within a reasonable time frame to account for the wounding patterns observed on Abraham Zapruder's film. Since Governor Connally is struck by a bullet before a hypothetical lone gunman could squeeze off a second shot if a single bullet did not wound both individuals, there would have to be a second assassin. In concluding that there was only one gunman, the Warren Commission theorized that a single bullet wounded both men. Furthermore, the Single Bullet (CE399) has to remain intact and in pristine condition after passing through President Kennedy and shattering Connally's rib and right distal radius wrist bone along the way (see also Exhibit 7).



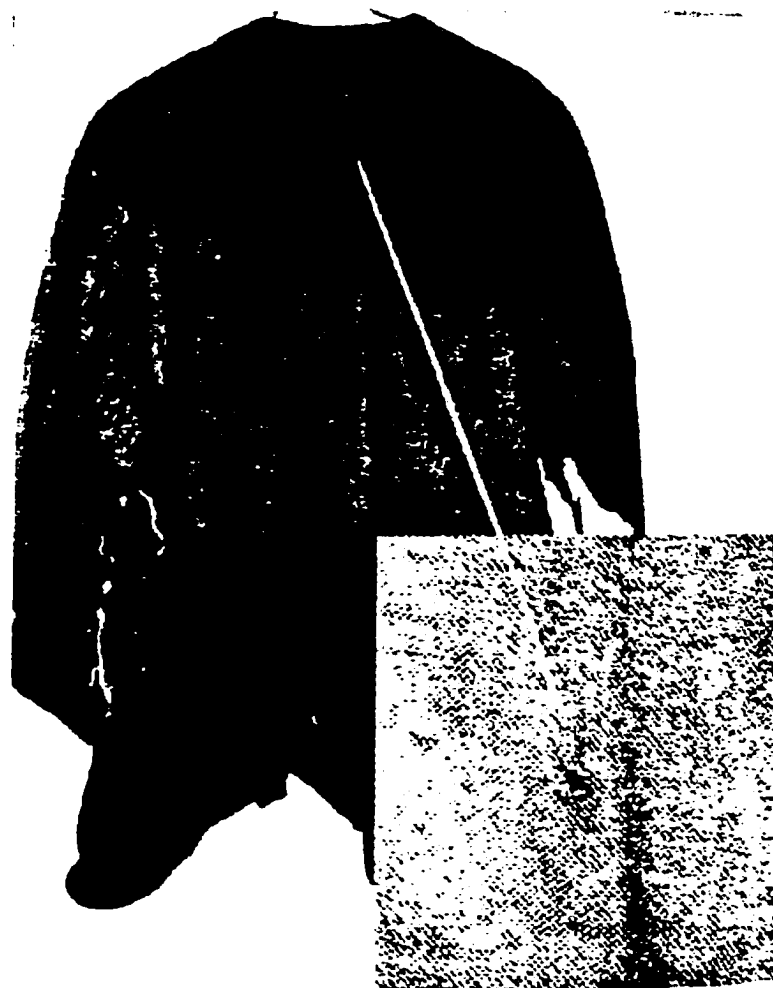


**Exhibit 6a-2. The Warren Commission's version of an alleged bullet wound through the neck**



COMMISSION EXHIBIT  
**397**

Exhibit 6b. Autopsy face sheet showing the bullet hole below the shoulder in the back

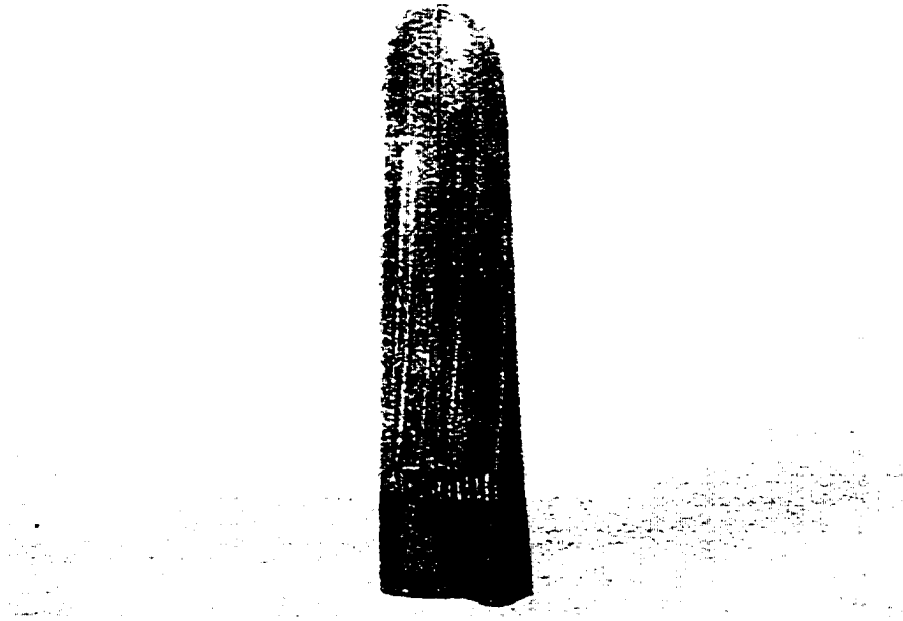


59      PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S  
SUIT COAT      STRAPLE HOLE

**Exhibit 6c-1. FBI Supplemental Report Exhibit 59 of  
President Kennedy's suit coat**



**Exhibit 6c-2. FBI Supplemental Report Exhibit 60 of President Kennedy's shirt**



**Exhibit 7a. Warren Commission Exhibit 399 (CE399), the “Single Bullet”**

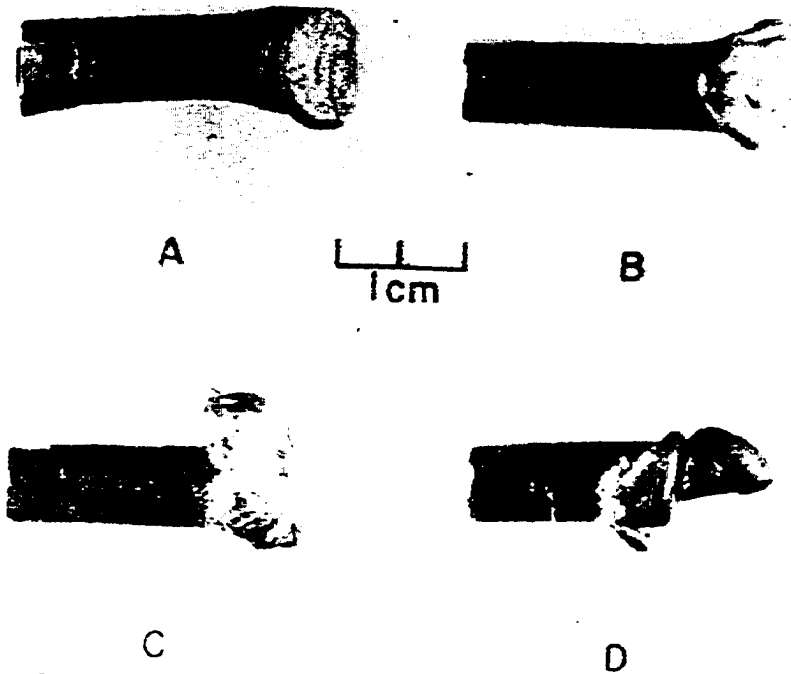
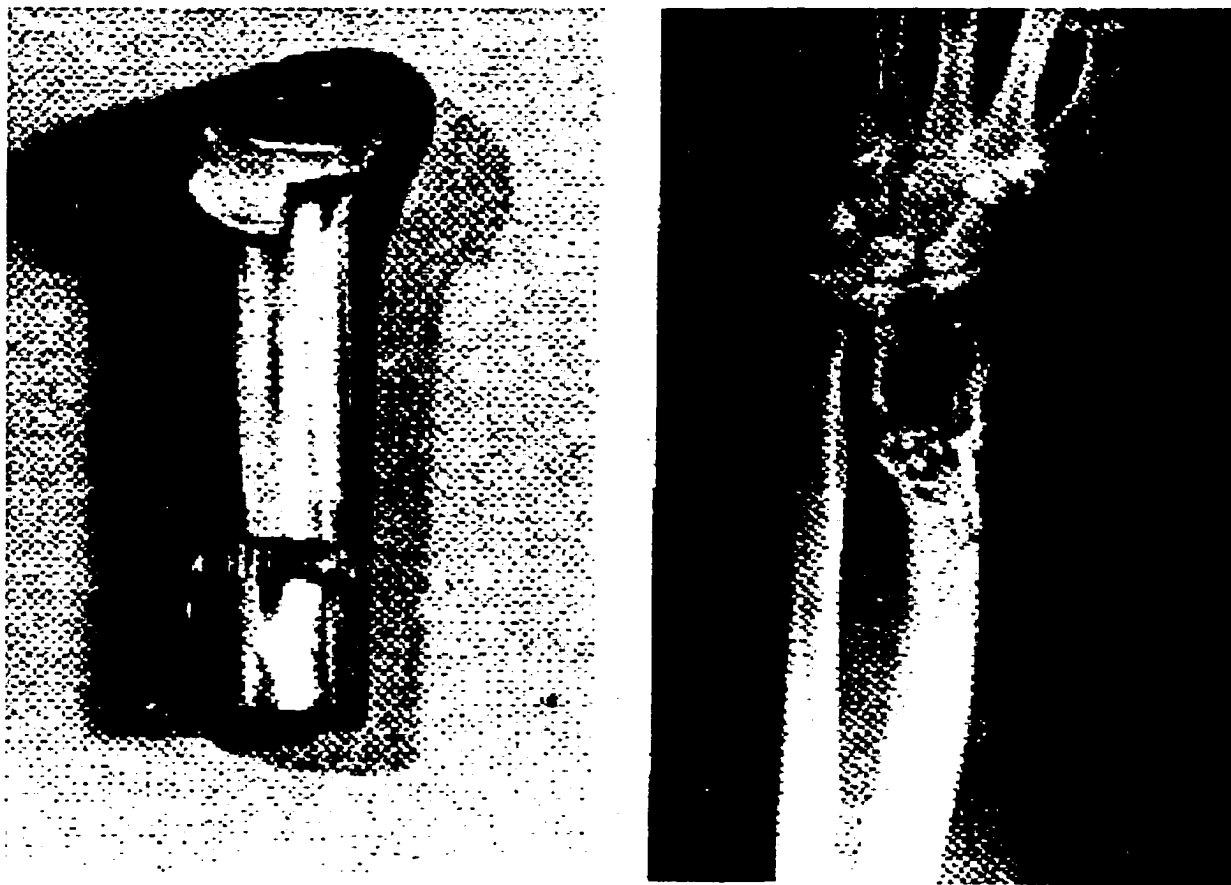


Fig. 5. This photograph was considered "Confidential" by the Government and withheld from researchers for eight years. It depicts "4.5 MM. Manchester-Carcano Bullets Recovered after being Fired Through Distal Ends of Radii of Cadaver Wrists."

**Exhibit 7b. Test bullets fired through cadaver wrist radii (at Edgewood Arsenal in August, 1964) in effort to recreate Connally's wrist wound and end up with a "pristine bullet." Needless to say, these tests never produced such a bullet. This photograph was considered "confidential" and withheld from researchers for eight years.**



**Exhibit 7c. Warren Commission Exhibit 856 (CE856). Carcano test bullet from Edgewood Arsenal, August 1964, and subsequent cadaver wrist-bone damage. The actual alleged "Oswald rifle" (CE139) was used for these tests. The firing tests produced nothing even vaguely resembling the unscathed condition of the "Single Bullet."**

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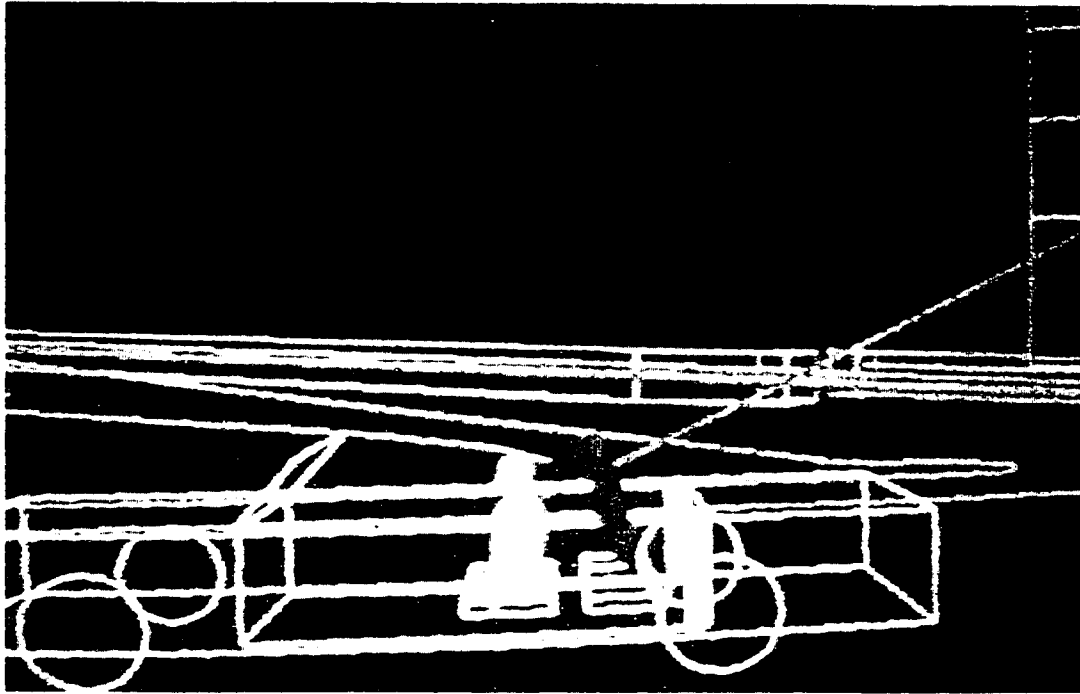
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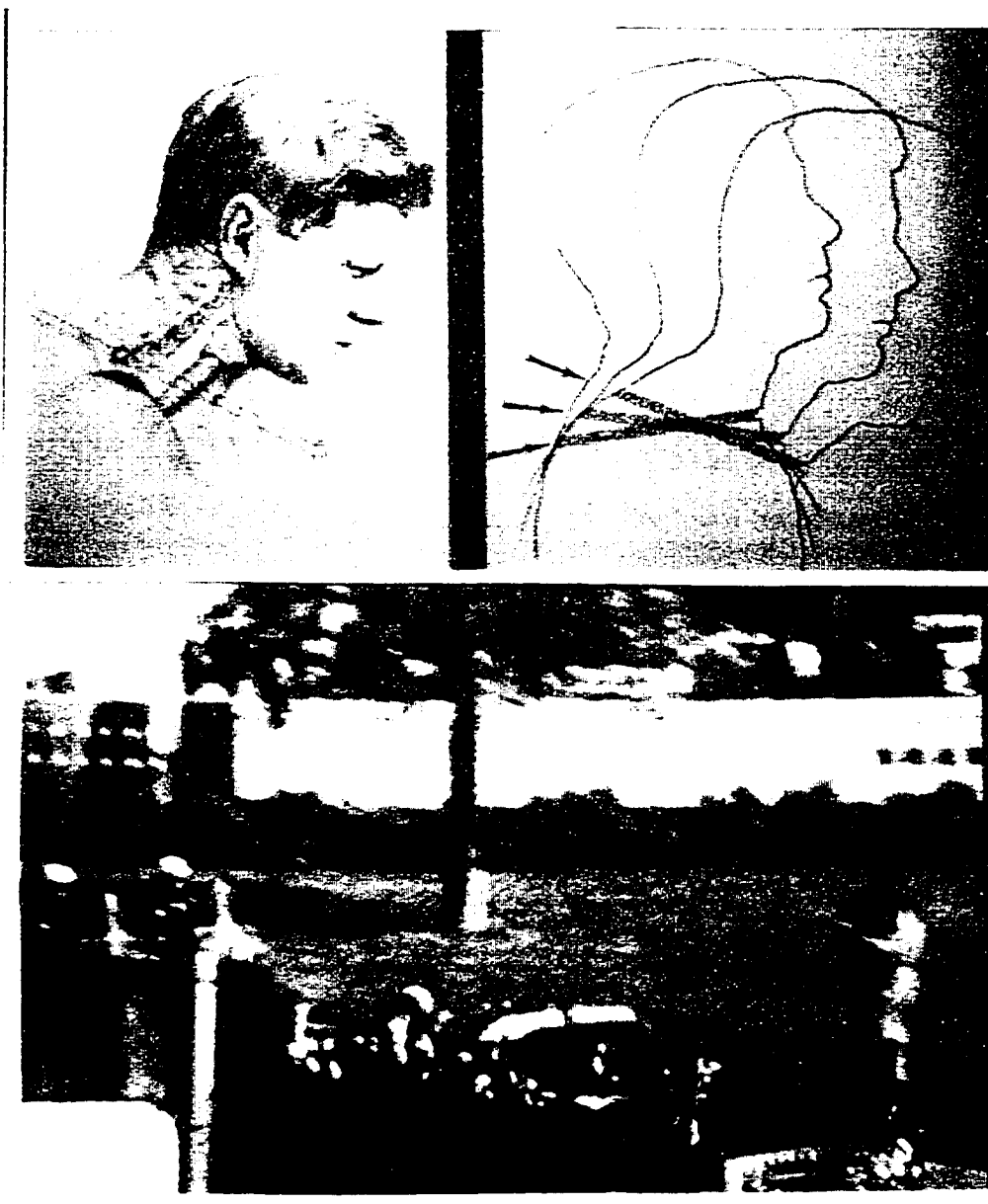
On the very sination, whe and snapping in the city he already there "Jack, what t here?" He wa

**Exhibit 8a. While suppressing the Zapruder film, *Life* erroneously reports that Kennedy actually turned around and faced a lone assailant in the Depository Building to explain "how the bullet could enter the front of his throat."**





**Exhibit 8b-1. CBS in its 1993 documentary uses a simulation from PBS claiming that the trajectory of Kennedy and Connally are in alignment. Stewart Galanor observes that the PBS Study asserts that Kennedy must have bent forward in the manner depicted above and in the sketch below to help allow for a bullet to pass through him. However, one wonders if the Zapruder film depicts JFK bending forward or in an upright position. In addition, the Warren Commission placed a rear wound at the base of the neck as does this simulation. Yet Wecht, Mantak and others who have seen the autopsy photos place the bullet hole below the shoulders in the back, which is lower than the throat wound.**



**Exhibit 8b-2. Zapruder frame 225. Unlike the Mandel description in *Life* of President Kennedy turning backwards toward an alleged sniper's next as to clutch his throat, the Zapruder film (owned by *Life*, themselves, and suppressed from public scrutiny) reveals that President Kennedy's posture was upright as he faced forward. Some advocates of the Single Bullet Theory contend that a bullet from above and entering below the shoulder blade of President Kennedy could exit his throat if he were bent over at the time. The Zapruder film, however, shows his posture to be upright. *What evidence exists for this assertion since he was only behind the Stemmons Freeway sign for 1-1/18<sup>th</sup> seconds?***

# LIFE

TIME & LIFE BUILDING  
ROCKEFELLER CENTER  
NEW YORK 10020

A. MATE SCOTT  
EDITORIAL OFFICE

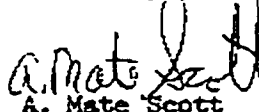
November 3, 1969

Dear Mr. Ralston:

Many thanks for your letter to LIFE suggesting LIFE reopen the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy.

We're sorry to disappoint you, but the project you have in mind is not feasible for us.

Sincerely yours,

  
A. Mate Scott

AMS:cs

Exhibit 9. Letter to Ross F. Ralston from *Life*, November 3, 1969

December 15, 1972

Dear Sir:

On December 11, the Public Broadcasting Service Network presented an hour long interview with former Chief Justice Earl Warren. During the course of this interview, the former Chief Justice made numerous incorrect statements regarding the responsible criticism of the Warren Commission Report on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

As a student of the Warren Report, I feel compelled to point out the misrepresentations and errors made by Mr. Warren.

At one point in the interview, Mr. Warren claimed that the critics of the Report had not produced any new witnesses to the tragic events of November 22. The former Chief Justice is totally in error on this point. Among the new witnesses produced by the critics are Frank Wright, Dudley M. Hughes, Clayton Butler, Eddie Kinsley and Acquilla Clemons.

At another point in the interview, Mr. Warren announced that no member of the Warren Commission had ever dissented from the findings of the Report. Here again, Mr. Warren is in error. On January 20, 1970, Senator Richard Russell, a member of the seven man Commission, stated that he did not agree with the findings of the Report. On page 16, col. 7, of the New York Times, January 20, 1970, Mr. Russell stated that the Commission was never able to find those who encouraged Lee Harvey Oswald.

Finally, Mr. Warren stated that the commission saw all the necessary materials needed to make a judgment as to the origin of the shots fired at President Kennedy. Yet the Commission did not see the autopsy photographs and X-rays of the late President Kennedy. On August 23rd and 24th of this year, Dr. Cyril Wecht, former head of the American Board of Pathologists, became the first non-Government pathologist to see those photography and X-rays. His conclusions were that shots had been fired from two directions. Certainly, this constitutes "necessary material." Former Commissioner Hale Boggs himself admitted on November 28, 1966 (New York Times, p. 29 col. 1) that a film of the assassination raised questions concerning the origin of the shots fired at President Kennedy. He further stated that this question would be resolved "If a group of doctors and other specialists would look at the X-rays of President Kennedy's body."

It is my belief that educational television has an obligation to present facts without distortion or misrepresentation. In light of the fact that Mr. Warren made serious errors on the December 11 program, I feel that the Public Broadcasting Service Network should allow equal time to a critic of the Commission's report in order that these discrepancies be resolved in the minds of your viewers.

Mr. Warren further stated that all conspiracy theories claimed that the assassination was motivated by "Communists" or "right-wing oil interests." Yet the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, the leading proponent of the multi-assassin theory, makes no such claim.

Sincerely,

**Exhibit 10. Reconstructed text from notes of a letter sent to PBS by Ross F. Ralston, December 15, 1972**

## PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE

485 LENFANT PLAZA WEST 5 W. WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024 • 202: 488-5000

January 11, 1973

Mr. Ross Ralston  
325 8th Avenue, SE  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414

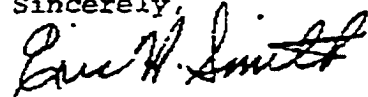
Dear Mr. Ralston:

This is in response to your letter of December 15 in which you request that the Public Broadcasting Service grant equal time to correct various statements of former Chief Justice Earl Warren concerning the assassination of President Kennedy. We consider your request as falling under the FCC's Fairness Doctrine. That doctrine requires that a licensee provide the public with programming covering various responsible viewpoints where the issues discussed involve a controversial issue of public importance. The licensee remains responsible for choosing the appropriate spokesmen for meeting the public interest requirement.

The program in question was an exclusive interview with the former Chief Justice in which he gave his views on a number of subjects including comments on his tenure as head of the Warren Commission. The subject matter of this Commission and the assassination occurred almost 10 years ago. We believe that no legitimate issue under the Fairness Doctrine is raised by this program. Accordingly, we respectfully deny your request that an opportunity for a specific response be afforded to you or to others who may disagree with certain of Justice Warren's statements. This is not to say that we may not present at some time views opposing those to which you refer, only that such response is not required by the Fairness Doctrine.

Best regards.

Sincerely,



Eric H. Smith  
Associate General  
Counsel

**Exhibit 11. Response from PBS to Ross F. Ralston, January 11, 1973. PBS acknowledges that if an issue discussed involves a controversial issue of public importance a requirement is to provide various responsible viewpoints. Because the assassination occurred almost 10 years previously, PBS found it was not a legitimate issue to be covered with opposing viewpoints. Apparently, Congress disagreed and, within four years, reopened the murder case.**



General Services Administration      National Archives and Records Service  
Washington, DC 20408

---

March 2, 1984

Mr. Ross Frank Ralston  
828-12th St. NW.  
East Grand Forks, MN 56721

Dear Mr. Ralston:

Thank you for your letter of January 10, 1984, concerning the records of the Warren Commission.

The transcript of the executive session of the Commission of May 19, 1964, contains the discussion of a personnel question relating to members of the Commission staff and is withheld from research under 5 U.S.C. 552 (b)(6), "personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy."

As indicated on the cover sheet of the transcript of the executive session of January 22, 1964, this transcript was prepared by a Department of Defense steno-typist who had the proper security clearance from the reporter's notes in the records of the Commission at the request of the General Services Administration after a researcher had requested that this be done.

Sincerely,

  
MARION M. JOHNSON

Judicial, Fiscal, and Social Branch  
Civil Archives Division

Enclosures

**Exhibit 12. Letter to Ross F. Ralston from the National Archives and Records Service, March 2, 1984.**

**Exhibit 13a. Early edition of *The New York Times*, December 1, 1970. The last paragraph of the morning edition raises doubts about the official version about what happened to President Kennedy. The last paragraph and most of the one above it are mysteriously missing from the evening edition, with the effect of entirely changing the thrust of the review.**

Books of The Times

# Who Killed John F. Kennedy?

By JOHN LEONARD

**AMERICAN GROTESQUE. An Account of the Clay Shaw-Jim Garrison Affair in the City of New Orleans.** By James Kirkwood. 312 pages. Simon & Schuster. \$11.95.

**A HERITAGE OF STONE.** By Jim Garrison. 253 pages. Putnam. \$6.95.

Bad vibrations.

New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison arrested New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw, charging that Mr. Shaw conspired to assassinate President John F. Kennedy. Mr. Shaw was acquitted by a jury. Mr. Garrison then had Mr. Shaw re-arrested on two charges of perjury. Mr. Shaw is suing Mr. Garrison, and a host of others. The judge at Mr. Shaw's trial has since been arrested in a motel room where stag movies and loose women are alleged to have exhibited themselves. The principal witness against Mr. Shaw has since been arrested for burglary. Mr. Garrison has since been accused of molesting a 13-year-old boy at the New Orleans Athletic Club, which is interesting because Mr. Shaw allegedly had links with the New Orleans homosexual underground.

No, this is not a fiction by Gore Vidal. It is a serialized novel on the front pages of our daily newspapers. Maybe that explains why novelist James Kirkwood—"Good Times/Bad Times"—got obsessed with the subject. Mr. Kirkwood met Mr. Shaw, and believed his story, and so wrote a sympathetic article before the trial (published by Esquire) and an indictment article after the trial (rejected by Playboy) and this tone-stress of a book (troubling the reviewer). Did Clay Shaw know David Ferris and Lee Harvey Oswald? Is Jim Garrison paranoid about the Federal government? One wishes the whole business were a fevered invention.

### "Perjury" Atop "Conspiracy"

It isn't, Mr. Kirkwood argues in "American Grotesque" that Jim Garrison used Clay Shaw to try the Warren Commission report; that Garrison scraped the bottom of the barrel for variously sick and variously intimidated witnesses to smear Shaw; that Garrison's guerrillas sought a jury of sepher intelligence to hemmets with bloody fantasies; that, having emancipated such a jury, they were so upset by the acquittal that they added the insult of "perjury" charges to the injury of "conspiracy" accusations. Unfortunately, Mr. Kirkwood is so conscientious in his reportage that one wonders why so many people claimed to have seen Mr. Shaw with Oswald and Ferris. Were they all mistaken or lying?

To be sure, conspiracy wasn't proved, and the state embarrassed itself with surreal incompetence. But "conspiracy" is no longer the charge against Shaw; perjury is. We have only Mr. Kirkwood's emotional word on innocence to go by. Such a word

isn't conclusive, not even in a book reviewer's court. Mr. Kirkwood's loyalty to a friend is admirable; his taped interviews with all the principals in the first Shaw trial are fascinating; his attention to trivia is in the best parajournalistic tradition—the little boy who cried Tom Wolfe. But legitimate questions about John Kennedy's assassination aren't answered according to the buddy system.

Which brings us to Jim Garrison's "A Heritage of Stone." The District Attorney of Orleans Parish argues that Kennedy's assassination can only be explained by a "mode" that was the murder on the Central Intelligence Agency. The C.I.A. could have engineered Dallas in behalf of the military-intelligence-industrial complex that feared the President's disposition toward a detente with the Russians. Mr. Garrison nowhere in his book mentions Clay Shaw, or the butch his office made of Shaw's prosecution; he is, however, heavy with all the other characters who have become familiar to us via late-night talk shows on television. And he insists that the Warren Commission, the executive branch of the government, some members of the Dallas Police Department, the pathologists at Bethesda who performed the second Kennedy autopsy and many, many others must have known they were lying to the American public.

### Mysteries Persist

Frankly, I prefer to believe that the Warren Commission did a poor job, rather than a dishonest one. I like to think that Mr. Garrison invents monsters to explain incompetence. But until somebody explains why two attorneys came to two different conclusions about the President's wounds, why the limousine was washed out and rebuilt without investigation, why certain witnesses near the "grassy knoll" were never asked to testify before the Commission, why we were all so eager to buy Oswald's brilliant marksmanship in split seconds, why no one inquired into Jack Ruby's relations with a staggering variety of strange people, why a "loner" like Oswald always had friends and could always get a passport—who can blame the Garrison guerrillas for fantasizing?

Something stinks about this whole affair. "A Heritage of Stone" rehashes the smelliness; the recipe is as unappetizing as our doubts about the official version of what happened. (Would then-Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy have endured his brother's murder in silence? Was John Kennedy quite so liberated from cold war clichés as Mr. Garrison maintains? But the stench is there, and clings to each of us. Why were Kennedy's neck organs not examined at Bethesda for evidence of a frontal shot? Why was his body whisked away to Washington before the legally required Texas inquest? Why?)

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**Exhibit 13b. Evening edition of *The New York Times*, December 1, 1970. This edition deletes the shopping list of doubts that follows the statement, “but until somebody explains...” compare both editorials to note the difference.**

Books of The Times

# The Shaw-Garrison Affair

By JOHN LEONARD

AMERICAN CONSPIROCY AN ACCOUNT OF THE  
Case Examined Garrison After 24 Years by  
New Orleans. By James Kirkwood. 162 pages.  
Shaw & Robinson, BOSTON.

A REPRINT OF STONE BY JIM GARRISON.  
233 pages. Pubman, \$1.25

Bad relations.

New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison attacked New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw, charging that Mr. Shaw conspired to assassinate President John F. Kennedy. Mr. Shaw was acquitted by a jury. Mr. Garrison then had Mr. Shaw re-arrested on two charges of perjury. Mr. Shaw is suing Mr. Garrison, and a host of others. The judge at Mr. Shaw's trial has since been arrested in a hotel room where play novelties and loose women are alleged to have exhibited themselves. The principal witness against Mr. Shaw has since been arrested for burglary. Mr. Garrison has since been accused of molesting a 13-year-old boy at 225 New Orleans Athletic Club, which is interesting because Mr. Shaw allegedly had links with the New Orleans homosexual underground.

No, this is not a fiction by Guy Vidal. It is a scintillated novel on the fringe pages of our daily newspapers. Why do they explain why novelist James Kirkwood—'Lord Tinsley/2nd Tinsley'—took occasion with the subject. Mr. Kirkwood met Mr. Shaw, and belittled his story, and so wrote a sympathetic article before the trial (published by Esquire) and an infamous article after the trial (rejected by Playboy) and this somewhere of a book reminding the reviewer, Dig Clay Shaw knew David Ferriar and Lee Harvey Oswald? Jim Garrison parades about the Federal government. One wishes the whole business were a literary invention.

## Perjury's Alep Conspiracy

If not Mr. Kirkwood argues in "American Conspire" that Jim Garrison went Clay Shaw to try the Warren Commission report that Garrison seized the source of the barrel for variously such and variously misinterpreted witnesses is some: Shaw; that Garrison's essential is just a part of sub-par intelligence to become with bloody

bullet; that, being emphasized such a part, they were so upset by the essential that they added the insult of "perjury" charges to the injury of "conspiracy" accusations. Unfortunately, Mr. Kirkwood is so conscientious in his repertoire that one wonders why so many people claimed to have seen Mr. Shaw with Oswald and Perre. Were they all indicators of "perjury" and the case embarrassed itself with several incompetence. Big "conspiracy" is no longer the charge against Shaw; perjury is. We have only Mr. Kirkwood's emotional word and innocence to go by. Such a word that man; have, not even in a book reviewer's court. Mr. Kirkwood's journey to a friend is admirable; his typed interviews with all the principals in the case; Shaw is in the best journalistic tradition—the little boy who cited Tom Wolfe. But his private gratification about John Kennedy's assassination aren't answered according to the buddy system.

Which brings us to Jim Garrison's "A Heritage of Shame." The District Attorney of Orleans Parish argues that Kennedy's assassination can only be explained by a "conspirator" who did the murder on the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA could have engineered DeLoe in behalf of the military - intelligence - industrial complex that feared the President's disapproval toward a client like Rosalynn. Mr. Garrison nowhere in his book mentions Clay Shaw, or the bitch like office made of Shaw's prosecution he is, however, heavy on all the other characters who have become familiar to us via late-night talk shows or television. And he insists that the Warren Commission, the executive board of the government, some members of the Dallas Police Department, the pathologists at Bethesda who performed many excruciating autopsies and many many others must have known they were lying to the Agartha probe.

Frankly, I prefer to believe that the Warren Commission did a poor job. Under than a dishonest one. I like to think that Mr. Garrison wants readers to explain incompetence.

MAN OF THE HOUSE - BY TIP O'NEILL  
Pg 271-272 [large type edition]

I was never one of those people who had doubts or suspicions about the Warren Commission's report on the president's death. But five years after Jack died, I was having dinner with Kenny O'Donnell and a few other people at Jimmy's Harborside Restaurant in Boston, and we got to talking about the assassination.

I was surprised to hear O'Donnell say that he was sure he had heard two shots that came from behind the fence.

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"That's not what you told the Warren Commission," I said.

"You're right," he replied. "I told the FBI what I had heard, but they said it couldn't have happened that way and that I must have been imagining things. So I testified the way they wanted me to. I just didn't want to stir up any more pain and trouble for the family."

"I can't believe it," I said. "I wouldn't have done that in a million years. I would have told the truth."

"Tip, you have to understand. The family—everybody wanted this thing behind them."

Dave Powers was with us at dinner that night, and his recollection of the shots was the same as O'Donnell's. Kenny O'Donnell is no longer alive, but during the writing of this book I checked with Dave Powers. As they say in the news business, he stands by his story.

And so there will always be some skepticism in my mind about the cause of Jack's death. I used to think that the only people who doubted the conclusions of the Warren Commission were crackpots. Now, however, I'm not so sure.



The Life and Political Memoirs of  
**SPEAKER TIP O'NEILL**  
with William Novak

HEARINGS BEFORE THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON THE  
ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY VOL. 7 PG 448

Mr. SPECTER. How many shots were there in all?

Mr. O'DONNELL. Three.

Mr. SPECTER. What is your best estimate as to the total time which elapsed from the first shot to the last shot?

Mr. O'DONNELL. I would say 5 to 6 seconds.

Mr. SPECTER. And was there any distinguishable tempo to the shots?

Mr. O'DONNELL. Yes; the first two came almost simultaneously, came one right after the other, there was a slight hesitation, then the third one.

Mr. SPECTER. And what was your reaction as to the source of the shots, if you had one?

Mr. O'DONNELL. My reaction in part is reconstruction—is that they came from the right rear. That would be my best judgment.

Exhibit 14. Tip O'Neill's memoirs relate that Kenny O'Donnell heard two shots from the grassy knoll while riding in the Presidential motorcade on November 22nd, and that he changed his account to conform with the scenario of a lone assassin firing from behind when he testified before the Warren Commission.

**Exhibit 15. Nicholas Katzenbach's memo, November 25, 1963, from House Select Committee on Assassinations (Vol. 11, pp. 411–412)**

November 25, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HOYERS

It is important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's Assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad that all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.

2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists. Unfortunately the facts on Oswald seem about too pat--too obvious (Marxist, Cuba, Russian wife, etc.). The Dallas police have put out statements on the Communist conspiracy theory, and it was they who were in charge when he was shot and thus silenced.

3. The matter has been handled thus far with neither dignity nor conviction. Facts have been mixed with rumour and speculation. We can scarcely let the world see us totally in the image of the Dallas police when our President is murdered.

I think this objective may be satisfied by making public as soon as possible a complete and thorough FBI report on Oswald and the assassination. This may run into the difficulty of pointing to inconsistencies between this report and statements by Dallas police officials. But the reputation of the Bureau is such that it may do the whole job.

The only other step would be the appointment of a Presidential Commission of unimpeachable personnel to review and examine the evidence and announce its conclusions. This has both advantages and disadvantages. It think it can await publication of the FBI report and public reaction to it here and abroad.

I think, however, that a statement that all the facts will be made public properly in an orderly and responsible way should be made now. We need something to head off public speculation or Congressional hearings of the wrong sort.

Nicholas deB. Katzenbach  
Deputy Attorney General

**Exhibit 16a. Allen W. Dulles memo. Officially, the Central Intelligence Agency was an investigatory arm of the Warren Commission. Both the FBI and CIA withheld information from the Warren Commission while at the same time seeking out intelligence concerning the Commission's activities through the use of informants. The House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded that the CIA limited its inquiry to only answering questions posed by the Warren Commission. As a member of the Warren Commission, ex-CIA Director Allen Dulles tells the CIA "what questions the Warren Commission may pose" (paragraph 1) and (paragraph 2) suggests what the response of the Agency should be to those questions.**

13 April 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Plans

SUBJECT: <sup>MEMO</sup> Discussions with Mr. Allen W. Dulles  
on the Oswald Case on 11 April.

1. At the instructions of the DDP, I visited Mr. Dulles on 11 April to discuss with him certain questions which Mr. Dulles feels the Warren Commission may pose to CIA. Mr. Dulles explained that while the Commission wished to clarify certain aspects of the Oswald case in which a response from CIA seemed necessary it was not sure how the questions should be posed nor how CIA should respond. Mr. Dulles hoped that our discussions would enable him to advise the Commission on this matter. He first raised the allegation that Oswald was a CIA agent. He mentioned two sources for this accusation. One was Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, Lee Harvey Oswald's mother, and the other was Mr. Mark Lane, Mrs. Oswald's attorney. He suggested that the Commission, in asking us this question, might well forward a summary or pertinent excerpts of the testimony concerning this matter. He noted, however, that Mrs. Oswald's testimony was so incoherent that it would be difficult to find pertinent excerpts, thus it would be better for the Commission to summarize the testimony.

2. Mr. Dulles then suggested that the response to this question could be in the form of sworn testimony before the Commission by a senior CIA official or a letter or affidavit. He recalled that the Director of the FBI had replied by letter to a similar question. In any event, Mr. Dulles felt the reply should be straightforward and to the point. He thought language which made it clear that Lee Harvey Oswald was never an employee or agent of CIA would suffice. We should also state that neither CIA nor anyone acting on CIA's behalf was ever in contact or communication with Oswald. Mr. Dulles did not think it would be a good idea to cite CIA procedures for agent assessment and handling to show that it would have been unlikely for Oswald to have been chosen as a CIA agent to enter Russia. There are always exceptions to every rule and this might be misunderstood by members of the Commission with little background in activity of this sort. I agreed with him that a carefully phrased denial of the charges of involvement with Oswald seemed most appropriate.

Document Number

657-831

for FOIA Review of

JUN 1975



- 2 -

3. The next question concerned the possibility of Oswald's having been a Soviet agent. Mr. Dulles suggested that the Commission's question on this matter be phrased somewhat as follows: "In the knowledge or judgment of CIA was Lee Harvey Oswald an agent of the Soviet intelligence services or the intelligence services of other communist states at any time prior to 22 November 1963, or was Oswald solicited by these intelligence services to become such an agent?" After considering this question, it became apparent that the problem of making a "judgment" as to whether Oswald might have become an agent of a communist power was subject to the same difficulties we would have encountered if we had tried to answer the allegation of CIA affiliation by citing CIA's own procedures. If CIA, in responding to the "judgment" portion of the question, were to say that in light of its knowledge of Soviet Bloc procedures it was unlikely that Oswald would have become their agent, we would have to admit that exceptions are always possible. Mr. Dulles and I felt that it would be better to avoid this and confine our response to a precise statement of fact. This statement, in Mr. Dulles' view, could note that CIA possessed no knowledge either gained independently or from its study of the materials supplied by the Commission tending to show that Lee Harvey Oswald was an agent of the Soviet intelligence services, or the services of any other Communist country, or for that matter of any other country.

4. Both questions were discussed individually but later Mr. Dulles suggested that because they were inter-connected it would be better if the Commission posed them in one letter to CIA. I agreed that this might be simpler.

5. After covering these questions of direct interest to CIA, Mr. Dulles mentioned other issues which concerned the Commission. He remarked that members of the Commission could not understand why CIA had not begun an investigation of Oswald as soon as it received word that he had defected. I noted that this question had been discussed with Mr. Rankin and his staff and there seemed to be considerable understanding of the practical circumstances which made it impossible for CIA to undertake such investigation inside the USSR. I expressed the hope that it would not be necessary for CIA to place matters of this sort in the public record. Mr. Dulles agreed.

*True* -

Note to HELMS on  
Talk with DULLES on 21 March.

23 March 1964

Dick:

Had a briefing at Allen Dulles' house on Saturday after-  
noon. (We were assembled to discuss his taping session with

Helen MacInnes, Donovan and Hanson Baldwin in New  
York tonight. None of the others were present.)

AWD showed me a letter he had received from Rankin  
recently expressing the desire to reach a modus vivendi in  
order to allay the story of CIA's possible sponsorship of Oswald's  
activity. The point of the communication to AWD was to suggest  
that he serve as <sup>CIA</sup> file reviewer for the Commission. The letter  
outlined alternative possibilities in this matter (affidavit from  
the DCI, etc.).

In my presence, AWD wrote the answer:

- a. Declining the invitation to serve as file reviewer for good and sufficient reasons.
- b. Stating his willingness to provide a statement or testimony to the Commission with respect to his knowledge of Oswald during his tenure as DCI. He noted in the tail-off of the letter that as far as he could remember he had never had any knowledge of Oswald at any time prior to the date of the assassination.

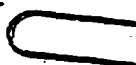
CS [Signature]

Document Number 618-1933  
for FOIA Review on July 1976

23 Mar. 64.

13 April 1964

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

1. | called me in at 0900 and showed me in draft a memorandum recording his conversation with Allen Dulles on Saturday 11 April re CIA assistance to the Warren Commission. In essence, the conversation dealt with questions which the Warren Commission will direct to CIA. Copy follows? 

2. | has suggested that nothing further be done re preparation of an analysis of the OSWALD affair pending receipt of the questions from the Commission. Answering these questions might make it unnecessary to prepare an analysis.

3. | asked that we prepare, on a priority basis, a reply to the FBI communication containing two reports on the OSWALD case from Nosenko. | is handling. | and | are to see it in draft.

P.S. | also returned to me the several items of Oswald production borrowed on 11 April.

Document Number

657-831

for FOIA Review on

JUN 1976

-2066

Approved  
14 Apr 64

**Exhibit 16b. Gerald R. Ford memo. Officially, the FBI was an investigatory arm of the Warren Commission. Both the FBI and CIA withheld information from the Warren Commission while at the same time seeking out intelligence concerning the Commission's activities through the use of informants. The Senate Intelligence Committee concluded in 1976 that the FBI's efforts, "did not allow for a thorough investigation" because "the Bureau viewed the Warren Commission in an adversarial light." As a member of the Warren Commission, Congressman Gerald R. Ford agrees to keep the FBI "thoroughly advised as to the activities of the Commission," becoming an FBI informant.**

JFK Exhibit F-442

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Mr. Mohr

DATE: December 17, 1963

C. D. DeLoach

SUBJECT: LEE HARVEY OSWALD  
INTERNAL SECURITY - R  
THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION

I talked with Congressman Gerald Ford (R-Michigan) at his office at 1:45 PM this afternoon. The facts concerning the allegations of Oswald that he had received \$5,500 in the Cuban Consulate, Mexico City, on September 18, 1963, and the recanting of such false facts were made very clear to Congressman Ford. He told me he was glad to get the further facts concerning the matter, particularly in view of the story that John McCone of CIA had told him originally.

With respect to the meeting of the Presidential Commission on December 12, 1963, Congressman Ford told me that the members of the Commission, including the Chief Justice, agreed unanimously that no preliminary release should be made to the press regarding the facts as outlined in the FBI report.

Chief Justice Warren told the Commission that they should strive to have all hearings completed and the findings made public prior to July, 1964, when the Presidential campaigns will begin to get hot. He stated it would be unfair to present findings after July, 1964.

Several members of the Commission indicated that Oswald's handwritten comments in the exhibits section of the report should be typed out for clarity. I was instructed to contact our liaison man, Inspector Malley, in this regard.

There was no criticism of the FBI at yesterday's meeting. There were allegations made by any one including the Chief Justice, that the FBI had leaked portions of this report. I again went over very carefully with Congressman Ford the fact that the FBI had not had any "leaks" whatsoever. I told him we were well aware that the Department had done considerable talking; furthermore, it now appeared somewhat obvious that members of the Commission were beginning to leak the report. I referred this week's issue of "Newsweek" magazine which contains a rather clear analysis of the report. I told Congressman Ford that "Newsweek" was owned by the "Washington Post" and that apparently some one was trying to curry favor. I told him we, of course, do not get along very well with either the "Washington Post" or "Newsweek." He stated that he was in the same boat, that he liked neither one of these publications.

Mr. Belmont  
Mr. Rosen  
DEC 20 1963  
REC 55  
REC 27, 1963  
SOVIET SECTION  
JFK Exhibit F-442

598

DeLoach to Mohr  
Re: Lee Harvey Oswald  
IS-R  
The Presidential Commission

12/17/63

stated he had one problem. He wanted to take the FBI report with him yet  
had no way of transporting it in complete safety. I told him I felt the Director  
could want him to borrow from us one of our Agent briefcases that contains a lock.  
He stated this would be ideal and he would appreciate loan of a briefcase very much.

ACTION:

This matter will be followed very closely. If there are no objections,  
I will deliver an Agent briefcase containing a lock to Congressman Ford tomorrow,  
December 18, 1963.

*W. J. Miller*  
*12/17/63*

*OK*  
*PA*

*[Handwritten signature]*

DeLoach to Mohr 12-12-63  
Re: Assassination of the President

I told Ford in strict confidence that the Director concurred with his viewpoint. I mentioned that our investigation thus far had conclusively shown that Oswald operated by himself and that Ruby additionally was a lover. However, FBI investigation was still pending on a large number of rumors, speculation and gossip and it, therefore, would be quite unfair for the Commission to take a stand prior to all the evidence being turned in. Ford stated this was his point entirely and that although he was a minority of one he intended to stick to his point.

Ford told me that John McCone, Director of CIA, had, approximately one week ago, gone up to his office and told him that CIA had uncovered some "startling information" in the Oswald case. McCone proceeded to tell Ford that a source of CIA's in Mexico had seen money exchange hands between Oswald and an unknown Cuban Negro. Ford stated this excited him greatly inasmuch as it definitely tended to show there was an international connection involved in the assassination of the President. *This shows how glib McCone is.*

I told Ford that apparently McCone had failed to follow up on this matter. I mentioned that CIA's source had recanted his story and had indicated that it was a fragment of his imagination. However, to prove the unstable tendencies of this source, the source had later claimed that he was actually telling the truth. I pointed out that we were still checking some angles of this, however, the CIA source was obviously either unreliable or somewhat of a psychopathic liar. Ford stated he could certainly see this. *When will we finish?*

Ford indicated he would keep me thoroughly advised as to the activities of the Commission. He stated this would have to be on a confidential basis, however, he thought it should be done. He also asked if he could call me from time to time and straighten out questions in his mind concerning our investigation. I told him by all means he should do this. He reiterated that our relationship would, of course, remain confidential.

We have had excellent relations with Congressman Ford for many years. He has been given an autographed copy of the Director's book "A Study of Communism" and has been in touch with my office on numerous occasions in the past.

ACTION:

Contact will be maintained with Congressman Ford.

*Walt Ruppel*  
*9/11*

*\* See this...*

# Gerald Ford suggested changes in Warren report, papers disclose

**'My changes had nothing to do with a conspiracy theory,' he says. 'My changes were only an attempt to be more precise.'**

By **GEORGE LARDNER Jr.**

WASHINGTON POST

Washington, D.C. — As a member of the Warren Commission that investigated the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Gerald Ford suggested that the panel change its initial description of the bullet wound in Kennedy's back to place it higher up in his body.

The change, critics said, may have been intended to support the controversial theory that a single bullet struck Kennedy from behind, exited his neck and then wounded Texas Gov. John Connally. The Warren Commission relied on it heavily in concluding that Lee Harvey Oswald was Kennedy's lone assassin, firing from a sniper's nest above and behind the president in the Texas School Book Depository.

Ford's handwritten editing, revealed in newly disclosed papers kept by the Commission's general counsel, was accepted with a slight change.

## Initial Draft

The initial draft of the report stated: "A bullet had entered his (Kennedy's) back at a point slightly below the shoulder to the right of the spine."

Ford wanted it to read: "A bullet had entered the back of his neck slightly to the right of the spine."

The final report said: "A bullet

had entered the base of the back of his neck slightly to the right of his spine."

A small change, said Ford on Wednesday when it came to light — one intended to clarify meaning, not alter history.

"My changes had nothing to do with a conspiracy theory," he said in a telephone interview. "My changes were only an attempt to be more precise."

## Criticism

But still, his editing was seized upon by critics of the Warren Commission's work who reject the commission's conclusion that Oswald acted alone.

One longtime critic, Harold Weisberg, said that "what Ford is doing is trying to make the single bullet theory more tenable."

The papers showing Ford's editing were made public Wednesday by the Assassinations Records Review Board, an agency set up by Congress to compile all available evidence in the Nov. 22, 1963, murder. The documents are part of the personal files of the late J. Lee Rankin, the Warren Commission's general counsel, whose son James donated the 40,000-page collection to the board.

Ford, at that time House Republican leader, was one of seven members of the commission, which was headed by then-Chief Justice Earl Warren. An active editor, Ford also suggested a number of other changes in the 1964 report, including harsher criticism of the Dallas Police Department for failing to protect Oswald. He was killed in the basement of police headquarters by nightclub operator Jack Ruby on Nov. 24, 1963.

Gerald Ford's change in the text of the Warren Report moves the back wound from "below the shoulder" to the "back of his [JFK's] neck." This helps allow for a downward trajectory of the Single Bullet (*Des Moines Register*, July 3, 1997).



## APPENDIX B. CODEBOOK

**KEY:****Surveillance, Correlation and Transmission**

- **Surveillance** of the environment, the watchdog role of the media: What is regarded as newsworthy and what is left out? Is the official record distorted, or not? Are there preconceptions?
- **Correlation** of parts of society in response to the environment in order to produce an interpretation of reality: What is the opinion of the editors and publishers, or editorials? What are the themes of headlines and labels ascribed to the assassination? What pictures are chosen?
- **Transmission** of social heritage from one generation to another: What is the overall world view or outlook presented to the public?

**Time/Life****Life, October 2, 1964**

- “The major significance of the report is that it lays to rest the lurid rumor and wild speculations that have spread after the assassination and confirms basic facts assumed since that tragic November 22. Oswald did it alone.”
- Endorses report (Surveillance—Preconception)
- Both Oswald and Ruby as loners (Correlation—Theme)  
(Surveillance—Preconception)
- 20,000 pages of testimony were taken
- 15 staff lawyers spread out all over the country
- “Monumental and historic task” (Surveillance—Preconception)
- The assassination was the result of bureaucratic blunders (Correlation—Theme)
- Two different versions of Zapruder film with pictures and captions changed and altered  
(Surveillance—Distortion)  
(Correlation—Pictures Chosen  
with Editorial Judgment)

**Time, October 2, 1964**

- Also endorses report “in sum and substance”
- Lays to rest “malignant rumors and speculation”
- Fascinating wealth of detail by which historians can abide
- Yet footnotes can’t be checked -- 26 volumes haven’t been released  
(**Surveillance—Preconception**)

**Time, December 4, 1964**

- Endorses report
- Paraphrase: Jackie, John and Nellie Connally, Lady Bird Johnson, O’Donnell, and Marina’s testimony (non-critical analysis)  
(**Surveillance—Handling of Information to Assess Agenda Setting**)
- Volume of testimony, pages and exhibits
- What is Left Out—Year 2039, suppressed evidence ( **Surveillance—What is Left Out**)

**Time, Sept. 16, 1966**

- Essay – Mentions skepticism, but report holds up due to volumes of papers—“painstaking detective work”  
(**Correlation—Opinion of Editor**)

**Time, November. 11, 1966**

- Autopsy transferred to archives
- “carefully guarded X-rays” – “exhaustive autopsy”
- Leaves out no dissection of neck
- Leaves out burning of autopsy notes
- Leaves out no dissection of brain ( **Surveillance—What is Left Out**)
- “minutely detailed testimony of doctors” ( **Correlation—Opinion of Editor**)
- Yet doctors didn’t see autopsy photos ( **Surveillance—What is Left Out**)
- “historical notes” theme ( **Correlation—Theme**)
- Critics as “mythmakers” ( **Correlation—Label**)

**Time, November. 25, 1966**

- “The Phantasmagoria” (Correlation—Label)
- “discrepancies real or imagined are increasingly obsessive”  
(Correlation—Opinion of Editor—Label)
- No mention of suppressed evidence
- With hoping to “trip over pebbles” (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- “minutiae and half-truths” (Correlation—Theme)
- 10,400,000 words
- “lacking any new evidence there seems to be little valid excuse for so dramatic a development as another full scale inquiry.”
- W/suppressed documents, where would this evidence come from?  
(Correlation—Opinion)

**Life, November 25, 1966****The Anomaly Article**

- “A Matter of Reasonable Doubt” / Headline and Cover Story (Correlation—Theme)
- Differs from sister publication *Time* dated the same day--Connally views still frames
- JBC’s testimony “shook the Warren panel to its foundation”—consistent with second gunman  
(Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Doctor Shaw and Gregory also maintain doubts
- Condition of bullet 399, reaction time of governor (Surveillance—Now Newsworthy)
- FBI initial report of separate shots is now newsworthy  
(Surveillance—Now Newsworthy)
- Editorial team = conclusion that film “bears out Connally’s statements” and “raises a reasonable doubt” October editorial (Correlation—Editor’s Opinion)
- With this *Life* concludes again with Connally’s physicians that he was struck by a later hit and not the single bullet 399, etc., on next few pages “case should be reopened”  
(Correlation—Editor’s Opinion)
- Only anomaly so far—for either *Life* and *Time*

## POST WATERGATE

- Cyril Wecht = No mention
- January 27th
- Still no mention (Surveillance—Not Newsworthy)

### Time, September 15, 1975

- Article is five paragraphs long
- LHO Note is “Threatening”
- Note: Observation will change in Senate report (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy)
- Perfect time to utilize January 27th transcript which was recently released since it involves FBI - Oswald relationship (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy and Left Out)
- Implications of FBI destroying the Oswald note - which is evidence - is not examined or discussed (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy and Left Out)

### Time, November 2, 1975

- LHO as “The Assassin”—lone gunman (Correlation—Theme)
- Destroying note is “clear case of bureaucratic self protection!” (Surveillance—Preconception)
- What about implications for rest of investigation - this is not mentioned (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy)

### Time, November 24, 1975

- Headline theme “Who Killed JFK—Just One Assassin” (Correlation—Editor’s Opinion/Theme of Headlines)
- “Mass of evidence”—equating volumes with completeness
- LHO note destroyed only to save agency from embarrassment—escaped “mass of evidence”
- *Time* is not asking what else is missing, like CIA plots against Castro escaped the “mass of evidence”

- WCR report “is not a record of investigators refusing to listen to witnesses who might disturb their conclusions” Edgewood bullets? (Correlation—Opinion of Editors)
- “array of questions, many of which are readily answerable” (Surveillance—What’s Newsworthy)
- E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis on Knoll
- Billy Lovelady, Lee Oswald and the Altgens’ photograph
- LHO hardship discharge (Surveillance—What’s Newsworthy)  
These are “straw men”
- Consequences for WCR investigation (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Lattimer and Jet Effect (Surveillance—Distortion)
- People on Grassy Knoll – Bowers (Surveillance—Distortion and What is Left Out)
- “No evidence of shooting was found on the grassy knoll” -- which is in front of the President yet *Time* publishes a diagram/map of Dealey Plaza with the grassy knoll located behind the President
- Major gap—newcomer to the case would view knoll shot as coming from behind the President so there is less controversy about direction of shots.
- Conclusion: “No physical evidence of any such shooting was found on the knoll” (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Autopsy photos mentioned—First reports are rear shots
- Autopsy mentioned— Not much is missing, only some tissue and the brain.” (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy or Left Out)
- Diagram of bunched up shirt and coat to explain back wound (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Copper tracings (Surveillance—What is Left Out)

**Time, January 10, 1977**

(Short article)

- HSCA budget debate Sprague as abrasive

**Time, December 19, 1977**

- “The FBI Story on JFK’s Death”
- Theme: “Improbable leads, new insights, and an old theory vindicated.” (Correlation—Theme)

- No mention of suppressed or missing evidence
- How fast can anybody read half of 80,000 pages in one week and conclude what the rest of it means? (Surveillance—Preconception)
- Theme remains, “FBI investigation was thorough in the extreme” (Correlation—Theme)
- *Time* ignores mention of the fact, admitted to by the FBI, that a note in handwriting of the man accused of murdering the President was delivered to their very own headquarters and destroyed after Oswald’s demise. Bronson film. (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Note: “Schweiker Report” conclusion will differ
- So will House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA)
- Another official version of history
- Second gunman—How will this be viewed?

**Time, January 4, 1979**

- Article is one column long, contrasted with eight pages when they endorsed the report in 1964
- “A Fourth Shot?”—Title punctuated with question mark (Correlation—Theme—Headline)
- Very little information *Time* will await the report

**Time, July 30, 1979**

- Release of HSCA Report--Second Gunman (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Article contains less column inches than the previous one
- Headline “Supposition” (Correlation—Theme Headline)
- “Nothing was found to overturn the basic conclusions of the Warren Commission 15 years ago that Oswald acted alone” (Correlation—Opinion of the Editor)
- No Fourth Estate approach

**Life, November, 1983**

- Zapruder film is most intensely scrutinized film in history

- Not scrutinized by *Life* in this issue except for the blanket statement “the fatal shot struck the right rear of his skull” (Surveillance—What is Left Out—Non-Scrutiny)
- No mention of HSCA 2nd gunman conclusions or the Single-Bullet Theory (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy and What is Left Out)
- “Capturing the Killer” (Correlation—Theme, No Trial Neglects to Use the Word “Alleged”)
- “Artifacts of Infamy”
- Pictures of physical evidence in National Archives
- Ammunition clip (Surveillance—What is Newsworthy—What is Left Out)
- JFK’s shirt
- CE399 (Correlation—Pictures Chosen)
- Conspiracy theories = agents of China, Russia, or Cuba (Surveillance—Preconception)
- HSCA suspected organized crime--not mentioned (Surveillance—What is Left Out)

**Time, November 28, 1988**

- Tragic Miss-Theory --“JFK’s Assassination: Who was the Real Target?”
- Cover story
- Excerpts from forthcoming book by journalist James Reston about John Connally (Correlation— Theme Headline)
- “Trendy Theory” = Mafia (Correlation—Label/Theme)
- Ruby motive—Spare Jackie Kennedy the ordeal of a trial (Surveillance—Distortion ignores Ruby note to Tonahill)
- Warren Commission version = Conclusion (Correlation—Label)
- HSCA version = Theory (Correlation—Label)
- Autopsy photos viewed (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Autopsy—Shots from behind JFK (Surveillance—Distortion of items left out)
- Acoustics—Scientists doubts (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- RFK didn’t turn over brain (Surveillance—Distortion memorandum of transfer signed; brain was never checked out of the Archives)

**Time, June 28, 1993**

- Excerpts from the memoirs of John Connally
- Two paragraph introduction only mentions remaining bullet fragments and CE399
- FBI sought permission from widow at funeral (not mentioned)—request denied for wrist fragments  
(**Surveillance**—What is Newsworthy)
- FBI sought permission to “settle once and for all” if “any single individual acted alone”  
(**Surveillance**—Distortion)

**Life, September, 1998**

- Zapruder film resold to government (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- “Competitive reasons” for *Life* not allowing film use  
(Correlation—Pictures Chosen; Theme)

**CBS News****CBS, 1967**

- Endorses report
- Public opinion polls – majority question Commission findings  
(**Surveillance**—Why Program is Needed)
- Mix of differing eyewitness reports (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Oswald as sharpshooter – not marksman  
(**Surveillance**—Distortion; LHO marksman in 1959 on Marine rifle test)
- CBS says LHO fired at moving target while Warren Commission used stationary target.  
CBS acknowledges Commission fudged on rifle difficulty  
(**Surveillance**—Newsworthy, Distortion)
- Similar gun test = use of a better gun (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Use of results which CBS shooters average 1.2 hits compared to 2.0 for an actual gunman
- Comparing Oswald who was barely qualified as a “marksman” by one point in the Marines  
with an “expert” rifleman (Surveillance—Distortion)
- CBS rifleman used firing clips (Surveillance—Assumption)
- Jiggle theory to give gunman more time = ignores mass of jiggles  
(**Surveillance**—Distortion)



- Metal detector = turns up negative on early missed shot (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Change of interpretation: “Under normal circumstances, Oswald would take longer [than an expert]. But circumstances were not normal; he was shooting at the President. So our answer is probably fast enough.” Becomes transformed later in the broadcast into “How fast could Oswald’s be fired? Fast enough.” (Correlation—Opinion)
- Perry and throat wound – confusion at Parkland (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- CBS ignores other physicians on throat wound (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Connally interviewed – heard shot and turned
- Humes and autopsy photos (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Humes and autopsy notes (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Wecht = third thoracic vertebrae
- Humes = two wounds of entrance; says photos confirm his testimony (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Single bullet deformity issue = reenactment test with Masonite designed to simulate bone yet only gelatin used to replace rib on the “more serious wound.” (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Still never shows the condition of test bullets fired which should match pristine single bullet (Exhibit 399) which has lost less than 1.5% of its weight - what did test bullets look like, this was the question the test was supposed to answer. (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Single bullet test labeled “completely valid test.” (Correlation—Opinion)
- Ignores that no bullet path was ever found in Kennedy’s body. (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Spector = SBT not indispensable; could have a three-bullet hit [to CBS, SBT is “indispensable”] (Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Use of an electric light bulb as a replacement to simulate JFK’s head - use of light bulb as a fixed object. (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Interpretation of light bulb test as valid replacement for head shot as “explanation.” (Correlation—Opinion)
- Ruby shooting LHO = was self-motivated; interviews with roommate, a competing nightclub owner, and two or “Jack Ruby’s girls”

- Single Bullet Theory = best account of what happened in Dallas and all objections to the Report vanish when exposed to the light of honest inquiry  
(Correlation—Editor’s Opinion)

### CBS, 1969

- Lyndon Johnson’s doubts eliminated from 1969 news broadcast.  
(Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- CBS explanation = “national security”  
(Correlation—Opinion)
- No Fourth Estate Approach

### CBS, 1975

- 1975 broadcast, to CBS, is the “definitive probe.”  
(Correlation—Theme, Label)
- Firing tests rehashed from 1967
- No discussion of throat shot, Betzner, Parkland doctors, etc.  
(Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Zapruder Z-210 and oak tree interpretation versus time of Connally’s wounds. Visibility versus viewpoint.  
(Correlation—Opinion)
- No frames prior to Z-210 are studied or mentioned/scrutinized.  
(Correlation—Picture Chosen)
- “Oswald’s fellow servicemen didn’t consider him an expert, he did attain the rating of sharpshooter - the second highest rating given by the Corps - an organization which prides itself on excellence in riflery.” Marine’s having pride in rifle proficiency translates into establishment of rifle proficiency; eliminates first part of passage.  
(Correlation—Theme of Label and Opinion)
- In “Warren Commission time, the rifle could be fired three times with accuracy in 4.6 seconds” according to CBS. False - crude firing time at Edgewood Arsenal with real gun is 4.6 seconds.  
(Surveillance—Distortion)
- Connally as saying shots came from over right shoulder ignores Life anomaly issue that “an entirely second bullet struck me” which would have had to occur before the 2.3 seconds needed to operate the bolt. (Surveillance—Distortion with What is Left Out)
- James Weston and autopsy photos  
(Surveillance—Newsworthy)

- Head shot utilizing ITEC - ignores Schoenfeld and Columbia Journalism Review.  
(**Surveillance**—Newsworthy)
- Hargis, Weitzman, Harper, etc. (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- JFK fatal head shot and backward movement described as “Jacqueline pushing him.”  
Note: CBS wouldn’t repeat this on any future documentary.  
(**Correlation**—Opinion of Editor)
- “But we believe no one can tell when Connally was hit.” Yet CBS concludes JFK was struck when you can’t even see him due to Stemmons Freeway sign.  
(**Surveillance**—Preconceptions and Distortions)

### CBS, 1988

- Twenty-fifth Anniversary program with “no comment on the past, only to bring it back.” Includes commemorative footage without analysis of the shooting.

### CBS, 1992

- “Warren Commission Report stands as the official record of what happened.”  
(**Surveillance**—Distortion, What is Left Out, Version 2 of Congress Exists)
- Single-Bullet Theory = evidence. Theory as evidence. (**Correlation**—Theme of Label)
- Warren Commission Council: “We know single bullet exited the neck.”  
(**Surveillance**—Distortion—No Bullet Path Found in Body, Wound Not Dissected—Going without Commentary)
- Similar gun rifle test: “It can be done”—same critique applies to 1967 experiment as related earlier. (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Ballistics show head shots came from behind – Guinn  
(**Surveillance**—Distortion: fragments have all disappeared)
- Brief treatment of autopsy, notes burned, brain tissue missing, misplaced or stolen  
(**Surveillance**—Newsworthy)
- Brain tissue missing, replaced or stolen  
(**Surveillance**—What is Left Out—entire brain is missing, not just some brain tissue)
- Tannebaum = asking too much of bullet CE399  
Warren Council = “We know it exited neck” — CBS makes no comment on either statement

CBS, 1993

- Thirtieth Anniversary: “While John F. Kennedy lay in Parkland Hospital, Dallas police surround the Texas School Book Depository”
- “Only one man left the building: Lee Harvey Oswald.” (Surveillance—Distortion)
- “As sirens wailed and police radios blared (Oswald’s) description” unidentified man on police radio: “Attention all squads! The suspect in the shooting...” (narrative ends here).
- No police radio description matched Lee Oswald - the description was ten years off in age and 35 pounds off in weight. (Surveillance—Distortion)
- On November 22, 1963 – Soundbite, Cronkite’s announcement is inserted “Regarding the probable assassin” (Surveillance—Preconception)  
Opinion of editor/anchor within 90 minutes of shooting on Nov. 22, 1963, that someone is “probable assassin”-too early when innocent until proven guilty.  
(Correlation—Opinion of Editor)
- When we return “Oswald meets his fate.”
- Regarding Ruby: “He visited Havana the year Castro took over only to have a good time.” As if visiting New Orleans crime boss, Santos Trafficante in a Cuban jail and lying under oath (HSCA conclusion) about a second trip to Cuba qualifies as a good time, even as the casinos were shut down. (Surveillance—Distortion; What is Left Out)
- Where Ruby dealt with the Mafia, there is no solid evidence of any other mob connection outside his nightclubs.
- Ignores House Assassinations Committee report. (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Katzenbach memo—Katzenbach statement “I meant put all facts out”  
(Surveillance—Newsworthy)
- Katzenbach memo—Context of thorough investigation (Correlation—Theme)
- “Distrust of the Warren Commission’s single gunman theory is often tied to the testimony of three self-proclaimed witnesses,” etc.
- Ignores House Committee and public opinion polls, which preceded these people.  
(Surveillance—Distortion)
- CBS brings back flawed rifle tests of 1967. (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Posner and Willis girl - interesting that mother’s statement is ignored, irrelevant to cite the other clearly older sister who was fifteen and not ten years old at the time.  
(Surveillance—Distortion)
- This is a “filmed discovery.” (Correlation—Opinion of Editor)
- Rifle firing time.

- Ignores 1964 Edgewood Arsenal test with the actual rifle. (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Oak tree and deflection.
- No evidence for this exists on the record. (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Zapruder film and head shot – Frames 312 & 313
- Zapruder film and head shot – Frames 313 & 314 (Surveillance—Distortion)
- Autopsy photographs—New physicians accept second gunman (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Jiggle theory utilized to claim Zapruder’s reaction is synonymous with gunfire startling him.
- Many other blurs or jiggles appear on the film, even House Committee said so, as well as the Thompson study. (Surveillance—What is Left Out)
- Jiggle theory becomes an “obvious reaction” to each shot. (Correlation—Opinion of Editor)
- “Three easy shots” (Surveillance—Distortion—Not Reproduced at Edgewood Arsenal with Actual Rifle)
- CBS endorses Warren Report—“The Commission’s conclusions passed the test of time.” (Correlation—Editor’s Opinion)

**APPENDIX C: ELEMENTS OF MEDIA PERSPECTIVES—TRANSMISSION****Content Creation**

The press did not break into Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office with a fingerprint kit and discover Watergate burglar E. Howard Hunt's fingerprints. That information was leaked to the press just as an unknown source named Deep Throat gave information to *Washington Post* reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. This was indicative of their Fourth Estate approach. Another technique of Fourth Estate content creation, besides news leaks, is to use legal action to free suppressed information.

The Market Approach is also socially created, but to sell newspapers, tabloids and appeal to profits which can result in sensationalism or exaggeration. However, Hegemony represents the exercise of agenda-setting, power, and what is perceived as possible, with the interpretation of reality by those elites who control the means of production. This would relate to claims-making and the creation of a social problem with an elite perspective since the minority may not have adequate media access and be heard on the matter. Only the Mirror Approach is neutral on this.

In the JFK assassination case, Fourth Estate Watergate-type leaks did not occur as agencies and principals holding information were suppressing, destroying or altering it. For example, the original autopsy report and Oswald's letter to the FBI were destroyed. Bullet fragments and tissue slides were either missing, lost or misplaced depending on which government description one accepts. The most telling example is the Zapruder film, itself arguably the most important piece of evidence in the murder case which was locked away by its owners in the media.

**True Fact Finding**

The Mirror and Fourth Estate approaches can lay credit to true fact finding. The Mirror perspective because the journalist is a neutral transmitter of information and the Fourth Estate because its reliance on digging out nuggets of information through leaks and litigation renders information subject to scrutiny. On the contrary, the Market Approach with

sensationalism and Hegemony with its emphasis on boundary maintenance of elite interests do not represent such true fact finding.

True fact finding cannot exist alongside distortion. CBS substitution of gelatin for a rib cage in their firing tests to simulate Connally's wounds while concealing the condition of the test bullets and the use of a better gun for its firing tests do not approach this. The same holds true for *Time-Life, Inc.*, suppression of the Zapruder film or even the use of its images for publication as charcoal drawings. A Fourth Estate approach would not endorse the Warren Report before any testimony or exhibits have been released, such as *Time* and *Life* did, whereas hegemony with its emphasis on boundary maintenance of the status quo would call for a wholesale endorsement either by blind acceptance or testing with distorted logic. The Mirror Approach would allow for use of the Zapruder film while the Market Approach would capitalize on its use. The end result of whatever vehicle fact finding is, becomes a representation of a world view.

### **Media Portrayals**

The same holds true for media portrayals which are the outgrowth of any fact-finding moderm. Again, the Mirror Approach is neutral while the Fourth Estate also goes after "just the facts." The Market Approach is exhibited with exaggeration without true regard to source. Hegemony reflects the relationship of power and status differentials of the larger society.

### **Gatekeeping**

The neutral assumption of a Mirror Approach leaves the gate open to whatever the camera picks up. So does the Market Approach with its no holds barred grip on reality. Yet Hegemony reflects gatekeeping through boundary maintenance as does the Fourth Estate since the media acts as a check and balance on government and politics.

*Time* and *Life's* blanket endorsements of the Warren Report upon its release do not resemble the scrutiny of dedicated inquiry which is the hallmark of the Fourth Estate approach. It shuts the door to future exposé. Further, it does not allow for the sensationalism

required for a Market approach to prosper and sell copies. It does, however, put fences of scrutiny around the Report locking in the Hegemonic boundaries of reasoned discourse.

### **Audience**

The Fourth Estate is motivated by what audiences need while the Market Approach gives them what they want. The Mirror Approach gives the viewer just what is out there. Hegemony speaks to supporting the interests and advancing the policies of inevitable elites.

Since one needs to see the Zapruder film in order to analyze it, the actions of *Time/Life* Incorporated fall considerably short of a Mirror Approach by not letting the audience decide for themselves. Showing the film would certainly appeal to profits in the conducive environment of the Market Approach. It would also allow for the scrutiny required of a Fourth Estate endeavor. This was not done. As long as the film is kept suppressed the boundaries of debate are locked in, not by a Market desire for profit or Fourth Estate debate and scrutiny, but rather by edict.

### **Sell Opinion**

The Fourth Estate exists to check and balance institutions of government by digging out data and the Market Approach is geared to selling newspapers. Since the Mirror Approach would be neutral, only Hegemony can lay bona-fide claim to selling consistently the opinionated vision of the world.

Correlation is the essence of opinions and editorials. *Time* in its November 28, 1988 issue referring to the Warren Commission version as a “conclusion” while the House Committee’s version is a “theory” is an example of editorial correlation. This is clearly not the sensationalism of a Market endeavor nor is it the acknowledgment of a need to pursue anomalies indicative of a Fourth Estate Approach. CBS’ labeling the Single-Bullet Theory as a fact does not mirror the language of its authors.

### **Appraisal**

In the coverage of the Kennedy assassination, *Content Creation* revolved around suppression of the Zapruder film by *Time/Life* and clear distortion by CBS. This hampered



*True Fact Finding* and the *Media Portrayal* based on it continued to reflect a bland acceptance of the Report and its contents for the *Audience*. *Gatekeeping* was evident throughout as *Boundary Maintenance* of that initial position was repeated continually in *Content Creation*. Repetition through cognitive dissonance reveals that hegemony was the norm and practice of its authors.

The following typology of ideal types can be arrived at by putting the elements together, as shown in Figure 5 below.

	Media Content as socially created product	True fact finding	Sell opinion	Gate-keeping	Audience	Media portrayals
Mirror	—	+	—	—	Give audiences what's out there	Neutral
Fourth Estate	+ leaks	+	—	+	Give what audiences need	Just the facts
Market	+ sell product	—	—	—	Give what audiences want	Exaggerated without regard to source
Hegemony	+ control	—	+	+	Support/advance inevitable elites	Reflects wealth, status power differentials in society

As explained above the following typology of ideal types summarizes these elements which explain why Hegemony is the best fit and only one of the four perspectives which can account for the media response.

The “+” symbol indicates *yes*; and the “—” symbol indicates *no*.

**Figure 5. Media perspectives**

Hegemony reaches perhaps its highest boundary maintenance not with the exclusion by CBS of Lyndon Johnson's dissent or even ignoring with surveillance the now public doubts of two Warren staff members, that of the late Senators Richard Russell and Hale Boggs, but in the high school textbooks which, as we have seen consistently ignored by omission the fact that two separate official versions of this murder actually exist. There is no mention of the House Select Committee on Assassinations Report of a second gunman located on the grassy knoll in front of the motorcade. This is the intended end result to Lasswell; **transmission**—the overall world-view and educational activity of media. That transmission is is hegemony. It leads back from the Katzenbach Memo written that fateful weekend when Oswald lay dying and autopsy notes were being destroyed in the fireplace of autopsy physician Admiral James J. Humes in his recreation room. This transmission is the third step in Lasswell's methodology. It resonates with high school textbook accounts and media presentations of the event coupled with ingenious defenses and cognitive dissonance propelled by the repetition required for transmission. It is attempting the confirmation of legitimacy, to use Berger and Luckman's terminology, which ends up reified in high school textbooks and "dual nut" editorials which only look at a single official version of our history.

With techniques such as distortion, media suppression of the Zapruder film and contrived rifle tests, we have to ask ourselves about the social construction of reality in explaining and justifying the social world. Without the diffusion of ideas and evidence and with the passive acceptance of missing evidence, a Fourth Estate approach is not in operation. Something else is operating instead.

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