

*copy for Harold.*

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Epsom  
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New Zealand

24/01/94

Dr Gerald McKnight  
History Department  
Hood College  
Frederick  
Maryland 21701  
U.S.A.

Dear Dr McKnight

I have been given your name and address by Harold Weisberg, and I understand from Harold that he has talked to you about the request I am about to make of you. I hope I can proceed with this letter in the knowledge Harold has established my bona fides with you.

I wish to obtain copies of the course outline, teaching notes and the associated material handed out to students for the papers you teach dealing with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Harold mentioned a figure of \$US25.00 as the base cost students pay for a course manual, including copies of original archival documents.

I would like to buy two copies of whatever material you are able to put together, one set for me and the other for Donald Craig who lectures part-time in the School of Continuing Education at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch. He teaches a course there entitled 'CONSPIRACY THEORY: THE ASSASSINATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY. Don has lodged a copy of his course material with the Assassination Archives Research Centre in Washington D.C., and I am sure that if you would like to obtain copies of his teaching material he would be very happy to send you a copy himself.

I am currently putting a proposal before the Board of Studies at Auckland University with a view to setting up a programme something along the lines of what Don Craig has been doing in Christchurch, teaching a course dealing with the assassination and its aftermath. This would be done within the School of Continuing Education. My course will not be the same as Don Craig teaches, for one I would wish to avoid most of the conspiracy theories and focus on recorded evidence that is not in dispute, much as I have been led to concentrate on through my correspondence with Harold. I think this is pretty much the same line of approach you use at Hood College.

At the moment I am hoping to learn from the way you have treated the subject as a teaching medium, and especially how you have tied the study of original documents into your course. (Of course, I would be happy for any advice you may wish to offer me too!) As well as whatever current material you hand to students, I would be more than grateful to receive other additional material, teaching resources I mean, you are willing to share with me.

I know this is asking a lot of you, but I would not use anything from you without first checking with you. Indeed, I would expect to keep you briefed on what does eventuate as a result of my attempt to get a course set up here. Knowing how long these things take, it would probably not be before 1st Semester in 1995 (i.e. March 1995).

I am enclosing a bank draft for \$US100.00, for two sets of your course handout material @ \$25.00 plus whatever else you may be able to provide, and \$US50.00 for airmail postage. You can either send both sets of material to me, in which case I would forward one set to Don Craig, or send separate sets to me and Don Craig. Don's address is:

Donald Craig  
P.O. Box 113  
Kirwee  
Canterbury  
New Zealand

ph. (03) 318 1081 (home)  
(03) 348 5199 (work)

I apologise for the spelling of your name on the bank draft, the bank clerk left off the 'Mc'. I expect it will not stop you banking the draft.

I trust it will be possible for you to send me the material I have asked for and I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes, and thanks, with greetings from New Zealand.

Yours faithfully

Dal McGuirk

Ph. (09) 625 4844 (home)  
(09) 849 6895 (direct line, Western Springs College)

# Weekend Book Reviews, NZ Herald, Auckland.

Gerald Posner rightly decries commercialisation of the JFK assassination, but is wrong in nearly everything else. His book sets out to do two things - justify the official US Warren Commission's 1964 report that found a lone malcontent with left wing tendencies the assassin, and counter the criticism levelled at the Warren Commission since the 1960s. To achieve these ends he adopts the partisan and adversarial role of a prosecutor. On key questions however Posner is silent, such as over the encounter by three police officers, immediately after the assassination in areas where shots were reported, of men falsely claiming to be Secret Service agents. Such evidence of conspiracy was not followed up by the FBI or Warren Commission either. Posner has been widely quoted and promoted worldwide since his book was released, and has received unprecedented support from the CIA. However, as anybody with a little factual knowledge of the subject can see, Posner takes a most biased viewpoint while claiming to be neutral and objective.

Robert Groden, longtime critic of the Warren Commission, has put together 600 photos (mostly colour) and diagrams connected with the assassination in a unique pictorial collection. He falls down badly though in the main text and captions trying to tie the photos to a dizzying number of possible assassins and accomplices. Both Posner and Groden fail to convince in pointing the finger at who they think killed JFK, mainly because of the dearth of conclusive evidence. The crime was not properly investigated at the time, and there are no leads now to follow (hence no basis for theories that reveal who may have been behind the assassination.) Groden's book may well be worth buying just for the photos, but one would need to read other authors to begin to understand what the photos mean.

Nigel Hamilton's book is the first of a two volume biography of JFK, and covers the years from 1917 to 1946. The "reckless" in the title comes from Hamilton's description of JFK's "reckless sexual licence", and it says much of what the book is about. Among the sexual exploits recounted by Hamilton is JFK's torrid wartime affair with glamorous Danish journalist Inga Arvad, wrongly suspected by the FBI of being a Nazi agent. Hamilton's book is rejected by the Kennedy family, especially in the way it shows JFK as an emotional cripple, deprived of love as a child by both parents. (The character of Joseph Kennedy Snr is blackened throughout the book, with Hamilton likening him to Josef Stalin.) Still, for all its deficiencies as a biography, it is a most readable story with its look at this hitherto hidden side to JFK's early years.

Reviewed by Dal McGuirk

**CASE CLOSED**

**Lee Harvey Oswald and the Assassination of JFK**

by Gerald Posner

Penguin      Paperback (607 pages)      \$21.95

**THE KILLING OF A PRESIDENT**

**The Complete Photographic Record of the JFK Assassination**

by Robert Groden

Hodder Headline      Casebound (223 Pages)      \$69.95

**JFK**

**Reckless Youth**

by Nigel Hamilton

Random      Paperback (900 pages)      \$29.95