

Ruby's Motives In Killing Oswald Remain Unclear

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Grief-stricken patriot or head-line-hungry would-be hero?

Sane or insane?

These are questions which have been parried about untold thousands of times since Jack Ruby gunned down accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald in the basement of the Dallas City Hall as millions watched in horrified disbelief on television.

Until that day — Nov. 24, 1963 — Jack Ruby was little known

except in the shabby milieu of striptease-type night clubs.

But he has since taken his dubious place in history as the man who killed the man who was accused of killing President John F. Kennedy.

WHAT MOTIVATED this pudgy, balding, middle-aged night club operator that morning slightly more than three years ago?

Was it, as he has said, to spare Jacqueline Kennedy the added grief of having to return to Dallas for the trial of Oswald?

Or was he acting in the mistaken belief that by slaying Oswald he would become a national hero as prosecutors contend?

Ruby's mental condition has been argued endlessly both in and out of courtrooms and it is a question that may never be answered satisfactorily.

BUT THERE'S little doubt that
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Ruby had some emotional problems.

Only weeks before the Oswald killing a stripper who performed at Ruby's Carousel Club filed a peace bond affidavit against him.

"Jack Ruby screams. He threatened to destroy \$10,000 worth of my costumes. I have seen him knock people down stairways. I am afraid he will do me physical harm," the stripper known as "Jade" said in a statement filed with Justice of the Peace W. E. Richburg Nov. 1, 1963.

Jade is among those who think Ruby's hero ambitions caused him to shoot down Oswald.

"... When he shot Oswald he thought this would make him a hero to the people in Dallas, that he was righting the wrong that Dallas had done President Kennedy," she told The Times Herald then.

THERE IS little doubt that Ruby, however, was deeply upset by the assassination of President Kennedy.

"He took the assassination very hard," said his roommate, George Senator. "He took it right through the heart. I have never seen him take anything like this."

Senator recalled that Ruby kept saying, "why did this have to happen to that poor family?"

"He kept saying that over and over again and kept saying 'those poor children,'" Senator said.

And Ruby apparently has always taken his patriotism seriously.

His sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, described him as an extremely patriotic man who bristled at every insult to the top leaders of the nation.

"IT DIDN'T matter who it was if he was in high government. My brother thought we should have respect for them. My brother is a good American," Mrs. Grant said.

If, however, it was headlines that Ruby was looking for, he succeeded. His name became a household name throughout the world.

But the enigma of Jack Ruby may never be explained.

By killing Oswald, he denied history the opportunity of discovering why Oswald acted as he did.

And it's possible that the world will never really know why Ruby killed Oswald because Ruby perhaps didn't really know himself.