

Who 'Really' Killed Kennedy?

SIX SECONDS IN DALLAS. By Josiah Thompson. Geis, \$8.95.
ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT: THE WARREN COMMISSION, THE AUTHORITIES AND THE REPORT. By Sylvia Meagher. Introduction by Leo Zapruder. Bobbs-Merrill, \$8.50.

By EDWARD S. KERSTEIN
Of The Journal Staff

WHO killed John F. Kennedy? By no means is that question resolved. Since no jury or judge has decided beyond a reasonable doubt who killed President Kennedy, his assassination will remain one of the most mysterious murder cases in United States history.

Lee Harvey Oswald was the only person named in a warrant as Kennedy's murderer. The fatal shooting of Oswald by Jack Ruby, Dallas strip joint operator, caused President Johnson to appoint the historic Warren commission to resolve the assassination of Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

The commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, subsequently issued a report that named Oswald as the lone killer. In support of this finding, the commission issued 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits.

Since then, nearly 50 books have been published in attempts to explain the mystery of the events surrounding Kennedy's slaying in Dallas. Some were attacks of the Warren report, others were written in support of it.

Contemporary readers and future historians will find the two latest books — "Six Sec-

onds in Dallas" by Josiah Thompson and "Accessories After the Fact" by Sylvia Meagher — skillful studies that cannot be ignored.

Thompson's book, which contains a profusion of photographs and drawings, is designed to prove that three gunmen were involved in the president's murder. Mrs. Meagher, for her part, contends that there is no indication that the Warren commission at any time seriously considered the possibility was not guilty, or that he had not acted alone.

Thompson charges that the commission "in its haste, its uncritical evaluation of the facts, and its predisposition to prove Oswald the lone assassin, overlooked much of the evidence."

"Six Seconds in Dallas" contains many drawings made under direction of Thompson in support of his theory that Kennedy was killed by more than one bullet and that there must have been more than one assassin. The pictures in the book are not reproductions from the original Zapruder film that dramatically captured the crucial assassination episode (with the exception of one frame long available to the public). Since the necessary photographic evidence was inaccessible, the publisher, in a prefatory note, asks the reader to compare the one included Zapruder frame with the artist's reconstruc-

tion of it and trust that the other reconstructions are accurate.

Mrs. Meagher, who claims she found 27 errors by the commission in the area of the Kennedy autopsy alone, which occupies only six or seven pages of the report, says acidly:

"The commission's failures manifest a contempt for the citizens whom this body pretended to serve — a contempt not for their rights alone but for their intelligence. . . . The Warren report . . . resembles a tale told for fools."

Neither the words of Thompson and Mrs. Meagher can be taken lightly despite the stature of the eminent figures who comprised the commission.

Both authors have notable backgrounds. Thompson, 32, studied at Oxford, Copenhagen and Yale and is now an assistant professor of philosophy at Haverford college.

Mrs. Meagher, an executive of the World Health Organization in New York, compiled and published last year the only index to the 26 volumes generated by the Warren commission.

The issues raised by these writers and others might well inspire some ballads of the old fashioned variety, or even cause the late president's brothers to foster a new inquiry into the murder of Nov. 22, 1963.