

SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS UNIVERSITY

Political Science 222
Political Assassinations In America

Fall, 1983
Dr. Melanson

Readings

1. Anthony Summers, Conspiracy (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981).
2. Packet of reprints and materials
3. Student-selected book on J.F.K. assassination

Grading

Mid exam = 30% Final exam = 40% 1000-word book review-30%

Topics

1. The Problem of Political Assassinations In America
 - A. Background: - definition of terms and concepts
 - Cross-cultural comparisons
 - Assassination as a political weapon
 - a history of "executive action"
 - B. Impact: - brief survey of American assassination cases
 - effect upon history, politics, public policy
 - implications for democratic ideals
 - C. Conspiracy versus lone-assassin theories
 - D. Psychological dimensions: assassins and assassinations
- II. The Assassination of John F. Kennedy (read Summers, Melanson articles)
 - A. Zapruder film and slides
 - B. Official and unofficial investigations, Warren Commission to the present-
 - C. The case itself: evidence, issues, mysteries, instructor's research findings.
 - D. 20th anniversary data - recent books, new data
- III. Other Cases
 - A. Martin Luther King (student-selected reading)
 - B. Robert F. Kennedy (read Melanson analysis)
- IV. Presidential/Candidate Protection
 - A. Problems, pressures, and conflicts
 - B. The U.S. Secret Service: history, organization methods, effectiveness
- V. Overview and Summary

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PSC 222
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Dr. Melanson
Spring, 1983

Final Exam

I. (60 points). Within a period of two months in the year 1968, both Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated. In both cases, the alleged assassins were caught, tried, and sent to jail; the cases both appeared open and shut.

Discuss and compare these two cases in terms of:

- the official findings and investigations
- unsolved mysteries and questions
- evidence of possible conspiracy
- governmental secrecy and information withheld or destroyed

II. (40 points) Protecting Presidents, candidates and political leaders from assassination is a difficult task. What major variables shape the quality of protection? What problems and pressures face the United States Secret Service in its protective mission and in identifying dangerous persons? Illustrate your answer with examples of methods, cases, problems. Mention the article you read on the Secret Service.

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Mid Exam

Answer two of the following questions as completely as time and knowledge allow.

- I. (50 points, Everyone must answer this question)
Anthony Summers' book Conspiracy presents a great deal of material (interviews, events, points of controversy, documentary evidence) dealing with both American Intelligence agencies and organized crime. Present several examples of key points in the Summers book relating to American intelligence and organized crime.
- II. (50 points - select one of the following)
- A. From the assigned articles (Spy Saga and the U-2) and from the lectures, provide examples of the intelligence-related, espionage-related aspects of Oswald's life - from his defection to Russia, to New Orleans, to Dallas.
- B. The problem of political assassinations is a complex one about which there is disagreement and confusion as to the definition of the problem and of basic concepts involved.
Drawing upon examples from the JFK case, describe these confusions and disagreements as they relate to:
- the psychology of assassins
 - the definition of a "loner"
 - the definition of "conspiracy"

SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS UNIVERSITY

Political Science 444

Fall, 1983

Dr. Melanson

Seminar In Political
Assassinations

Required Reading

1. Anthony Summers Conspiracy (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982)
2. Packet of articles and materials assembled by the instructor

Grading

Research paper (Due Dec. 16) = two-thirds of grade

Preparation, participation, attendance = one-third of grade

Papers

Typed, end notes, bibliography. Minimum of 12 pages
(250 words per page). No maximum.

Agenda

Meetings

Tasks

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | discussion of seminar goals and requirements, papers, readings, grading. Background presentation by instructor |
| 2. | Background material presented by instructor |
| 3. | Slides
Brief presentation of research topics by students |
| 4. | Slides |
| 5. | Presentation of instructor's research and findings. |
| 6. | Guest lecturer |
| 7. | Preliminary presentation of research progress by students |

Meetings

8.

9.

10-13

14.

Tasks

Data-exchange workshop

Discussion of Summers,
packet materials,
instructor's findings

Student presentations of
research findings to date

Summary: 20th anniversary
assessment.

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Political Science 222

Political Assassinations
In America

Dr. Melanson

Fall, 1983

Book Review Assignment

The book: Any book or report dealing with the JFK assassination case.
Anthologies or collections cannot be used.

Due date: All book reviews are due November 29.
Late reviews will be penalized 5% (half a letter grade) on
the grading of the review assignment.

Reviews received any later than November 29 may - at
the instructor's opinion - result in a temporary Incomplete
(I) for the course. The instructor cannot guarantee that
papers submitted after November 29 can be processed in time to
meet the deadline for final grades, given the large number
of students in the class and the 72-hour rule for grading
final exams.

Specification: All reviews must be typed, double spaced
minimum size: 800 words
maximum size: 1000 words
A complete citation of the book must be included.

Analysis: The review should not simply summarize the book,
nor should it focus on whether or not you liked the book
(whether it was interesting, fun to read). Instead, your
review should deal with each of these questions. How much
of your 800-1000 words should be devoted to each question?
This depends upon the book you choose and your approach
to the review. For a particular book, one or two of these
questions might be much more relevant and you might spend
much more time on them. But all of the following must be
dealt with, however briefly. The questions can be dealt
with in any order you choose.

- I. What is the book about? Provide a brief summary of
its substance or main themes.
- II. What is the book trying to do? What are its goals -
solve the case? Prove a conspiracy?
- III.A. How well does it accomplish its goals?
B. How credible do you find the book's arguments or
analyses, or conclusions (i.e. how convincing
is the evidence, the source materials? how objective
or biased or competent is the author?)

- IV. Does this work enlighten us about the JFK assassination?
Explain why or why not.

The key to the assignment is to analyze the book rather than to merely summarize it or tell whether you liked it. It would probably be helpful to write one or more rough drafts of your review, in order to see if you can handle all of the questions within the space allowed (800 - 1000 words).