

319 Dryden Road
Ithaca, New York 14850
3 February 1970

Dear Mrs. Meagher,

I have been meaning to write to you for months, but I almost quite literally had no free time, as I was taking two high-level graduate seminars this past term, and was kept exceedingly busy with the usual academic nonsense. Quite frankly, I'm fed up with graduate school, and I am seriously considering leaving after I (hopefully) get a master's degree this fall. Considering the gravity of the job situation for PhD's these days, I think it would be a terrible waste of time for me to beat my head against the wall for two years working on a doctoral dissertation. Besides, I'm fed up with the unreal quality of graduate school; it's a prolongation of one's adolescence into the mid-twenties, filled with drudgery, frustration, and boredom.

No, I'm not writing to you simply to vent my spleen against the academic world. In fact, I really don't consider it a problem any more, now that I've decided to get out. I'm already beginning to look around for various jobs, and am not really very worried.

What I am writing about is this: many people who read my paper on the Warren Commission (including my advisor in the history department) have told me that it demonstrated a talent for journalistic (rather than academic) writing. Other papers in the past have elicited similar comments; even when the content has been less than outstanding, I have always been told that my writing is "clear, concise, well-organized," etc. What I would like, quite simply, is your opinion--based on having read my paper and my letters--on this matter. Even more to the point, do you think I could succeed as a journalist? I'm not asking you to find me a job; even if I thought you had the influence to do this, I would not impose upon you in such a manner. But--as I'm sure you know--I value your opinions quite highly, and would very much like to hear what you have to say on this matter. I have no training whatsoever in journalism; whatever merits or faults my writing may have are the products of my own efforts.

Enough on this matter. As for our usual subject of correspondence, I've pretty much abandoned hope. For personal reasons, I've become quite disillusioned with Gary Schoener--I'm still waiting for his instructions concerning that useless Thornley transcript that I ordered from the Archives for over \$10. The materials that Fensterwald has sent me have made me wonder if any of the critics--except for Leo Sauvage, Josiah Thompson, and yourself--are at all sane. This so-called "committee" twists the evidence to fit their own conclusions in the same way that the commission did; indeed, they remind me of fundamentalist preachers who change their interpretation of the Bible to meet criticisms, while all the time maintaining that every word in the Bible is the inspired word of God. I'm still interested in the case, but really have no expectation of its ever being solved. I believe that the only hope at this point is a confession from one of the guilty parties, or from one of those who deliberately white-washed the truth--and this seems about as likely as a revelation from the ghost of Lee Harvey Oswald.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Richard P. Edelman
Richard P. Edelman