

Fredonia Prof Keeps Searching for Truth In JFK Assassination

By ANTHONY VIOLANTI

More than twenty-two years after the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Dr. Jerry D. Rose of Fredonia continues to try to find out what really happened on Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas.

In all that time, Rose, a professor of sociology at Fredonia State College, has reached one certain conclusion about his long quest for truth: "The problem is understanding you will never find it," he said.

Though the search for truth may be a lost cause, in November 1984 Rose began publishing "The Third Decade," a bi-monthly journal that publishes scholarly, documented articles devoted to examining the evidence in the murder of President Kennedy.

Rose supplies most of the funds and editorial effort to keep the publication going. It has about 125 subscribers, most of whom, like Rose,

have done scholarly work on the assassination. Rose stresses, however, that the publication also is of interest to lay readers wanting to know more about the assassination.

Rose has a strong academic background. He has been teaching at Fredonia since 1970. He has a master's degree in education from the University of Oklahoma and a doctorate in sociology from the University of Wisconsin.

Over the years there have been many theories about the death of the president. Shortly after the assassination, the Warren Commission, in a controversial decision, declared that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, shot Kennedy twice, once in the back and once in the head.

In the 1970s, Rose indicated, the House Select Committee on Assassinations determined that a shot was fired by another gunman and the death of the president was probably



Dr. Jerry D. Rose puts out an assassination newsletter.

a conspiracy. The House report, Rose indicated, was turned over to the Justice Department, but nothing happened, and critics believe the investigation will never be reopened.

So if government can't do the job, Rose believes it is up to private individuals like him to carry on the probe. While some are quick to brand such people as nuts or assassination kooks, Rose feels it is worth taking the criticism to pursue truth. That is one reason he insists on

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factual accuracy and documented research in his publication. "In my journal, I make every effort to stay away from speculation and kooks," Rose said. "I'm not publishing any article by anybody with a final solution. We deal in evidence about the case." But does anybody care? In 1986,

time has erased most of the painful memories of that day. Many researchers on the assassination, including Rose, believe the public would rather not face up to the fact that agencies of the federal government may have been involved in the murder of a president.

"Interest has waned," Rose said. "To me it's a question of why interest hasn't been revived." He said opinion polls have shown the majority of Americans do not believe the findings of the Warren Commission. That leads Rose to the fundamental conflict in America on the Kennedy assassination: Is the truth too terrible for everyone to bear?

"Government cannot investigate itself," Rose wrote in a recent journal editorial. "If the job is to be done, it must be done by us, amateurs though we may be."

After his years of study, Rose does have a theory on the president's murder. "I have strong hunches about what happened and who was involved," he said.

Rose hypothesizes the assassination was a conspiracy, the result of a campaign of anti-Castro, far-right-wing elements in the CIA. He speculates that Oswald was an agent for the FBI and CIA and was made a scapegoat in the assassination.

Rose's special field of interest is research into and knowledge of the Dallas Police Department at the time of the murder.

What are the long-term lessons of the assassination? Rose believes all his time and energy is worth the effort if the American public comes to understand one thing: "People can't be so naive and trusting of (the government's) official versions of events," he said. "If they are, things that happened in the past will happen again."



Like the eternal flame at JFK's grave, Jerry Rose keeps going.