

Thurs. 8/1/68  
Rec'd 8/2

Dear Sylvia,

Here are some statistics which may solve a puzzle. The puzzle: How does a wound in JFX 5 1/2" below the collar line become in the autopsy a wound 5 1/2" below the top of the scapular process? Solution: When a body is moved from an upright to a prone position the distance between the top of the scapular process and any point on the upper back is greatly reduced.

Let us do a small experiment. Wearing a shirt I measure down from the top of the collar 5 1/2", 2" to the right of the midline. This locates a point on the upper back which is actually 9+" from the top of the right scapular process, when measured in an upright position. I now lie down on the floor and the distance between the top of the scapular process and the marked point on the back is again measured. Here are the results:

Distance from mark on back to top of scapular process	Position of Prone Body
5 1/2"	Face down, arms above head
6 1/2"	Face to right, arms above head
6 1/4"	Face to right, arms folded under head
7 1/2"	Face down, arms at 90°
5 1/2"	Face down, arms abyside
4"	Face down, arms abyside

Excluding the odd 90° position, it appears that by moving from an upright to a prone position the distance between the two points is shortened by 2½" to 3½". The relative of the shoulder girdle together with the depression of the rear of the head relative to the shoulders. In the prone position has shortened an upright distance of 9" into a prone distance of 5½" to 6½". The doctor's measurements and the FBI clothing measurements were both correct. What had missed our attention all along was the fact that the clothes measurement assume an upright body position while the autopsy measurements were made in a prone position.

I have no idea how these considerations bear on the ideas of your pathologist acquaintances, but I hope they mutually compliment each other. It was so damn simple.

Let me know what you think of it. The actual distances will vary somewhat but using someone of JFK's height & body configuration should give very accurate results.

Hope you're enjoying the first rest you've gotten in ages. Old gal, and clear blue sky is not too hot. It's marvelously cool here in San Francisco.

Affectionately,  
Tom