

General Manager  
WGBH-TV  
Boston, Mass.

7627 Old Receiver Road  
Frederick, Md. 21701  
1/31/89

Dear General Manager,

Quite some time before you aired the Nova show on the assassination of President Kennedy I wrote its executive producer with cautions. The morning after it was aired I wrote her again. My warning was that you (pl) were about to perpetrate a fraud and defame yourselves. What I said after I saw the show is that it was knowingly, deliberately and shamefully dishonest. I enclose copies of both letters.

I asked Ms. Apsell, who has responded to nothing and nobody, so omniscient is she about everything, to refer what I said to Bob Richter, who wrote and produced that disgraceful thing, and to, if she did not reply, someone above her. I have heard nothing from anybody after more than two months so I write you.

This is not because I think you can do anything. There is no way you can undo the harm done with a disgraceful misinforming of a large audience about the most subversive of possible crimes in a society like ours, one that can work well only when the people are well and accurately informed about important matters. It is because I believe you should know and because I think that the people have a right to expect honesty and decency from public TV.

I believe that your show and its responsible people failed a public trust, to the people for whom public TV is intended and failed in their personal and professional responsibilities. I believe also that they <sup>are</sup> insufferably arrogant and behaved badly.

When I learned that a history professor who is a subject expert and coauthor of the only scholarly bibliography on the subject could not get anyone to talk to him when he took the trouble to phone I wrote, although I am over 75 and in impaired health. I asked nothing at all for myself and there could have been nothing for me. I tried only to help your people meet their professional responsibilities and their responsibilities to Nova, often a truly great program, to your station and its audience and to the stations that would carry that program and their audiences.

I did not annotate a transcript because I do not know anyone who got one but if you want me to put up or shut up send me one and I'll annotate it and confront anyone who disputes any of my annotations, particularly Richter and Lifton.

I was truly disappointed and I thought about this after seeing the misnamed "Who Shot President Kennedy" - misnamed unless you intended to defame many innocent people - and there are a few things I add to what I wrote Ms. Apsell.

Without my caution Richter had solid reason for not trusting Lifton. He interviewed Lifton when he was with CBS, probably as early as 1966. Lifton then was pushing another theory, that Brown & Root, major contractors ( and with Lifton this reads LBJ and he did specify LBJ to me ) dug tunnels in secret in Dealey Plaza and placed a papier mache tree there and later removed it also in secrecy. He said the assassination was pulled from the tunnels and papier mache trees. This is well known and Richter knew it. *It is nutty!*

You aired an information program alleging that the President's body was kidnapped and altered yet you omitted even a suggestion about how this was possible or who did it and how. Naturally. I wrote and told Ms. Apsell that it was impossible and if you want the proof, please let me know. So, that was just omitted. I'm surprised not to have heard of any review or commentary that did not clobber you for this.

If Richter was as familiar with the literature as honest preparation required he also knew that just about 100% of what Lifton's book takes credit for was published long, long before he did it. This should have prompted some curiosity if not cautions. What remains, save for a few misinterpretations of evidence, is only the theory, the fabrication you aired. If I recall correctly he also ripped that off from a man who was his friend and

who published it years before Lifton did his book.

You know nothing about me. I am a former reporter, investigative reporter, U.S. Senate investigator and editor and during and for a time after World War II I was a government intelligence analyst. I have published seven books on political assassination and some are still used as collegiate texts. My first book was the first book on the Warren Commission. I filed many Freedom of Information lawsuits to bring to light most of the previously-withheld information that is now available, in all perhaps a third of a millions pages, all of which is freely available to anyone here and will be in perpetuity at local Hood College. Congress amended the investigatory files exemption of the Act over one of my earlier lawsuits. My work is a study, as I told Ms. Apsell, of how our basic institutions worked or failed to work in that tragic time and since then. (Nova made no mention of these institutions, really. But it is part of one.) If you want to be referred to those who will tell you that while I have my own beliefs (and I inject no theory about who did the killing at all and never published even one) I make all that I got under FOIA fully available to those I know will say what I do not agree with. Unlike those who produced that Nova program, I make no effort to censor what the people can know.

I have two purposes in writing you. One is to inform you because I believe NOVA did a great disservice to the nation and was knowingly dishonest. The other is to add to the record I leave for the future about how our institutions served us when it looked at and undertook to inform the country about that great subversion that I believe had the effect of a coup d'etat. I believe this is true regardless of who the President is. and I do it without enjoying it a bit.

What you do or do not do is your affair. I regret this whole business very, very much because I expected better from NOVA and from your station which originates so much that is so good.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg