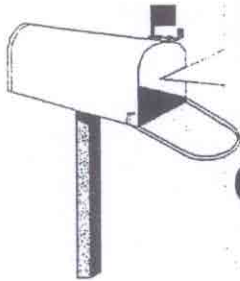


copy to - H. WEISBERG

KENNEDY ASSASSINATION CHRONICLES
VOL. 3, ISSUE # 2
SUMMER, 1997



Letters to the Chronicles

JFK News Email

Dear JFK Lancer:

I have been receiving your updates now for several months. I have studied JFK the man and the president now for twenty-six years. I have also studied his assassination. I believe that anyone who seriously undertakes to learn about John F. Kennedy and his extraordinary talents cannot help but long for an answer as to why he was killed.

John Kennedy has shaped my life even though I was only 10 when he died. I appreciate the enthusiasm and professionalism you bring to this endeavor. It is apparent in your writing. I just wanted to take a minute out of a very busy schedule, including the recent birth of my twin boy and girl, to tell you how much you are appreciated.

If all goes well, I hope to attend the conference in Dallas this November. I would love to hear the educated opinions and research of the panelists. Again, thank you for your continuous efforts. I wish that I could somehow contribute. We all deserve an answer. It has been apparent to me for over twenty years that I was lied to about the death of a man I have come to admire...and miss.

William C Fields Jr
Dacula, Ga

NOTE: If you'd like to receive our email updates and announcements, subscribe on our web site:
<http://www.jfklancer.com/Groups.html>

Z Film Alteration Discussion Continues

Letter to the Editor

Investigating the Zapruder Film:

A Response by James H. Fetzer, Ph.D.

The letter to the editor from Martin Shackelford published in *The Chronicles* 3 (Spring 1997), pp. 4-5, was presumably intended as a rebuttal to my article, "The Zapruder Film and the Language of Proof", *The Chronicles* 2 (Winter 1996), pp. 40-42. The outstanding feature of this commentary must be its offhanded rejection of serious work by qualified students of the assassination, such as Noel Twymen and David Mantik, both of whom have invested enormous resources personal and financial in

painstaking research. When he dismisses their work on the ground that "[he] remains unconvinced," it might be worth considering the possibility that perhaps he should be convinced! His failure to identify and display the "evidence" on which his indictments of their analyses are allegedly based makes them "cheap shots" rooted in shoddy research, as I explain below.

Having been allowed to participate in the closed workshop, which lasted ten-and-one-half hours on 21 November 1996, and having been present for the public symposium, which lasted four-and-a-half hours on 22 November 1996, Shackelford was exposed to the breadth and depth of the evidence of alteration. After twenty years of thinking about the Zapruder film, for example, White provided us with a veritable cornucopia of cinematic anomalies that establish a *prima facie* case the film has been edited in many ways.

What I mean by this assertion is that, unless these anomalies can be "explained away" on rational grounds, their existence supports drawing the conclusion that tampering has occurred on the basis of inference to the best explanation (see, for example, James H. Fetzer and Robert Almeder, *Glossary of Epistemology/Philosophy of Science* [1993]). If there are better explanations for the white blob, the pink "spray," Greer's head-turn, the missing car-stop, the missing Connally left-turn, the peculiar changes in the visual field, and so forth, it is not obvious. Those who want to judge the evidence for themselves, therefore, would be well-advised to obtain a copy of the Zapruder Film Symposium videotapes from JFK Lancer or a copy of the book, *Assassination Science*, which should be available from Open Court Publishing during October.

The two frames from the film that Shackelford offers to support his argument actually illustrate the peculiar change in the visual field. Beginning at around Z-207, there is a steady magnification of the background that seems intended to compensate for editing in the foreground. During the workshop and symposium, I referred to this as "horizontal" editing within individual frames as opposed to "vertical" editing by removing whole frames. The purpose appears to have been to compensate for the removal of information in the foreground that would have revealed vertical editing, but it had the unintended consequence of shifting the limousine to the bottom of these frames.

When the magnification of 1.6:1 Mantik has discovered by meticulous measurements is taken into account, the limo returns to the center of the frames. There had to have been important reasons to edit the film, of course, and they are gradually becoming increasingly apparent. Jack White has recently reviewed the testimony of Roy Truly, who was watching the motorcade from a location

Letters to the editor may be edited for clarity and space. Please include your address, email, and phone number on all correspondence.



about 10 or 20 steps in front of the Texas Book Depository Building.

Roy Truly reported to the Warren Commission (Vol. III, pp. 219-221) that the driver of the Presidential car *swung out too far to the right* and came within an inch of running into this little abutment here between Elm and the Parkway . . . he had to almost STOP to pull over to the left . . . after he seemed to have fallen back into line . . . I heard an explosion, which I thought was a toy cannon or a loud firecracker from *west of the building*. I saw the President's car *swerve to the left and stop somewhere down in this area*. (The emphasis here has been added by Jack White.) That the limousine swerved to the left and came to a halt has also been reported by other eyewitnesses, which by itself impeaches the film's integrity.

Shackelford might argue in support of the Warren Commission's position that the photographic record overrides eyewitness testimony. That not only begs the question by taking for granted that the film is authentic but, as Milicent Cranor has observed, contravenes the practice of courts of law. Anyone who consults standard works on the principles of legal procedure, such as McCormick on Evidence, 3rd edition (1984), Section 214, will find that the rules upon which photographs and films are ordinarily admitted into evidence are [that] a photograph is viewed merely as a graphic portrayal of oral testimony, and becomes admissible *only when a witness has testified that it is a correct and accurate representation of the relevant facts personally observed by the witness*. (I have added the italics within this quotation.)

Some may be struck by the fact that, although in this and other cases, the Warren Commission disregarded eyewitness testimony because of photographs and films, surely its staff of attorneys ought to have known better.

Perhaps Shackelford may be absolved for not knowing that principles of law support eyewitness testimony over photographs and films, but it is more difficult to excuse him (and others) for their failure to get the Zapruder film frame-sequence straight. Noel Twyman has informed me that he and others have pointed out to Harrison Livingstone and his group, Martin Shackelford and Daryll Weatherly, unless Livingstone failed to share what he was told, that they have been relying upon a mistaken sequence of frames relative to the Greer head-turn. For many years, it has been known that the National Archives has issued a frame "Z-317" that is actually a copy of frame Z-308, which these "scholars" have relied upon in debunking work on Greer, even though they have been informed of this false substitution a point made in Twyman's book, Bloody Treason (Laurel, forthcoming). It should come as no surprise that "researchers" of this calibre might not recognize the real thing.

There are more important cases of disinformation than those brought about by mistakes and misunderstandings, however. I recently obtained a copy of CE-900 from the National Archives (indirectly, through a friend), and have discovered that the small dark spot at the center of the spiral nebula (located where the President's left ear would be if it were visible), indicative of a through-and-through hole in the windshield, which can be seen in the Altgens' photographs, for

example, Robert Groden, The Killing of a President (1993), pp. 30-31 appears to have been removed. (For early comparison prints, see Harold Weisberg, Whitewash (1965), special photo section; and Harold Weisberg, Whitewash II (1966), pp. 244-245.)

Perhaps there is an innocent explanation that I am unable to imagine. But one reason why this case is so difficult to solve might be that our own government continues to fabricate evidence and deceive the American people

16 July 1997
James H. Fetzer, Ph.D.
jfetzer@d.umn.edu

A Guestbook Visitor Gives Us High Praise!

Karen Gillespie
via the internet

I must say that this is the very best net site on JFK and I should know. I have been studying JFK since I was in the sixth grade when he was shot and killed. My father was from Boston and knew a few of the Kennedy family, but not as well as I would hope. Someday I will get to Boston and get what I can from up there. This site again is the best and I get on it weekly to get updates. Thanks and keep it coming. It's great.



**November In Dallas
1996 Conference
Video Tapes**

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL PRICE WOULD BE:
\$299.45
NID96-12 **\$199**
Set of all 13 Conference Tapes
SAVE \$100

Over 25 hours of JFK evidence
presentations!

Order Now