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Dannelly claimed another worker had brought Oswald to her desk, but when asked, the other employee, Jesse Skrivanek, did not remember anyone who looked like Oswald or anyone using that name.<sup>20</sup> Others in the Austin Selective Service office swore they never saw him or heard the name before the assassination.<sup>21</sup> Actually, there were fifteen Oswalds in the Austin office files, but Dannelly refused to admit she might be mistaken. All of the facts Mrs. Dannelly recounted about Oswald in her story were available locally in the media before she told anyone of the alleged visit. The FBI discovered that the waitress who claimed she too saw Oswald turned out to have Wednesday, the day of the alleged Oswald appearance, as her day off.<sup>22</sup> None of the other employees at the coffee shop recalled ever seeing Oswald or hearing of anyone with that name before the assassination.<sup>23</sup>

Another witness who claimed to have seen Oswald elsewhere at the time he was traveling to Mexico is Sylvia Odio. Summers calls her testimony "the strongest human evidence."<sup>24</sup> Sylvia Meagher dubs it "the proof of the plot."<sup>25</sup> Robert Groden writes that Odio is "among the strongest witnesses to conspiracy in the case. . . ."<sup>26</sup> According to Odio, three men visited her Dallas apartment near 9:00 P.M., near the end of September. Her sister answered the door, and the men claimed to be members of JURE, the Junta Revolucionaria, an anti-Castro group that Odio had helped form several months earlier in Puerto Rico.<sup>27</sup> "Two were Cubans, "the greasy . . . kind of low Cubans, not educated at all," recalled Odio.<sup>28</sup> She later said they "looked very much like Mexicans." One of the Cubans said his name was Leopoldo and asked if she was in the underground, and she said no. "And he said, 'We wanted you to meet this American. His name is Leon Oswald.' He repeated it twice," recalled Odio.<sup>29</sup> "Then they introduced him as

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\*Odio's father was in a Cuban jail for political actions against the Castro regime. He had been a business tycoon before Castro's revolution, and Odio came from a wealthy and pampered background.

\*\*JURE members used "war names," fictitious names, so that Castro agents could not unmask their real identities. Odio said that the Cubans gave their war names, but she assumed Leon Oswald was a real name for the American. However, she evidently never considered the possibility that Oswald would have been a perfect war name for any anti-Castro Cuban





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the American introduced as "Leon Oswald" or the telephone con-  
versation from Leopoldo the following day.<sup>33</sup> As for the preassas-  
sination letter to her father, which no longer exists, Odio says she  
wrote the names of the two Cubans but did not mention the name  
"Leon Oswald." She was not even sure if she mentioned that an  
American was in the group.<sup>34</sup>

But there is much stronger evidence that the visitor was not  
Oswald. Odio could not positively identify him when shown  
photos during her Warren Commission testimony. She said, "I  
think this man was the one that was in my apartment. I am not  
too sure of that picture. He didn't look like that."<sup>35</sup> She said he  
had a small stubble of beard growth around his mouth, almost "a  
little moustache," and another thing that "confuses me is the lips  
that did not look like the same man."<sup>36</sup> But more problematical  
than the shaky physical identification was the time element she  
pinpointed. She was certain the men had visited before Tuesday,  
October 1, because on September 30 she moved to a different  
apartment.<sup>37</sup> Her sister was living with some American friends  
and came on the last weekend to help her pack for the move. Ac-  
cording to Odio, her sister had arrived on either Thursday, Sep-  
tember 26, or Friday, the twenty-seventh. By the time the three  
men arrived, Odio and her sister had "already started to pack to  
go" and there were boxes in the living room. Odio remembered  
she had worked the day the three visitors arrived, and since she  
did not work Saturday or Sunday, she said "it would be the 26th  
or the 27th, for sure."<sup>38</sup> Starting on September 26, Oswald began  
his twenty-hour bus journey from Houston to Mexico City, where  
he arrived on the twenty-seventh. He did not return to the U.S.  
for seven days. It was physically impossible for Oswald to visit  
Odio in Dallas when she claims he did.

If it was not Oswald, then what of Odio's story? Was there an  
imposter Oswald? There is no doubt that three men visited her,  
as her sister, Annie, confirms. The FBI thought it had solved the  
Odio mystery in 1964 when it found three men who might have  
visited her apartment near the end of September. Loran Hall, a  
prominent anti-Castroite, bore a marked resemblance to the man  
Odio described as the leader, Leopoldo. Hall told the FBI on Sep-  
tember 16, 1964, that he was in Dallas soliciting funds during

*no source*

September 1963 and had been to the Odio apartment. He named his two companions as Lawrence Howard and William Seymour. The three of them had been arrested in Florida in December 1962, as part of the Kennedy administration's crackdown on anti-Castro paramilitary operations.<sup>39</sup> Howard looked like the second of the Cubans/Mexicans described by Odio. But the most staggering coincidence was that Seymour, who spoke only a few words of Spanish, greatly resembled Oswald. Seymour also constantly wore a beard stubble, the same as what Odio described on "Leon." However, four days later, September 20, 1964, Hall recanted his statement. Seymour and Howard also later denied they were at Odio's apartment.<sup>40</sup> When Odio was shown photos of the three and was asked if it was a case of mistaken identity, she stuck to her story and said she could not identify them.

*no source*

But even if the visitors were Hall, Howard, and Seymour, what about the introduction of "Leon Oswald" and Odio's explicit details of the following day's telephone conversation about his being a Marine sharpshooter who thought President Kennedy should be dead? For a possible answer to this, Sylvia Odio herself has to be briefly examined. By the time of her Oswald story, she had a history of emotional problems. In Puerto Rico, where she had lived before moving to Dallas in March 1963, she had seen a psychiatrist over her fractious marriage. According to FBI reports, he decided she was unstable and unable, mentally or physically, to care for her children.<sup>41</sup> A doctor who was called to treat her once for "an attack of nerves" discovered she had made it up to get the attention of her neighbors. He described her as a very mixed-up young lady, and was told by others that she had also been under psychiatric care while living in Miami, when she moved to the States in 1961.<sup>42</sup>

In her divorce proceeding in 1963, she lost custody of her four children, because of charges of neglect and abandonment.<sup>43</sup> Near the time of her divorce, her friends recalled that she began having more "emotional problems," suffering total blackouts "when reality got too painful to bear."<sup>44</sup> In Dallas, she sought more extensive psychiatric help from Dr. Burton C. Einspruch. By the time of the assassination, she had been seeing him for more than seven months, at least weekly, sometimes more frequently.<sup>45</sup>

Odio insists she told a friend that three men, in her opinion, were involved in the assassination. One of the people the FBI questioned her about was Leon Oswald after she had told her about Oswald after she had only known Oswald, but she had known him as a refugee in Dallas.<sup>46</sup> The FBI questioned her before the assassination, but she was not questioned until several years after the event. For the three visitors, but not for Leon or about the Leon Oswald story.<sup>47</sup>

On the day JFK was shot, she was in seizures, passed out, and was surrounded in circles," she said. The day after the assassination is when he first remembered the assassination. "exaggerate," connection "in a sort of history described how his sister Kennedy assassination year later.<sup>50</sup> He blamed his parents in Cuba for his mother-in-law, went to an actress who could not wish.<sup>51</sup> A confidential source told the Bureau "that she cannot rationalize her daughter of a wealthy man, and she will become the center of attention for the FBI that Odio's family has the opinion that she is a woman of great condolences at her death. Other friends confirm her story. Some in Dallas, sought excellent imagination."



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Odio insists she told at least two people, before the assassina-  
tion, that three men, including Oswald, had visited her apart-  
ment. One of the people she told was Lucille Connell. But when  
the FBI questioned her in 1964, Connell said that Odio only told  
her about Oswald after the assassination, and then said she not  
only knew Oswald, but he had given talks to groups of Cuban  
refugees in Dallas.<sup>46</sup> The second person Odio contended she told  
before the assassination was her psychiatrist, Dr. Einspruch. He  
was not questioned until 1978, by the Select Committee, fifteen  
years after the event. He said he was certain she had told him of  
the three visitors, but he did not remember hearing the name  
Leon or about the Leopoldo telephone call before the assassina-  
tion.<sup>47</sup>

On the day JFK was killed, Odio suffered one of her emotional  
seizures, passed out, and was hospitalized. "My mind was going  
around in circles," she recalled.<sup>48</sup> Dr. Einspruch spoke to her the  
day after the assassination, while she was still hospitalized. That  
is when he first remembered that Odio, who had a tendency to  
"exaggerate," connected her visitors to Oswald and the assassina-  
tion "in a sort of histrionic way."<sup>49</sup> One of Odio's brothers, Cesar,  
described how his sister suffered a nervous breakdown after the  
Kennedy assassination, and that she still had the effects nearly a  
year later.<sup>50</sup> He blamed her divorce and the imprisonment of their  
parents in Cuba for her emotional collapse. Silvia Herrera, her  
mother-in-law, went so far as to say that Odio was an excellent  
actress who could intelligently fabricate such an episode if she  
wished.<sup>51</sup> A confidential FBI informant, who was an Odio friend,  
told the Bureau "that one of her main difficulties [is] that she  
cannot rationalize herself to the fact that she is no longer the  
daughter of a wealthy individual who will grant her every re-  
quest, and she will perform various actions in an attempt to  
become the center of attractions."<sup>52</sup> The informant advised the  
FBI that Odio's family is "split in their opinion . . . some being of  
the opinion that she is almost crazy, and the others offering their  
condolences at her troubles and offering her assistance."<sup>53</sup> An-  
other friend confirmed to the FBI that Odio was extremely lone-  
some in Dallas, sought to gain attention from others, and had an  
excellent imagination and a tendency toward exhibitionism.<sup>54</sup>

