

Editor  
Delaware County Daily Times  
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12/3/91

Dear Editor,

You refer to me and nobody else as "a disgruntled and discredited charlatan" in what I presume is accurate quotation of Robert Groden in your issue dated the 28th anniversary of the JFK assassination.

In the two paragraphs from which these words are quoted there is not a single truthful word.

Groden says I was "rebuffed" by ~~Stonex~~ Oliver Stone. This is a lie and it happens the exact opposite is the truth - I refused to have anything at all to do ~~with~~ with him or his commercialization and exploitation of that great tragedy.

He says I "leaked" a copy of Stone's script to George Gardner of the Washington Post for a reason that makes no sense.

I "leaked" nothing to Gardner or anyone else. As Groden knows very well, as also does Stone, who has been paying Groden for his evil, I gave the script openly to the Post and its story is quite specific on this.

Why, according to Groden?

"This so-called critic leaked it because he was convinced Stone was going to do his story. Oliver saw through it ~~xxxx~~ at the very beginning and wouldn't deal with him. His revenge was leaking the script."

So you can understand the truth of this vicious lie - and the entire reference to me is defamatory (not a threat and I have no action in mind) Groden also told you that those who "attacked the film [had] absolutely no idea of what it's about..."

The truth is that particularly to coincide with the release of his film "Doors" Stone launched a ~~xxxx~~ propaganda campaign for his exploitation, titled "JFK" when it is not about the President. Thus also he took the name "Camelot Productions" for his company and did much else to commercialize the tragedy.

In his propaganda Stone announced that his film would be based on the book, "On the Trail of the Assassins," by former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. Stone later said he had also bought the right to use "Crossfire," by Jim Marrs. It is a compendium of all the nutty conspiracy theories whose creators and cribbers flaunt contempt for the known fact of the crime or, in the case of some of those, in addition to Marrs, used as ~~the~~ "experts" by Stone, boast about their ignorance. Take this literally!

When I learned that Stone was going to base his movie on as dishonest a book as I knew Garrison's is, I wrote Stone in detail February 8, 1991. Contrary to Groden's additional lie, this was not a request for anything from Stone. I began by telling him he has every right to be a Mack Sennett producing a Keystone Kops farce with a Pink Panther and then

for at least 4,000 words I went into detail, attached some documentation, offered more, <sup>and</sup> ~~the~~ that greatest ego in the city that is home for as big a collection of them as the country suffers, did not respond.

Along with announcing that his film would be based on Garrison's book, Stone also proclaimed that he would be recording their "history" for the people and would tell them "who" killed their President, "why" and "how." Several months after I wrote him, when it served his propagandist's purposes and in what he intended as self-defense, Stone was still using these words and I have the stories and the interviews.

It is because any movie based on the type-set swill to which Stone bought the rights has to be what I said in description of Garrison's book, a fraud and a travesty, that I wrote Stone warning him. This was quite some time before he started shooting, so he had plenty of time to prepare a different script or if he doubted my work, to ask for additional documentation. It is because Stone himself told the world what the movie is "about" in saying it would be based on these two atrocious books that there was and <sup>is</sup> regardless of any subsequent changes in the script, ~~that I had~~ a good enough understanding of what Groden falsely says I did <sup>know</sup> not, what the script is <sup>is</sup> "about."

Remember, Stone himself uttered the words he cannot now claim he did not, quoted above. In those words he told the world his was a non-fiction movie.

He may claim the right to ~~re~~write history, as I've heard him say he ~~does~~, but that does not mean that it cannot be objected to or exposed. He does claim a first amendment right to desecrate our history with his commercialization, exploitation and rewriting of it but in a number of statements <sup>into</sup> of which I have copies, he simultaneously claims that nobody has the right to try to do anything about it under that same first amendment until it is too late, until he has poisoned the national and international mind with his egotripping that is also crass and disgusting commercialism.

This to Groden "so-called critic" <sup>he says</sup> who is also "a disgruntled and discredited charlatan" is the godfather of his firstborn. When he and his wife Chris lived in Hopewell, New Jersey, they spent many a weekend with us as our guests. He did his first work on the Zapruder <sup>film</sup> for me. It was I who suggested to him that he create a slow-motion version by duplicating each frame of the assassination sequence and as he worked on it he came here with it weekends and we discussed it and what else could be done.

His ~~work~~ photographic work is impeccable, but when he opens his mouth cover your ears and head for the tall timbers.

Line, first published August, 1965, was the first book on the Warren Commission. I have published six on the JFK assassination and one on that of Dr. King and they are accurate, they stand after all these years of critical examination, and they are factual. There is no theory in any one of them. They represent most of the fact as distinguished from usually wild and untenable theories that has been published on the assassination.



As Groden knows very well, I also filed a series of lawsuits against the government, mostly the FBI and CIA, under the Freedom of Information Act. As a result I ~~may~~ have and make available to other writers in all about a third of a million pages of once-withheld records about a quarter of a million on the JFK assassination.

These are the very records <sup>about which</sup> that Stone, who has trouble telling the truth even by accident, has laced the country with two lies: that they are all withheld until at least the year 2039 and that he has used in his film "all" the information that has come to light. Is this alone less than the most dishonest commercialism and exploitation?

Yet knowing all of this is freely available, Stone did not ask to see a page or for me to send him a single page.

He has been wallowing in the swamps of indecent fabrications that are dignified by referring to them as "theories."

Groden also knows the opposite of his inference that I was seeking some reward. He knows that with no quid pro quo at all I have given all I have to local "hood College, where it will be a free public archive.

What is little understood is that the government never investigated the crime itself and never intended to. Instead of Garrison's sordid and to me disgusting fictions of his own invention (I was there- I know- I spent much time on damage control or his fiasco would have been more of a disaster and undermining of the credibility of all responsible criticism), he could have used official records that say what I say, clearly and unequivocally. Without a real official investigation there are no real leads to be followed.

So you can better understand not only what I say above but also the degree to which Stone was informed, I ~~was~~ referred to Garrison's false representation of how he came to fire a man he'd hired who used the name "Bill Boxley." Garrison was going to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the JFK assassination by, among other things, charging one Robert <sup>B.</sup> Barrin, who had killed himself in Garrison's jurisdiction in 1962, with being a 1963 Grassy Knoll assassin! I gave Stone more details and offered him access to my proof and the investigative report that gave Garrison little choice. He could hardly fire himself <sup>when</sup> and he made this utter unsanity up, not Boxley, ~~and~~ Boxley went out and manufactured "proof" <sup>of</sup> it.

I do not know what the last script contains but I do know that the one I was given- Stone called me a thief but he had to know that was a lie - has this wretched business in Garrison's shameless version!

And this is but a glimmer of the outrageous commercialization and exploitation about which we will soon be flooded with all sorts of fictitious accounts of how wonderful it is, witness those three Oscars, etc.

I'm 78 now and, as Groden knows, have survived a series of surgeries, some life-threatening, at least two of which I was not expected to survive, the last open-heart,

and I am severely limited in what I am able to do. Ordinarily I would ignore such a story in a small local paper. Stone and his flunkies, of whom Groden is but one of many, have given many false accounts of which, as with your story, I was sent copies. All I've done is ask Stone to stop lying by saying he is using my work in his movie. He was not man enough to respond in his own name or through an assistant at his instructions. He referred one of those complaints to his lawyers, one of whom write in non-responsiveness that history cannot be copyrighted. (Another reflection of the fact that Stone really has said and does believe that the garbage he has on film is accurately our history.) This brave, bold, innovated man, long on the bull that the CIA was out to ~~get~~ ruin him when it is to his knowledge I and I <sup>we</sup> ~~also~~ <sup>also</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>also</sup> started it, had the ~~second~~ <sup>second</sup> one stamped, no forwarding address!

He did not ask ~~my~~ <sup>the</sup> right to use any of my work, I did not offer it to him leave <sup>me</sup> alone want him to use it and pay me for it, as Groden has it, and when I got a thinly-hidden effort to bribe me from his flunky who styles herself his research coordinator, I rejected it and could not have been more explicit in saying I wanted nothing to do with them.

What a <sup>mur</sup>derer! Aside from what his flunkies like Groden say. On the one hand I am CIA and on the other hand he is using my work?

There are several other reasons why I make an exception and take this time to write you. One is that I was born in Philadelphia, raised in Wilmington, and still have relatives in the area. Another is that many of your readers may remember my many appearances on that really fine talk show of that great Irishman Jack McInerney when he was on WCAU radio. These listeners, who may if they stop to think, recall that I never advanced any theory <sup>that</sup> as suggested I had solved the crime, I would like to know the truth. I did not impose on their trust and what you have published about me is, in each and every word, not only false but was known to Groden to be false.

He should have gotten more than 30 pieces of silver for defaming one who befriended him.

He is trying hard to earn it! Telling me nothing about this story he phoned me last week to tell me that his former coauthor, Harry Livingstone, has written in a new book that I leaked the Stone script wholesale. Groden said he has excerpts, he promised to send me copies and I have not received them.

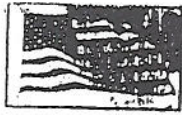
The things some people do for money - or for other reasons!

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg





# DAILY TIMES

50¢

SHOWERS WEATHER, PAGE 12

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4 DELAWARE COUNTY DAILY TIMES 7500 JEFFERSON BLVD.

## IN THE COUNTY

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### BRIEFLY

#### Victory parade set

**CHESTER** — Supporters of Mayor-elect Barbara Bohannon-Sheppard will hold a victory parade Saturday, starting at noon from Democratic Headquarters, Eighth and Avenue of the States.

The parade will wind through the city down Seventh Street and end at Memorial Park in the West End. Bohannon-Sheppard will be in the parade with her running mate. Councilmembers-elect Kenneth Burton and Chuck McLaughlin. The Democrats shocked the county when they won control of city government on Election Day, the first time in nearly a century.

#### No to sabbaticals?

**ASTON** — At last night's work session, the Penn-DeLco School Board asked a solicitor to look into whether recent requests for teacher sabbaticals can be denied due to insufficient funds in the budget. While on sabbatical, a teacher is paid approximately half his working salary.

Superintendent Harry M. Hill said five teachers recently requested sabbaticals to begin this January, which is expected to cost the district approximately \$100,000. The district is operating with a fund balance.

"The money was in there at 116 mills," Hill said, referring to his originally proposed budget. The final budget was trimmed to 83 mills.

The board will vote on the sabbaticals at Monday's school board meeting, which was moved up two days due to Thanksgiving.

#### 'Blue' maps for asking

**RADNOR** — PennDOT is offering free to the public a new Interstate 476 (Blue Route) color brochure which illustrates the 21.8-mile long highway and its nine interchanges.

Copies may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: I-476 Brochure, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 200 Radnor-Chester Road, St. Davids, Pa. 19087.

Copies may also be obtained from state legislators, businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations and institutions which have requested brochures for distribution to their constituents, employees or members.

#### Thou shalt not steal

**CHINTON HEIGHTS** — Anyone caught stealing aluminum cans from residential recycling containers will be fined \$500 for every offense — every household that the cans are taken from, said council president Joseph Kelly Monday night.

Kelly said that council will strictly enforce the \$600 penalty for stealing recyclable materials under the borough's new recycling ordinance, after Mayor Mary Natale informed council that someone has been stealing aluminum cans from recycling containers in the borough. "If residents see anyone taking recyclable materials they should contact the police or their council representative," said Kelly.

#### 2 quit in Upper Chi

**UPPER CHESTER** — Commissioners accepted "with regret" the resignation of Angle Mann and Hal Frantz from the Civil Service Commission at last week's board meeting.

Donald Zoladz was appointed to the commission and the board is seeking candidates for two remaining vacancies.

## 'JFK'

### Delco writer acted, assisted assassinaton film project

By KELLYN ANDERSON  
Of the Times Staff

**BOOTHWYN** — When Oliver Stone's movie "JFK" fills the theaters in December, Upper Chester resident Robert Groden probably won't be mobbed at the malls for the three minor roles he plays in the film.

But if the movie successfully raises the consciousness of movie-goers, causing them to ask more questions about what happened in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, fame will be the least of his rewards.

As one of the foremost experts on the tangle of evidence and conjecture surrounding President John F. Kennedy's death, Groden has tasted popularity, most recently when his book, "High Treason," went to number two on the New York Times' bestseller list.

Groden and many others reject Sen. Arlen Specter's single bullet theory. They believe Kennedy was the victim of an assassination plot launched by the CIA, and covered up by the Warren Commission, and, to a lesser extent, by the House Assassination Committee.

So when he got a call from Stone's California office in August 1990, Groden took the next plane to Dallas to talk with the director of "JFK" and "Born on the Fourth of July," Robert DeNiro.

Stone and Groden have much in common. Both are the same age. Both found themselves in a moral quandary after Kennedy was killed, searching for answers from a government they once trusted.

"This is in fact, although I don't know if it was meant to be or not, part three of a trilogy on the Vietnam War," Groden said of "JFK," during a recent interview at his Boothwyn home. "Now we're going back to the beginning and see what caused the war."

Groden, whose 1976 enhancement of the Abraham Zapruder film of the assassination led to convening of the House Assassination Committee, served as a technical consultant to "JFK," directing the assassination scene.

"I handled the timing, the reactions of the crowd," said Groden. "The production went very well. Oliver is a very professional person, a true artist."

"The angles, the feel of the movie, every aspect of the film is marvelous," he said.

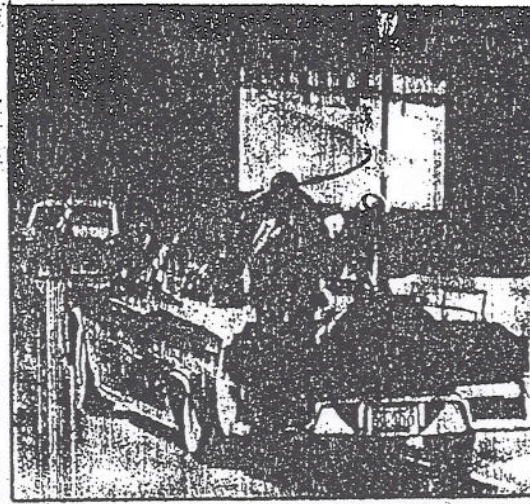
In addition to his role behind the camera, Groden plays three bit parts: Dr. Malcolm Perry, the doctor who performed the emergency tracheotomy on Kennedy; an unscrupulous photo reporter; and the courtroom projectionist in the trial of Clay Shaw.

"I walked on the set one day and found Tommy Lee Jones, who plays Clay Shaw, reading my book," Groden said. "He'd already read it and he was just bouncing up on it again."

The most commonly asked question is what's Kevin Costner like. Groden laughed. "He's very patient, open and unassuming."

Before the first scene was shot, Stone's film was subjected to criticism from writers opposed to its depiction of the Warren Commission. "I was a bit of a critic," Groden said. "I was convinced Stone was going to do a disservice," Groden said. "Oliver saw the script at the very beginning, and he called me and said, 'You're wrong. This is the best script I've ever read.'"

Conspiracy and the "medievalism" of the JFK assassination, Groden hopes JFK will do



President Kennedy is strapped in left rear seat as his wife helps a Secret Service agent into the speeding car seconds after the shooting in this film photo.

the establishment, because the film is being attacked months and months before it's been released," he said. "The Washington Post and Newsweek have attacked the film with absolutely no idea what it's about except that one of the central characters is Jim Garrison (played by Costner)."

Stone paid meticulous attention to detail in "JFK." He re-built the extension of the Texas School Book Depository, planted shrubbery, moved street lamps. "It will raise the public's consciousness tremendously," he said. "It is far more fact than fiction."

As a veteran of the Kennedy assassination circuit, Groden is all too aware of the many fictions accompanying one of the "greatest unsolved mysteries of the 20th Century."

The internal politics of life as an assassination expert often wear him down, Groden said. "Josiah Thompson, Sylvia Marz and Harold Wolsberg have had their work ripped off for years, and I know what it's like."

"I went public with this in '78, and again in '78, when it took off," he said. There were three people taking credit for his discoveries less than three months after Groden made his findings public.

It was a disgruntled and discredited character, who, rebuffed by Stone, checked in a copy of the "JFK" script to Washington Post writer George Lardner, Groden said.

"I had so-called critics leaked it because I was convinced Stone was going to do a disservice," Groden said. "Oliver saw the script at the very beginning, and he called me and said, 'You're wrong. This is the best script I've ever read.'"

Conspiracy and the "medievalism" of the JFK assassination, Groden hopes JFK will do



ROBERT GRODEN

what 19 years of agitation have failed to accomplish: A proper airing of the facts. "I was at Fillmore two weeks ago, and I was told it was the largest single crowd they've ever had for a lecture," said Groden. "That's a good sign. Very few of the people there were alive when it happened."

"You can kill the dreamer, but you can't kill the dream," he said, quoting a statement often attached to another famous assassination, that of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

J. See the newspaper...

Harold