6 SECONDS IN DALLAS; 29 YEARS IN PHILADELPHIA

BY MIKE MALLOWE

AS CITIES GO, PHILADELPHIA MAY SEEM AN ODD CHOICE TO pair with Dallas in any revisionist treatment of the JFK mystery. Yet with the possible exception of New Orleans, where Lee Harvey Oswald lived and where the unappreciated work of former D.A. Jim Garrison took place, no other city in America figures as prominently as Philadelphia in the enigma of the president's death—and, even more so, in the charged politics of the crime's aftermath. At least a dozen people with some close connection, personal or professional, to our city are linked immutably to the case.

With director Oliver Stone's long-awaited and controversial film *J.F.K.* just released, and at least three additional movies, all from major studios, in the works, it's time to examine, once again, the Philly connection.

A few of the people on our list have tried to capitalize on the death of a president in the most banal manner. Others have sacrificed nearly everything, from marriages to jobs to countless sleepless nights, in what can only be described as noble quests to get even on Jack Kennedy's behalf. History may be the final judge as to who is who.

SUBJECT	CLAIM TO FAME	FORMER LIFE	ASSASSINATION EPIPHANY	CONSPIRACY CLIQUE	HIDDEN AGENDA	BECOMES HOMICIDAL IF	HAS THIS TO SAY	IN THE NEXT MOVIE, SHOULD BE PLAYED BY	HISTORY'S COLD JUDGMENT
Arlen Specter	Warren Commission author of the "single-bullet theory"—one bullet, fired by Oswald, struck both Kennedy and Texas Governor John Connally.	Senator Hugh Scott protégé; assistant D.A. in Philadelphia; ambitious young pioneer.	Began moving steadily to the right to keep pace with his Republican masters. Instrumental in Richard Nixon's presidential campaigns; cofounded Pennsylvania CREEP. Amazingly resilient for the past 30 years.	Lone assassin: Oswald, not case.	Used Warren Commission stability to later run for D.A. (win), mayor (loss), and U.S. senator (current win).	You mention "Helms," "Bobby Hill" and "Stephen Friend" in the same sentence.	From an aide: "The senator stands by his Warren Commission findings."	Jack Nicholson	If JFK was Batman, Specter is still the Joker. Last remaining defender of the Warren Commission findings. A master droid who perpetrated the greatest snow job in history on the naive American public.
Vincent J. Salandria	First critic of the Warren Commission to get his methodical, logical debunking of Specter's theory and the medical evidence into print. Father of the first generation of critics.	Attorney for the School District of Philadelphia (previous: its assistant general counsel).	Became the true Zen master of all JFK conspiracy theories.	A sinister shadow government led by the military-industrial complex effected a secret coup d'état in America.	To prove that the government we have now is not the same one set up by the U.S. Constitution.	You tell him the assassination of JFK is an unsolved mystery. Or that he's nuts.	"I never sought publicity. I'm not sure where you stand at *Philadelphia Magazine* in relation to the Agency or the assassination."	Dustin Hoffman	Venerated as an early, incorruptible researcher; shunned by some newer critics who bristle at his curtankerousness and arrogance. Not crazy after all; probably got it right first.
Gaeton Fonzi	Superb investigative reporter (*Philadelphia Magazine*, 1959–72) who became the top sleuth for both the Senate and House committees that reopened the Kennedy case.	Magazine author. Fonzi knew both Salandria and Specter intimately—and knew which one to believe.	Turned his back on a stellar career in journalism to become the first full-time conspiracy investigator. Probably the most respected link in the contentious chain of authentic critics and loony buffs.	The plot was set up by CIA yahoos, anti-Castro Cubans and the Mafia. Points to David Atlee Phillips, a.k.a. "Maurice Bishop"—chief of the Western Hemisphere Division of the CIA, chief of counterintelligence in Mexico during Oswald's visits there, and founder of the Association of Retired Intelligence Officers.	The more he thought about the assassination, the madder Fonzi became; he had to get to the bottom of it to save his sanity.	You suggest the Mafia was largely or solely responsible. Or hint that Fonzi's last government boss, G. Robert Blakey, chief counsel of the House Assassinations Committee after Richard Sprague resigned (and now a professor at Notre Dame), was not co-opted by the spy guys.	"Oswald didn't kill anybody; he probably never fired a shot. Our records from the House committee are sealed until the year 2029. I still can't get it out of my head."	Harrison Ford	You think baseball fans love Babe Ruth? You should hear the buffs rave about Gaeton Fonzi. Fonzi will be the man who finally solves the JFK murder, provided he finishes his Big Book on the case.
Josiah "Tink" Thompson	Wrote *Six Seconds in Dallas* (1967), the landmark microinvestigation of the events in Dealey Plaza that still stands as one of the seminal conspiracy books. Dick Sprague's bedtime reading.	Professor of logic and philosophy at Haverford College, on the Main Line.	Retired from teaching in the mid-1960s to investigate the assassination and write his book. Today he's a much sought-after private eye in San Francisco, and a consultant to most JFK reinterpretations.	An "inside job" involving government complicity and cover-up. One of the first to lose faith in any further microanalysis of the physical evidence. Points to tainted ballistics evidence, including "planted" bullets.	May not have realized it at the time, but was going through a mid-life crisis. Berating himself to the murder got him over the hump. It's also more fun to be the Thomas Magnum of San Francisco than a philosophy prof at Haverford, tenured or not.	You mention Specter's name in mixed company and don't immediately spit on the floor.	"There exists a black box of hidden knowledge concerning Jack Kennedy's murder which we may never be able to penetrate."	James Caan	*Spenser for Hire*. The one person everyone who connected with the JFK case would most like to be. One of the few the assassination didn't bankrupt or drive crazy.
Richard S. Schweiker	Cochaired the Senate Select Subcommittee on Intelligence Activities in 1975–'79.	U.S. senator; moderate Republican from Montgomery County (currently president of the D.C.-based American Council of Life Insurance, a powerful lobby group).	Lost many of his old friends in Washington and probably ruined his political career (he seemed to have a lock on the vice presidency, at least) when he called the Warren Commission a "house of cards" and bravely allowed his investigators to do their jobs.	Castro engineered the hit on Kennedy in retaliation for CIA attempts to kill him. He had help from the Cuban exile community in Miami, especially double agents employed by the CIA.	Frank Church was chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Schweiker lobbied him incessantly for permission to set up his own operation. He had help from his bosom buddy, Democratic Senator Gary Hart. Both wanted desperately to become president. The assassination seemed the perfect catapult.	You say that his subcommittee investigation fell way short of the mark. Which, unfortunately, it did.	"Was Oswald a paid informant for the CIA, the FBI, or both? We uncovered verbatim telephone transcripts dating back to the Warren Commission days. In one conversation, the CIA guy says to the FBI guy something like, 'We aren't admitting that Oswald worked for us.' Then the FBI voice replies, 'Neither are we.'"	James B. Sikking	Schweiker's subcommittee, sidetracked as it was by the refusal of the CIA and FBI to cooperate, probably accomplished more than all the other investigations combined.
David W. Marston	As Schweiker's legislative counsel, recruited Fonzi and personally assured the integrity of the Senate investigation. Coordinated the crucial fieldwork.	Lawyer, major-leaguer Republican office-seeker (still a Philadelphia lawyer).	Left the Senate committee to become U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; later ran for mayor and lost. May one day end up back inside the Justice Department, as head of criminal division or higher.	Refuses to say, but is bullish on Fonzi's fingering of "Maurice Bishop" and the Miami connection. The Bay of Pigs was the catalyst.	May have been thinking about becoming attorney general in a Schweiker administration. His wife currently serves as a major player in RUB under Jack Kemp. Still commutes from D.C. to his law office here. The last of the "moderate" Republicans.	You ask him why he dropped out of elective politics in Philadelphia. (He's still an active GOP fund-raiser.) The Sam Katz of an earlier generation.	"You really hate to look at it now—what is it, almost 30 years later?—and have to admit that, regrettably, we're not much closer than we were then."	Craig T. Nelson	Newer buffs and conspiracy critics tend to misunderstand or underappreciate the self-effacing Marston and his low-key but important role. One of the unsung heroes.

PHOTOGRAPHS: GEORGE TOOTLE (SPECTER, FONZI, SCHWEIKER, MARSTON); CHARLES HOFFMAN (SALANDRIA); ROBERT NELSON (THOMPSON); COURTESY HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY (DEALEY PLAZA, JFK IN MOTORCADE); THOMPSON; WAR

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Richard A. Sprague	Hired by the House committee to conduct a nonpolitical homicide investigation. Damn the conspiracy theories, just come up with the killers.	Philly's First Assistant D.A. under Specter; probably the best homicide prosecutor in the country (now a top local litigator).	As soon as he arrived in Washington, Sprague scared people. A relentless indicting machine, he was closing in on the truth; got clobbered.	Congressman Henry Gonzalez of Texas, who chaired the House committee after Virginia's Thomas Downing retired. Gonzalez's age was just as huge as Sprague's, and Sprague quit after nine months on the job.	Hardly anyone, including most of the buffs, realizes Gonzalez worked for Naval Intelligence throughout his military career. What's more, he was a material witness to the assassination, riding in the motorcade in Dealey Plaza, taking pictures of Kennedy at Parkland Hospital (and claiming to House investigators that his camera was stolen and later returned without the film), and failing the same investigators that he took Connally's blood-stained clothes from the hospital, but that they were stolen from him and dry-cleaned.	You hum "The Yellow Rose of Texas" in his presence.	Sprague refuses to return telephone calls. Says his right-hand man on the House committee, Al Lewis, "Henry Gonzalez is now the chairman of the House Banking Committee. God help the United States of America."	Raul Julia for Sprague; Danny DeVito for Gonzalez	Left to his own devices, Sprague would have made an arrest and bagged a murderer.
Bob Edgar	Of all the members of Gonzalez's committee, Edgar was the best-informed and tenacious. He also fought the hard-nut to allow the full records of the Lancer critics to be opened before 2029.	Former minister and teacher; U.S. congressman, liberal Democrat from Delaware County (now president of the School of Theology at Claremont College, in California).	His ways on the House committee elevated his stature among Democrats and made him a special target of Republican fury back home in conservative Delco.	Military-industrial cronies, Sam De Mohrenschildt, shadowy European oil man and Oswald's alleged CIA case officer, in Dallas, in Texas.	Edgar was jotting after Specter's Senate seat from the first day he ran for office. Mr. Assassination Investigation vs. Mr. Single-Bullet Theory was a nice high-concept platform; it should have worked.	You ask too much about his personal life.	To a House researcher tracking suspicious deaths, shortly after De Mohrenschildt died of unexplained gunshot wounds less than an hour before he was supposed to talk to Gaeton Fonzi: "Mr. Hess, why is Mr. De Mohrenschildt's name on your list?" MR. HESS: "Because you'd asked which decision to the investigation." EDGAR: [illegible]	Michael J. Fox	Seen as a martyred champion by the best investigators. (The loonies are still looking for Jack Kennedy's missing brain.) Edgar is one of the countless fully innocents slaughtered along with Jack Kennedy.
Baron George De Mohrenschildt	One of Oswald's closest friends in Texas, despite the fact that Oswald was broke—only material did he make—school of well-trained, Eastbrook Polish-Russian nobleman.	Bryn Mawr graduate, Married Main Line heiress Wynne Sharples and assimilated into the offshoots of Bryn Mawr's Gilded Quaker Foundation, a right-wing philanthropic charity that supported the kinds of anti-Castro Central American projects that reeked of Bay of Pigs boots. Killed mysteriously in 1977.	Hosted a Christmas party in Dallas at which he introduced a hometown couple, Michael and Ruth Paine, his blue-blooded Quakers from Pa., to Oswald and his Dirty Russian hotel Marina. (Ruth of course had [illegible])	Figures in a big way in New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation of the assassination, about which Stone's movie is based. He blamed the Cubans, according to his wife.	Did the CIA dump De Mohrenschildt? Still mysterious. It was probably by hand, making the heroin shot his last shot.	We'll never know.	"Lee Harvey Oswald is innocent of [illegible] assassination."	Arnold Schwarzenegger	The Big Kahuna, the one that got away. The Warren Commission [illegible] Oswald completely from [illegible]. Facts were pushed, but some cannot fall if Oswald that Stone reveals he [illegible] was also a part of the cover-up.
Ruth Paine	Married Oswald's best friend, leading to the Oswalds in Texas and the person who got Lee Harvey his job in the Texas School Book Depository.	Philadelphia socialite, Quaker activist.	There's still more to Ruth's story than about her "long persist." [illegible] with the assassination.	Bit party (Stone's movie) [illegible]	According to the Assassination Archives and Research Center, Paine is currently active with a Friends project in Nicaragua. The Oswalds' residence in Florida?	We say that Oswald did it.	"The Oswalds always wanted to come up to Philadelphia. They thought they would do better here."	Meryl Streep	"She knew all the secrets and never revealed one. A class act lady."
Frank Sturgis, a.k.a. Frank Fiorini	Sturgis was one of the first people questioned by the FBI on suspicion of murdering JFK.	Twice-around pro from Tampa, Havana, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Germantown, Ex-Marine, ex-Mercenary, CIA contract agent.	Grandstanded from possibly being one of the mysterious "tramps" seen hiding behind a fence in Dealey Plaza to being one of the Watergate burglars.	Various forms of [illegible]	His always version of his CIA boss E. Howard Hunt's execution as a novelist; Sturgis longed to have his embellished story told.	You accuse him of exaggeration.	"There was a tremendous conspiracy going on in that assassination. The Warren Commission has not told the [illegible]."	Vanilla Ice	Considered a tainted source, one of the bad guys.
Robert Groden	Get access to first-generation copy of the Zapruder film at *Life* magazine; still refuses to disclose how. Also has rare color prints of JFK's autopsy. Coauthor (with Harrison Edward Livingstone) of the best-selling book *High Treason*.	Photo-optics technical whiz from Southwark, PA.	Every assassination committee after the Warren Commission has used him as a photoanalysis expert. One of the most active, accessible critics in the country. If he isn't schmoozing with Larry King, Groden is working as a consultant to Oliver Stone.	Groden continues to microanalyze the physical and photographic evidence from Dealey Plaza, especially the acoustic evidence of at least four (not the Warren Commission's three) gunshots and the directions from which they came.	Fame and fortune.	You say anything nice about another well-known assassination writer, David Lifton, author of *Best Evidence*. Lifton wanted Oliver Stone to ask his screenplay for the movie; Stone decided to use the more dramatic Jim Garrison story instead and quickly dropped Lifton from his Hollywood "X" list in favor of Groden.	"It will be a cold day in hell before I ever agree any association with an old *High Treason* coauthor, Harry Livingstone. What he has done (engineered a smear campaign against Groden) is unconscionable."	Michael Douglas	Considered the ultimate authority on the Zapruder film. A techie who made good, very good.
Mark Crouch	Has one of only about four original sets of prints made from the black-and-white photos of JFK's autopsy.	Broadcaster and radio station owner from West Chester, PA.	Crouch befriended James K. Fox, a retired U. S. Secret Service researcher. About ten days after the assassination, Fox's boss ordered him to secretly make two extra copies of the autopsy photos—one for each of them. (The boss claims he never ordered the copies.) Fox arranged for Crouch to make a bootleg print of his set. When Fox died, his set of autopsy prints vanished.	Solidify in the autopsy/medical evidence school. Now working closely with Harry Livingstone, taking up where Bob Groden left off.	Isn't writing any books, but is assisting Livingstone with a new one. Crouch lectures occasionally and maintains a laid-back role in the fractured community of warring critics and buffs.	You appear to be an agent working for David Lifton, whom he accuses of purposefully keeping him from ever getting friendly with Groden, who lives about 15 minutes away.	"One good thing's come out of all this. Two of my sons are old enough to understand all this now, and they are becoming very interested. We can work together on it."	Larry King	The jury's still out.

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