

Letters to the editor
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Nicholas Ecos is correct in his complaint that the present JFK assassination "debate" is between "the lone-nut" ~~conspirax~~ theorists, consisting of supporters of the Warren Report, and "the conspiracy theorists" typified by Oliver Stone and his movie, "JFK."

He is also correct in saying that neither "deals much with truth or substance" and that "with the facts available we are unable to determine exactly who committed the crime and why."

Finding "many conspiracy theorists to be obscene in their profiteering from a national tragedy" refers most of all to Stone and his movie, which is devoid of "truth or substance" because Stone announced it as a truthful, factual account of our history in which he would tell the people who killed their President, why and how when in fact he based it on Jim Garrison's rewriting of the fiasco of his own history, knowing that Garrison's book was "a fraud and a travesty."

The sad truth everyone misses is that we cannot know "who committed the crime and why" because the government never intended to investigate the crime itself and didn't.

From the records of the Warren Commission that, contrary to Stone's representation (Post, June 2, 1991) ^{and long have been} are available save for about two percent, and from about a quarter of a million pages of other government records, most ^{of} those of the FBI that I obtained by a series of FOIA ^{by} lawsuits, this is beyond any question at all.

Thus there are no factual leads to be followed and the truth remains ^{unknown} buried.

At least for ^{any} years there will ^{never} be any real official investigation of this crime because that would require an investigation of the FBI and that nobody in political life can expect to survive politically.

Ecos errs, however, in believing that "the facts available" are ^{first} facts when mostly they are not and ^{then} then in attributing them only to these two extreme of conspiracy theorists.

Beginning with the first of my four-part "Whitewash" series (1965) and in my "Post

Morten" I espoused no conspiracy theories at all. I subscribe to none, oppose all as deceiving and misleading the people, and base ^{d my books,} them entirely and factually on the official records that were either misrepresented or ignored, in the official investigations.

So, fact about the crime, if not any solution, ^{has} have long been available.

The real debates, I believe, should be over the exploitations and commercializations typified by Stone and over the failure of the government to seek and report the truth and why it did not then or since.

Harold Weisberg

The JFK Assassination And a Debate Derailed

Ken Ringle's piece about the John F. Kennedy assassination (Style, Jan. 19) was typical of the disappointing wave of commentary stimulated by Oliver Stone's film. On one hand, we have the conspiracy theorists who have more answers than evidence and who perennially appeal to the young and/or uninformed. On the other, we have the lone-nut theorists, like Mr. Ringle, who admonish the conspiracy theorists to grow up and accept the randomness of violence. Neither side in the debate deals much with truth or substance.

Many of us who lived through the events of November 1963 were appalled by the Warren Report. We were not budding conspiracy theorists ripe for the exploiting (just as we are not paranormals plagued by conspiracy fantasies today).

To the contrary, we found many conspiracy theorists to be obscene in their profiteering from a national tragedy. What appalled us about the Warren Report was the lack of evidence to support the lone-nut scenario. A famous example is what is now known as the "magic bullet" theory. One only has to find a fair amount of background reading to find it unbelievable. There are numerous examples of forensic and ballistic facts that make the Warren Report unbelievable. Unfortunately, most people on both sides of the debate prefer to indulge in the abundant circumstantial details of the case, of which there are plenty to support almost any theory.

Mr. Ringle's column and those of countless predecessors derail the debate into an ideological one about "random" versus "conspiratorial" violence rather than attempting to deal objectively with the facts of the president's murder. We all want a neat explanation for what happened in Dallas, lone-nut and conspiracy theorists alike. Unfortunately, with the facts available we are unable to determine exactly who committed the crime and why. Regardless of the merits of Mr. Stone's film, it is sad that the response has been a useless ideological debate contributing no new insight into that strange, horrible crime.

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