

Mr. George Will  
The Washington Post  
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Dear Mr. Will,

What is remarkable to me in your today's column is that you condemn Oliver Stone in precisely the words I used in warning him before he started shooting would be used to condemn him. George Lardner has copies of I'll send them to you.

In a long, detailed and documented letter of February 8 I told him, based on personal knowledge, that he would be filming a "fraud and a travesty."

I warned him that Garrison's book was of intended dishonesty, that he "falsified" throughout and was entirely "indifferent to truth."

Some of the details I provided and documented can, I think, give you a column that will be great fun to write and to read.

George and I have known each other for 25 years. If you want credentials for me, I am confident he will provide them.

What time I could spend in New Orleans was used to try to learn more about Oswald. I did and Garrison was indifferent to it. I would <sup>up</sup> along with some of his staff, doing damage control. I did prevent, as George will confirm, what would have been outrageous beyond description.

Knowing this and having been offered more, Stone nonetheless proceed~~ed~~ with an overt exploitation and commercialization. If this interest, you for another column, I'll be glad to provide what you may want.

Most incredible of all was Garrison's planned commemoration of the fifth assassination anniversary. When his staff was not able to get him to abandon it, two asked me to try. I was able to use Garrison's own staff investigators to make simple and obvious investigation he had never asked of it. With this, with my own knowledge, and with the copies of Garrison's own records I gave one of his staff a memo that convinced Garrison he would not get away with what he had cooked up, out of nothing but the murk of his mind.

Just imagine! He knew that Robert L. Perrin, former husband of a Warren Commission witness, had killed himself in New Orleans in 1962. But he was going to charge Perrin with being a Grassy Knoll assassin in 1963!

For exposure and condemnation rarely more justified, I think I have a riches of information if you or anyone else you know would like more. Again, I suggest you ask Lardner.

You ask an obvious and proper question, why did Costner lend himself to this libel on our country. You could ask ~~ask~~ this question of a number of other famous actors Stone enticed with large fees for bit parts. The answer is that the persuasive Stone coned them with lies. Costner reflects this as he is quoted in "Personalities" on P3: Stone convinced them and on all possible occasions told the world that all the governments records were

suppressed until the year 2039 at the earliest. Stone knew this was a lie and knowing it he kept repeating it, only recently changing its formulation after a friend of mine finally broke through his palace guard and was able to wise him up.

There is absolutely nobody working in the field of political assassinations who does not know that by a series of difficult and costly FOIA lawsuits I obtained about a quarter of a million pages. They also know that believing <sup>ING</sup> that FOIA makes me surrogate for the people I make them freely available to all writers. While it is not possible that the few experts of various hues he hired, mostly to be able to trade on their names, did not know this. I told Stone himself two months before he started shooting, in that February letter.

This is to say that without question Stone knew he was lying and he continued to lie because he could promote his lie of a movie in advance with his deliberate lies.

Actually, he lied about almost everything, he and his sycophants and hangers-on.

Two who are journalism/communications professors are, I think, worthy of special attention. One was Garrison's editor and Stone's co-author.

If you are not aware of it, Stone's self- and movie-promotions ~~has~~ began with his telling the world that he would be recording their history for the people, telling them who killed their President, why and how. I proved ~~it~~ to him that without question he could not do this with Garrison's book, yet he did not respond and he proceeded with what he knew had to be a "fraud and a travesty."

As recently as in his December 20 oped piece in the New York Times he referred to it as history and said reporters could not be trusted with it. I believe, without proof, that Peter Dale Scott was the probable author.

I hope you will take the time to talk to George and read some of what I gave him, especially this February letter and what I wrote him the day after the Post published his incredible lies and other errors after giving him the rare opportunity to correct what he had submitted earlier. As of June 2 he was still monumentally ignorant of basic and proven fact about the assassination and its investigations.

You, anyone working for you or for that matter anyone at all interested is welcome to examine what I have ~~is~~ and to use our copies.

I believe that this wretched exploiter and commercializer and all others who would misuse the tragedies of our history for personal gratification or profit require exposure and discouragement.

As I am sure George will tell you I am the only one writing in the field who is not and never has been a conspiracy theorist and that when I can I expose them, including by helping him do that. My work is restricted to fact, my seven books have survived close critical examination and remain basic in the field, and enfeebled and in ill health at 78, I make what effort I can to leave an accurate record for history.

*Harold Weisberg*

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg

George F. Will

# 'JFK': Paranoid History

Oliver Stone's movie "JFK" will give paranoia a bad name and give us all pause. Viewing his travesty about the Kennedy assassination makes one wonder what Stone would have thought about the century's most consequential assassination.

On June 28, 1914, six young men were poised in Sarajevo, Bosnia, to throw bombs at the car of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Five of them, intimidated by the crowds or unwilling to hurt the archduke's wife, did nothing. However, one asked a policeman which car was the archduke's, the policeman identified it, and the boy threw his bomb, which bounced off the archduke's car and exploded under the following car.

One of the others, Gavrilo Princip, went off disconsolately for coffee at a corner cafe, where he loitered. Later the archduke, going to a museum, decided to visit the people injured by the bomb. His driver, confused about the route to the hospital, stopped in front of the cafe where the astonished Princip sat. Princip leapt up and shot the archduke and his wife, thereby lighting Europe's fuse.

Stone's portrayal of this would be: Like, wow. What a complex conspiracy brought the victim to the assassin's cleverly contrived coffee break. The driver was not confused, the first bomb "miss" was a ruse, the policeman was in on the plot, and there must have been hundreds of others, too. Who was behind it all? Well, who benefited? Munitions makers—merchants of death.

That is the message of Stone's celluloid diatribe. Much of America's establishment conspired to kill Kennedy because he loved peace and "they" wanted war. Strange that a society so sick allowed such a saint to be president at all, but this is cartoon history by Stone, who is 45 going on 8.

In his three-hour lie, Stone falsifies so much that he may be an intellectual sociopath, indifferent to truth. Or perhaps he is just another propagandist frozen in the 1960s like a fly in amber, combining moral arrogance with historical ignorance.

He is a specimen of 1960s arrested development, the result of the self-absorption encouraged by all the rubbish written about his generation being so unprecedentedly moral, idealistic, caring etc. He is one of those "activists" who have been so busy trying to make history they have not learned any.

Of America's two other assassinations of the 1960s—of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.—Stone says, "There's no doubt that these three killings are linked, and it worked. That's what's amazing. They pulled it off." Ah, yes: "They." Who are "they" who used Sirhan Sirhan and James Earl Ray as well as Lee Harvey Oswald for their purposes?

They are, he says, "a moving, fluid thing, a series of forces at play." Can he be a tad more specific? Okay. They are "a parallel covert government." They are merchants of death, omnipresent, omnipotent—but unable to stop Stone from unmasking them. Amazing indeed.

History teaches that as a conspiracy increases in size arithmetically, the chances of its unraveling increase exponentially. Yet Stone asserts that a conspiracy of many thousands (involving the FBI, the CIA, the armed forces, the Secret Service, the Mafia, doctors, Earl Warren and the other members of his commission, the press and many others) succeeded until, 28 years later, there came a hero: Stone.

Back in Stone's formative years—those 1960s he loves so ardently—members of the John Birch Society thought President Eisenhower had been a Communist. Intellectually, Stone is on all fours with his mirror images, the Birchers, who, like Stone, thought Earl Warren was a traitor. Stone and they are part of a long fringe tradition, the paranoid style in American politics, a style ravenous for conspiracy theories.

Why is actor Kevin Costner lending himself to this libel of America? Is he invincibly ignorant or just banally venal? Nothing else can explain his willingness to portray as a hero Jim Garrison, who, as New Orleans district attorney, staged an assassination "investigation" that involved recklessness, cruelty, abuse of power, publicity mongering and dishonesty, all on a scale that strongly suggested lunacy leavened by cynicism.

After covering the assassination story for 28 years, the journalist who knows most about it is The Post's George Lardner. He documents Stone "stomping on presumption of innocence, cooking up false admissions, ignoring contrary evidence and giving a conspiratorial tone to inconsequential facets of the tragedy that were explained long ago." Stone himself should have played Garrison.

Every viewer will have his or her favorite Stone fabrication. Mine is either the assertion that U.S. troops from Germany were airborne over America as part of the plot, or the assertion that President Johnson reversed a Kennedy order about Vietnam that in fact Johnson approved four days after the assassination, or the assertion that the CIA had stories about Oswald's arrest in some foreign papers almost at the moment he was arrested.

The through-the-looking-glass premise of this movie is: Proof of the vastness of the conspiracy is that no one can prove it exists. Stone's pose is that he loves America and the truth equally. That is true.

"JFK" is an act of execrable history and contemptible citizenship by a man of technical skill, scant education and negligible conscience.