

# Widow charges Oswald set up

Conference probes  
slaying of JFK

By Anthony Flint  
GLOBE STAFF

CAMBRIDGE - In a rare public appearance yesterday at a Harvard conference on the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Marina Porter, the widow of Lee Harvey Oswald, said her husband was set up to be the patsy in a conspiracy to kill the president.

Lauded by an audience that mostly shared the belief that Oswald was not a lone assassin, Porter, 52, born in Russia but now an American citizen, said Oswald "loved JFK and what he stood for."

"I'm here simply out of desperation," Porter, remarried and living in Dallas, told researchers and authors participating in a three-day conference and teach-in on the eve of the 30th anniversary of Kennedy's assassination.

"Now I'm able to face people and not hide behind the burden of the shame," said Porter, who implicated Oswald in testimony to the Warren Commission but has since changed her story. "Things haven't been the way they have been told."

Porter has granted only a handful of interviews, including one with Tom Brokaw of NBC several months ago, and has rarely made public appearances. She is the subject of a made-for-TV movie, "Fatal Deception: Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald," to be aired tomorrow on NBC.

Speaking of her husband, whom she met after Oswald defected to the Soviet Union in 1959 following his service as a US Marine, she said: "I'm not going to put a halo on him, make an angel out of him, because he's not."

But she staunchly denied that her husband was motivated to kill Kennedy because of Oswald's support of Cuban President Fidel Castro, or that he was in any way connected to the KGB. She said both ex-

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# At Harvard conference, widow of Oswald charges he was set up

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planations were false leads designed to cover up the truth.

"Forget about Cuba and the KGB. It's to lead you down the wrong path," Porter said in a brief interview after her hourlong appearance.

"It's right under your nose. Jim Garrison smelled it," she said, referring to the New Orleans district attorney who attempted to prove a conspiracy in the 1969 trial of alleged CIA operative Clay Shaw. Garrison's efforts were portrayed in the popular Oliver Stone film, "JFK."

Porter made brief remarks in her appearance yesterday and then took questions from the audience, which included several authors of conspiracy books and researchers who have spent years combing through records to prove that Oswald was not the lone gunman in the assassination of Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

Although several conference participants prefaced their questions with praise for Porter's "courage" in coming forward, Porter has provided few details to back up her statements and sidestepped questions about specifics.

When asked about the weapons that Oswald kept or about a disputed camera that Oswald was said to own, for example, she professed that she was "not an expert" in guns or photography. In addition, she did not respond specifically about people with whom Oswald associated, in Miami and New Orleans.

**Husband "very secretive"**

"That was a side to Lee I did not know," she said. "He was very secretive. He did not confide in me."

Oswald's association with or infiltration of various political groups, including pro-Castro organizations, Porter said, was "nothing but a big camouflage, nothing more than the simple scenario he had to play."

She did not elaborate on the scenario. Regarding Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union, Porter said: "He was sent there and he came back when it was time. Do not ask me where I got this information, but it can be proven."

On several occasions, Porter said she had learned more about Oswald by reading books on the assassination than she had garnered from personal experience or recollection. "Sometimes I look at the books to see what I did" on a certain day, she said.

Porter, born Marina Nikolaevna



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / JANET KNOTT

Marina Porter, the widow of Lee Harvey Oswald, takes part yesterday in a seminar at Harvard University on the Kennedy assassination.

Prusakova, did provide details on other matters, eagerly scribbled down by the assassination researchers: Her uncle was an engineer in the Soviet internal affairs department, not the KGB; Oswald told her in April 1963 that he tried to shoot Gen. Edwin Walker but missed; Oswald asked her not to tell Ruth Paine, the woman who took the couple in when they moved to Dallas, that he had guns, because she was a Quaker; she was treated well by the Secret Service following the assassination and felt "honored by the protection"; and she snapped several versions of Oswald in different poses, one of them the famous photograph of him holding a rifle and a newspaper. Some theorists contend the photo was doctored.

### Conspiracy theorists

The authors and researchers gathered for the conference are part of a circle of assassination specialists who have kept the idea of a conspiracy alive despite the findings of the Warren Commission, the House Select Committee on Assassinations and, most recently, the book "Case Closed," by Gerald Posner.

The researchers, many of them agreeing on the basic contention that Oswald's activities were choreographed by the US intelligence community, have been encouraged by both the Oliver Stone film and the recent release of hundreds of thousands of government documents on the assassination. Although they are pressing for the release of more doc-

uments and complain that many critical papers have been almost entirely blacked out, they continue to pore over the folders for clues.

Sitting in on panels and exchanging ideas with each other at Harvard's science center, the researchers are hopeful that Porter's public statements will help dislodge "what seems to be a taboo in academia and the mainstream media in terms of talking about the case for conspiracy," said Peter Jourdain, a Harvard doctoral student and lawyer.

