

Dear Dave,

3/15/91

With a short period before lunch and until we get the mail I'll begin comment on Feinman's 2/22/91 to you. First by telling you that I've told Jerry about it briefly. I think that in confidence he should read it and be aware of its content in the event a need for the college to know comes suddenly. While he and I both believe that nothing is wrong with your disclosure of it and nothing can be done by Roger about it, when he speaks to the librarian again the question should be asked of the lawyer. You may get more meaningful assurance that way. He also has from Greg's sister the pertinent pages of Meagher's will. They give all rights to Greg and all discretion, which Roger has avoided mentioning. Even though he told me that he'd read the will he did not draw up.

After the one reading during which I highlighted what I'll address I got the clear impression that this letter will be damaging if not ruinous to any effort Roger may make in court. This is one of the reasons I wrote you, I think, saying that in confidence I believe that both Jerry and Charles Kuhn, the really fine person who is the librarian, should read it. I think there is no risk at all in letting Jerry read ~~and~~ it and when he is here I'll show it to him. I won't with Charles unless you agree. I hope you do, with the understanding that until you say more it is strictly confidential. I think that as I complete comment the need and the usefulness will become apparent.

By way of general comment, this is infamous, dishonest and false and the only reason I am not angry after reading it is because I am more than ever convinced that Roger is not rational about this now, whatever the reason. He has flipped. I've known him too long and too well to think otherwise. I've known him only as a fine and an honest person. I've not known him to lie about anything or to shade meanings or to misrepresent or distort or seek to mislead or malign, as in this letter he does. There also is the fact that this represents so abrupt a change in his attitude toward me. This apparent from our correspondence. This radical change seems to coincide with what I believe happened, he learned through Policoff of the relevant provisions of Greg's will and could not handle it.

He begins by attributing to me a "self-serving, impressionistic and terribly distorted effort" to "establish a record on this same subject," the reference to "same" not being clear but either to Stone's death or Meagher's "materials." Whatever he means it is false and while what I've written and said over the years would not be easily retrieved, copies being filed under a variety of correspondent's names, before and after Meagher's death what I've said and believed has not changed. He may be referring to our correspondence but in that I have been only consistent and explicit.

I know of no basis, not matter how anything may be distorted, to justify what he says ~~in the next graf,~~ "I am personally dismayed by Mr. Weisberg's imputating to Mrs. Meagher a desire to financially benefit me." I'll resume without ~~omitting~~ omitting anything in quoting, but I say first that I never had any such thing in mind, had no basis for even dreaming of it, and certainly never said anything of any kind of her wanting to benefit him financially. "...which is an untruth born out of his extreme fantasies about her dealings with younger men." I note that he now does admit discussing that within "a very small circle." I think he later says something like this in a sexual sense, a lie.

From the first, when I sought to understand some of the bad judgements Sylvia made, beginning with Epstein, about whose book she raved to me before it was published, I wondered why her excellent judgement failed her in her evaluations of younger men. Going along with this is the fact that so long after her husband's death she wore, to my knowledge, only black. And the fact that I never knew her to have any woman-man relationship with any man, of any age. She had once discussed with me when I visited her at her apartment when I was in New York, probably circa 1966, how long it took Meagher to ask her to marry him and that he did not live long after marriage. I think she said he was an alcoholic and I am pretty clear on her representing that he was the only man in the world for her and that is why she waited so long. This is consistent with my never having seen her in anything but black, including in her own apartment, and with her never having even suggested that any other man interested her even as an occasional date. I do not remember her ever

mentioning ever having a date with any man other than her husband. I therefore presumed that she never had any such interest in any other man and never would. This of course includes younger men. There never was any hint or any basis for believing it existed without my having any knowledge of it. I certainly never suggested, by even the most remote an unreal interpretation, that her interest in younger men was in any way sexual and I was always, I am certain, explicit in attributing this to the fact that she never had children. There also is the fact that I knew not a single young woman who was a critic and I do not remember her even mentioning that she knew ^{any} young woman critics.

It is not at all unusual for older people to have much interest in and devote much time to younger people and when I was young I was the beneficiary of this, from both men and women. When I was quite young and DJ had borrowed me from the Senate when we were in London, Ky for the Bloody Harlan prosecution a former lieutenant of West Virginia who then was mine-workers counsel for that area, Thomas Townsend, had such an interest in me. For just about all the time I was there I'd meet him quite early in the morning at his hotel and we'd walk in those mountains for about three hours. He talked, I listened, and I think I learned much from his experiences and his wisdom. Whenever he was in Washington, although he was old enough to be my grandfather, he always went up to the Senate Office building (then one) to visit me. So, for that matter, did the clerk of that court. And I was broken into my editing job by an older woman. Look at the time I've taken, some of which you are aware of, with younger people, mostly men but including quite a few young women, as recently as this week, with a student from Mount St. Mary's, not far away, who will return, and countless hood students. My God! what ~~is~~ a really filthy mind to so distort the net at all abnormal taking of time to help younger people by older people! Just take the time I did and I took with Koffman, who spent much of his summer here beginning when he was in high school and continuing into law school and to a degree the several years he clerked for an appeals-court judge. I did even taught him to cook and bake, and, of course, because we had no children, I can appreciate that this can make one more inclined to be helpful to others. I doubt very much if Sylvia devoted as much of her time to younger people as I have and there is absolutely nothing sexual that can rationally be inferred. What he says here and later on this is filthy, evil, knowingly false. It is vile.

In the second graf he says, with nothing to support it and nothing can, "whoever may examine them(her materials) must do so with the awareness that Weisberg shares Stone's responsibility for the latter's failure to perform certain undertakings to her," verbal and in her will. There is no basis for this at all. There was nothing I could or did to to get him to do or not to do anything about her papers. That I arranged for their temporary ^{Greg} storage at Hood is not relevant to his allegation (although it did secure them and save him from the sum she left him, \$5,000, from the cost of commercial storage) and I never even suggested that he not do whatever Sylvia had asked him to do for all the time he did not do it. The only change of any kind in this was the last time he phoned me before Greg killed himself and obvious that had nothing to do with what prior to them he had not done. He then was disheartened about facing going over her materials and I suggested that he get Roger Feinman to do it for him. This is the exact opposite of the rotten allegation Roger here makes. It was the one way of which I knew in which there was any prospect of what she wanted getting done and I immediately wrote Roger about it. Greg made it quite clear that he did not want to do anything about Sylvia's records, the real reason he hadn't. I was aware of his record of not doing anything, of his unkept promises to do it, of the fact that Hood had extended free storage for only six months, that he had spent as much as three weeks in Alexandria without going to Hood for even a second, and that it had become oppressive to him. I knew of Roger's interest in the records and that he had subject-matter knowledge Greg did not have or even want to have. At the time of our last phone conversation, when this oppression and frustration were obvious, I suggested two things to Greg: one that he ask Roger to handle Sylvia's records and two that he return to work on his doctorate. This had nothing to do with what preceded it and to Roger's knowledge is the exact opposite of his rotten lie (which extends into responsibility for Greg's suicide) that the only possible relevant period is the few weeks before he killed himself. But even that time I made the only possible effort to have Sylvia's wishes met, by suggesting to Greg that he ask Feinman to do it instead.

The last sentence in this graf also suggests that I have a responsibility for Greg's suicide. But the grim fact is that the matters Roger says Greg "mull[ed]" while hurtling to his own self-destruction" were directly attributable to Sylvia and nobody else. She ~~was~~ forced the unwelcome obligation on Stone, nobody else.

Paul LeMat told me that Greg's Los Angeles friends had been trying to persuade him to return to his doctorate and Roger himself criticized Allard Lowenstein for, in Roger's words, not seeing to it that the many students who helped him so much, including Greg, were prepared to face life and make a living in it. He said that in this sense Lowenstein was selfish and did not serve the interest of his young disciples. In criticizing Lowenstein for this he appeared to be oblivious of the fact that this is precisely what Meagher did to Greg, involved him, against his desires, in an obligation that ~~was~~ deterred if it did not prevent his preparing for life and making a living. In this sense, and perhaps Roger has some awareness of it and can't handle it, Sylvia has a responsibility for Greg's killing himself.

Rogey in the next graf begins with a prejudicial lie about Sylvia's intentions because she did not prepare for them when she could. She was retired and had all the time in the world. She could have done as I did, make all the arrangements I wanted. Or she could have done what I can't, worked on getting them ready for deposit. The uses she desired for her records after her death is nothing out of the usual and these matters are not relevant in any way to what he next says, beginning with what he and Sylvia both knew, that Greg had no interest in the JFK assassination. What he does not say and what she and he both knew is that he had a dominating interest with which she was frustrating by imposing the unwelcome obligation on him and that at the same time she was reducing if not eliminating his chance to complete his doctorate. Why Sylvia did this awful thing we do not know but the responsibility is hers and hers alone and I think this deeply troubles Roger because of his great affection for her. It was irrational at best, evil at worst, and in it, to use Roger's own words, she betrayed him and their friendship and his trust in her. He then and I think since has been deeply troubled by this. He attributes this to pressure from her relations but the fact is that she had originally made the best possible arrangement, for Roger to have the role she behind his back and without even mentioning it to him forced on the unwilling Greg.

What then follows at the bottom of the first page is rubbish, what he says he hears from you and me about whatever he may mean by his "scholar-in-residence" nonsense. Those who, if ~~any~~ have any interest in her records, will be whoever they may be. You and I have no influence over that. If the interest is in small groups of students or a single student working on a thesis (or as earlier this week I had from two students doing nothing but a short paper, for which I took time), these are interests that serve her intended purposes. He then goes into "the immediate and practical needs of present-day researchers and journalists" saying that this was her exclusive interest. Bull! If anyone had such an interest, especially a journalist, Roger and Greg would have known about it. He dreams that the press is knocking on doors and being denied. This is false. He says she had both interests, yet in the absence of one, which is everybody's fault except Sylvia's and his, the second is both worthless and what she didn't want.

Next at the top of page 2 he makes a sally argument, that whatever he may mean by "the circumstances" the "body of her work" may now be presented without the due consideration ~~which~~ which she had entrusted to Greg. If this is a reference to his suicide, we had nothing to do with that and could not have prevented it, had no reason to know he was considering it, and I at least suggested a way out to him by asking Roger to do it for him. If he is referring to whatever he means being done by Hood rather than by Greg, that would in every way be better for "the body of her work" and how it is presented because Greg had no interest and no knowledge.

Before stopping for at least a short while I note what I've never said before, but think I now should. I think that Roger could have made an enormous difference if as soon as I told him, which was as soon as I suggested it to Greg, that he let Greg know he was willing to assume the responsibilities for him that Sylvia had loaded onto him. If he had he'd have removed that pressure from Greg, who killed himself over his pressures. So, in

this sense, particularly because of his devotion to Sylvia, Roger has some responsibility for what he visualizes as well as for Greg's suicide. And maybe these are some of the things that drive him now.

This is disturbing, in part because it is so dishonest and evil and makes trouble for the innocent and in part because it worries me about Roger's state of mind, so I continue to get it off my mind as much as is possible, although I won't read and correct it immediately.

Three of the four matters in his short next paragraph relate to me and maybe in his sick mind he imagines the fourth does also. First he "intends to complete the record of Mr. Weisberg's influence in this matter;" This means he is making one up because I've had none at all. "his inordinate curiosity about Mrs. Meagher's sexuality" which by itself means nothing and in fact does not exist. I've never had or expressed any such interest, unless he had by some magic plumbed the inner recesses of my mind and discovered that long ago I had decided that she had no sexual interest at all. But even that means nothing. "He is a plain, out-and-out liar in this. It does not exist and it does not exist in any oblique hint, either. It is plain rotten of him." (in addition to her personal views of him)" again related to my alleged "inordinate curiosity. This is another deliberate lie.

I don't care what she thought of me and I could not have been more explicit than I was in telling him, including in writing, that I knew she had been influenced by her crediting a fabrication by Harry Schiller in his rotten book "The Scavengers," believed she did not believe my explanation to her, and could detect the difference in her attitude toward me beginning then. I was explicit in saying that I assumed she had things in her files that I would not like but that nothing should interfere with their being made available. I am sure I said to him and probably to Stone that none of us have any right to censor the history of which we are or have been part and that I have never censored any references to me that I've received, have preserved them all so that others may read and understand them, and that we should all have this attitude. I know her views of my work because she has written them to me and whatever she came to believe is something I can do nothing about and never expressed any interest at all in. If he is ever asked to substantiate this he'll resort to a lie and say I said it because it is in nothing I have ever written, to him or to anybody else, with regard to her files or anyone else's.

The next and a long paragraph says it refers to me to begin with but it does not in any way. Nor does it make out any case that if Greg did decide on the permanent deposit being at Hood that breaches the intent of her will. His opinion, which is, of course, self-serving if unfactual, that Greg could not make a wise decision on the deposit without word-for-word reading of her large collection (for \$5,000 plus this major intrusion into his life and future) is without merit. Why should any college administrator take a stranger's word about the content and value other than the publicly-known value of any such records?

What he next says about Stone's alleged "preference" is news to me, is not reflected in any conversation I had with Stone or in any communication. I think that this and the paragraph before it indicate he was motivated by learning that Greg had willed the records to Hood and he is making up a case against it. I know that Sylvia left all of this to Greg's exclusive discretion because he left those pages of the will for Jerry and Jerry got them from Greg's sister and he read them to me.

Whether or not what he conjectures is the usual practice as I've told him and as others have experienced, a deposit in a large university may often mean burying the papers forever. I cited my experience in my unsuccessful effort to have access to Edward Epstein's deposit of years ago at Boston College, they have no idea of the content, they said, they have not once touched the boxes in which they'd received them, and I had no access. They could not tell me if or when that situation would change. Scholars are better able to address the details than I but I think he is blowing smoke. And how could anyone promise to publish a catalogue and guarantee to make the investment in time and money required until that institution knew what it thought to be the value of a deposit is? Not his word for it.

Whatever he may mean by the concluding words of the paragraph that begins at the bottom of page 2 and continues onto three, it is a deliberate lie. I did not attempt to "persuade" Stone that "he needn't be concerned;" about anything other than the one thing he mentioned to me, his word, "accessioning." Roger has known this all along. That is the one thing Greg told me he had to take care of and that I told him is the responsibility of ~~the~~ institution. I knew of nothing else that had to be done. ~~erkod!~~ I assumed that she might have labelled some things confidential, and I told Greg they could be removed easily, in the context of Roger going over the records, the suggestion Greg said he liked. Roger later told me that she had unpublished manuscripts of others, and I later wondered if he had some of his own work in mind. But such things are protected by common-law copyright to begin with and he also presumes wrongful intent on the part of ~~the~~ recipient. It is a manufacture/lie to extend "accessioning" into what he has said, repeatedly, "everything."

Whether or not it is the lack of interest he clearly had, it is a fact that Stone did not inventory her records. That is not ~~my~~ responsibility, yours, Jerry's or Hood's. If it means anything. He suggests that a college is neither interested in an inventory or willing or capable of making it. This is sick! ~~If~~ not egomaniacal. But even with an inventory, unless it is page-by-page, how in the world could anyone tell whether something had been taken. And when Roger knows, as he's been told, that nobody at all has touched the records in, I repeat, temporary storage, to suggest that Hood would or would permit thievery is slanderous. But if they are at Hood, as they are, and are given to Hood, as I've been told Greg did, how is this at all relevant? Would it steal from itself?

The long paragraph on this page on the alleged "pattern of" my "behavior," is false and malicious. While it is true that I have been critical of some books and their authors, I can't think of a single instance in which Roger also did not have and express identical or lower opinions. If he is saying that I think that Sylvia's magnificent but dated and limited work is a "challenge," he is silly. I recommend her work all the time, as I do Roffman's. ~~It~~ also is a lie to say that her work is the only work I could not "impeach directly." If I wanted to, on a basis of honesty I could, but has he forgotten Roffman's? Or that Roffman requested that I permit him to write the preface to Post Mortem?

How many books are there on the JFK assassination that do not advance untenable theories or pretend non-existing solutions? Must I like those works to satisfy Roger's sick mind? But the fact is that opposite of what he says. Not that when called for I do not make criticisms and I'll today stand on the accuracy of everyone I've made. I also note that his is a general statement without a single citation of any support. As a matter of fact there is not a single author of any of the works who I know and who has asked for help that I have not given it. After Groden and his coauthor, Peter Model, stole my work in their trifling paperback I met and was not unfriendly with both, Groden fairly often, and after to a large degree he and Livingstone did the same thing again I made no criticism or complaint to either and as of last night I was continuing to help them, when Livingstone phoned me. Even the scoundrel Lifton got what he asked for. I gave Lane free TV time. I helped Tom Gervasi promote Epstein's book for Viking. I could go on and on. The fact is that by far most of the many writers of various media who have used my files without supervision for more than 20 years were known to me to be those I would not agree with. Roger knows this as does just about anyone of serious interest in the field. But if there were to be any kind of court proceeding, which I think there will not be, if he were to be put on the stand and asked to be specific on this and then asked his own opinion he would be a laughingstock. He has agreed with every criticism he's heard me make and I have agreed with those he made.

But on one of the things Sylvia said about this, I'll attach a photocopy of what she wrote in her book to me. My files also hold her early letter, before she edited and revised her book, which it happens was after she read mine and hers was not published, saying that if it came to a choice between hers and mine being published, mine was better and she'd rather have it published. (I note that she did not offer me a chance to read her ms.) and when I asked her to edit the second part of Post Mortem, she ~~edited~~ and described it as a tour de force of which I ~~also~~ was capable. If Roger has read what her files hold about me he knows this and he is being dishonest and making false imputations.

I could say more but believe it is not necessary.

HE NEXT SAYS I "just want(s) to see what Mrs. Meagher had on him and learn whatever he can about her relationships with a series of young men beginning with Edward J. Epstein and including your writer." Neither is true and note that he does not even hint at any reason to believe it. There is none. He knows, as does or did Greg, that I assumed she had things relating to me that I'd not like but that can't be changed and ought not be suppressed or destroyed and that we all have to live with such things and can't be censors of the history we have made ourselves part of. I do not have the prurient interests he attributes to me, had no such beliefs about Sylvia, and even declined to see or to accept such things when they were offered to me. These range from the unwise nasty pictures Mark Lane had taken of himself and women to the FBI's tape-recordings of Marina Oswald's private and sexual conversations with women friends. I have my rejection of the latter in writing, the offer from the FBI and my refusal, for stated reasons.

Still in this graf, he says what he had to get ~~as~~ carried away with his own fabrications and emotions to have said, "No living person who has been involved in this controversy (referring back it refers to the JFK assassination, whether or not he had something else in his contorting mind) since its inception can be trusted to lay claim to serving the cause of history, which will have to make its own judgements." Aside from the fact that a legitimate claim may or may not be of later interest, I think that the authors of books that for various reasons I did not like can make such a claim, Joesten, Buchanan, Epstein, Sauvage, Lane and many others. Incorrect books also can serve history.

Here, at last, he confesses what I suspected, that he needs access to Sylvia's records for his own work.

He concludes this graf with an assault on Hood as well as on me and my alleged "sanctimony." He says I am building a monument to myself at Hood. I did not even ~~ask~~ ask that the deposit bear my name. I have no "special relationship with" Hood unless he refers to one of my friendships. and I am not aware of any pretension of any kind that Hood has made and he does not state a single one.

His assault on Hood at the top of 4 is incredible, wrong, and he has no knowledge of it, its policies or its student body. The college has one of the very best reputations, repeatedly the expressed judgement of its peers. There is no institution in the country save that of blacks or Catholics that does not have a majority of WASP students, so what does this mean? He has no way of knowing and he is wrong about the representation of minorities in its student body. Or of the efforts made to attract and assist them. So, to him who knows all there is to know about everything, it is a deeply perverse repository" that "has nothing extraordinary to recommend it except that" I chose it as my repository. First of all, the academic record of Hood is extraordinary as its peers have said repeatedly and since when does an institution have to be in any sense "extraordinary" to be a good college or to give an appropriate home to scholarly deposits?

The next graf on this page is rubbish and is not relevant to anything except his eruption of bile. He doesn't even know what "primary source material is" because the records that are available in the FBI's and CIA's reading room are identical with my copies, neither being the originals, plus the fact that I have what is not in their reading rooms, what they were compelled to give me and did not deposit there and what I added in several ways, first by assembled related records that are not related in the reading rooms and by my adding my own knowledge to them.

He is running out of steam and invective and slander by the penult, graf on this page, but if he is saying anything with any meaning it seems to be that Sylvia's records deposited along with mine will suffer. He does not define what he means by "the quality of her work" but if he refers to her writing, no argument. It is great! The best! But if he is referring to scope and content, he has no knowledge and he is wrong. He also again slanders Hood in suggesting that it would merge her papers with others. On what basis he can suggest this can't be guess because there is no such basis.

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Skipping more crap to the second graf on 5, I note the inaccessibility of the Epstein papers at Boston, a large university, and what you wrote him about your experiences with deposits. He actually says that the institution must master the content of enormous deposits and be "prepared to guide 'tourists' through the thicket." This means do research for those intending research. He is ignorant of faculties and what he then says is not relevant in any way. But his argument falls at the end by the untruthfulness of what he says about "major institutions" and his failure to inquire into Hood's plans for making its deposits available to other institutions. (I am not certain and I may not have but I think I did inform him of this.)

What he next says, about faculty, also is not relevant and he does not cite any practises in these regards elsewhere nor does he even hint that Meagher or he inquired of any "major institution" whether it had any interest. What is the relevance of "endowment money" but if it is relevant, how is Hood with a bad record on this? He just does not know anything he talks about and makes it up as he goes. What he says about cataloguing my materials is nonsense. They can be sued now, are used now, without any assistance from me, and what Hood does with them will add to this.

Ignorance again in the form of an irrelevant question, suppose Hood sponsored a conference on the case, what are its facilities for accomodating "the number of people who could be expect?" The latter being a number he does not know. He pretends this is nothing but a cowpasture, that there are no local accomodations, that nobody other than enrolled students is at Hood ever, that we have no hotels and motels in the area, etc. (In a letter to me he even pretended that coming here would cost students more than living in New York City while they use college records!)

The last graf on this page says there are things in Sylvia's life that must be kept secret. I have no such knowledge. But he lies again in saying that I want to impeach her work (note he does not say that I ever have, for he knows I have, but respect it greatly) and "would relish the opportunity to destroy her reputation." I presume he has something in mind of which he knows that I do not know because I know nothing at all that blemishes her reputation and it is simple sick malevolence to say I want to.

At the bottom of this page and onto the next he again refers to his opinion of how her work "advances knowledge of the case." I doubt that it does this very much because it is so dated. But that is not the only value of such deposits. What I am saying is that on the basis of what I know she brought nothing to light that had not already been brought to light in her magnificent book or in her unpublished research. But this is not in any sense a suggestion that her records are not valuable as part of the history of the whole matter and I believe, from knowing her and knowing nothing at all about her records, that they hold a valuable part of the history and are historically important.

In the penult graf of the letter he lies in saying that Greg Stone was not thinking of using the money Oliver Stone offered for the rights to use her book "for any purpose related to Sylvia's papers or her own work." I have been told that he said other things to other people but he told me that if he accepted Stone's offer he would use the money for precisely the purpose Roger said he wouldn't, "related to her papers."

What he says about Stone in the last graf is immaterial. The fact is that against his wishes and against his interest Meagher for her own reasons, which included removing

Feinman from the very role, forced this unwelcome burden on him. It is not in any sense that Sylvia did not know what she was doing. He has already conjectured to me that she had special motives, like Stone's great benefit. She was not incompetent and she knew exactly what she was doing when she imposed this on Stone and removed it from Feinman without even the courtesy of telling him. His bugs him and I think will forever bug him. He was honest in telling me she betrayed their friendship, him and their trust and I agree, the very least she could and should have done was talk to him, her close friend and confidant. Aside from these feelings he can't acknowledge that his god had the same feet of clay we all have. To the shock, surprise and dismay and fear for him I have already expressed I add the thought that there may be in her files what can be hurtful to him. I hope not!

3/16/91 I've had trouble staying awake while reading and correcting this because I was wide awake at 2:45 again and tired with my early-morning walking. I add a few things.

I omit what I think can be hurtful to Roger on the chance some use is made of this letter. There is no point in hurting him and I don't want to go.

I got a feeling in reading this that maybe one of his motives is his fear that Sylvia's records will suffer by comparison. I don't think that values can be measured by volume and I do think that there are in her records what is not available elsewhere. He is carried away by his own bull.

Insofar as he alleges that Hood would not treat her records well and would not be calling attention to them, things like that, my own belief is that if Greg had turned them over when he took possession of them they'd constitute the only significant archive now available in any educational institution other than of those who created the official mythology, like Ford.

And as long as I am alive and he succeeds in delaying their staying at Hood, if that is what Greg's will provides, he is preventing the very use he pretends he wants to somehow assure. Without any reason to believe that any of the places he has in mind, of which he mentioned NYU to me, wants or would do anything with them. He still has not made any inquiry so he could state what he learned.

I did not say all I could about his stupid comments about suppose Hood decided to have a conference. As you know, you suggested this and Jerry likes the idea. Does he think there are no conferences here? The military alone has held many with quite a few people. Businesses do, too. The University of Maryland holds an annual income-tax conference locally, and hundreds of people attend. The facilities here are so good, so much the opposite of what he infers, knowing nothing, that for years people attending conferences in Washington preferred to stay in Frederick and travel both ways daily. There have been times when I could not get a room in the Holiday Inn or the Red Horse for friends because of this.

Allow for the fact that I did doze off in reading this in evaluating what he now says: he does not have a single legitimate adverse comment or opinion. He states no facts at all in his objections.

I have trouble believing that he intends taking this to any court. He is a lawyer and I have no reason not to believe at least a competent one if not better than that. It is to dignify what he wrote to call it frivolous. It clearly is the making of a nuisance and potentially a costly nuisance.

He was not rational when he wrote this. He then had to know that we are good friends and that you would give me a copy. Rational, he'd have expected me to go over it with care and if rational he'd have anticipated what I do herein.

Best,

Harold

To Harold Weiskopf —
at long last! Friend and
colleague, to whom we are
all so indebted for your
tremendous contributions,
may all our hopes
be fulfilled and the full
truth be known —
for all your help!
With heartfelt gratitude

Alvin Meyer
Oct. 23, 1967

142-10 Hoover Avenue
Apartment 404
Jamaica, New York 11435

February 22, 1991

David Wrone
1518 Blackberry Lane
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Dear Dave:

I appreciate your letter of February 17, and the thought you have given to the matter of Sylvia Meagher's archives. As Mrs. Meagher's colleague, friend, and occasional legal adviser, I would have strongly preferred to withhold any comment on the handling these materials but for the unfortunate death of Stone and the self-serving, impressionistic, and terribly distorted effort by Mr. Weisberg to establish a record on this same subject. I am personally dismayed by Mr. Weisberg's imputing to Mrs. Meagher a desire to financially benefit me, which is an untruth born out of his extreme fantasies about her dealings with younger men. I did not until now discuss this matter outside of a very small circle.

The essential point is that there has been a very serious failure of the purposes Mrs. Meagher had in mind for these archives, and whoever may examine them must do so with the awareness that Weisberg shares Stone's responsibility for the latter's failure to perform certain undertakings to her, both orally and as prescribed by her Last Will and Testament, concerning the handling of her body of work. Obviously, all of us would have preferred that Stone had full command of his mental faculties and had not mulled these matters while hurtling toward his own self-extinction.

It is crucial to an understanding of this matter that Mrs. Meagher intended, first and foremost, that her archives be used now and in the present to advance the state of existing knowledge about the assassination of President Kennedy, and then be placed in a university or college library. This is not instinct, imputation, inference or divining on my part; it is clearly expressed in her Will. Whatever were the content of their private communications, it is clear to me based upon my personal contacts with Stone that he had no interest in the John F. Kennedy matter. I point this out because what I am hearing from both you and Mr. Weisberg revolves around a "scholar-in-residence" concept of staid historians or professional academicians working with these files under some foundation grant or for a doctoral project, or for a seminar with a class of 12,

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rather than the immediate practical needs of present-day researchers and journalists for whom Meagher envisioned her files as a working tool. She served both constituencies.

I have also pointed out that, under the circumstances, Mrs. Meagher's body of work may now be presented without the due consideration which she entrusted to one with whom she had personally and confidentially communicated.

My comments are also intended to both illuminate and complete the record of Mr. Weisberg's influence in this matter; his inordinate curiosity about Mrs. Meagher's sexuality (in addition to her personal views of him); and the treatment which Mrs. Meagher's archives, her work, and her reputational interests have received to date.

In his efforts to urge Greg Stone to leave the archives permanently with Hood, Mr. Weisberg ignored a clear distinction between responsibility to an individual who leaves such a collection, and responsibility to history. While I believe it is possible for one person to perform both, what I am saying is that Stone undertook directly to Mrs. Meagher to "protect and preserve" the body of her work and "use it to advance the state of existing knowledge and understanding of the case" (quotes from the Will). His responsibility also included fulfilling whatever representations he made to her or whatever instructions he noted during their discussions. He could not possibly perform his responsibilities unless he examined her papers. He did not examine her papers because he knew that he had no knowledge, understanding or interest in her work, which is why the subject of my being his "surrogate reviewer" came up. He understood that someone who actually worked with Mrs. Meagher and was close to her ought to at least take a good look at what was there before it passed into other hands. He could not credibly seek a proper permanent home for these papers without knowing what they contained so that he could propose ideas to college administrators. He could not give any consideration to what provisos ought to be attached to a permanent deposit unless he knew what her files contained.

Mr. Weisberg too easily dismissed and belittled Stone's preference (which I shared) that someone acting on Mrs. Meagher's behalf should work out details regarding the placement of her files. Would that Greg Stone (or someone else acting on Mrs. Meagher's behalf) have said to a college: "I'd like to see you give prominent mention of this collection in your admissions catalog. I'd like you to print a catalog of the collection and make it available for a nominal charge. I'd like a representation from you that her library will be preserved intact and kept apart from your general circulation materials. I would like you to ask

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for identification from people wishing to examine her files. I would like you to obtain from the family of Sylvia Meagher a suitable portrait for hanging in your library, which should be mounted with a legend noting that her archives reside here, etc." Mr. Weisberg did a serious disservice to both Mrs. Meagher and Stone by attempting to persuade the latter that he needn't be concerned; someone else at Hood would take care of everything.

Stone was never even interested enough to inventory the contents of her bequest! Would he have even known or cared if someone got into those file cabinets and made off with some of her books, etc., before he turned ownership and possession over to an institution?

It was his responsibility in the first instance to make the kinds of judgments that he and I discussed, as set forth in my memorandum, and to carry out whatever instructions Mrs. Meagher gave to him, which he obviously agreed to perform; it is the permanent repository's responsibility to make their own independent judgments as to how they wish to handle and present the materials.

The pattern of Mr. Weisberg's behavior is manifest to all who have labored in this field, i.e., the venom pervading his assaults against any published author whose renown poses a challenge to his own or who has failed to acknowledge his self-proclaimed primacy in the field of assassination research. Mrs. Meagher is the single major critic of the Warren Commission whose work Mr. Weisberg could not impeach directly. To be blunt, for all his sanctimony about the demands of history, Mr. Weisberg just wants to see what Mrs. Meagher had on him and learn whatever he can about her relationships with a series of young men beginning with Edward J. Epstein and including your writer. No living person who has been involved in this controversy since its inception can be trusted to lay claim to serving the cause of history, which will have to make its own judgments. Each of us has his own agenda (I confess my own need to work with Meagher's files to complete the research necessary to my own projects), and Mr. Weisberg's odor of sanctity both permeates and discredits the repository cum monument-to-himself which he is attempting to build at Hood. Notwithstanding his contributions, he is dangerous, and his special relationship with Hood clouds its pretensions to hegemony in the field of assassination scholarship.

Your argument, simply restated, is that Mr. Weisberg is the center of gravity and all objects of a similar nature must obey the laws of gravity. I reject this as specious, for by the same methodology, Washington, D.C. would be the ideal choice.

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This unremarkable school, Hood College, with its overwhelmingly WASP female student population (and I deplore the infinitesimal proportionate representation of religious, racial and ethnic minorities in its student body, a deeply perverse repository for Mr. Weisberg's King assassination archives) has nothing extraordinary to recommend it except that Harold Weisberg has elected to establish his own personal memorial there (as you know, he is not only donating his files but also his house and land to the school).

As a serious researcher, I could not totally rely on Mr. Weisberg's collection to the exclusion of the National Archives and FBI and CIA reading rooms. Even he admits that people have purloined documents from his files. No serious scholar who works with Mr. Weisberg's material can ever enjoy the same comfort and confidence of viewing the primary source material at its source. In strict academic terms, Weisberg's collection has no greater value than secondary source material. But he feeds you and permits smoking.

Sylvia Meagher knew that Mr. Weisberg was putting his papers at Hood.

As I have indicated elsewhere, the issue is not mere availability of an institution, but which institution would offer the best permanent home for Mrs. Meagher's work, an inquiry Mr. Stone never carried beyond Hood College.

As you are aware, Mrs. Meagher did not align herself ideologically or otherwise with other writers, but preferred that her work be judged on its own merit. The repositing of her materials with Hood (and the concomitant interest of other researchers who are now also thinking that their files should go to the same place as hers and Weisberg's) may one day cause unborn future scholars to mistakenly view Meagher as merely one among a small group of assassination buffs (of whom the most prodigious appearing was Harold Weisberg), whereas the quality of her work is clearly of a higher order and ambition. You should also know that Mrs. Meagher's Will expresses her desire that her archives of books, papers, etc. be preserved as an intact collection. How this may impact upon Hood's (if that is the permanent destination) system is something only they can answer.

By itself, the Meagher archives traces the development of the assassination controversy until shortly after the 25th anniversary, not only through file materials but also through her library of books. It is especially strong for the years 1965-1971, encompassing her active writing and speaking on the case, but also includes much material carrying the case forward through the HSCA and beyond. Granted, her archive does not include the vast quantity of government

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documents obtained by Weisberg under the FOIA. One seeking a broad overview of the case, however, could spend months (if not as long as two years or more depending on one's familiarity with the case) mastering this collection alone before tackling another. Undoubtedly, since both Mr. Weisberg and Mrs. Meagher were contemporaries in the early days of the critical studies movement, and both performed extensive research at the National Archives, there will be much duplication of the source materials found in their respective collections.

The fact that there may not be many academicians around who are already prepared to guide "tourists" through the thicket, is itself an argument for at least attempting to establish a collection such as this at a university with a large and diverse faculty in a variety of disciplines. How better to make this archive widely accessible than to enlighten some major institutions as to its existence, scope and potential, and to gauge their responses?

If these materials are repositated at Hood, what happens if Mr. McKnight decides to relocate to another college or university? In all the years I have dealt with Weisberg, neither he nor (more recently) Greg Stone have mentioned the names or qualifications of any other faculty members who would devote any attention to the assassination materials. And, where is the money to handle these collections coming from? Does Mr. McKnight or anyone else at Hood have the wherewithal to walk into a private foundation and obtain endowment money? How many years is it going to take before they finish cataloging Weisberg's collection and get to Meagher's? How much staff are they willing to devote to this, and on what basis? Suppose Hood wished to sponsor a conference on the case: What are its facilities for accommodating the number of people who could be expected? Where are those people going to stay for two or three days? I ask these questions out of complete ignorance and with all sincerity and respect.

You express interest in Meagher's biographical profile. Certain aspects of this subject may long remain guarded by those who knew her for reasons which transcend personal loyalty. There are still those (including Mr. Weisberg) who, because they could not impeach her work would relish the opportunity to destroy her reputation. I refer not only to Warren critics and conspiracy theorists, but also proponents of the Warren Report who are prone to use any excuse to tarnish the work of the critics. I will not lend myself to voyeurism (although that should not be taken as denigrating your sincere interest) *so long as the work she began may yet help to achieve a practical impact in advancing the case within the lifetimes of those for whom the assassination*

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still holds personal meaning and significance. (That which remains generally unknown about Sylvia Meagher will ultimately, in my opinion, inure to her credit as a courageous dissenter who took great personal risks in achieving her preeminence among the critics). There will be time enough in the future to consider her deepest drives and motivations. I have recorded some brief insights and observations and these will be available; I have to think awhile about the impact they will have upon other people and the cause. I do not trust myself to decide wisely at this time.

Further regarding Greg Stone and Oliver Stone: Greg called me on the day he received the offer. I believe that, if I was not the first, I was certainly among the first he spoke to about this, and that I am the first to have raised as a hypothetical question (assuming he accepted the offer), "Why not take at least a portion of this money and use it to endow Sylvia's papers?" (Stone told me he'd been offered \$25,000. He told Mr. Weisberg \$15,000.) He definitely was not considering using the money for any purpose related to Sylvia's papers or her work. I took notes during the conversation. I stand by my previous account, and I believe he probably spoke to both you and Mr. Weisberg after he had spoken to me and considered how his intentions sounded.

Your use of the word "dissembling" was probably the most apt description. Based on my personal impressions and the information available to me, Stone appears to have been an intelligent and articulate, yet acutely troubled, confused and unstable young man seeking succor and approval, even through the devices of patronization and outright deceit. This suggests the disquieting possibility that Sylvia Meagher saw more in Stone than she might have perceived when in her prime, but then, were it not for my conversations and correspondence attending his suicide, I would not have seen him as I do now.

Sincerely yours,



Roger B. Feinman