

Sociology 480
Quiz II
8/3/00

Abbreviations

WC	-	Warren Commission
WR	-	Warren Report
HW	-	Harold Weisberg
HSCA	-	House Select Committee on Assassinations
JAMA	-	Journal of the American Medical Assoc.

A. Everyone must do question #1. Choose any 2 of the remaining four questions on Whitewash.

1. Identify two significant criticisms one could make of the following statement of a key conclusion of the WR:
"Although it is not necessary to any essential findings of the Commission to determine just which shot hit Governor Connally, there is very persuasive evidence from the experts to indicate that the same bullet which pierced the President's throat also caused Governor Connally's wounds."
2. On what basis did the WC conclude that 3 shots were fired, and why did the Commission have to insist on a 3-shot scenario?
3. How did the WC handle the testimony of FBI spectrographic expert, Gallagher?
4. What was the initial observation of the Parkland doctors and nurses regarding President Kennedy's throat wound? Why did this present a problem for the autopsy doctors and the WC?
5. The Postscript of Whitewash is devoted to what significant discovery HW made on March 30, 1966?

B. Everyone must do question #6. Choose any 7 of the remaining ten questions on Never Again! in this section.

6. Give two examples of how the word "lie" applies to what JAMA published.
7. What conspiracy does HW offer proof of in this book? And who are the principal figures in this conspiracy?
8. What percentage of the Warren Commission records are available to the public?
9. Give two examples of how the FBI tried to control the WC's "investigation" of the assassination.
10. According to apologists for the official story, what role did the Kennedy family play in the autopsy? And what does HW have to say about this?
11. What is Dr. Humes' explanation for the destruction of his autopsy notes, and how does HW challenge it? In this context, what did Dr. Humes get away with in his testimony before the HSCA?

12. Give 3 reasons why Admiral George Burkley, President Kennedy's personal physician, should have been called to testify before the WC.
13. What is the meaning or significance of the title of Chapter 13, "If It Isn't Written Down, It Wasn't Done?"
14. How does Dr. Humes in the JAMA interview contradict his original WC testimony about CE399 (or the single-bullet theory)?
15. What charade did Mr. Specter go through in his questioning of Dr. Perry?
16. What aspect of Oliver Stone's portrayal of the autopsy (in "JFK") did both Humes and Boswell repeatedly challenge in their JAMA interview?

Sociology 480
Take Home Final Exam
8/7/00

A. Answer all four questions. Feel free to use the books, reserve materials, your notes, etc. to complete the exam. You may discuss the questions with your classmates, but I expect your work, as reflected in your written responses, to be your own. I have given suggested page lengths for each essay (single-spaced handwritten or double-spaced typewritten). Your exam must be turned in no later than 1:00PM, Friday, Aug. 11th at my office, Main 132.

1. As I pointed out at the beginning of this course, our two principal texts, Whitewash and Never Again!, represent the earliest and one of the most recent books in the 36+ year history of the controversy surrounding the JFK assassination. In light of this, I want you to identify and discuss any 3 examples of how our knowledge of the deficiencies of the original Warren Commission investigation has expanded and improved over the 30 year period that separates these two books. (1-2 pages)
2. Select any one document (excluding those from Post Mortem in which Mr. Weisberg provides the analysis in a footnote) that I handed out in class or which is contained in the Appendix to "The JFK Assassination and the Failure of Institutions," and discuss this document's significance. Moreover, include in your discussion how the document you selected relates to one of the main points of this course -- the failure of institutions. (Provide a copy of the document along with your essay.) (1 page)
3. Critically analyze the following two pages on the "Neck Wound" that appears in Gerald Posner's 1993 best-seller, Case Closed. Keep in mind that the errors in it may be obvious or not so obvious, such as points Mr. Posner conveniently overlooked in attempting to bolster the official story. (1-2 pages)
4. Read and critically analyze any one article from a major newspaper or magazine (except for Time) that appeared within roughly the first month following the assassination (i.e., 11/23/63 to 12/23/63). You will find these on microfilm near the reference section of the library. Basically, this is a little exercise in what I did in my essay on Time magazine, which you should read to give you some perspective on what to look for in these early articles. (1-2 pages)
(Provide a copy of the article along with your essay.)

weren't done, such as inspecting the spine, dissecting the neck organs, tracing out the bullet tracks, and inspecting the clothing. They should have shaved the head—it's necessary for proper examination of a head wound—but Humes didn't do it, to save time.⁶³ (The Kennedy family did not want the wound shaved, since they intended to have an open casket, and only changed their mind at the last moment).⁶⁴

The findings of the original autopsy physicians have been studied by subsequent panels of leading national forensic specialists. In 1968, a four-member medical panel appointed by attorney general Ramsey Clark concluded the President was struck by two shots from behind, and reaffirmed the original autopsy report. In 1975, the Commission on CIA Activities Within the U.S. (the Rockefeller Commission) reviewed the case, and also confirmed the autopsy results and the Warren Commission conclusions. In the late 1970s, the House Select Committee appointed a nine-member medical panel of experts with vast experience in gunshot wounds. Its members were the first forensic scientists and medical examiners to have complete access to all the photographs and X rays, as well as financial support to conduct the latest scientific tests, including neutron activation and photo enhancements. The Select Committee panel found faults with the autopsy, but confirmed its findings, and held that JFK was struck only by two bullets from behind.

The Neck Wound

The autopsy doctors were unable to figure out the path for the bullet that had entered at the rear base of the President's neck. They could find no exit for that bullet, even conjecturing that it might have penetrated the back for only a few inches and then fallen out during the emergency treatment in Dallas. They did

*There have been suggestions that Humes was under orders to limit the scope of the autopsy, but he insists that is not true. "Nobody made any decision in the morgue except me. Nobody distracted or influenced me in any way, shape, or form." The House Select Committee concluded that Humes had the authority for a full autopsy but only performed a partial one (HSCA Vol. VII, pp. 9-10, 13-14, 191-92).

"He Had a Death Look" • 305

not know there was an exit hole in the front of his neck because they had not examined the President's clothes and did not see the holes made by the exiting bullet through JFK's shirt collar. Moreover, the tracheotomy done by Dr. Perry at Parkland had obliterated the neck wound and it was not until Dr. Humes spoke with Perry over the phone the following day that he realized what had happened.*

Early statements by some Parkland physicians that the wound in the front of the neck was a wound of entrance led to considerable confusion. Of all the doctors involved in treating the President at Parkland, only five—Carrico, Perry, Jenkins, Jones, and Baxter—saw the front neck wound in its original condition before the tracheotomy was performed.⁶⁵

At a press conference following the announcement of the President's death, Dr. Perry said in response to a question that the throat wound he saw "appeared to be an entrance wound."⁶⁶ "As the press is wont to do," says Dr. Perry, "they took my statement at the press conference out of context. I did say it looked like an entrance wound since it was small, but I qualified it by saying that I did not know where the bullets came from. I wish now that I had not speculated. Everyone ignored my qualification. It was a small wound, slightly ragged at the edges, and could have been an exit or entrance. By Sunday, after working on Oswald, I had learned my lesson, and I handed out a written statement to the press and took no questions. I had got a lot smarter in two days."⁶⁷

What of the opinion of the other four Parkland doctors who saw that wound before the tracheotomy? No one at Parkland ever turned the President over, so they did not see the even smaller hole on his back that was in direct line with the one in the throat.**

*There was also some question as to why the location of the entry wound at the rear base of the President's neck is several inches higher than is indicated by the bullet holes in his suit jacket and shirt. Photographs taken during the motorcade show the President's jacket was often bunched and riding up his back as a result of his waving to the crowd. His back brace also pushed his clothing up. Therefore, measuring placement of the holes in the clothing is not an accurate means of determining precisely where the bullet entered the body.

**Although no one at Parkland saw JFK's back wound, Dr. Pepper Jen-

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August 8, 2000

Dear Harold,

This has been a long summer of teaching, but it will be coming to a close at the end of this week. I am looking forward to a two-week break before the regular school year begins.

During this second session of summer school I taught my JFK assassination seminar to a very good group of students, including a 70 year old gentleman who not only has had a long interest in this subject but also is generally very knowledgeable about the 50's and 60's period. He is a retired psychologist and teacher from your neck of the woods, the Baltimore area. His comments and questions in class were often as insightful and educational as anything I was saying. Although the other four students in class had trouble following some of our discussions about political figures and events of that era, I believe on the whole they benefitted greatly from his presence. I certainly appreciated his contribution and frequent support for many of the points I made in class -- especially in connection with our discussion of Never Again! He told me he especially enjoyed reading Howard Roffman's book, which he did in addition to the other reading I assigned.

This man's name is Sigmund Pickus, and he tells me he will be travelling to Gaithersburg, MD to visit his brother in a couple of weeks. He said he'd like to meet you. He is a cancer-survivor and has a close relative on dialysis, so I am sure he will be sensitive to your (and Lil's) difficult health circumstances, of which I have told him. But I believe you will like him if he gets a chance to stop by. I also am going to encourage him to call Jerry McKnight and perhaps stop by the Hood College library to see where your archive will be.

Regarding the course, I believe it went well. I am enclosing copies of the syllabus and other materials which I thought you might like to look at to get some idea of what we did.

I am also enclosing a picture from Claire's graduation. Unfortunately, Claire has been a big source of worry this summer. Although we believe she has the ability, she has never really applied herself too much and so graduated with mediocre grades and no desire to go to college (at least not yet). She probably needs to get a job and mature some more before she will be motivated enough to go on to school.

Hanh-Trang is back from her 3-month fellowship down in Charleston. She studied neo-natal intensive care. Unfortunately, none of the hospitals in the area have a position for a nutritionist with this specialty. She is contemplating some other options until something opens up.

Give our regards to Lillian.

Best,



Sociology 480
Course Outline
Summer '00
G. Ginocchio

I. Nature of the Course

- A. This course will involve a detailed examination of the failure of the investigation of President John F. Kennedy's murder and what that failure reveals about some basic institutions in our society such as government, law, and the media. From a sociological standpoint, this course is based on the premise that as tragic as the death of President Kennedy was, it is far overshadowed by the deceit and cover-up which has characterized the whole history of this controversy and seriously undermined the integrity of government and other basic institutions in our society. And given the fact that now, over 35 years later, we have yet to deal honestly and objectively with this tragic event suggests that these same basic institutions continue to fail us and probably will do so for the foreseeable future.

II. Course Requirements

- A. Required Reading: the following books will be required reading:
(1) Whitewash: The Report on the Warren Report by Harold Weisberg
(2) Never Again! by Harold Weisberg
- B. Reserve Materials: the following books and articles will be on reserve in the library. Some of these titles you will be required to read and others you may use in connection with paper assignments.
(1) Warren Report
(2) Hearings and Exhibits of the Warren Commission (26 vols.)
(3) All of Mr. Weisberg's books our library holds.
(4) Accessories After the Fact by Sylvia Meagher
(5) The Freedom of Information Act and Political Assassinations, Vol. 1 David R. Wrone (ed.) (3 copies)
(6) "The JFK Assassination and the Failure of Institutions: The Sociological Significance of a Major Historical Event" (2 copies)
(7) "Senator Russell Dissents" by Harold Weisberg (2 copies)
(8) JAMA article featuring JFK autopsy doctors (2 copies)
(9) "Press Coverage of the Investigation and Controversy Surrounding the JFK Assassination: The Case of Time Magazine" (2 copies)
- C. Papers and Writing Assignments: everyone will do a couple short papers (roughly 5 pages) and some shorter writing assignments (roughly 2 pages). Details about each of these assignments will be given later.
- D. Exams: there will be two quizzes on the required reading and a take-home final exam which will be comprehensive. This take-home final will be handed out a couple days before the end of the term and will be due no later than the time of our regularly scheduled final exam.
- E. Grades: your grade for this course will be determined roughly as follows:
(1) papers and writing assignments - 50%; (2) reading quizzes - 25%; and (3) final exam - 25%. Class participation, along with attendance, will also be taken into consideration.
- F. Attendance: doing well in this course will depend on keeping up with things, which means regular attendance is a must. Poor attendance will have some adverse impact on your grade.

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Sociology 480
Warren Report Exercise
7/11/00

- A. For this exercise I want each of you to select a portion of testimony and one Commission Exhibit (CE) from the 26 volume Hearings and Exhibits of the Warren Commission. The testimony need be no longer than five pages (which you may excerpt from the complete testimony of a witness) and the CE can be as short as one page (many affidavits are a page or shorter). If there is a particular individual or aspect of evidence that you would like to pursue, let me recommend you consult Sylvia Meagher's subject index to the Warren Commission volumes. Some "witnesses" you might want to avoid. Marina Oswald's testimony, for example, takes up the better part of two entire volumes, although you might be interested in a small portion relevant to some aspect of the case (eg., where she complains of having to give her testimony under duress.).

I want you to provide a xerox copy of the testimony and CE, and be sure to cite it properly when you discuss its meaning, using Professor Wrone's essay as a guide. In terms of discussing it you might consider the inherent soundness or credibility of the testimony; does it support or contradict any aspect of the Warren Commission's conclusions, do the type of questions asked make sense, etc. Your analysis or discussion need be no more than a few pages.

- B. This will be due next Monday, July 17th. Also be prepared to give a brief synopsis of your findings to the rest of the group.

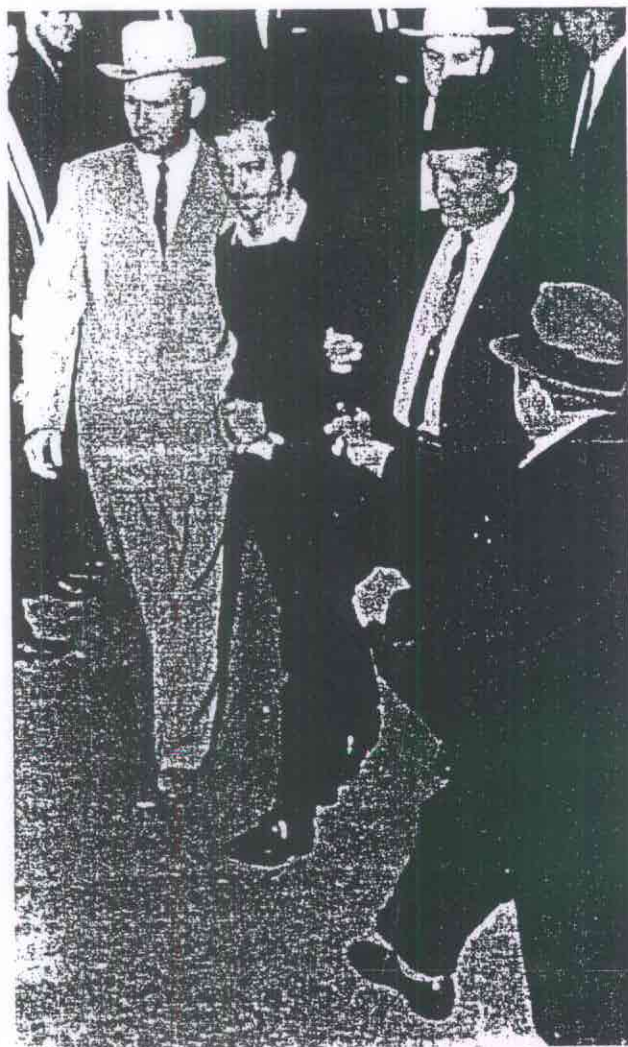
Sociology 480
Paper Topic II
7/17/00

- A. For this second writing assignment I want you to read and critically analyze the attached defense of the Warren Commission by one of its staunchest defenders, former asst. counsel, David Belin. More specifically, what I want you to do is select any 3 aspects of his defense and take issue with these aspects in the context of writing a letter to the editor. In other words, what 3 points would you single out in criticizing Belin's essay if you were incensed and motivated enough to write a letter to the New York Times Magazine? I want you to write this assignment as you would write a letter to the editor, and in that respect I want you to be as concise as possible (no more than 3 pages). If you quote anything from Whitewash or Warren Commission testimony, please cite the appropriate page number (and volume, in the case of the Warren Commission).
- B. This assignment will be due next Monday, July 24th.

NY TIMES
MAGAZINE
Nov. 20, 1988

THE WARREN COMMISSION

Why We Still Don't Believe It



JACK BEERS/DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Above: Jack Ruby, gun drawn, about to kill Lee Harvey Oswald. Right: Chief Justice Earl Warren handing his commission's report to President Lyndon B. Johnson on Sept. 24,

1964. Other members of the panel, from the left: John J. McCloy; J. Lee Rankin, counsel; Richard B. Russell, Gerald R. Ford, Allen W. Dulles, John Sherman Cooper and Hale Boggs.

By David W. Belin

THE TRUTH IS that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman who murdered President John F. Kennedy and Dallas Police Officer J. D. Tippit on that tragic Friday afternoon, Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas.

Yet 25 years after the event, a majority of the American public does not believe the truth. Rather, polls have shown that most Americans believe President Kennedy was assassinated as an outgrowth of a conspiracy.

Over the years, conspiracy theories have ebbed and flowed. During the late 1960's, claims focused on an alleged conspiracy by so-called right-wing conservatives. In the 1970's, the conspiracy buffs concentrated on the Central Intelligence Agency. More recently, the dominant theme has been that the Mafia was in some way involved, with Jack Ruby as the "hit man." A common effect of many of these allegations has been to tarnish

the name of the late Chief Justice Earl Warren and to create the conviction that the Warren Commission was a "blue ribbon cover-up."

Having served as counsel to the Warren Commission investigating the assassination of President Kennedy, and as executive director of the Rockefeller Commission investigating the C.I.A., in which capacity I had access to all C.I.A. files relating to the Kennedy assassination, I know that the right-wing conspiracy theories, the C.I.A. conspiracy theories and the Mafia conspiracy theories are pure fiction. Why are they believed by a majority of the American public? How can it be that an investigation headed by Earl Warren — a man whose in-

David W. Belin, a senior partner in the Des Moines law firm of Belin Harris Helmick Tesdell Lamson McCormick, was counsel to the Warren Commission. He adapted this article from "Final Disclosure: The Full Truth About the Assassination of President Kennedy," to be published this month.

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UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

tegrity was above reproach — has failed to gain the public's confidence?

The easy answer is that there is a general mystique about conspiracy — a mystique encouraged by the shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald by Jack Ruby on Nov. 24, 1963. In fact, when I first went to Washington to serve as counsel to the Warren Commission, I felt that the killing of Oswald by Ruby, a man with underworld connections, might have been some sort of a "hit" ordered to silence the President's assassin.

Of course, common sense would dictate otherwise; as a practical matter, so-called Mafia "hit men" do not choose an area where they are surrounded by the police and immediately apprehended. But apart from this, exhaustive investigation by the Warren Commission proved that Jack Ruby was not conspiratorially involved. Not only was this finding corroborated by a polygraph examination taken by Ruby, at his own request and against the advice of his lawyers, but a happenstance independently confirmed this conclusion.

Oswald was scheduled to be transferred from the city jail, in the police station, to the county jail several blocks away shortly after 10 A.M. on Sunday, Nov. 24. Before the transfer, he was to undergo the third of a series of interrogations by Capt. J. Will Fritz, head of the homicide section of the Dallas Police Department, and representatives of the Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

If no one else had joined the group, Oswald would have been transferred long before Jack Ruby ever got downtown. But at the last minute, Postal Inspector Harry D. Holmes — who had helped trace the money order Oswald used to purchase the rifle with which he killed President Kennedy — joined the group.

Holmes told the Warren Commission: "I had been in and out of Captain Fritz's office on numerous occasions during this two-and-a-half-day period."

"On this morning I had no appointment. I actually started to church with my wife. I got to church and I said, 'You get out, I am going down and see if I can do something for Captain Fritz.'"

"So I drove directly on down to the police station and walked in, and as I did, Captain Fritz motioned to me and said, 'We are getting ready to have a last interrogation with Oswald before we transfer him to the county jail. Would you like to join us?'"

"I said, 'I would.'"

Holmes's inclusion extended the interrogation by at least half an hour.

Ruby shot Oswald at 11:21 A.M., approximately five minutes after Ruby left the nearby Western Union office, where at 11:17 A.M. he had wired funds to one of his nightclub employees. Had Holmes continued on to church with his wife that morning, Jack Ruby would never have had the opportunity to kill Oswald.

Nevertheless, many of the television shows being shown this November, as well as "Libra," the recent "historical novel" by Don DeLillo; and recent "nonfiction" books — including "Contract on America," by David Scheim, and "The Plot to Kill the President," by G. Robert Blakey — all focus on Jack Ruby's alleged role as the Mafia hit man who killed Oswald.

At first blush, it's easy to cast the blame on this group, whom I call the assassination sensationalists, for deceiving the American public. Yet I do not believe they are primarily to blame. Rather, I believe that if there is a dominant reason why the Warren Commission Report has not been accepted by a majority of Americans, it is because all our investigative work was undertaken in secret.

It was far easier to work without the presence of the press. Yet if there had been open hearings, people could have watched on television, heard on radio and read in the newspapers what the key witnesses said as the investigation unfolded. By the fall of 1964, when most of the testimony and exhibits were published in the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission Report, the potential impact of daily reporting had been lost.

If the public had been included at the time, there would be little question, for instance, of whether the shots were fired solely from the southeast corner sixth-floor window of the Texas School Book Depository Building — which happens to be the fact — or also from an area known as the "grassy knoll." People would have heard the testimony of Howard Leslie Brennan, the 45-year-old steamfitter, who was sitting on a retaining wall across the street from the Book Depository and was looking around while he waited for the motorcade to arrive. And they would have learned that this testimony was corroborated by ballistics findings.

Brennan "observed quite a few people in different windows. In particular, I saw this one man on the sixth floor which left the window to my knowledge a couple of times."

Brennan then turned his attention to the approaching Presidential limousine. He watched it turn left at the corner in front of him and then go southwest along Elm and down an incline toward the freeway entrance and a railroad underpass.

"And after the President had passed my position, I really couldn't say how many feet or how far, a short distance I would say, I heard this crack that I positively thought was a backfire."

Belin: "Then what did you observe or hear?"

Brennan: "Well, then something, just right after this explosion, made me think that it was a firecracker being thrown from the Texas Book Store. And I glanced up. And this man that I saw previous was aiming for his last shot. ... As I calculate a couple of seconds. He drew the gun back from the window as though he was drawing it back to his side and maybe paused for another second as though to assure himself that he hit his mark, and then he disappeared. ..."

Ballistically, it was determined that Oswald's rifle was the gun that fired all of the shots that struck President Kennedy and Texas Governor John Connally. Unfortunately, the public never had an opportunity to learn first-hand how Oswald's rifle was found, how it was identified as the source of the bullets and how Oswald was also identified as the killer of Officer Tippit.

The secrecy problems of the Warren Commission were exacerbated by a very unfortunate decision made by Chief Justice Earl Warren at the request of the Kennedy family. The family persuaded the Chief Justice to withhold the X-ray and autopsy photographs of President Kennedy from introduction into evidence as exhibits. Not only was the commission deprived of seeing these documents first-hand, but the public was denied an opportunity to have them independently examined by anyone seeking to verify the conclusions of the autopsy physicians who testified before the Warren Commission.

The Warren Commission counsel with direct responsibility to interrogate these physicians was Arlen Specter, now a United States Senator from Pennsylvania. Specter, I, and almost all the other

lawyers serving with the Warren Commission thought the decision was very inappropriate, but Earl Warren, out of deference to the Kennedy family, would not yield.

Subsequently, commission members Gerald R. Ford, later to become President, and John J. McCloy, the member with the broadest trial and corporate legal experience, agreed with our criticisms. In a letter to me in the mid-1970's, McCloy wrote:

"I agree wholeheartedly with your criticism of the commission itself for failure to demand the original X-rays and photographs. ... The argument against their being viewed by the commission as part of the record was that the X-rays and photographs of the President's body did not in themselves carry as much weight as the interpretation of them by the experts. This together with what I thought to be the oversensitivity of the Chief Justice to the attitude of the family, resulted in a good bit of just criticism of the commission which in my judgment could have been avoided. ..."

In 1975, when President Ford appointed me executive director of the Rockefeller Commission, I was able to see these photographs and X-rays myself. We were investigating charges that the C.I.A. had been conspiratorially involved in the assassination and that shots had come from the front as well as from the rear of the motorcade. An independent panel of physicians helped to re-evaluate all the evidence. The photographs and X-rays were horrifying, but they showed beyond a reasonable doubt that all of the shots that struck Kennedy came from the rear; Governor Connally also was struck from the rear.

Although the conclusions of the autopsy physicians who testified before the Warren Commission have been supported by every panel of physicians that has examined the materials since — an independent panel appointed by Attorney General Ramsey Clark in 1968, the independent panel appointed by the Rockefeller Commission in 1975 and the panel appointed by the House Select Committee on Assassinations in 1978 — the public is really not aware of these facts.

CERTAINLY, ANOTHER important factor contributing to widespread disbelief of the Warren's Commission's findings is the increased public dis-

trust of our national Government, as an outgrowth of Vietnam, Watergate and revelations of misconduct by the C.I.A. The Rockefeller Commission, on which I served, uncovered a wide range of unlawful C.I.A. activities, including the opening of mail in direct violation of Federal statutes, unlawful spying on American citizens, assassination plots directed against foreign leaders in peacetime and the withholding of evidence from the Warren Commission — in particular, evidence that the C.I.A. was engaged in assassination plots against Fidel Castro. This was relevant to the Warren Commission's work, because one of the key areas of investigation concerned whether Fidel Castro was in any way involved in the assassination of President Kennedy in response to the anti-Castro rhetoric and deeds of the Kennedy Administration, including support for the Bay of Pigs operation.

But another important reason why the Warren Commission conclusions are not believed today relates to the 1976-78 investigation of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. In December 1978, the committee members were reviewing drafts of their report. After nearly two years' work and the expenditure of \$5.8 million, they had concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, had assassinated President Kennedy, wounded Governor Connally and killed Officer Tippit. There was no conspiracy.

But less than three weeks later, a major flip-flop occurred. The 600-plus-page report was rejected, and on Dec. 29, 1978, a majority of the committee approved a seven-page "Summary of Findings and Recommendations," which concluded that although Oswald was the assassin, there was a conspiracy involving an unseen second gunman. This invisible person supposedly fired a single shot from the elevated portion of land known as the grassy knoll, to the right front of the passing Presidential limousine. According to the committee summary, this shot missed Kennedy and everyone else, and even missed the Presidential limousine, barely 100

feet from the invisible gunman.

The committee's abrupt turnabout was caused by the mid-December testimony of two acoustic experts, Mark Weiss and Ernest Aschkenasy. They said they were 95 percent certain that the oscillating waves on a Dictabelt recording of police channel communications from the Presidential motorcade indicated the presence of a second gunman firing a fourth shot from the grassy knoll.

Members of the committee staff said the tape came from a microphone, stuck in the "on" position, attached to a motorcycle driven by Dallas Police Officer H. B. McLain.

Several members of the committee dissented from the summary, including Representative Harold S. Sawyer, a Republican of Michigan. In his dissenting opinion, Representative Sawyer wrote that Officer McLain "together with other police officials located near the Presidential limousine at the time the shots were fired in Dealey Plaza all agree that sirens were activated, and motorcycles and other vehicles were subjected to emergency acceleration within not more than a few seconds following the shots' having been fired. No change in the rhythm or intensity of the motorcycle noise appears anywhere on the relevant Dictabelt. There is no audible sound even resembling sirens until a full two minutes following the last of what is interpreted by the acoustical experts as the shots."

Three years later, the acoustical-evidence testimony was refuted in a 96-page report by the committee on ballistic acoustics of the commission on physical sciences, mathematics and resources of the National Research Council. The committee, headed by Norman F. Ramsey, Higgins Professor of Physics at Harvard, included other professors and representatives from corporate research centers such as Bell Telephone Laboratories, Xerox and the International Business Machines Corporation.

In its executive summary, the committee stated: "The acoustical analyses do not demonstrate that there was a grassy knoll shot. ... The acoustic impulses attributed to gunshots were recorded about one minute after the President had been shot and the motorcade had been instructed to go to the hospital."

"Therefore, reliable acoustic data do not support a conclusion that there was a second gunman."

Nevertheless, the refuted 1978 acoustical evidence is still being cited as authority today in books accusing the Warren Commission of a cover-up.

THE PUBLIC HAS IN some areas been misled, but in others it has simply ceased to remember. Most Americans have forgotten about the murder of Officer Tippit, which took place at approximately 1:15 P.M. on Nov. 22, about 45 minutes after the assassination of President Kennedy. Six eyewitnesses who saw the murder itself or saw the gunman fleeing the scene of the crime while he was reloading his pistol positively identified Lee Harvey Oswald as the killer.

William W. Scoggins, a cab driver, typifies their testimony. He was sitting in his cab around the corner from the murder scene. He saw Tippit stop his police car and get out, heard the shots and saw the policeman "grab his stomach and fall."

The gunman then passed within 12 feet of Scoggins: "I saw him coming kind of toward me. ... I could see his face, his features, and everything plain ... kind of loping, trotting. ... He had a pistol in his left hand."

Oswald was arrested a short time later, after running inside the Texas Theater, where he pulled out a concealed weapon as he was approached by police officers. That revolver, ballistics evidence later showed, was the Tippit murder weapon.

The Tippit murder provided the essential link to the assassination. Oswald, it turned out, had purchased the revolver that killed Tippit through the mail under the same alias he had used to purchase the rifle he used to kill President Kennedy. Once these facts were established, all the other evidence came into clear perspective.

Yet Americans still have doubts, fueled by the speculations of assassination sensationalists. In his letter to me, John McCloy, the Warren Commission member, wrote:

"I never cease to be amazed at the willingness of so much of the public to accept the statements of the charlatans and the sensationalists rather than the facts and record. The media and the reviewers were really fatuous, if not worse, but what really astounded me was the doctrinaire approach which so many of our colleges and universities took toward the commission's conclusions. ... It was actually thought 'liberal' to be convinced

that President Kennedy had been shot as a result of a conspiracy by a group of Texas millionaires or chauvinists and that it was quite 'illiberal' to think that he had been assassinated solely by a little 'punk' who perhaps had some personal Communistic leanings."

YET ANOTHER REASON WHY most Americans don't believe the

Warren Commission Report is that our investigation involved hundreds of witnesses and thousands of exhibits. As every experienced trial lawyer knows, natural inconsistencies arise within the testimony of different witnesses to an incident. This is particularly true of a sudden and traumatic event.

Even in mundane matters, the hon-

est recollections of witnesses differ. James Jarman Jr., who worked every day with Lee Harvey Oswald, swore under oath that Oswald "never hardly worked in a shirt. He worked in a T-shirt." Troy Eugene West, who also worked with Oswald every day, swore under oath, "I don't believe I ever seen him working in just a T-shirt. He worked in a shirt all right, but I never did see him work in a T-shirt."

One of the early, better-selling books contending that more than one gunman was involved relied heavily on the notion that President Kennedy had said after the first shot, "My God, I am hit." The Warren Commission found that the first bullet had exited President Kennedy's throat and had struck Governor Connolly, who was sitting directly in front of him. But the opposing theory held that since the President had spoken after being hit, he couldn't have been wounded in the throat; the bullet, then, had taken a different path and Connolly had been struck by a different bullet, fired by a second gunman.

Certainly there was evidence to support the claim that President Kennedy spoke, for this is exactly what Secret Service Agent Roy H. Kellerman testified. He was riding in the front seat of the limousine.

Yet the author never told his readers what the other four passengers in the limousine remembered.

Sitting next to Kellerman was the driver, Secret Service Agent William R. Greer. Asked whether the President said anything after he was hit, Greer testified: "I never heard him say anything; never at any time did I hear him say anything."

There were three other witnesses in the limousine.

Governor Connally said: "He never uttered a sound at all that I heard."

Mrs. Connally said: "He made no utterance, no cry."

Jacqueline Kennedy said: "I was looking this way, to the left, and heard these terrible noises. You know. And my husband never made any sound."

The key to understanding what really happened on Nov. 22, 1963, is first to recognize that the facts of the assassination are distillations of hundreds of recollections and pieces of physical evidence — any of which, ignoring the overall record, could produce a persuasive conclusion, albeit a false one.

If the television networks were to give the same amount of time to the testimony of Brennan, Scoggins, Holmes and others that they have to wild speculations, I believe it would go a long way toward convincing the American public.

One of the reasons I care so much about the truth is that if we can be deceived on these issues, we can also be deceived by a small cadre of people about matters that are far more directly related to the survival of our country — matters of war and peace.

The Warren Commission analyzed all of the evidence, including that from witnesses who disagreed with one another. The overall record showed beyond a reasonable doubt that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed President Kennedy and Officer Tippit.

Any American who takes the time to examine the overall record will agree that the Warren Commission was right. Each and every attempt to prove otherwise can be refuted. The truth has a long fuse, and ultimately it prevails. ■

Sociology 480
Paper Topic III
7/24/00

- A. For this assignment I want each of you to check out any non-governmental JFK assassination website on the Internet. You should print out 1-2 pages of information and/or commentary from that site and then discuss what it is about and how it relates to the approach and information that you have been exposed to in this class. I am hoping to get a bit better feel for how this subject is being handled on the web. If you get stuck, I am sure a reference librarian can help you do a search.
- B. The paper should be roughly 3-4 pages. And please remember to include the relevant pages from the website you access.
- C. This will be due next Tues., Aug. 1st.

Sociology 480
Paper Topic IV
8/1/00

- A. For this final writing assignment I want you to give some thought to the future of the JFK assassination controversy. Specifically, I want you to write an essay focusing on any aspect of this case which you might like to pursue in the future and which you believe would be fruitful in terms of coming to some resolution of this controversy. Your essay should include the following elements: (1) a brief description of an aspect of this case, (2) how you would approach investigating this aspect, and (3) what conclusion(s) you think you might reach and their implication for some sort of resolution to the controversy surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy. (For example, you might focus on clarifying exactly what JFK's autopsy did establish, cutting through all the contradictions and inconsistencies in the testimonies and statements of those who participated in the autopsy.) Remember, this is basically just an outline of what you might do, not the actual article (or even book) you would write.
- B. This essay should be roughly 5 pages. Be sure to footnote any quotations you might use.
- C. It will be due on our last regular class day, Wed., Aug. 9th.

Sociology 480
Whitewash Quiz
7/21/00

A. Answer any 10 of the following 13 questions. Note that I have used the following abbreviations, which you may also use if you wish:

HW - Harold Weisberg
WC - Warren Commission
LHO - Lee Harvey Oswald
TSBD - Texas School Book Depository

1. In terms of the failure of institutions, what failure does HW highlight and discuss in the Preface, at the very beginning of Whitewash?
2. Briefly describe the composition of the WC and how the commission went about its task, as HW discusses this in "A Word About Investigations."
(Note: I am not looking for specific names.)
3. How did the WC treat the testimony of Gov. Connally and his wife?
4. In what sense was LHO a "bird in the hand" to the Dallas Police (and later, the FBI and WC), as HW stresses in the opening of Chapter 3, "The Set-Up for an Assassination?"
5. Identify any 2 pieces of its own evidence which contradicts the WC's assertion that LHO brought the alleged assassination rifle to the TSBD on the morning of the assassination.
6. What was the official Marine Corps' interpretation of LHO's last shooting skills test? Why is this significant?
7. Identify any 3 aspects of the Army tests which are not true to the conditions under which LHO allegedly assassinated President Kennedy.
8. Considering all aspects of the Dallas Police Dept.'s handling of LHO and the evidence against him, identify and briefly discuss any three things they clearly did wrong.
9. HW quotes the Warren Report regarding the person Congressman Ford called the most important witness: "It says, 'Brennan also testified that LHO, whom he viewed in the police lineup the night of the assassination, was the man he saw fire the shots from the sixth floor of the Depository Building.'" What is wrong with this?
10. What was wrong with the police lineups, especially in connection with the witnesses to the Tippit murder?
11. Identify any two ways in which LHO's legal rights were violated.
12. How was Marina Oswald treated by the FBI and WC? And why is she included in HW's chapter on LHO's government relations?
13. Basically, how did the WC handle reports of the "false Oswald?"