

Trade Pub discrimination

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December 17, 1975

Robert Dahlin
Editor, Trade News
Publishers Weekly
1180 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036

Dear Mr. Dahlin:

Your December 1 review, "Fresh Wave of JFK Assassination Titles Suggests a Host of New Theories," disproves the reasons given me by your department of Publishers' Weekly for refusing even to mention the appearance of my last two books on the JFK assassination.

Consultation with your own records will show that I have published by far the greatest amount of work in this field and even the FBI has certified to a federal court that I know more about the subject than anyone in the FBI. This is included in facsimile in the more recent of these newest two books of mine, the only ones Publishers' Weekly has failed to mention.

When I raised this question with Miss Neely, her response was that I did not give PW six weeks advance notice. This was not PW's requirement with my first three books, all of which it mentioned and on none of which it had advance notice.

Mine are close to instant books. I did inform PW in advance of publication of the latest, but I could not give six weeks notice when the book was printed less than a month after it was completed.

However, your article is of an entirely different nature. I believe you have compounded this discrimination by making no reference to these books, the only ones to bring any new fact to light (you have also discriminated against a truly fine book by Howard Roffman, Presumed Guilty).

Reviewers are always in a difficult position when they deal with subjects of complexity; thus, I cannot really fault you for not recognizing the book ghosted for Hugh McDonald as an overt fraud. It is a complete fabrication as anyone familiar with the most elemental fact that is beyond question should immediately recognize. The only other works you mention are cheap commercializations without substance, without real value, deceptive in all cases, and largely unoriginal whether or not the laws about plagiarism have been violated.

So here you are (nothing personal) claiming that "if the investigation is reopened, book publishers will have proved instrumental in initiating the change of mind." The actuality is exactly the opposite. Those in the Congress who have been in contact with me are sick and distressed over all the wild and irresponsible conjecturing, none of which can withstand the examination of a real expert.

Consistent with the long record, painful to one with a love of books going back to childhood and with my experiences, almost without exception the commercial publishers have eschewed substantial work

and have gone for the crap they can commercialize.

Anson's book, for example, is a hasty rehash of the work of others, both uncredited and wrongly credited, to which he has added most of the nut theories that have plagued and crushed the few of us who have done responsible work. He visualizes in your own words a conspiracy that omits only the whores' union.

PW, because of its unique position, assumes a responsibility I believe it has deliberately disregarded with respect to my work. The two books it refused to mention made headlines coast-to-coast as news, commonly page one, and although books they were new and with news content. The first of these, the fourth of the WHITEWASH series, was made possible by and reports an unprecedented Freedom of Information lawsuit by which I obtained and reproduced in facsimile 90 top secret pages of Warren Commission executive sessions. It and part of the second of these two books, ^{which} another of these top secret executive sessions was reproduced in facsimile, are perhaps the most widely ripped-off material of recent times, including by two of the authors you mention.

So, while you glory in the nonperformance of commercial publishers and their rehashes and fabrications, you suppress the only works that bring to light anything new and factual. There are, for example, in POST MORTEM, the book about which PW knew in advance, almost 200 pages of facsimile reproduction of documentary suppressed evidence, some formerly top secret. In order to be able to do this, aside from the enormous labor and cost involved for a one-man publisher, I had to file and prevail in a series of Freedom of Information lawsuits. No man, rich or poor, has filed as many. The Congress cited one as the first of those requiring amending of the law. That amending is a boon to the entire publishing industry as well as to the country.

It may not be your intent, but the practical purpose accomplished by this discrimination by PW, which follows the change in its ownership, is to deny booksellers knowledge of the existence of books that are entirely unique, books that are available commercially and under normal commercial terms. You have denied booksellers the profit they could have made. You have denied book readers the knowledge they could have acquired/ You have denied countless libraries and institutions the information they want. And you have put some of those who depend upon you and your unique position to considerable cost so that they can do business properly and honestly. Why, for example, should conscientious booksellers have to place long distance calls to me to find out if I am the publisher whose work their customers read about on the front pages of their newspapers and they see nothing about in PW?

Because of the representations made in your article and because it goes back as far as it does, I believe you owe your readers and me some mention of the existence of these two titles.

So that you can compare it with the regurgitation you praise in Anson's commercialization, I enclose herewith a copy of POST MORTEM. You will find in the appendix and in facsimile documents that are without precedent in our history. Such as the President's own physician approving the destruction by burning of the records of the President's autopsy; his "verification" of the total disproof of

the Warren Report, his death certificate that the Warren Commission never even had, and countless other documents that I think, in any fair appraisal, are close to unique.

I did offer a review copy to PW and received no response.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

P.S. If you want a copy of WHITEWASH IV: TOP SECRET JFK Assassination Transcript for purposes of evaluating whether or not Publishers' Weekly has met its responsibilities, although I think I sent one, I will be happy to send you another.