

Mr. John F. Kennedy, Jr.
John F. Kennedy Library Foundation
P.O.Box 836
Boston, Mass. 02103

7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, Md. 21701
6/16/86

Dear Mr. Kennedy,

Although the possibility of a personal response to a mass mailing appears to be slight, despite failing health and its limitations I make the effort for reasons that will become apparent. Beginning with confessions of prejudice: the only reason I voted for your father was Richard Nixon and when your father was assassinated I believed he was on his way to becoming one of our greatest presidents. And two personal notes at least one of which you have no way of knowing. You were a very attractive youngster and for an Easter White House egg roll I tried to give you a real egg that weighed three-quarters of a pound, as I did every Easter to sick children in Washington and Baltimore hospitals, but I failed, probably because someone thought I had some kind of personal benefit in mind, as I did not. Your sister may or may not have remembered and mentioned the second matter, a long afternoon I spent with the counsel for your Uncle Teddy's Freedom of Information subcommittee. This conversation was so intense that I was entirely unaware of the fact that your sister, then a teenager, was sitting crosslegged on the floor nearby and listening. My wife told me after we left Tom Susman's office. That conversation related to the better-known part of my work, which is not on your father's assassination as much as how government functioned in that time of great crisis and thereafter. To the best of my knowledge I am alone among critics of the investigation in not being a conspiracy theorist. I also made a study of aspects of your father's presidency, intending a book my age, 73, and impaired health will now make impossible for me. This, really, is the reason I write in the hope that this letter may reach you.

As war is too important to leave to generals, I believe that history is too important to leave to professional historians. Too many conform their work to their preconceptions and the revisionists have already gone to work on your father, aided and abetted by those who have other interests to serve.

Your uncle, Sargent Shriver, may remember me because I was able to arrange for the first really good public attention the Peace Corps got. Once after that when I was in his building for other reasons and he was told about it, he had me taken to his office, asked me to go to work for him, and then called his division chiefs in to talk with me.

I am leaving a large archive relating to the investigation of your father's assassination of which perhaps a quarter of a million pages ~~is~~ is of previously withheld official records, a rather large additional part of which is the records of

my FOIA litigation to force disclosure of withheld records, my own work and perhaps 15,000 letters from total strangers about all of this. (The rest relates to the investigation of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I think it is fair to represent that I have done just about all the original work that is not in accord with the official solutions in both cases and that it is both responsible work and is so accurate that after more than 20 years I am aware of not a single substantive error.) If your library is interested in arranging for copies of any or all of this that is possible under the current arrangements.

I do not intend to be forward or to impose in any way, but I do believe that it might make a worthwhile addition to the oral histories for me to be interviewed with regard to that part of your father's presidency the revisionists have been rewriting. If this interests you or your sister, we are not much more than a half hour away from the Shriver place in Rockville. Although I do not rule out any professional historian (and several are among my best friends) I think the end product would be better if no point of view were imposed in the questioning.

The fierce official opposition to disclosure under FOIA is, I believe, an aspect of all of this that is of considerable importance. Right now, for example, the Department of Justice has procured a judgement against me in one case by, and please believe me, this is literally true, completely undenied perjury, fraud and misrepresentation. Because it also sought and obtained a judgement against my lawyer, since abandoned, I am perforce my own lawyer in the pending appeal. It would have been much easier and certainly less costly if I'd merely paid the judgement but if I had I'd have assented to the creation of evil and repressive precedents and what might become the de facto end of the Freedom of Information Act as we have known it. This means the most serious restriction on the right of the people to know what their government has done and is doing, to me, like political assassination, a subversion of representative society.

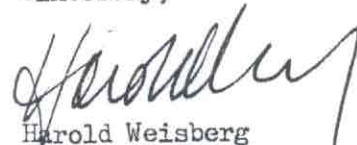
I have no ulterior purpose in writing you and I will not make any public use of this letter. Nor do I ask anything for myself. Rather is it that my age and serious circulatory impairments prevent the completion of the rather large inquiry I have already made, one that has withstood time's testing and, among authentic scholars is described as pre-eminent in the field. Perhaps you may understand this better to know that I am the first of my family to be born outside one of the most murderous and repressive societies and thus, in the words of a poem that was one of your father's favorites, have promises to keep in the (now fewer) miles before I sleep.

I thank you for the invitation, which I am please to accept, and I do hope that you and your sister may come to have an appreciation of your father that you will

not get easily from the extensive and partisan work of ^{so many} the professional historians.
(As you may have learned in your formal education, for the most part they quote each other, with little original work other than by those who seek to deprecate him.)

Resumed 7/13/86. With my only regular income slightly more than \$350 a month I do not include a check with this. However, I do include a copy of my 6/23/86 letter to the National Archives. For the many years I've not been able to get there I've had a cash deposit that bore no interest. I've asked that it be transferred to your library foundation. I've heard nothing from the Archives but I do assume that they will forward my deposit and will inform us both, as I asked.

Sincerely,


Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21701

John F. Kennedy Library — Honorary Fellows Program

Nominee's Official Registration Form

for

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Note if your name and/or address is not correct, please make the necessary changes.
J368

I accept with pleasure this special invitation to join the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation as *See enclosed letter*

Honorary Fellow (\$25) _____	Associate Fellow (\$35) _____	Sustaining Fellow (\$50) _____	Senior Fellow (\$100) _____	Life Fellow (\$500) _____
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By accepting this special invitation, I am entitled to all rights and privileges of Fellowship, including *free admission, newsletter*, the recording of my name in *the leatherbound Register of Honorary Fellows* to be placed on exhibit, as well as *invitations* to special programs and receptions.

Because generous support will help to enrich our political process with a better understanding of President Kennedy's contributions to the American democratic tradition, I wish to help the Library's Endowment Campaign with an additional tax-deductible contribution of \$_____.

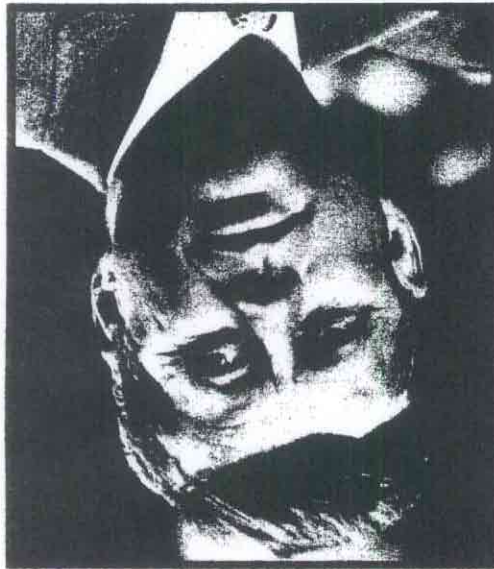
I am enclosing a total of \$_____ which I understand is tax-deductible and entitles me to all the privileges described.

I decline with regret your kind invitation. Nevertheless, I would like to support the Library and help it expand its worthwhile Programs. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of \$_____.

Please make your check payable to the "John F. Kennedy Library Foundation" and mail in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.

John F. Kennedy Library Foundation · Boston, Massachusetts

*John F. Kennedy Library
Honorary Fellows Program*



What I Remember Most About President John F. Kennedy...

That he inspired so many people so many of whom were young; that he sought to turn the world around to make a better and safer life for all people; and that he grew in the presidency as perhaps no other president ever did.

Selections from new Honorary Fellows' anecdotes and reminiscences will be included in a forthcoming issue of the John F. Kennedy Library Newsletter.

*The Board of Directors
Cordially Invites You
to Accept Nomination as an
Honorary Fellow of the
John F. Kennedy Library Foundation*

John F. Kennedy, Jr.

Friday Morning

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg,

I am writing to invite your personal participation in a cause that I care very deeply about -- my father's memorial, the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum.

As you know, this year is the twenty-fifth anniversary of my father's inauguration as President of the United States.

And our family feels that it is especially appropriate in this anniversary year to initiate a new campaign to raise funds so that my father's Presidential Library may have permanent economic security. Of all the Presidential Libraries, the Kennedy Library is the only one without such an Endowment.

On behalf of all my family, I am extending an invitation to you to be a part of this memorial to my father, by becoming an Honorary Fellow of the John F. Kennedy Library.

You would be joining a limited and very exclusive number of America's most distinguished citizens -- past, present and future leaders in our country's political, cultural, and economic life.

At the time of my father's death, he had only just begun to plan the Library that would hold his Presidential papers and commemorate the major events of his Presidency. But today, because of the tireless dedication of my mother and Caroline, the other members of my family, and my father's many friends and supporters in communities across America, the Library is a reality.

But now, in order for the Library to fulfill its mission and carry out its worthwhile programs, additional sources of private funding are needed.

As you may have seen from news reports, our Endowment Campaign was highlighted by a remarkable evening last June, when President and Mrs. Reagan graciously attended a fund-raising dinner for the Library at my uncle Senator Edward Kennedy's home.

Gifts obtained through occasions like that are an essential part of the Endowment Campaign. But I know my father would not have wanted to limit the Campaign to large gifts or special events. He would have found it especially appealing to have the Library's work supported by a large number of donors from all parts of the nation.

And so our family has decided that a key part of the Endowment Campaign should be the Honorary Fellows Program which I am asking you to join -- so that Americans throughout the country who loved my father and admired his leadership and his contributions to our land can share, at least in some small way, in the Library that is his enduring memorial.

I hope that you will wish to make a contribution to the Library, and that you will make your gift as substantial as possible. We feel, however, that the amount of the donation needed to qualify as an Honorary Fellow should be set at the modest level of twenty-five dollars.

In addition to the support you will be giving to the Library's important work, your individual donation, which is tax-deductible, will also entitle you as an Honorary Fellow to these other benefits:

- You will receive an Honorary Fellows membership card, granting free admission to the Library for you and your family, as well as discounts at the Museum Store.
- You will receive a special limited reproduction of the portrait of my father by the distinguished artist Jamie Wyeth.
- You will also receive the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Newsletter, published periodically during the year to keep the Honorary Fellows and others informed of the activities of the Library.
- Your name will be recorded in a bound leather "Register of Honorary Fellows." The Register will be updated each year, and will be maintained in a special exhibit in the Library, on view to the hundreds of thousands of Americans who visit the Library during the year.

Additional privileges will be offered to Honorary Fellows from time to time, including invitations to

attend receptions at the opening of new exhibits, notices of distinguished lecturers, significant events, and other special occasions at the Library.

But I hope that more important than any of these tokens of appreciation will be the satisfaction you will feel from your role in helping to preserve my father's memory and the record of his achievements, and in enhancing our appreciation and understanding of his contributions to American democracy.

Visitors to the Library often remark that the Museum and its exhibits make the events of my father's Presidency come alive again -- the Peace Corps and the Space Program, the Berlin Crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Alliance for Progress in Latin America and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty with the Soviet Union, the New Economics that produced such an extraordinary burst of growth, the achievements on Medicare and civil rights that meant new hope for progress and justice for every citizen.

I have been to the Library many times since its dedication in 1979. And each time I go there, I learn something more about my father and his times. Growing up, I have met countless men and women who were my age when he was President, who tell me how their lives were touched or changed by his example -- how proud he made them feel to be Americans, how he inspired them to acts of generosity or service in their own communities.

But, more than this, the Library also evokes the high spirit and ideals of his Presidency and his New Frontier. You get a sense of America on the move again, the zest for politics and the love of history, the wit and humor, the immigrant heritage and Irish good nature, the sense of progress and adventure, the quest for excellence, the lively exchanges at the Presidential press conferences, the grace under pressure.

Most of all, there was the feeling of hope, the promise of change, the confidence that we are equal to any challenge, the optimism that our country's best years are still ahead.

"Each person can make a difference," my father liked to say, "and everyone must try." And the Library's greatest value may well be its success in stirring the memory of those years, tapping the ideals of America at its best, kindling a commitment by citizens in our own day and generation to try to make a difference -- to make our country and planet a better place.

So I hope very much that you will decide to accept this invitation to participate as an Honorary Fellow in this hopeful endeavor and in the ongoing work of my father's Presidential Library. In a sense, it is an opportunity for all of us to advance my father's ideals of peace and justice and progress for America and for peoples everywhere.

For your convenience, I am enclosing a prepaid envelope addressed to me and an acceptance form for the Honorary Fellows Program. Please let me know by return mail whether you wish to accept or decline this

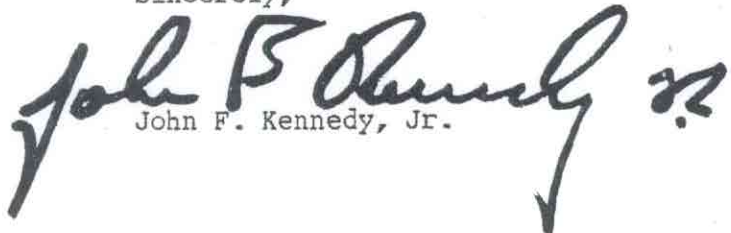
let me know by return mail whether you wish to accept or decline this invitation to become one of the limited number of the original Honorary Fellows.

At the very least, I need to have your decision within two weeks, because we intend to go to press next month with the first edition of the printed scroll of the names of the original Honorary Fellows.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

With my warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John F. Kennedy, Jr." with a small flourish at the end. Below the signature, the name "John F. Kennedy, Jr." is printed in a standard serif font.

JFK:mo

P.S. For those who are able to afford a larger contribution to the Library, we are also establishing within the Honorary Fellows Program a special category called "Senior Fellows" -- open to those who contribute one hundred dollars or more. In addition to all of the privileges mentioned above, each Senior Fellow will also receive these other gifts:

- (1) A bronze Kennedy Presidential Medallion, available only from the Library.
- (2) An exact replica of my father's famous PT-109 tie clip, also available only from the Library.