

David R. Wrone  
1518 Blackberry Lane  
Stevens Point, Wi 54481

Dear Harold

This AM I mailed by overnight express 100 pages of my response to the reviewers of Zapruder. I felt sullied having to do it, for I think Commandant Kurtz is much more rotten than I supposed. Oh well. It amounts to a mini-book.

Enclosed are the pages you requested re Kurtz/ Kansas.

I also note that as regards the road stripe, you corrected that Commission altered photograph in WWII the next year. You are the only one who did this. Kurtz claims to know your works. He could only have gotten the information on the fifth stripe from WWII. Thus he knew beyond question the truth, or maybe he is just stupid.

I also include my review of Kurtz book from the J. of Southern History. I had forgotten all about it. It is not so good as Jim Lesar's but still it is the type of review that would fester in the craw of a man like Kurtz..

Received a phone call as I was typing this from a young man in Schaumburg, a Chicago suburb he is going <sup>to</sup> be on the library board to have your Case Open put in beside Posner's Case Closed and is talking about seeking legal help to force the issue, it needs be.

Regards  
  
David

**Wrone, David**

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**From:** CMossburg@aol.com  
**Sent:** Friday, January 07, 2000 3:06 PM  
**To:** dwrone@uwsp.edu  
**Subject:** Harold Weisberg

Dr. Wrone;

I am a friend of Harold and Lil's and he asked that I email you his letters, along with quotes from certain documents that will help you. I will retype his letters to you as it would take a great deal of space to scan it and download them and this might be a problem. To this end, I am also breaking this down to several emails. Please note that I am also sending these things Priority Mail so that you will have the hard copies for your edification. Feel free to use me as an intermediary for your communications with Harold. Sincerely,  
Katy Mossburg

1/07/00

Dear Dave,

As soon as I read Brigg's letter and its two enclosures I asked Jerry to come and make copies so he could write you separately and so that he could go over what I wrote and give me his suggestions and opinions. But I was so troubled when I went to bed after reading it that I had trouble sleeping. I have little time now because I leave for dialysis in an hour and a half. But doing what I will want you to consider will take time and not meet the 20th deadline. How often they meet, Briggs doesn't say but it is clear he wants to present your answer by then. So, I'll do what I have in mind in two ways, one that may be able to meet the deadline and one that will go into more and inform Kansas more as well as be another fragment in the records for history. I will write this, these things, to you separately so that you can ignore them, send them to Briggs as they are or select from them what you want to give him.

The real problem is that just about all academicians are subject-matter ignoramuses and that includes Briggs and his committee.

Also a real problem is Kurtz's dishonesties and as I recall his omission of a single accurate reference to what he says is inaccurate in mine, often as he says that. I will be asking you to ask Briggs to ask Kurtz to specify where he says I am wrong and to provide what he believes is the correct version. I think if Briggs is willing to disregard the deadline and ask Kurtz to do that, all that Kurtz criticizes will crumble.

I expect to see Jerry after dialysis today. I'll ask him if he can email what I do as I do it. That might make it possible, weak as I am now, to do it before the deadline expires.

But I also think if you make the changes, these people who know nothing about the assassination want made, you will have inaccurate books and Kansas will be published a seriously flawed book that will be too much like the abundant assassination junk.

In haste,  
Harold

## Wrone, David

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**From:** CMossburg@aol.com  
**Sent:** Friday, January 07, 2000 6:22 PM  
**To:** dwrone@uwp.edu  
**Subject:** Harold cont'd

Dr. Wrone;

Here is the second letter written to you by Harold.  
Katy

1/07/00

Dear Dave:

What Michael Briggs sent you came only a little before my early bedtime. I read it and went to bed troubled by it. Not by Briggs' letter. It reflects that he is honest, fair and helpful, but he does not recognize the position which he and others are when they ask for peer reviews on the assassination. I have been in this longer, more intensively and in frequent contact with others, and despite what the reviewers say, I know of only four college professors who are legitimate experts on the assassination, and despite his having published a book, Kurtz is not one of them. Two are historians, and two are sociologists.

I will address this separately as soon as I can. But particularly with the deadline so close I would like you to please ask Briggs if he will ask Kurtz to be more specific in his allegations of error on my part and to provide what he regards as the correct version. I think this is required by Kansas for its own protection in the event, and I assure you it is the actuality, that Kurtz is not correct in what he says. I believe it is also necessary in fairness to me.

After a troubled night with less sleep than at 86 and not well I need, I remember in what Kurtz did say in attributing mistakes to me, in not a single case did he make any case at all. I will, of course, respond, but without the specifics I seek and will be specific in addressing, Kansas is in the position of taking Kurtz's word over mine, and it knows nothing about me and if it really knew Kurtz, it would not have asked a peer review of him.

In the taking my word part I state that in all the years since the first Whitewash was published in 1965, with all the severe criticisms in it of the Commission and of its staff, I have yet to receive a single call or letter from any of the staff or the Members in which it alleges that what I wrote about him in what grew to be 10 books was in any way unfair or inaccurate. In fact, one of the members, Senator Richard Russell, encouraged my work until his death. I can provide the opinion of the staff member he had read it and offer his opinion of Whitewash and the next 3 books I wrote. (High Praise!)

Despite the fact that I was suing the Department of Justice and it's FBI the department's appeals officer, who described himself as a history buff, asked me to file my appeals from withholding under FIOA in detail and with documentation. They take up three jammed file drawers. Or, he asked me, not the FBI, to make that particular record for history.

I was confronted by all those many FIOA lawsuits by FBI lying that was often perjury. In fact, FIOA was amended by the Congress in part just over that and it was Senator Edward Kennedy who made that part of the legislative history. In the first lawsuit filed under the amended Act, I attributed perjury to the FBI. I did not do it the safe way, through lawyers' pleadings, which are immune. I put myself under oath and made myself subject to perjury if I lied. Eyeball to eyeball, the FBI and the Department blinked. Their defense was an admission, was not a defense, but the judge accepted their irrelevancy. They filed a response in which they said I could make such allegations ad infinitum(?) because I knew more about the assassination and the surrounding events than anyone working for the FBI.

I may have, in the past, sent you this pleading or the first pages of it and that page of the Congressional record. I will repeat that when I can, but I cannot send you three jammed file drawers. I enclose what is now possible this early morning when what I can mail must be in my box when I leave for dialysis before 6 a.m.

These are credentials Kurtz, professor that he is and boasts of, does not

have.

What his credentials on this subject are, the review in the Journal of American History makes clear. I enclose that.

Kurtz has personalized this, so I think that it is not unfair to report a bit about Kurtz. I'll enclose the page if I have time. He asked to be heard by the Assassination Records Review Board when it heard people in New Orleans for the purpose of being told when the board could find withheld assassination records. Kurtz then told the board that he had seen Oswald and a strange former FBI agent who had a private detective agency, Guy Banister, together. Now Banister is one of the more outlandish assassination fictions.

But Kurtz did not tell that to the FBI after Oswald was charged with being the assassin. I know this because I did what Kurtz did not do, I filed a long series of FIOA lawsuits to bring to light what I could [think] of that was suppressed. In the end it came to about a third of a million pages, official data on which I draw and Kurtz does not. He never asked me for a single page of them, although it is well known in the files that I give free access to all those files and to our copier.

The choices are that Kurtz did not see Oswald and Banister together, or he lacked the patriotism to tell the FBI that he had.

In haste,  
Harold

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cate that representatives of heavily black districts generally have a more "pro-Black" voting record, although the relation is not precisely linear. This is also true when elected officials are black: a representative from a predominantly black district will be more race conscious than one with a racially mixed constituency.

To oversimplify, the research reported in this book generally supports Key's theory of a gradual coming together of the politics of North and South, as well as his prediction that widespread black-voter participation would alter the political culture and behavior of the region's officials. These findings, however, are qualified by the caveat, repeated in several variations by the authors, that for all its change the region retains a political distinctiveness.

These essays, workmanlike and well edited, are rather severely empirical. They are nonetheless accessible to the intelligent undergraduate and nonspecialist, although written for a professional audience.

Rice University

CHANDLER DAVIDSON

*Crime of the Century: The Kennedy Assassination from a Historian's Perspective.* By Michael L. Kurtz. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, c. 1982. Pp. xii, 291. \$17.50.)

Academics have ignored the assassination of President Kennedy. Professor Kurtz thinks they have erred because they have an obligation to address such crucial events in our nation's immediate past in order to provide society with a comprehensive perspective. After describing the murder scene he presents the Warren Commission's findings, which unfortunately shaped the public mind. He carefully examines the ballistics and medical evidence as well as witness testimony before delving into the recent, inept congressional probes to reach the conclusion that the investigations failed. Finally, he offers his theory of the assassination. The effort is impressive but falls short of the goal of providing a thorough reexamination of the assassination.

Official documents, while often prepared by apparently neutral professionals, must be examined critically. This is particularly true in the study of the Kennedy assassination. Professor Kurtz demonstrates some analysis; for example, he shows that the claim of Oswald's palm print on the alleged murder weapon is unsupported. However, he accepts many key documents with little question. An illustration is the autopsy protocol, the central instrument in this criminal inquiry. While in the hands of the U. S. Navy the protocol silently went through a succession of variants that included alterations in major facts before ending in an official published version. Critical analysis must consider its sullied history.

His notes suggest a strong reliance on original documentation, yet they can rarely be used. The references to "FBI Papers" typically omit finding numbers unique to each document. Moreover, these records were not gratuitously assembled by the FBI; they were forced into the public domain by responsible critics. It is still convention to cite the many similarly based works by critics who originally brought most of the information into discussion, for example,

Harold Weisberg's *Whitewash* (1965) and Sylvia Meagher's *Accessories After the Fact* (1967). Kurtz shows the lack of credibility of the witness used by the commission to place Oswald on the sixth floor at the alleged scene of the crime; the witness gave an earlier story placing him on a different floor. In an article (1971) Meagher first revealed the conflict and clearly identified Oswald's placement on the first floor. Kurtz places Oswald on the fifth floor. Also, the source is an FBI interview, not an affidavit. It would have been pertinent to add that in between these clashing accounts, officials speculated that the witness "would change his story for money" (Commission document 735, p. 296.)

Errors of fact suffuse the text. Policeman Tippit was taken to Methodist Hospital, not Parkland Memorial Hospital. Neutron activation analysis is a test of half-life decay, not simply a test conducted by submitting subjects to radiation. The FBI in token response to Civil Action 75-226 reluctantly gave the court seventy-two miscellaneous, disconnected pages on neutron-activation analysis, not a seventy-two-page report. It is true that the dented cartridge case found at the scene will not hold a bullet, but the actuality is that violence inflicted after firing, such as ejection, can create a dent.

His argument contains several major elements that a more critical review of the evidence would not uphold. Most important, however, the omission of two shots impairs his assessment. The "Aldrich" shot scarred the north sidewalk of Elm Street, the street where Kennedy met his death. Another shot struck the curb of Main Street, spraying concrete and wounding a citizen, James Tague. Each of the omitted shots, having occurred at a time and a place incompatible with the federal evidence, wrecks the official findings of a lone assassin firing three shots. The curbstone section now rests in the National Archives with an unexplained concrete patch over the original metal-smear bullet crater. The FBI's scientific tests were conducted on the patch which, they reported, was not a bullet smear.

The last chapter departs from historical principles to interpret the murder scene. It violates the cardinal rule of history never to speculate but to remain faithful to evidence even if it leaves perpetual blanks in the narrative. He omits clashing facts; for example, the Tague and "Aldrich" shots. He tentatively posits a theory of Cuban government involvement but wants more documentation before fully accepting it. But to reach his cautious conclusion, he does not consider several well-documented, domestic right-wing threats against President Kennedy's life, including four in Texas alone. At the same time he excludes the possibility of plots within portions of the government and armed forces which, given the tumult of 1961 to 1963, in theory ought to have also been entertained. Certainly, many agencies gave investigative bodies incomplete, often inaccurate, and sometimes misleading information. The Warren Commission members did not trust the FBI's investigation and secretly voiced their fear of the agency.

No credible evidence connects any group or individual, including Oswald, to the murder. The implication poses a major task for historians of Cold War America.

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DAVID R. WRONE