

ies we have of the Zapruder film are complete and in their original condition or order. Whomever was responsible for cutting up these films and burning parts of them with projector lamps made sure that we might not have enough film left to authenticate the original, which the government and Kodak, so far, have been unable to do.

Reductio ad absurdum of our alteration arguments will not work.

The evidence, when you give it some thought, is that the Zapruder film remains the biggest hoax of our time, perhaps in history, and there have been a lot of them. What we are looking at throughout this article is the minutiae of the government and Kodak trying to make some progress, running with what we researchers had previously pointed out, in approaching the overall problem. I don't think they went about it the right way because they ignored content, and only considered the technical aspect of some of the anomalies in the film and its copies. This may be somewhat helpful, but leaves us farther from our goal. Their goal, perhaps, was to create new puzzles and exhaust us. We will not be fatigued, as Kennedy used to say. We must go on.

We may actually be closer to proving the film is fake, though, than we ever were. This is a new field, too, and new fields have a habit of becoming established and of making great advances in human understanding—of often proving what seemed improbable, like flying, or radio or television or computers. I think we are closer than we realize.

Notes

1. Doug Horne, ARRB, report of call to Bruce Jamieson, 7 March, 1997.
2. ARRB report of interview with Frank R. Sloan, March 10, 1997.
3. *Killing the Truth*, H. Livingstone, p. 511-512.
4. Zavada report to the ARRB, "Meeting Minutes," with Dick Blair and Phil Chamberlain, 8 August 1997 p. 2.
5. Doug Horne, ARRB memo of his visit to the office of Jamie Silverberg, Henry Zapruder's lawyer, memo dated 11 April 1997.

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LIVINGSTONE'S CREATION SCIENCE AND THE ZAPRUDER FILM

by
Hal Verb

"We see what we see because we miss all the finer details." A. Korzybski There may be some who think that perhaps a certain cottage industry has arisen because of how the famed Zapruder film has been interpreted by many Kennedy assassination critics of whatever persuasion - conspiracy or no conspiracy- but at least in one case a new "creation science" has emerged which concludes that the Zapruder film has been altered to conceal the conspiracy. Indeed, to use writer Harrison Livingstone's own phraseology "the Zapruder film was *created* (my emphasis) as films are edited in Hollywood." So now it appears that the JFK research community is face to face with a similar situation wherein the Kansas state schools are up against teaching creation science as a legitimate scientific method. In Livingstone's case he informs us that, according to his creationist theory, the film was "heavily edited and assembled from different pieces."

What follows is a response to Mr. Livingstone's article in the November, 1999 issue of "The Fourth Decade" ("The Zapruder Film: A Study in Deception, Part IV").

To begin with and for some mysterious reason (that perhaps the editor can best explain) it appears to me that, since all four of Livingstone's articles have appeared regarding his proposed Z-film alteration, no one in the research community has seen fit to comment. Can this be because that community agrees with Mr. Livingstone and therefore no reply is necessary? I must say I find this unchallenging scenario a bit difficult to accept and, in fact, I do not believe that the research community is heavily on the side of Z-film alteration.

In previous articles in "Fourth Decade" where I rebutted arguments offered by Fetzer, Twyman and Mantik and at assassination conferences in Dallas (before both Lancer and COPA) I openly challenged those mentioned above and anyone else to refute my arguments. None of them did and, now, again, I offer the opportunity to Mr. Livingstone to refute my past claims as well as those presented in this article. I trust that he will not use the

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argument that he is unfamiliar with my articles or my conference talks (available on TV tape should he need them). Before addressing certain issues raised in Livingstone's article I want to counter his argument about the use of "reductio ad absurdum" as not being a "correct method" to debunk (my term, not Livingstone's) Z-film alteration. He adds that one has "to examine the empirical evidence, a posterior) tested with the scientific method."

I don't know if Livingstone is directing his comments at me but it makes no difference for I stand behind my claim of absurdity in Z-film alteration because I've provided that evidence as being contained in the film and which the alterationists have profoundly misinterpreted. To be as brief as possible my argument was based on early first shot evidence striking JFK and the compelling evidence of a double head shot killing JFK in which that double head shot was virtually simultaneous (one from behind striking at some moment in time at Z-312 and the other a frontal shot from the knoll area at Z-313.)

Why, I've asked repeatedly, would the alleged alterationists leave this virtually absolute and compelling evidence for conspiracy in the film? Why, indeed?! And to allow it to remain even in a film that is supposedly doctored in its "final" form?

I'll await my reply from Livingstone on these two crucial areas and to avoid them will result in the same condemnation critics applied to the Warren Commission and all the other official governmental bodies assigned to uncover the truth.

It is to be noted that Livingstone refers to two head shots separated by a time length which is not the time length I've cited (Z-312 and Z-313). His thesis is that a further head shot (the final one) occurred "much closer to the bridge" (in a previous letter to me he stated that "This is about Z-338 or actually somewhat later.") According to Livingstone, the two head shots were somehow, magically, "composited in one." But a visual inspection of the film shows the evidence I pointed to (Z-312 and Z-313) and not his. Are my eyes (and, therefore, Livingstone's eyes) deceiving me? And if Livingstone is right on the mark about a later head shot, what witnesses support this "later" shot? None that I can find as decisively in support of the Livingstone position!

Elsewhere in his article, Livingstone finds Kennedy's "extraordinarily mottled and puffy face." (prior to the head shot) suggesting strongly that it may have been doctored since he finds it "very unnatural". But this al-

leged "puffiness" when examined on the first generation slides at the National Archives (and noted by other researchers), can be described (as one researcher has "clearly as a big grin" by the President. I think that with a projection of up to about 5 feet which the Archives allows this will be evident. Note also that Livingstone believes the JFK limo first stopped and *shots* (Plural - my emphasis) were fired. This reference is to the "abrupt change of scene" between Z-132 and Z-133 when the limo appears.

Apart from Livingstone's claim of the limo stopping and first shot (obviously missing or so says Livingstone) there is no evidence to back up his claim that is reliably based. For example, on the first shot allegedly missing, Livingstone completely ignores such on-the-scene witnesses who all say or can be shown by their positions at the time of the first shot that Kennedy was struck at a later point in time than Livingstone's Z-132 and Z-133 frames. These on-the-scene witnesses include but are not limited to the following: Phil Willis, Zapruder, Bronson, Chism, Hicks, Calverly, Hickey plus witnesses I've uncovered on my own. It would appear that Livingstone picked his particular frames because of his belief in the limo stopping and Z-film alteration and for no other reason. But if it can be shown that he has profoundly misinterpreted what he sees, Livingstone's missed shot analysis is totally erroneous. What follows will attempt to show why he is in error.

Let us start out with this "abrupt change charge". Years ago I received a letter from an excellent researcher here in California who had interviewed Zapruder's secretary, Marilyn Sitzman, on precisely the points raised above. Here is what he wrote me: "During our discussion, I asked her if Zapruder ever stopped filming? She said, 'Yes, I think so'. I then asked - at what point did he stop?! She replied, 'Well, you see, he (Zapruder) had vertigo, or whatever, so he asked me to hold on or steady him when he got up on the wall, (pedestal) over here (pointed her right) he started filming when the motor cycles came around on to Houston (St.), and he kept turning (i.e. - panning) to his left, to follow them when they go to Elm, and started to turn he started to fall away from me.'

"I said - so you started to grab him? She said - yes and I think he stopped filming then! think he started to film again, when the President's car came down Elm."

This researcher pointed out to me, "as you know there is a definite break in the filming sequence, at the point Sitzman describes. Zapruder evidently did not film con-

tinuously." Thus, this researcher's analysis of what Sitzman told him would explain the stop. It was a combination of Zapruder's vertigo and Sitzman's reaction to his behavior. These two do not add up to either a shot missing nor frames edited and/or deleted.

I should note here that, when researcher Martin Shackelford did his analysis of the Zapruder film, he recorded that at frame Z-142 the "Limo slightly blurred, apparently Zapruder briefly stopped following it with his camera." And that particular frame is about 9 frames after 133 or a little over half a second response. And it may even be less than this figure because Zapruder is panning left as late as Z-136, lowering Zapruder's reaction time to one-third of a second (which is exactly what one would expect). If you study the film it can be observed that Zapruder is panning to the right at Z-143 and all the way up to the early Z-160 frames. And add to all of the above Jamieson's discussion with Livingstone where Zapruder might have stopped the camera after the lead motorcycle passed, and waited for the rest of the motorcade. Sometimes... amateur camera operator does not know when he has the camera on or off."

As can be seen from what is mentioned above, these observations fit perfectly well with a finding of human reactions to extraordinary events and not with a claim of a change in the film being done outside of these human parameters or variables. Note also Livingstone's citing as evidence for his various claims about why the film should show Kennedy's head moving forward (instead of backward). To support his position, he enlists none other than CBS-newsman Dan Rather and the FBI's Cartha De Loach! It is rather odd on Livingstone's part to rely on these two individuals, none of whom were actual witnesses to the event of the fatal head shot (or shots). Dan Rather, embarrassingly so, in a book he wrote about his experiences, says he made an error and in so far as Mr. De Loach is concerned he was certainly not present when Mr. Rather viewed the film. So where did De Loach get "analysis" from? I haven't looked this up to see where he did obtain this, but I would hope that J. Edgar Hoover is not the source for De Loach's fanciful notions (is this the same Hoover who said that "3 shots were fired within 3 seconds" and that Oswald didn't fire at Kennedy when he was on Houston Street because of "trees blocking" his view?)

Livingstone's sources of support for some of his arguments become highly problematical, again, if not downright ludicrous as in his discussion of the "frozen tab-

leau" scenario (wherein the JFK limo prior to the head shot nobody moves in the back seat, until Connally turns). So who does Livingstone cite in support of this? "Time" and "Newsweek" magazines - those bold upholders of scientific and factual information. Maybe so for Mr. Livingstone but not from my vantage point and not by any stretch of the imagination! Give us a break here, Harry!

At one point in his article Livingstone mentions "trajectory analysis". Since no real analysis is presented from first to last shots I'm thoroughly baffled at what this means for him and therefore his readers and supporters. As I've evidenced in my thesis here I emphatically differ as to the first shot missing scenario (and when) plus the double head shot thesis (occurring almost simultaneously). My bafflement is not exactly encouraged by his writing to me in a letter nearly two years ago that he believed in "snipers 2-5 blocks away"!

I recall Warren Commission member John McCloy stating at a Commission hearing designated as "top secret" no less so that the American people could not learn of it: "This bullet business leaves me confused."

If the reader of this article is not confused by what Livingstone has to offer, one can consult another "alterationist" author, Noel Twyman who, while considering this "confusion" presents no less than 5 different scenarios for the first shot! (For an analysis of this "confusion," see my previous writings for the "Fourth Decade").

As for Livingstone's mention of the Nix film and his claim that it "shows a rearward motion of Kennedy's head much slower and less violent": although here Livingstone is not stating that the Nix film has been altered, the implication and thrust of his argument appears to me, at least, that the film was altered.

There are some severe problems for Livingstone if, indeed, he does hold to alteration of the Nix film. Apart from the fact that one has in alteration itself an overwhelming and burdensome task (what to leave in; what to take out; and the virtually impossible limitations caused by getting it all done in a certain amount of time) there is the fact that this particular film was not available until at least, Monday, November 25th, 1963 or three whole days after the Z-film was altered! In addition to these problems there are other considerations. Let us consider, for example, Livingstone's contention that this film shows a "slower" and "less violent" movement of Kennedy's head. Is this an accurate account?

That the film shows viewers of Kennedy's head to be much slower and less violent, say, when compared to the Zapruder film is to be expected when one observes that the Nix film was taken from a greater distance to the JFK limo (than Zapruder's distance), the perspective and angles are different, and finally one cannot equate body movements on a one-to-one basis because of these variables. Sorry! That would mean using poor mathematics and bad reasoning against faulty observations.

And, as a final note since Livingstone offered his "frozen tableau" scenario he seems to have forgotten or deliberately ignored the following pieces of evidence contained within the Z-film which provides a "melt-down" for his unique hypothesis. And before listing these I should note for the reader that Livingstone's alterationists (the conspirators) utterly failed to adjust or remove these from the film at their own peril. And, I should add, all of the following support my analysis of first shot striking JFK. These are:

1) Kennedy's hand at Z-194 drops rapidly across his face.

2) Mrs. Kennedy at Z-204 turns to her right towards JFK.

3) At Z-207 Howard Brennan turns to his right - a reaction that points to a first shot being fired.

4) Secret Service agent John Ready at Z-207 turns to his right and this is only 1/6th of a second after Jackie reacts (one would expect this as Jackie was closer to JFK than Ready was and Ready's reaction time is consistent with observable behavior.) FROZEN, INDEED!!!



A SCHOOLBOY'S HISTORY OF NOVEMBER 22, 1963

by
David W. Mantik

"The media are less a window on reality than a stage on which officials and journalists perform self-scripted, self-serving fictions." Paul H. Weaver, "Selling the Story," *New York Times*, July 29, 1994, p. A13

During May 14-16, 1999, the University of Minnesota held a conference titled "The Death of JFK". During this meeting, Charles Drago issued a challenge; what do we critic really want? I do not want that question to go unanswered. Over the past several years, I have developed an answer of my own—one that was hinted at in my public comments to Debra Conway at the meeting: why should we trust our history books on other issues, if they cannot tell us the truth about the death of our own president? My goal is simple: Our history textbooks should admit simply, without equivocation, that JFK's death was due to a conspiracy.

We can debate what additional admissions we might wish for, but it would be a bracing change for textbooks—especially those written for children—to admit forthrightly to a conspiracy. I could live with that alone for a long while. I recently returned from my daughter's fifth grade classroom where the children reported on selected presidents. One girl presented Oswald's shooting of JFK as if it were an established fact. That is exactly what must stop.

Having achieved the first goal, my intermediate goal would be an admission that the cover-up required key elements of the federal government.

My final goal would be an admission that the execution itself—as opposed to just the post assassination cover-up—required elements of the federal government. But until we achieve the first goal the latter two must remain remote hopes at best. Is the first goal—a simple admission of conspiracy—even achievable? And if so, how? Toward this end, the assistance of professionals such as David Wrone, Michael Parenti and Michael Kurtz would be most welcome.

For the past several years I have home schooled my son in seventh through ninth grades. This unexpected

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