

Dr. Bruce McKinney, Communications
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Dear Bruce,

Hasty response to your 4/1. And the good question, "Why does the government always expect us to believe the unbelievable?" The short answer is because it always gets away with it.

The reason it gets away with it is that all the major institutions fall in line and lie in support of the official mythologies. Especially the free and independent press.

You ask is the president really in charge. I've thought of this often and reached the conclusion that each and every president is the captive of his advisers. He knows what those around him want him to know and he does not easily know what they do not want him to know.

This magnifies the abdication of all the major media.

With regard to Kennedy you ask if what happened to him is that "he didn't do as he was told."

I do not think it was that way. I think it was in part that he had around him some who wanted him to be truthfully informed but most of all that he came to understand the realities at the time of the 1962 Cuba Missile Crisis and thereafter had determined to lead the world to peace. He and Khrushchev were groping toward that. They had exchanged about 40 letters aiming that way when JFK was killed. Khrushchev did not long survive that. The powerful people inside the USSR did not then face a dævisish president and they did not want their one become-peactnik running them and their policies.

Barbie Zeliser's earlier book, which I did not buy, is a fraud and a fake, the reason I did not buy it. This does not mean that his "Shaping the Collective Memory" has to be but given what the first one is I'll not take time for the second. There is enormous commercialization and exploitation of the assassinations and the great popular interest in them now.

The thesis you say it has seems true but I do not trust what he'll write, given his record on the subject. Nor do I think he will have taken the time or have the background and understanding to do more than a potboiler.

Good luck and best wishes,

Harold
Harold Weisberg



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Mr. Harold Weisberg
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Dear Mr. Weisberg,

I saw you last night on *Unsolved Mysteries*, and you look and sounded fine. I recognized your basement as well. I haven't heard from Texas yet, but am keeping my fingers crossed.

With respect to the King assassination, I never really looked at it closely before, but I was amazed with the similarities between Oswald and Ray--and I guess you could say the same for Sirhan. Why does the government always expect us to believe the unbelievable? I have often wondered, does the elected government really govern? Is the president really running the country? It seems that after World War II things changed. Am I paranoid in thinking that there is really a secret circle of unelected individuals that really run the country and Kennedy didn't do as he was told?????????

There is a new book out that you might be interested in. My department head showed be an advertisement for it in a Temple University alumni newsletter. The book is called *Covering the Body: The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory* (by Barbie Zelizer). It claims, "The book examines how journalists used assassination coverage to legitimize their own role as interpreter of American society." It argues that those who continue to support the Warren Commission (i.e., Rather) are acting to protect their turf as their role as "custodians of Memory [sic]." Sounds like a good thesis to me.

I just heard from my publisher. My book won't be out until October, but I will send you a copy when it comes out.

Anyway, it was good see you on the tube. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

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