

# HAROLD WEISBERG

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6/3/94

Ms. Patricia Holt, book review editor  
The San Francisco Chronicle  
901 Mission St.,  
San Francisco, CA 94103-2988

Dear Ms. Holt,

It was only a mention, and a short one with some qualifications, but it is so rare I write to thank you for what to the best of my recollection is any mention in any west-coast newspaper, even if it took the seventh of mine on the JFK assassination to achieve it.

I'm sorry the book was rushed so and cut so very heavily, by at least three-quarters, and I'm sorry you did not consider it worth your time. That is your decision and I have no complaints.

Matter of fact, if any other newspaper made any mention at all I've not heard of it.

I'd be glad to provide anyone who might question the first statement on the back cover with a xerox, too.

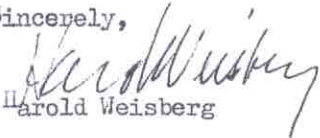
Case Open has been on sale six weeks or a little more. To date I have not no complaint or protest or denial from Psner or Random House. Or their lawyer. And I do know that they are very well aware of it and of its contents.

My daily reporting days are so far in the past they were probably before you were born but I've never lost my interest in newspapering. So it does feel a bit odd to be the only one writing on so controversial and if you stop to think of it so important a subject as what has the effect of a coup d'etat who is not a conspiracy theorist or a non-conspiracy theorist, to have published all I have published without a single letter or phone call from a single one of the hundreds I've mentioned complaining of any inaccuracy or unfairness and to find that it makes me and my work virtually <sup>a person</sup> ~~non-ex~~ and non-existing. Respectively, that is. Please excuse it. I can't do or type better.

In a way all of this is commentary on what has happened to us. A palpable fraud of a book is greeted like the given word almost universally and a book that proves it was a knowing, deliberate fraud, as dishonest as any book can be, has what you published in your 5/29 column as the only mention it has had.

So I do mean it when I thank you because now those out there who read your column will know that the book exists.

Sincerely,

  
Harold Weisberg



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*Review is edited by the San Francisco Chronicle. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned or acknowledged only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Letters to Review will be edited for space and clarity. Send letters to Kristine Feldman and manuscripts to Patricia Holt, book editor, Review, The San Francisco Chronicle, 901 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-2988*

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## LITERARY GUIDE

### BETWEEN THE LINES Patricia Holt

# A New Way Into JFK Assassination

The electronic book is coming into its own as a literary experience, as James Daly reports (see cover), but whether it's time for individual readers to invest about \$2,500 in computer hardware that will accept both Macintosh and DOS-compatible CD-ROMs is another matter.

The technology, as is typical, is in flux at the moment, and somewhere between the heralded no-risk chip and the superhighway lies a lot of expensive experimentation. But if you can find a machine on which to explore state-of-the-art CDs, it's fun to watch the new technology-in-progress.

JFK assassination buffs will certainly be intrigued by "J.F.K. ASSASSINATION: A Visual Investigation" (Medio Multimedia, \$60), which offers the Warren Commission Report; Jim Marrs' book "Crossfire"; a "Book of Facts" that includes cross-references of hundreds of names, events and subjects; the Zapruder film, which can be viewed at normal or slow speeds, or frame by frame in normal or enlarged shots of JFK and the infamous "little girl running" in the crowd; excerpts of the Nixon, Hughes and Muchmore films; hundreds of still photos; animations showing views of possible bullet trajectories; entire sections on the structure of Dealey Plaza, the city of Dallas, the aftermath of the assassination and so forth.

Sounds like a gold mine-in-a-CD, right? And thanks to the magic of computer-clicking from one story to another to pick up peripheral information (if, while reading the "Aftermath" section, you don't know who Officer J.D. Tippit was, you can click over to the "Book of Facts" for instant background), then click again to resume the "Aftermath"), it all seems astonishingly accessible and easy to absorb.

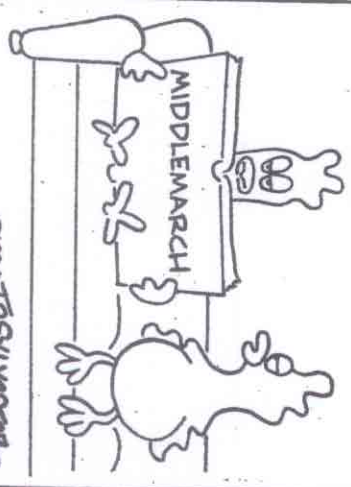
Problems do arise for mid-level JFK nerds who will immediately note that the Warren Commission Report does not include many volumes of witness testimony, which is a must for anyone comparing viewpoints and timetables; the House Select Com-

mittee material is sketchy at best; the animated views of bullet angles offer simplistic explanations of body positions and possible grassy-knoll conspirators; many references are already out of date — lengthy references are made to Gerald Posner's "Case Closed," for example, but not to a later book, "Case Open," by Harold Weisberg (Carroll & Graf, 178 pages, \$11.95), which is devoted to refuting Posner's alleged "distortions."

For readers, though, the transition from physical book to CD-ROM, while fun and useful for research at first, can be frustrating. Clicking around in encyclopedic fashion does distract the reader from following a straight narrative that helps the mind start a sorting process of its own.

Patricia Holt is book editor for The Chronicle.

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Shouldn't you be up to Middlemarch by now?  
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