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TV Specials Are Marking Anniversary of JFK's Death

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Don't let it be forgotten
That once there was a spot
No, it will not be forgotten
Television is making sure of
that.

In an unprecedented barrage of specials on a single topic, TV is marking the 25th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy this month. Programs will start in - Saturday, Nov. 21, and end after the anniversary day after the anniversary.

After the assassination, Jacqueline Kennedy told William Manchester, who was researching his book "The Death of the President," that the late president liked to listen to the soundtrack of "Camelot." Then a Broadway hit, Alan Jay Lerner's lyrics honoring the one shot that he became forever linked to the Kennedy administration.

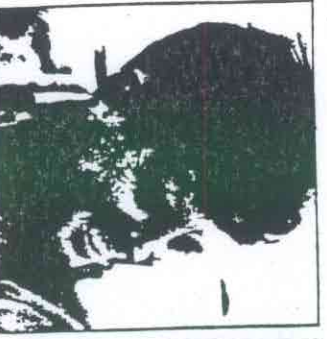
Twenty-five years later, television will help us relive many moments - shining and tarnished - from Kennedy's life and death, as well as the tangled, convoluted investigations of that death.

Here's what's coming up:

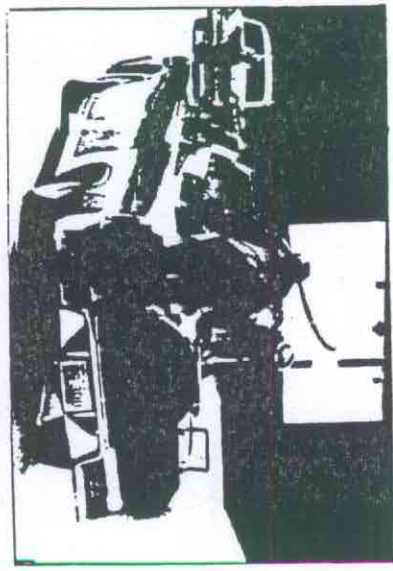
■ "JFK, by Mike Owen, Nov. 15, 9:30 p.m. on HBO. Owen speaks even and 8 p.m. Nov. 27.

Another unshakable truth: this HBO special uses recordings of Kennedy, many of them never before played publicly. Bar TV clips include Kennedy campaigning for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1946 and U.S. Senate in 1952, and there are loads of home movies of him at all ages. Others spotlight his witty press conference - several - with press conference - several - the bizarre blood-spattered man model for the film.

The walk through the for the first Kennedy-Nixon debate in 1960 with Ron Kessler, later to become executive producer of "60 Minutes," explains the format, and Kennedy simply smiling on Kessler's advice toward Mr. Nixon



An abundance of television specials mark the 25th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's assassination.



Robert McNeil, NBC's man in Dallas, and Mr. Ryan reading the main news bulletin.

■ "Remembered, 7 p.m. Show on A&E and Entertainment Weekly. This triptych recreated from memory about the assassination, a master's degree thesis by University of Maryland student John DeWitt, was the focus of the HBO special. Mr. Scott takes a strongly anti-Fordist stance toward the Warren Commission findings that Oswald acted alone, and he finds out a bit of the evidence that shows why those are questionable. He succeeds in raising a "reasonable doubt" that Oswald was the sole assassin - as he does of other assassination hits. Before him, but because he prevaricates with one side, his analysis

is not as credible as "There's a JFK: A Time Remembered," (9:30 p.m. Nov. 21 on Channel 8 and 50). Another triptych, and a good one, with Alan Brinkley, Tom Bricker, Randy and many others paying homage to Kennedy. They work in to reminiscence during a solid, straightforward chronology of the events of Nov. 22 '63. A wide-ranging selection of clips, most of them in color, but still packing a wallop as if for all these years.

■ "JFK Assassination: An 8 1/2 hour special," 1:30 p.m. Nov. 22 on A&E and Entertainment Weekly.

If you're not burned out on JFK specials at this point and have cable, this is the most definitive of all A&E will air 4 1/2 hours of the initial reporting on the assassination early as it aired on NBC on Nov. 22, 1963. No commercial breaks, no editing, just the straight stuff.

Viewers may remember Chas. Huntley and David Brinkley bringing the news, but that was not case. Mr. Brinkley was in Washington, D.C., and Mr. Huntley was in Studio 54 in New York, along with Frank McRae and the long forgotten Bill Ryan. Mr. Huntley takes a back seat in the other two, with Mr. McRae handling a telephone interview with

But the program gives this a power that many other specials lack. Here's a look at journalists in Vietnam, struggling to make

The set is amazingly crude - just straps and the technology laughable, as Mr. McGee tries to be heard on the air. They talk over each other constantly, motion for each other constantly, motion for each other constantly.

It's a shame that the former director Rivers will have the last word, cynically of the many specials, just as the equally shameless Jack Anderson had the first. But in between those two maddening pieces of

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