

the Harper fragment is occipital bone. In contrast, all of this same objective evidence points to the correct conclusion that the Harper fragment was exploded from the more forward portion of the skull to be recovered some 25 feet south of the assassination site.

If a conspiracy actually existed to alter all of the objective evidence in this case to hide an exit wound in the top rear of the skull, it has failed miserably. One must question and ultimately reject the notion that wholesale tampering with the evidence has occurred. Almost always, when a discrepancy exists between eyewitness observations and the objective evidence, in the medical area of this case, it is either the result of a simple error in the eyewitness observation and the conclusions derived therefrom or as a result of a deliberate attempt by individuals to distort or ignore evidence for the benefit of a conclusion favorable to their own viewpoint. I would cite the demonstrable perjury of Drs. Humes, Boswell and Finck before the Warren Commission in an effort to deny that an exit wound was present in the top rear of the head as a prime example. Is the persistent belief that the Harper fragment is occipital bone and represents a portion of an exit low in the rear of the head another?

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Notes

1. NARA RG233 HSCA Rec. #180-10099-10390 Agency File #002528.
2. NARA RG233 HSCA Rec. #7310080 Agency File #004864.
3. 7H383, 7H353.
4. 7H371, 7H383.
5. Six Seconds in Dallas, Josiah Thompson 1967, p. 142.
6. Report of Inspection by Naval Medical Staff on November 1, 1966 at National Archives of X-rays and Photographs of Autopsy of President John F. Kennedy, p. 8.
7. 7H81, 85.
8. NARA RG233 HSCA Rec. #180-10102-10409 Agency File #013617, p. 5.
9. NARA RG233 HSCA Rec. #180-10105-10164 Agency File #002191, p. 3.
10. 7H107, NARA RG233 HSCA Rec. #180-10087-10092 Agency File #000640.

TRUE BELIEVERS: TOM SNYDER TALKS TO ARLEN SPECTER

by

Richard Bartholomew

On Tuesday night, May 30, 1995, talk-show host Tom Snyder introduced his "friend" Senator Arlen Specter to his CBS call-in talk show, *The Late Late Show with Tom Snyder*. He said he knew Senator Specter as an honest man when he last interviewed him 30 years earlier in Philadelphia. Specter spun himself as a presidential candidate who is standing on principle while others are "blowing with the wind or swinging with the political pendulum." He half-jokingly told Snyder, "And now that you've reinterviewed me, I want you to extend that representation of honesty, or else I may own CBS." Snyder did, adding, "You've always been a very straight forward and level guy. I mean you and I both came from the Midwest as does your formidable opponent Robert Dole of Kansas."

Having established himself and Specter as pillars of truth, Snyder put on his trademark look of sincere bewilderment and broached the subject of the people's mistrust of government "in the wake of Oklahoma City." With the camera showing Specter nodding in sad-eyed agreement, Snyder added, "And in extreme cases feel that the government would actually go so far as to plot the bombing in Oklahoma. How do we get rid of this malaise in the body politic? How do we bring these people back to realize that we are the government? You and me and all these people who vote, we are the government."

Missing a golden opportunity to call for the immediate release of all files pertaining to the JFK assassination, a process begun with legislation co-sponsored by himself, Arlen Specter, the reputed author of the Single Bullet Theory, quoted political ethics advice from Richard M. Nixon about how not to alienate the electorate, then said, "So I think the first thing that people of America have to do is insist that their elected officials—the politicians—tell the same story all the time. And if they change, they have to be made accountable."

Specter then spoke of the grave oversight committed when Congress failed to investigate the executive branch after the Waco and Ruby Ridge, Idaho disasters. Specter, who has staunchly defended his own role in an executive branch self-

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investigation known at The President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy, seemingly belied his own commitment to "tell the same story all the time" when he responded to Snyder's next statement.

"But when you become President," Snyder said, "you will realize that the executive branch cannot fully investigate itself and that if further investigation of your administration is warranted by Congress, you as President would agree to that."

"Well of course I would," Specter replied, "but the President doesn't have to agree to it. The Senate can do it itself. And eventually we will but not soon enough for my taste. I think we should have done it already." After getting Specter to admit that he had been politically damaged doing just that in the Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill fiasco, Snyder changed the subject to the "flat tax" and broke for a commercial.

When the show resumed, the flat tax discussion was abruptly put on hold when the first caller asked about the Single Bullet Theory. One would think that Mr. Specter would have refined his argument in favor of this theory to a razor-sharp edge over the last 31 years. One would think that, especially now that he is running for President, a task easily endangered by controversial opinions, his argument would be reasonably understandable. However, instead of a simple question followed by a simple answer, there ensued an enlightening struggle to return to more mundane campaign '96 issues.

The first call was from Charlie in New York City. Charlie said, "Hi, I'd like to ask how Mr. Specter's views have changed over the last 30 years since writing the Single Bullet Theory for the Warren Commission."

Snyder's voice intoned pained embarrassment as he said he'd hoped that question wouldn't come up. Specter grinned nervously and said his views have not changed at all. As if that answer was insufficient, the Senator continued, "In fact, the Single Bullet Theory has been confirmed in many subsequent studies. But [sic] the basic facts have held up."

Still apparently desiring to overcome some perceived inadequacy, Specter pressed on and began gesturing. "The bullet that hit the President in the back of the neck passed between two large strap muscles, hit nothing solid, sliced his trachea, came out the front of this throat, and Governor Connally was sitting right in front of him in the jump seat, and the bullet had a little yaw—that is, it wasn't pristine—and it entered slightly to the left of the Governor's right arm pit, passed through, grazed a rib, came out, and he was sitting like this [gesturing straight forward with right hand over front of left

kneecap and left hand on top of right hand], and it went through his wrist, and the truth is sometimes stranger than fiction, and it happened that way, and it's been confirmed." Specter, sporting a finally self-satisfied grin, changed his gaze from the camera back to Snyder.

"Okay," Charlie sighed, followed by an apparent stunned silence. The camera closed in on Snyder's amused expression as he asked, "That's it Charlie? Okay?" Charlie said, "Okay well, I just thought it—no, I hate to bring it up but it's something I always think about."

"I know," Snyder said. "A lot of people do Charlie. What are your thoughts on this as long as you're here?" Charlie said, "Well, obviously I don't believe the Single Bullet Theory or I wouldn't ask."

"Okay," Snyder said with resignation. Specter jumped in as if to the rescue. "Charlie, let me tell you why you might not believe it the way the evidence has been misconstrued. The bullet on the President's shirt would have placed a point of entry well down on his back so that some people say the bullet would have to have gone up, which of course it couldn't do. But what hasn't been understood is that the President had on a back brace and he was waving and the shirt rode up."

As the Senator is in mid-gesture, reaching for the studio scaffolding in a futile attempt to make his shirt and suit coat behave unnaturally, Snyder felt compelled to rescue his rescuer. "You know, I'm almost in tears here," Snyder interrupted, "because I remember sitting with you on that show in Philadelphia 30 years ago when all of this started with Mark Lane and Rush To Judgment." Snyder began blinking rapidly and stammering. "And— and—and I'm watching you now and you are doing the same thing with the same precision—and the alacrity that you did 30 years ago and it just almost brings me to tears—to me—but anyway."

Specter, beaming, comes back to Snyder's rescue with, "Well don't cry. Just let me finish." Snyder shouts, "No, no, but tears of joy that you're still consistent in your beliefs!"

The hole they were digging for themselves only became deeper. "Well listen, listen, this is the evidence," Specter says, reaching again for the back of his neck. "The point is this is where—" Snyder interrupts again, still shouting, "This isn't the Oliver Stone movie is it!?"

"Pure fiction," Specter shoots back. "This is real life. The bullet entered the body right at the base of the neck. And it's not a question of where it was in the shirt because the shirt rode up. It's a question of where it was on the body. And one other

fact. The bullet found on Kennedy's stretcher was almost intact. A hundred and fifty-eight to a hundred and sixty-one grams is what it had. And the X-rays of Governor Connally's wrist show metallic fragments at various levels. A Dr. Gregory, who testified, and I questioned him before the Commission, showed the X-rays and those metallic fragments at various levels were postage stamp weight consistent with coming from that bullet." The camera cuts to Snyder who looks out at the floor crew. The corners of Snyder's mouth twitch before the camera cuts back to Specter.

"So that when I debated Mark Lane and Epstein and many many others—" Snyder interrupts again. "You took them all on?" Snyder asks. "Well I was prepared to do that," Specter answered, "and I still am." Snyder, apparently getting signals to cut, finally puts the discussion out of everyone's misery. "I know you are," Snyder assured Specter. "I know you are. Charlie, I'm glad you called. I wish we had—we should do a whole show on this sometime and I'm sure Mr. Specter's saying, 'But please not with me.' Charlie, I'm glad you called. Thank you." Specter corrects, "Charlie, I'll be glad to do it with you and with Tom." They go to commercial, then to the flat tax issue, but take no more calls.

By the time Snyder's program continued on radio after the televised portion ended, the damage control mentality now familiar to political campaigns had begun to take over. It was still palpable the next night, May 31, 1995, as Snyder's simulcast again took to the CBS TV airwaves.

"I have found over the years," Snyder explained, "that you can say things, and people say things to you on radio, that they will never say on television. And for the life of me I can't figure out why." Snyder explained that, as the discussion of the assassination continued on radio the night before, listeners picked up on the fact that Snyder had never stated his position on the assassination. Apparently in violation of his self-imposed TV taboo, he cleared this up for his TV audience.

"It amazed me how many people still cling to the theories that go beyond the findings of the Warren Commission...I truly believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone and that the Single Bullet Theory holds water. And by the way, if you want to call on radio don't argue with me because I'm not going to change my mind. And more importantly, if you don't believe it, I won't try and change yours...You have to keep in mind that if you believe the conspiracy theory in the assassination of JFK, keep in mind that an assassination does not begin a conspiracy, it ends a conspiracy. So if that conspiracy was in fact

intact, it ended the day that JFK was shot. And secondly, knowing as we all do, that everything in America is for sale, wouldn't you think that by now—1995—" Snyder stops suddenly, sensing that he is on a TV soapbox. In an attempt to climb down, he digs another hole. "See, I think I'm on radio. I could go on for an hour about this stuff." He seems to have overcome his difficulty saying what he "will never say on television."

Continuing his explanations and corrections of the events of the night before, Tom Snyder adds to his contention that any conspiracy in the JFK assassination ended when Kennedy was shot. "Wouldn't you think that by 1995, 32 years after the assassination, knowing that everything in America is for sale for a price, that if somebody had the secret information as to who really did it, he or she would have sold that information to somebody in media by this time?" Sure as he claims to be that no conspiracy killed JFK, and that if it had, pocketbook journalism would have revealed it already, and that no one will change his opinion of that, and that he desires to change no one else's opinion, one would wonder why true believer Tom Snyder discusses the subject at all.

Challenging these statements Snyder made at the top of his show, the first caller to his May 31, 1995 TV broadcast asks Snyder if he also thinks the Watergate conspiracy ended with the break-in. Snyder responds, "The conspiracy to break into the Watergate complex ended with the break-in and then began a new conspiracy to cover up that break in." When the caller points to that same possibility in the JFK assassination, Snyder says, "Now Ken, I promised I'm not going to try and change your mind. Don't try and change mine." In other words, don't confuse Snyder with the facts.

The credibility of Snyder's stated view of pocketbook journalism suffers equally. On June 9, 1975, Snyder taped an interview for his Tomorrow Show on NBC on which W.R. Morris and Harry Dean, a former FBI-CIA agent, were guests. They discussed their knowledge of a conspiracy to assassinate JFK. Dean wore a mask and was referred to as Mr. X. They outlined a plot involving Oswald as a secret government operative being set up by General Edwin Walker, David Ferrie, Loran Hall and Eladio del Valle among others.

At one point in the program Snyder asked, "Who brought the political pressures about that keeps Mr. Hall, one of the assassins of John F. Kennedy...who brings such political pressures that he is allowed, and I assume today that he is a free man?" Dean answered that such pressure is brought about by

people in right-wing, so-called patriotic organizations including the John Birch Society. NBC never aired that show. Subsequent evidence supports much of what Dean and Morris said.

But even if someone attempts to tell Tom Snyder about that evidence, he claims it will not change his mind and he will urge the person with the information to stop trying to change it. Despite such a view, Tom Snyder believes that someone—someone other than himself apparently—would gladly pay money for such evidence of conspiracy. The fact that he will not believe it enough to pay for it, and the fact that those who have revealed the evidence have been accused of doing so solely because they are monetarily motivated, does not enter into his thinking. It can't because he won't let it.

Because he is a true believer, Tom Snyder almost sheds tears of joy when he hears his friend and presidential candidate, Senator Arlen Specter, declare that President Kennedy's coat and shirt rose from the middle of his back to his neck just in time to receive a bullet hole there, then in the blink of an eye fell back into place because of a back brace that isn't understood by others to cause this because it never visibly interfered with the President's clothing.

This is the "stuff" that Tom Snyder "could go on for an hour about" because, as he said, "I truly believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone and that the Single Bullet Theory holds water." Goodbye honest, straight forward, level-headed, Midwest, principled guy. Hello true believer.

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THE MAGIC SKULL

by

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SEVEN FRAMES EARLY, A STRANGE SHAPE

It is flat and triangular. It has the thickness of bone. It has a white edge and small notches. Lines radiate outward, fan-like, from where it attaches to the right temporal region of Kennedy's head. Its size, shape, and location appear to be identical to the temporal-parietal bone flap seen in autopsy

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photos and x-rays. The object appears on the Nix film at frame 17 — seven frames before Kennedy is supposed to be hit in the head for the first and only time at Nix frame 24. It is not easy to see.

The photographer, Orville Nix, had filmed from Kennedy's left. The object was visible on the left because Kennedy leaned in that direction. As the film progresses, its orientation changes. Like a sail in a storm, it shows its full width one moment (N-17), and its profile the next (N-22).

The shape is accompanied by a long white line that, considered in three dimensions, lies in the same angle as the one that leaves the head in Zapruder 313 at 70 degrees. The shape is accompanied by abrupt changes in head position not evident on the Zapruder film.

At almost the same place on the Muchmore film (M-36), six frames before the official head shot (M-42), white lines come from (or approach) the head, also at the same angle with the horizon as the lines in Zapruder 313. The top of Kennedy's head seems abnormally white compared with the heads of other people, and a small area directly to the right of his head is also white. Hovering above are reddish brown shapes — scalp-covered bone fragments or chemical damage on the film? The shapes move upward and backward in subsequent frames. There is a slight blurring soon after, but before the main head shot.

The Zapruder equivalents (Z-306–Z-312) show Kennedy frozen in place with nothing wrong with his head until Z-313. On clear copies of this film, you can see the flap swing out on a vertical hinge, slanting to the right 70 degrees. Its orientation changes, and the hinge becomes horizontal. The flap seems to support the upper half of a large clam on the side of the head. In Z-313, about an inch and a half above the ear, is an arc, apparently the perimeter of a crater left by the bone flap which is the same size and shape. If the flap swung backward, it would fit into this crater.

DID MRS. KENNEDY SEE IT?

Jacqueline Kennedy's testimony suggests she saw the bone flap before the head exploded. According to the Z film, the air is instantly filled with debris when Kennedy is shot in the head. Yet, Mrs. Kennedy saw bone before the explosion:

"I could see a piece of his skull and I remember it was flesh colored. I remember thinking he just looked as if he had a slight headache...No blood or anything. And then he sort of did this (indicating), put his hand to his forehead and fell in my lap. "[1]