

4/8/92

Dear Sam,

Thanks for sending me Belin's New York Magazine article.

He is correct in saying that Stone and the A & E show lied as you know I've been ^{since} saying before he made the movie, but the real question now is how much better is Belin? He also lies, including in this article.

He berates them for omitting. He and his Commission associates did that more than Stone was in a position to.

All those dependable witnesses to the Tippit killing, not one of whom was dependable - that solves the JFK case? Well, by Belin's own time reconstruction Oswald could not have gotten to the scene of that crime until after it was on the police radio that bystanders had trouble using - the first one never did make it work.

He filed a FOIA case to get the Commission's records disclosed? (Only 2% ^{of his} ~~of his~~ still withheld.) Why not for the records of the CIA he saw when he ran the Rockefeller Commission when he "omitted" the CIA's analysis of the Zapruder film that proves the Warren Commission was wrong?

Why not the records of the FBI? I filed for them, not that Judenrat.

He is careful in what he says (exaggerated) about Howard Brennan, "who saw the assassin fire." That night Brennan refused to identify Oswald in a police lineup. Later, when it was suggested to him that he was afraid to, he said it was Oswald. Of his description Belin said fit Oswald, it also fit about a third of the men in Dallas.

He says Oswald went into the shoe store? He didn't.

Belin is a pathetic case.

Thanks and best,

THE BIG 'LIES' OF 'JFK'

BY DAVID W. BELIN

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In the furor over the film *JFK*, it is easy to lose sight of just how exhaustive the investigation of the assassination of John F. Kennedy by the Warren Commission was. The commission over nine months accumulated eyewitness and expert testimony, and ballistic and other physical evidence that eventually filled 26 volumes and a summary report. The overwhelming weight of that evidence points to Lee Harvey Oswald as the lone gunman. David W. Belin was a counsel and a key investigator for the Warren Commission and is author of *Final Disclosure: The Full Truth About the Assassination of President Kennedy* and *November 22, 1963: You Are the Jury*. (Royalties from both books went to charity.) Belin, who now practices law in Des Moines and New York, is deeply troubled by the revisionist history presented in *JFK*, as well as in the book on which the movie is based—*On the Trail of the Assassins*, by former New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison—and *The Men Who Killed Kennedy*, a recent five-hour series on the Arts & Entertainment Network. He claims that in *JFK* alone, there are "more than 100 major lies and omissions." In a memo written to his files and made available to New York, Belin attempts to refute several of what he considers the worst transgressions of the film, the book, and the A&E series:



A scene from *JFK*: "Americans will eventually understand the perpetration of the big lie."

"You can't find many people who agree with me on deconstruction," says Evan, who was beginning to find her classmate intellectually interesting.

marry, but she wanted a change. What she would like, Charlene thought, was someone to whom she was the most important person in the world. But she had gone through all the friends of her friends, and she wasn't the kind of person who hung out in bars. How could she meet a man?

One day, Charlene got a letter from "The Millionaire's Club." It was a dating club with an elaborate questionnaire on everything from current events to drinking habits. It seemed more intelligent than most. She made an appointment to visit the office, on West 57th Street.

There, she filled out the questionnaire, was interviewed on videotape, and was photographed. The fee was high, about \$1,000 for two years, but the club's library was lined with books of members' photographs and their questionnaires. If you chose someone, the other person was given your file. If he or she liked it, you were given each other's phone number.

For the next two years, Charlene, who lives on the Upper West Side, chose and was chosen. She dated many nice men, but no one special. Just four weeks before her membership was to end, she was browsing through the books looking for a few last dates when she came to Tom Leslie's picture. Good-looking, thought Charlene. In his videotape interview, Tom seemed self-assured. But the file said he was a "computer-programming project leader" for a bank. Banking, thought Charlene. Could be a dud. Yet he had a degree in theater arts. Maybe...

Tom Leslie, who lived in Chelsea, was finding Manhattan dating rituals to be a grind. He was handsome, self-confident, quite successful, but there seemed to be a terrible misunderstanding. If you treated Manhattan women well, they somehow didn't respect you. And by the time they were in their thirties, he found, many of them had built a wall around themselves. Tom was nearing 40, and he was tired of being alone. He hated bars, and "I'm a terrible one-night stand in every way," he says. He, too, had gotten a mailing about the dating club, which had been renamed "Invitations." Why not give it a try? he thought.

The club told Tom he had been "chosen." Tom believed that the person "choosing" should make the first call. He had told his life story enough on first dates. But Charlene expected Tom to call her.

When he didn't, she phoned. They found they both loved to travel. Tom had just signed up for an adventure tour of Costa Rica. "That's right on the top of my list!" cried Charlene.

She didn't say, "Costa Rica! Where's that?" or "Aren't there mosquitoes?" Tom remembers.

TOM EXPECTED CHARLENE TO "PENCIL HIM IN" THE way most Manhattan women did. But she agreed to meet him the next night. When Tom entered the restaurant, Charlene looked at him and thought, Very good-looking. He was wearing a European suit, not a banker's uniform.

But Charlene had on slacks and a rumpled blouse. "This woman's attractive," Tom remembers thinking, "but she's

made no effort." She's not interested, he thought.

Nonetheless, over dinner, they discovered they came from similar backgrounds—"mainstream Protestant." Despite the difference in age, they had even "dropped out" for a while, becoming "hippies" in the same year. It was such a relief, they both thought, not to have to explain things. At the end of the evening, Tom gave Charlene a little kiss, and they went their separate ways.

A few days later, Tom, full of hope, called Charlene for a second date. But she was leaving on a business trip, she said. Oh, no, Tom thought, the Manhattan woman's syndrome again! Whenever these women had to travel, it seemed that they could never go out the night before, because they always had to pack.

But after they hung up, Charlene realized Tom had misunderstood her schedule. She phoned back, and Tom was encouraged by her call.

They agreed to meet again at an Indian restaurant on East 6th Street, since they had established that they both liked spicy food. This time, Charlene wore a black leather miniskirt. She's interested, Tom thought. Charlene remembers getting flustered and knocking over the condiment tray.

After dinner, they walked up to 23rd Street on a lovely fall night. Tom was angling to get Charlene to his apartment. But she had to catch a plane the next morning, and she had to get ready. Here we go again, thought Tom.

A few days later, when Charlene returned, they went to see *Drugstore Cowboy*. Tom wanted to ask Charlene to stay over, but it was a weeknight, and they both had to work. He walked her to the 14th Street subway. Then, just as she walked through the turnstile, he leaned over and kissed her, making Charlene feel "like I was covered in a purple haze. That got me thinking!"

Soon, Charlene had to go away again. She gave Tom the phone number of her hotel. She had loved the kiss, and she wondered why he didn't call. (He had, but the hotel didn't give her the message.)

When Charlene arrived home, she invited Tom to some friends' for dinner. "We sat around swooning," says Charlene. "We couldn't get out of that dinner fast enough." This time, Charlene accepted Tom's invitation to his apartment.

The next morning, Tom asked, "Does this mean we're dating?" Charlene said it did.

Not long afterward, Tom ran into a man who had worked at the dating club. He was out of a job, the man said. One day, without warning, the owner of the club had come to the office, taken all the videos away, and locked the doors. The club had just vanished, the man said.

Well, thought Tom, the club had served its purpose, at least in one case. It had brought him and Charlene together.

Six months later, on November 24, 1990, Tom and Charlene were married at the Little Church Around the Corner, at Fifth Avenue and 29th Street. They honeymooned in the Yucatán.



The basic format underlying the spread of lies about the murders of President Kennedy and Dallas police officer J. D. Tippit on November 22, 1963, is to cover up the overwhelming weight of the evidence and to paste together scraps of testimony to form a case for conspiracy while covering up the guilt of Lee Harvey Oswald, who was the lone gunman. The Oliver Stone-Kevin Costner film *JFK*, as well as the book by Garrison and the recent five-hour A&E television series, has adopted this format. Four vivid examples involve the critical testimony of postal inspector Harry Holmes, cabdriver William Scoggins, shoe-store manager Johnny Calvin Brewer, and steamfitter Howard Brennan—some of the key witnesses whose testimony I took while I served as counsel to the Warren Commission. Together with California attorney Joseph Ball, I was assigned to what was called Area II: the determination of who killed President Kennedy and who killed officer Tippit.

Don Unbrock/Life magazine



Oswald's mug shot.

Postal inspector Holmes's testimony independently disproves the central thesis of the film *JFK*, that the killing of Oswald by Jack Ruby was the ultimate act proving the existence of conspiracy. William Scoggins was the most important witness to the murder of Tippit and actually saw Oswald from a distance of as close as twelve feet. Johnny Calvin Brewer is the Dallas citizen who was responsible for the apprehension of Oswald in the Texas Theatre. Howard Brennan was the witness who actually saw the gunman fire from the southeast-corner, sixth-floor window of the Texas School Book Depository building, went to the police, told them what he had seen, and described the gunman as young, white,

slender, about five feet ten, weighing about 160 pounds—a description remarkably close to Oswald's. None of the crucial testimony of these witnesses appears in *JFK* or in Garrison's book, which forms a large part of the foundation of the Stone movie. Here are a few highlights from their testimony.

1. POSTAL INSPECTOR HARRY HOLMES. On Sunday morning, November 24, 1963, Holmes was on his way to church with his wife. At the last minute, he decided instead to go to the Dallas police station to see if he could help his friend Captain Will Fritz. Holmes had been assisting Fritz in the investigation of the murder of President Kennedy and the murder of officer Tippit, the Dallas policeman who was killed by Oswald about 45 minutes after the Kennedy assassination and whose murder is really the Rosetta stone to understanding the truth about the assassination. Holmes entered Captain Fritz's office, where Oswald was being interrogated by Fritz and representatives of the Secret Service and the FBI. During their interrogation, Fritz turned to Holmes and gave him the opportunity to ask questions. Holmes jumped at the chance, and the session was extended approximately another half-hour.

Jack Ruby, meanwhile, had come downtown to the Western Union office to send a money order to one of his employees. The time stamp on the money order showed that he was at the Western Union office at 11:17 A.M. Jack Ruby went from the Western Union office to the basement of the nearby police station, where he joined a group of reporters awaiting the transfer of Oswald to the county jail. Oswald was killed at 11:21 A.M. If Harry Holmes had just continued on to church that morning, the interrogation session would have ended and Oswald would have been transferred long before Jack Ruby ever got to the Western Union office. Obviously, if Jack Ruby were part of a conspiracy, he would have been downtown at least a half-hour earlier. And common sense dictates that a conspiratorial "hit man" would not kill his target in the middle of a police station.

But nowhere will the movie audiences seeing *JFK* ever learn about postal inspector Holmes, whose testimony



1 THE SHOOTING OF OSWALD BY JACK RUBY.
The film (bottom) portrays Ruby as part of a conspiracy. But the evidence shows his encounter with Oswald was by chance.

is one of many elements showing that Jack Ruby was not conspiratorially involved. Nor will they ever learn about the testimony of Jack Ruby's rabbi, Hillel Silverman, who, on the basis of his many visits with Ruby in prison, is convinced that Ruby was not involved in any conspiracy. Nor will they ever learn about Jack Ruby's lie-detector test and the results, which, although not 100 percent accurate, confirmed that Ruby was not part of a conspiracy.

2. WILLIAM SCOGGINS AND THE TIPPIT MURDER. Nowhere in *JFK* (or in the A&E series) does the viewer ever learn that six eyewitnesses, including cabdriver William Scoggins, who was twelve feet from Oswald, witnessed Oswald at the Tippit-murder scene or running away from the Tippit-murder scene with gun in hand, and positively identified him as the gunman. As Oswald reloaded his gun, he tossed cartridge cases into the bushes as he headed toward Scoggins's cab, and four of these cartridge cases were turned over to the police. Ballistically, it was determined that they were fired from the revolver Oswald pulled out in the Texas Theatre as police approached. Cartridge cases are an absolute means of ballistic identification. Because Oswald's revolver had been rechambered and because of the mutilated condition of the bullets in Tippit's body, FBI experts could not absolutely identify the bullets as having been fired from Oswald's revolver. But an independent expert retained by the Warren Commission was able to confirm that one of the bullets did indeed come from Oswald's revolver. Of course, the movie, as well as the A&E series, covers up the ballistic testimony, which is overwhelming when combined with the eyewitnesses and Oswald's pulling his gun.

3. JOHNNY CALVIN BREWER AND THE ARREST OF OSWALD. Oswald was apprehended in the Texas Theatre because an independent citizen, Johnny Calvin Brewer, who worked in the neighborhood where the Tippit murder took place, became suspicious of Oswald as Oswald ducked into Brewer's shoe store as police sirens were heard and then immediately left as the sirens faded. Brewer trailed Oswald to the Texas Theatre, had the cashier call the police, and pointed Oswald out to the police as they entered the theater and the house lights were turned on. All of this is covered up in the movie, as well as in the Garrison book (and in the A&E series).

4. HOWARD BRENNAN, WHO SAW THE ASSASSIN FIRE. Howard Brennan was seated on a retaining wall facing the Texas School Book Depository building and, after hearing what he first thought was a firecracker, looked up and actually saw the gunman take aim and fire the last shot. Brennan went to the police and told them what he had seen, and it was his description of the gunman that was broadcast on the Dallas police radio approximately fifteen minutes after the assassination. When police entered the book depository and went to the sixth-floor assassination window, they found three cartridge cases, which were determined to have been fired from Oswald's rifle, which was found from the back stairway in the northwest corner of the sixth floor. They also found a large homemade paper bag undoubtedly used to carry the rifle into the building, and it contained the left-index-finger print and the right-palm print of Oswald. Oswald's palm print was also on the rifle. It



2 THE TIPPIT MURDER. Six eyewitnesses prove—contrary to *JFK*—that Oswald shot officer Tippit (above).

3 THE CAPTURE OF OSWALD. *JFK* ignores the role of salesman Johnny Brewer (left) in the arrest of Oswald at the Texas Theatre.



was also determined scientifically that Oswald's rifle had fired the bullet that struck President Kennedy's head—two portions of that bullet were large enough to be ballistically identifiable. (This is independent proof that Kennedy was not struck in the head by a shot fired from the grassy-knoll area, despite the movement that one sees from the Zapruder film.)

Neutron-activation-analysis tests on the bullet fragments from Governor Connally's wrist subsequently proved that they came from the nearly whole bullet that fell off his stretcher. Ballistic tests proved that bullet was

T H E B I G ' L I E S ' O F ' J F K '

fired from Oswald's rifle. Connally's doctors all agree he was hit by one bullet, which was the bullet that first passed through President Kennedy's neck. Governor Connally was right in line to receive the shot. Nineteen out of twenty medical experts who served on the four independent panels that over the years have examined the autopsy photographs and X-rays of President Kennedy have confirmed that all of the shots came from the rear. Of course, this is omitted in *JFK*, as it was in the A&E five-hour series.

In the 1975 report of the Commission on CIA Activities Within the United States (the Rockefeller Commission), there are summaries of the findings of three of the investigative panels (separate from them, there is the 1979 report of the House Select Committee on Assassinations). In all four, the medical experts determined that all of the shots came from the rear and there is specific movement of the president when the fatal bullet struck. *JFK* uses the head movement as proof of a bullet from the front, despite the unanimous findings to the contrary by the physicians on these panels, and despite the irrefutable ballistic evidence that the bullet came from Oswald's rifle. According to the report of Dr. Alfred Olivier, "the violent motions of the President's body following the head shot could not possibly have been caused by the impact of the bullet." He attributed the popular misconception on this subject to the dramatic effects employed in television and motion-picture productions. The impact of such a bullet, he explained, can cause some immediate movement of the head in the direction of the bullet, but it would not produce any significant movement of the body. He also explained that a head wound such as that sustained by President Kennedy produces an "explosion" of tissue at the area where the bullet exits from the head, causing a "jet effect" which almost instantly moves the head back in the direction from which the bullet came." The 1979 House Select Committee report also concluded that the head shot, as well as the shot that passed through President Kennedy's neck and then struck Governor Connally, came from Oswald's rifle and was fired by Oswald. Of course, none of these facts is included in *JFK*, in A&E's *The Men Who Killed Kennedy*, or in Garrison's book.

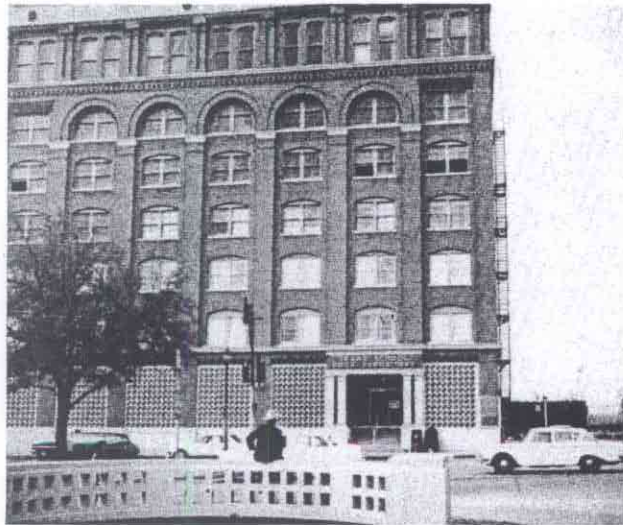


in *Assassinations?*

IN DEFENSE OF WARREN. When will Hollywood produce a movie that includes the heart of the testimony of Holmes, Scoggins, Brewer, and Brennan—a movie that tells the truth? When will the A&E network produce five hours of commercial television that presents the truth? When will the responsible leaders of our free press, who owe so much to Earl Warren, stand up for the truth, expose the techniques that have been used to disseminate the big lie that there was a high-level coup d'état involving the CIA or organized crime or both, and the big lie that Lyndon Johnson was part of the cover-up (Garrison calls him an accessory after the fact), and fully defend Earl Warren's name from the slanderous charges that have been made against him and the Warren Commission?

There are some who assert in the face of this conspiracy barrage by the mass media that we will never know the truth. That simply is not accurate. The truth is known: Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman who killed President Kennedy and Dallas police officer J. D. Tippit. (To reinforce that truth, in 1975 I filed a Freedom of Information Act request, seeking the release of all remaining Warren Commission files. Unfortunately, the fruits of that filing produced less than 5 percent of the remaining material.) However, all the salient evidence is already available. If the press were ever to approach that evidence with the kind of diligence and fairness that the American people have the right to expect, then the overwhelming majority of Americans would not only understand the truth but would also understand the techniques of the big lie, so that the kind of deception used by the producers of *JFK* would be exposed for all to see. The press owes that obligation to the memory of President Kennedy, to the memory of Earl Warren, and, indeed, to the American people. To paraphrase Walter Lippmann, the time has come for the press to devote sufficient effort to help the truth emerge for all America and, indeed, for all the world to know. The time has also come for the press to rise to the defense of Earl Warren from the reckless charges that are being made by those who not only seek to cover up the truth but who, in the course of making money out of the Dallas tragedy, slander the name and reputation of an individual who stood for truth and justice.

only 7 files so with held



4 THE SHOOTING OF KENNEDY. A witness on the retaining wall (above) in front of the book depository saw Oswald shoot Kennedy. This is not in *JFK*.

Photographs: top, UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos; center, courtesy of the National Archives.