

Time-Warner Publications

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NO. 101 FROM FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1992

# entertainment WEEKLY

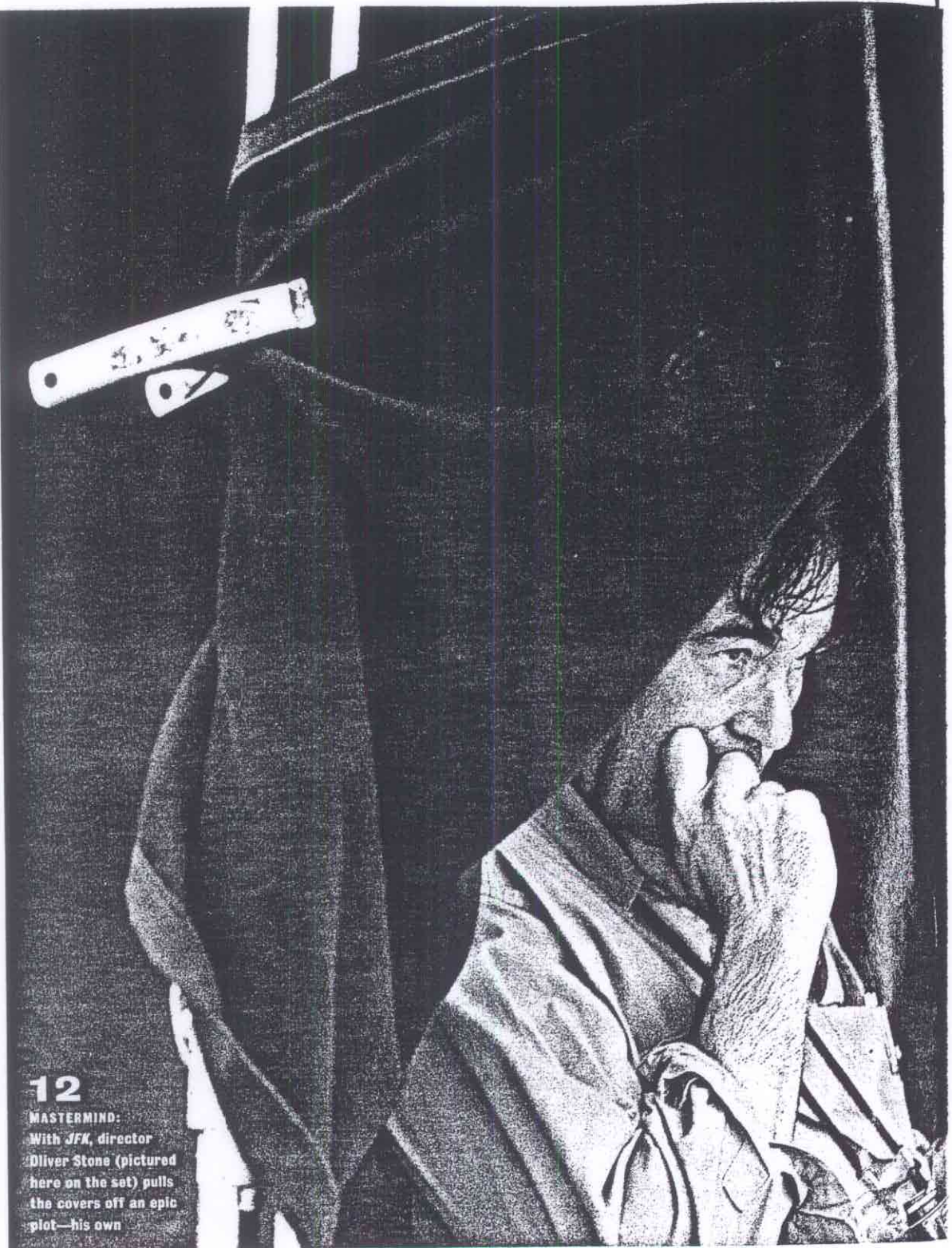
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**12**

**MASTERMIND:**  
With *JFK*, director  
Oliver Stone (pictured  
here on the set) pulls  
the covers off an epic  
plot—his own



# entertainment

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1992

## NEWS & NOTES

**6/Statuesque** Barbra Streisand, Oscar-bound?...Madonna explores her fantasies...HOT SHEET...The real rules in *Studs'* dating game...FLASHES...and more.

## FEATURES

**12/COVER JFK** Who killed President Kennedy? By offering a Grand Unified Conspiracy Theory in answer to that much-debated question, Oliver Stone's unsettling new film has kicked up the biggest movie controversy in memory. **PLUS:** An analysis of Stone's manipulative filmmaking techniques, our roundups of competing conspiracy theories and movies, and the true story behind the famous Zapruder film of the assassination.

**26/Getting Naked on Screen**

BY REGINA WEINREICH In *Naked Lunch*, director David Cronenberg draws on the harrowing life and hallucinatory imagination of writer William Burroughs.

**30/Studies in Scarlett**

Critics savaged the sequel to *Gone With the Wind*, but since its publication last fall, Alexandra Ripley's *Scarlett* has sold 2 million copies, renewing both the *GWTW* legend and industry.

## REVIEWS

**38/MOVIES** OWEN GLEIBERMAN on *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle* and *Naked Lunch*. **PLUS:** When bad things happen to good movie kids.

**44/TELEVISION** KEN TUCKER on *Drug Wars: The Cocaine Cartel*; also, *This Is Garth Brooks*, *She Woke Up*, *Against Her Will: An Incident in Baltimore*, and *Mystery!: Prime Suspect*. **PLUS:** Some of TV's best-loved series may bow out this spring.

**50/BOOKS** L.S. KLEPP on *Violence*, by Richard Bausch; also, *She Walks in Beauty*, by Sarah Shankman. **PLUS:** Alfred Gingold sends up the men's movement.

**56/MUSIC** STEPHANIE ZACHAREK on Lou Reed; also, Barry Manilow, Linda Ronstadt, Follow For Now, Branford Marsalis, Tommy Flanagan. **PLUS:** Rock & roll poets.

**62/VIDEO** TY BURR on *Jungle Fever*; also, *Point Break*, *Lady for a Day*, *Stromboli*, *Till There Was You*, *Chopper Chicks in Zombietown*, *Kisses*, and laserdiscs of *Terminator 2* and *Aliens*. **PLUS:** The horrifying Brinke Stevens, B-movie star.

**68/KIDS** PARENTS' GUIDE to recent movies and videos. **PLUS:** Do you know what your kids watch at the multiplex?

## DEPARTMENTS

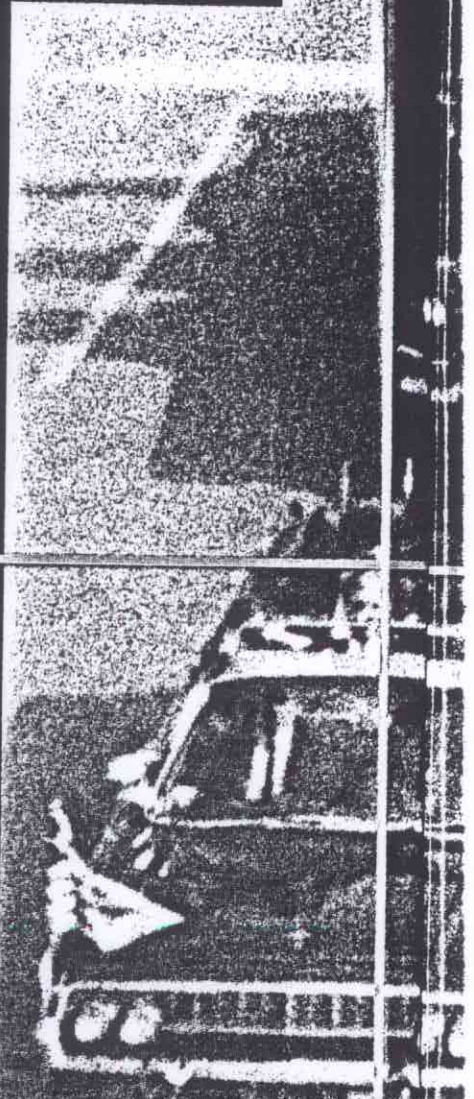
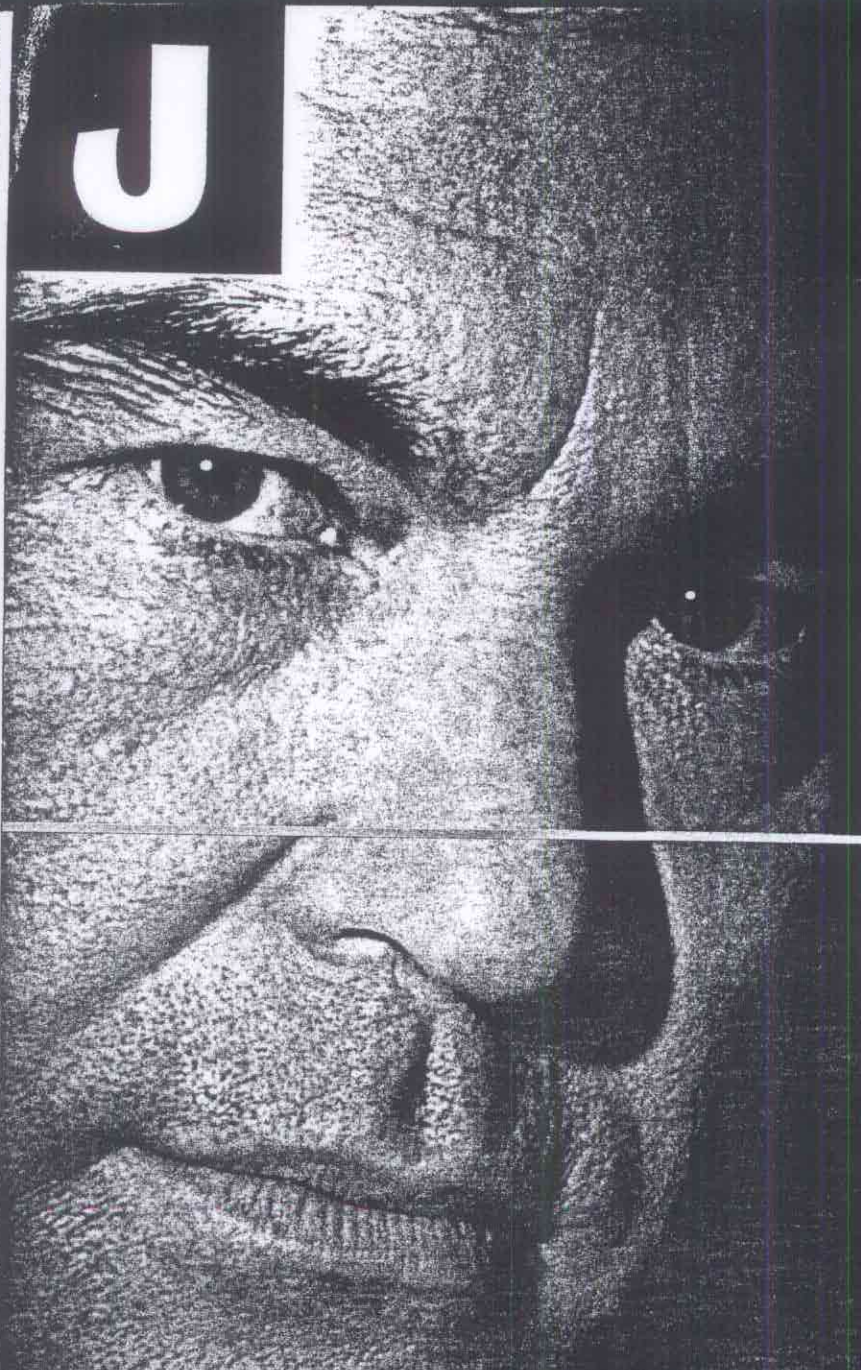
**4/Mail** Beatty, Midler, *Hook*, and the blood of Madonna.

**72/Encore** Jan. 20, 1982: Ozzy Osbourne bites a bat.

Cover UPI

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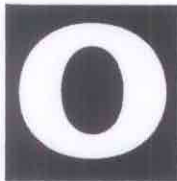
*Oliver Stone's re-creation of the assassination of John F. Kennedy is inspired propaganda. B*

K

entertainment  
JANUARY 1992

*of the Kennedy assassination  
a. But is America buying it?*

FROM LEFT: TONK; FRANK SCHEFFEL'S SOLUTION; JIM SIOGA; KENNEDY; CONTEMPORARY DARK OVERLAP



LIVER STONE MAY be paranoid, but that doesn't mean they're not out to get him. "Every paper and magazine in America," the director maintains, "has devoted more space in the last three

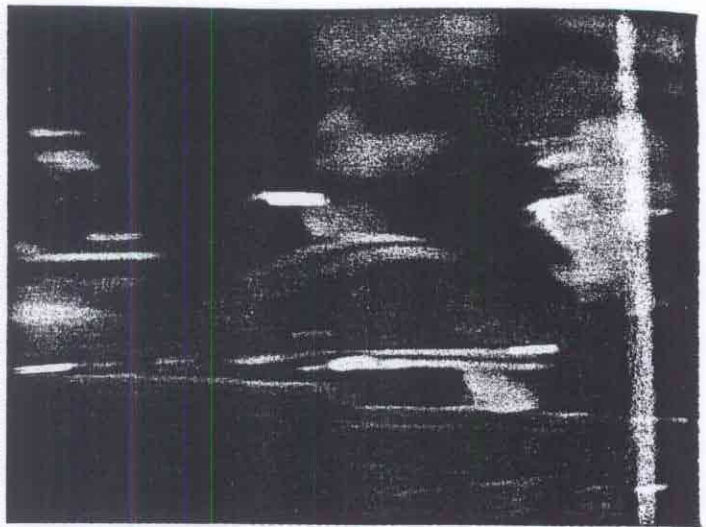
months to attacking my attack on the Warren Commission than they devoted in the previous 28 years to examining the Warren Commission."

Stone is speaking with his customary hyperbole, but he does have a point. *JFK*, his three-hour, high-voltage inquisition into the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, is the most controversial movie in recent history. Indeed, it was on its way to that distinction while the cameras were still rolling. Starting last May, when, on the basis of a first-draft script, *The Washington Post* skewered the film in an article titled "Dallas in Wonderland," almost every major newspaper, magazine, and TV pundit has taken a swing at Stone's vision of a vast conspiracy behind the Kennedy assassination. Since *JFK* was released by Warner Bros. on Dec. 20, the fire storm has intensified. *The New York Times* alone has found room for at least 20 articles on the picture.

In Stone's view, there is something unfair, even insidious, about these attacks. He isn't above hinting that his critics are part of what he believes is a nearly three-decade cover-up. "My question is, why are they so scared of this movie?" he asks. "What are they defending?" In endless interviews, he has charged that "the Establishment" is trying to quash his film.

If the Establishment is indeed trying to silence Oliver Stone and his work, it has done a stunningly inept job. In the three weeks since *JFK* opened, it has been seen by more than 5 million people, earning a solid \$31 million and making more money per screen than Steven Spielberg's *Hook*. "The negative publicity became a positive for Warner Bros.," says *The Hollywood Reporter's* Anita Busch. "It fed people into the box office."

What the moviegoers see is a technically astounding avalanche of flashbacks, flash-forwards, sound bites, reenactments, star cameos, and conjecture involving 212 speaking parts, over 1,000 camera setups, and 15 different types of film stock. But Stone does more than ask penetrating questions; he provides answers to the question that has

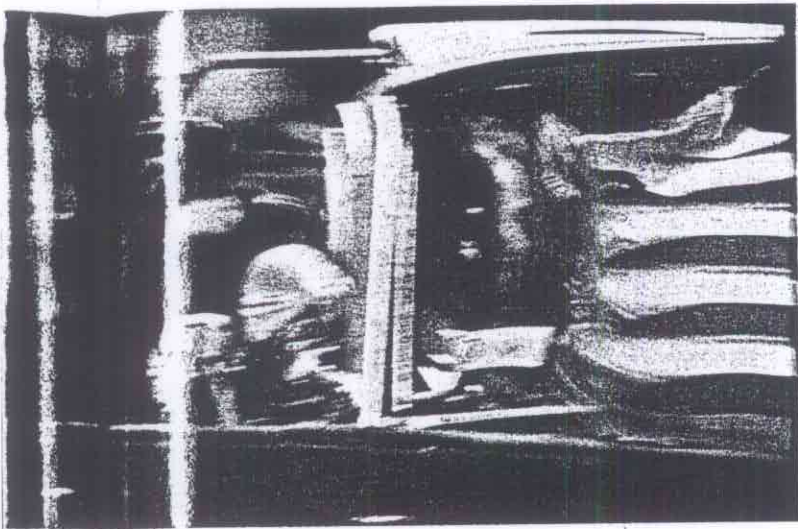


Lou Ivon and Garrison (J.O. Sanders and Kevin Costner) return to the alleged scene of the crime, above, for a reenactment. Previous pages (l. to r.): the director; an assassin's-eye view of the motorcade in a *JFK* re-creation; and an actual still from a home movie, taken by a teenager shortly before the President was shot.

haunted the country since shots rang out in Dealey Plaza on Nov. 22, 1963. A recent TIME/CNN poll indicated that most Americans are convinced that Lee Harvey Oswald did not act alone, as the Warren Commission concluded in 1964, and that a conspiracy—some conspiracy—was involved. Stone's presentation of a vast, well-oiled plot seems to tie neatly together all the strands of one of the most maddeningly snarled episodes in modern history.

*JFK* is also dazzling entertainment. The welter of facts and suppositions Stone and cowriter Zachary Sklar muster has been laid onto a simple detective plot that plays like Frank Capra by way of Dashiell Hammett. And there at the center of it all is America's favorite Everyman, Kevin Costner, as the stalwart truth-seeker.

It's this choice of a hero—Costner plays New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison, who in 1969 unsuccessfully prosecuted Clay Shaw, a local businessman, for his involvement in an alleged JFK assassination conspiracy—that has most provoked the film's detractors. In reality, Garrison was a



Stone shows the President's motorcade (reconstructed above) from every angle, in real time and slow motion, color and black and white. Below, Gary Oldman is a dead ringer for the "lone assassin."

reckless DA whose prosecution of Shaw aroused charges of witness fixing. But Garrison's 1988 book, *On the Trail of the Assassins*, gave Stone the one thing he knew he needed: a hero on which to hang his movie. "It's classic Sam Spade stuff," he says. "It's the idea of one man walking into a den of corruption and taking a stand." In the final analysis, Garrison's case against Shaw was technically sloppy and ethically questionable. That's unintentionally reflected in *JFK*, where—like the jurors in the Shaw trial—the audience comes out willing to believe there was a plot but unclear how Shaw was supposed to have been involved.

Stone is vigorous in Garrison's defense. "I'm so tired of having this man run down," he says, calling him "a real hero, the best of America." That seems something of a bluff. There was no strong effort to turn Costner into a replica of the flamboyant Garrison. "I wanted to use Garrison as a vehicle to include all the researchers and to get us through the looking glass," he says.

Costner acknowledges that "I don't believe that's the true Garrison that you see in the movie," adding, "I just played the shit out of the lines that were written." Stone splices the dramatic momentum of Garrison's story with the factual underpinnings of Jim Marrs' 1989 *Crossfire: The Plot That Killed Kennedy*, considered by many the best one-stop-shopping conspiracy tome. "They're haranguing me for using Garrison's book," Stone says,



"but nobody mentions Marrs' book. Much of our research came out of that."

Nonetheless, Garrison's rousing one-man-against-the-system story and Marrs' relentless sifting of the evidence are not a perfect mesh. And when they conflict, Stone follows his dramatic instincts and sticks with Garrison. In one scene, Stone has Garrison make light of a suggestion that the Mafia might be involved. What's left unsaid is that Garrison himself was the subject of repeated but never proved allegations of involvement with the Carlos Marcello crime family in New Orleans. (In 1973 a jury found Garrison not guilty of taking payoffs from underworld pinball operators.) According to *Crossfire*, Garrison's failure to pursue the mob angle "has caused many raised eyebrows among researchers otherwise kindly disposed toward the former DA." Stone concedes that "why Jim didn't ever investigate Marcello is a legitimate question." But *JFK* sidesteps the entire debate.

"An artist has a right to interpret history as much as a newsman," Stone argues. Nowhere does he lean on artistry more than in his ambitious conjecture about who really was responsible for Kennedy's death. *JFK*'s elaborate web of plotters—including the Pentagon, the CIA, the FBI, Lyndon Johnson, anti-Castro Cuban exiles, and military contractors—has been the most roundly denounced element in the film. It is also part of its seductive appeal.

The notion that our central institutions have been engaged in a systematic campaign of lying to the public is hardly a new one. That has been a theme in entertainment—and in real life—for almost 30 years. When Stone's political insider "X" (Donald Sutherland) spins out his intricate tale of government secrecy and corruption, it's a moment most moviegoers hardly find shocking. In fact it is quite familiar, recalling scenes in movies ranging from *All the President's Men* to *Rambo*.

But Stone goes the classic paranoia genre one better by linking the JFK, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King assassinations as well as the Vietnam War in what *The New York Times* dubbed a Grand Unified Conspiracy Theory. By implying that *someone* is responsible for all these tragedies, Stone's thesis can be seen almost as an antidote to the nihilistic cynicism of his generation. He cheerfully describes *JFK* as "a bit of agitprop."

At theaters around the country, *JFK* is reaching a

sympathetic—but not completely accepting—audience. “A lot of what’s written about current events in the newspapers is a lie,” says L.A. moviegoer Linda Weinberg, 45. “So give Oliver Stone a chance to lie too if he wants to.” “It makes me really mad that they only present one side of the Kennedy killing at my school,” says 14-year-old Daniel Kirschner, a student in the Chicago suburb of Arlington Heights. “This film makes me want to learn more.”

Stone hopes the point-counterpoint of the debate will yield “a synthesis of informed public opinion”; at the least, the arguments are sure to go on for a while. Two *more* movies—*Ruby*, starring Danny Aiello, and *Libra*, based on the 1988 Don DeLillo novel about Oswald—are in the works. Even politicians are getting in on the debate. On Dec. 19, *JFK* was shown to members of Congress at a screening organized by Frank Mankiewicz of the powerhouse D.C. PR firm Hill and Knowlton, hired by Warner Bros. One result has been new calls for the release of sealed records from the 1977 House Select Committee on Assassinations investigation. Rep. Lee Hamilton, a Democrat from Indiana—who *hasn't* seen *JFK*—has been pushing since last March for release of the records. “They ought to be made available so people can make up their own minds,” he says.

Asked about the controversy recently, President Bush reiterated his faith in the Warren Commission, comparing conspiracy theories to rumors that Elvis is alive. Stone promptly fired off a statement to *Daily Variety* virtually accusing Bush of being part of the cover-up. In his 30 years in the “executive branch establishment,” Stone writes, Bush “has had ample opportunity to stonewall the American people.”

No matter how many files are opened or how much evidence is reconsidered, it's probably too late to expect a definitive resolution of the Kennedy mystery. By now the urge to find dark conspiracies behind every national crisis is so imbedded in our culture, it may never be extirpated. And that is the deep cultural craving that *JFK* exploits and satisfies so well. —Allen Barra and Ty Burr; additional reporting by Giselle Benatar, Terry Catchpole, David Kronke, Cindy Pearlman, and Michael Swindle; research by Paul Foglino



The pristine Single Bullet. Stone takes aim at the Warren Commission view that it passed through both JFK's and John Connally's bodies.



**Not sure who's lying in *JFK*? Stone offers plenty of clues to his opinion. When alleged conspirator Clay Shaw denies ever having met several gay suspects, Stone dashes his credibility by cutting to the above shot of Shaw (second from right, played by Tommy Lee Jones) cavorting with those same party boys.**

#### STONE'S TECHNIQUE

## Camera Obscura

**E**NNOBLE THE cause, damn its opponents: Those are the prime rules in crafting propaganda, that worrisome tool used for centuries in the service of wars, religious crusades, political campaigns, and now, to sensational effect, Oliver Stone's *JFK*. The movie is an intricately stacked deck, a barrage of visual and aural cues geared not to help viewers reach their own conclusions about the mountain of conflicting Kennedy-assassination evidence but to affect their hearts and minds on a visceral, almost subconscious level. Here's a primer on Stone's cinematic tools of persuasion.

**Mixing Varied Film Stocks.** *JFK* opens with a 3½-minute MTV-paced salute to Kennedy, a torrent of images from actual newsreel and home-movie footage, mostly in black and white. Yet as this prologue builds to a Dealey Plaza replay, Stone begins to blend in staged black-and-white footage, much of it shot on 16 mm or 8 mm film for an authentically fuzzy look. As the movie begins weaving to-

BY STEVE DALY





gether eyewitnesses' testimony, the ratio of grainy reenactments to real footage increases, making it difficult to tell fact from supposition.

**Concrete Conjectures.** Stone repeatedly backs up speculative conspiracy theories with dramatizations. Could Oswald's fingerprints have been put on the gun at the morgue? Bang, we see exactly that happen. Could David Ferrie (Joe Pesci) have been murdered by anti-Castro Cubans? Cut to unidentified hands stuffing medication down his throat. Theories Stone *doesn't* support aren't dramatized; when a coroner says Ferrie's death could have been suicide, we get no illustration.

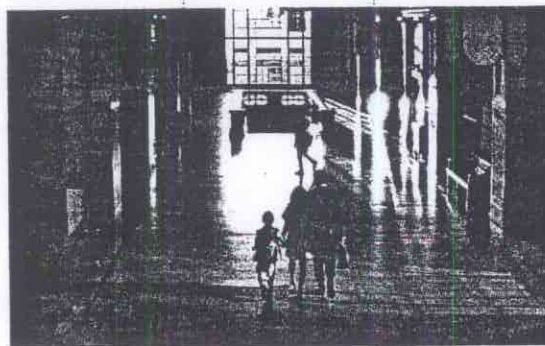
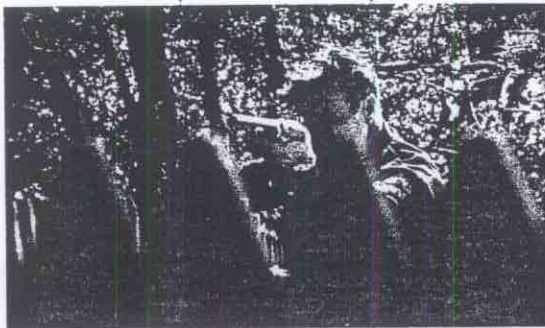
**Contradictory Cutaways.** Almost every time Clay Shaw (Tommy Lee Jones) speaks, he's undercut by flashbacks that directly contradict what he's saying. Ferrie's answers during his interrogation also get *60 Minutes* gotcha-style visual rebuttals, as do the answers of lawyer Dean Andrews (John Candy) during Garrison's grilling. When Andrews denies knowing Shaw, he is immediately shown sharing a cozy lunch with him.

**Recurring Bit Players.** As eyewitnesses and Garrison staffers reconstruct Oswald's activities in the summer of 1963, we see their accounts reenacted. Lurking in the background, two Cuban anti-Castro conspirators show up again and again. Stone

thus provides visual connections between these disparate recollections, making it appear that they all add up. He pulls a similar trick by having the actors who play the boxcar "tramps" (alleged to be plotters) also turn up as grassy knoll hit men.

**Foreshadowed Allegations.** To lend pulse-pounding significance to each revelation by Garrison's team, Stone plants coming attractions. During a scene with Garrison assistant Susie Cox (Laurie Metcalf), he inserts shots of an X-Acto knife cutting up a picture. We don't know what these shots mean until later, when Susie breathlessly asserts that LIFE's cover photo of Oswald is a doctored composite. We're predisposed to believe this charge, as we've seen it with our own eyes.

**Body Language.** In *JFK's* hierarchy of good and evil, hero Jim Garrison (Kevin Costner) and his staff are uniformly attractive, stalwart, earnest, and often bathed in golden light. Villains Shaw, Ferrie, Jack Ruby (Brian Doyle-Murray), and Guy Banister (Ed Asner) are evasive, unsavory thugs with bad skin, often shown in shiftily-eyed close-up.



Want a smoking gun? Stone creates one (top right)—and gives it the look of genuine documentary footage. Above, Garrison and family get a saintly aura as they leave the courthouse.

changing shocked looks as Garrison says certain FBI files were "destroyed while being photocopied."

**Objections Overruled.** Stone hedges his theorizing with qualifiers ("let's suppose," "maybe I'm wrong," etc.); the catch is, he gives them no dramatic weight. He also has doubting Thomases raise objections only to have Garrison demolish them. When an aide conjectures about a mob hit, the boss fires off a series of questions that effectively rule out the theory. The definitive skeptic's conversion comes when naysayer Mrs. Garrison (Sissy Spacek) hears of RFK's death and gushes, "Oh, my God...You were right!"



Did he act alone?  
Oswald in a famous  
backyard photo that  
many conspiracy  
buffs believe  
was faked

# Out, Damned Plot

*Nine tangled theories that go far beyond the Warren Commission*

**E**VERYBODY on earth on Nov. 22, 1963, it sometimes seems, was involved in a plot to assassinate JFK. If all those alleged conspirators—all of whom have denied the allegations—were there, it's lucky anyone got out of Dealey Plaza alive. Oliver Stone's *JFK* has touched on only some of the possibilities. Here is a definitive roundup of conspiracy theories. Reader, beware: It's a territory in which facts intermingle freely with conjecture and fantasy.

## CUBAN COMMIES



**PLAYERS:** Fidel Castro, Raul Castro, Che Guevara; pro-Castro agents in the U.S. posing as anti-Castroites; Soviet-trained Cuban sharpshooters smuggled into Dallas.

**WHY:** JFK embarrassed Castro big time in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, and Latin machismo demanded retaliation.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Just who he said he was, a pinko Castro sympathizer opposed to Kennedy's Cuba policy; silenced by onetime Castro gunman Jack Ruby.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Full disclosure would force the U.S. to retaliate against Castro and the USSR would back its puppet, leading to World War III and the end of civilization as we know it.

**ALSO SEE:** *Red Friday* by Carlos Bringuier.

## CUBAN ANTI-COMMIES



**PLAYERS:** Exiled anti-Castro activists Eladio Del Valle and Sergio Arcacha Smith; their U.S. rightist henchmen Guy Banister, Clay Shaw, and David Ferrie; CIA baby-sitter "Maurice Bishop"; mercenary Loran Eugene Hall; snipers recruited from Alpha 66 guerrilla group and coordinated in Dealey Plaza by the anonymous "umbrella man."

**WHY:** JFK withheld air support at the Bay of Pigs, and pulled the plug on all exile get-Fidel plans thereafter.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Never shot anybody; was duped into thinking it was a pro-Castro operation; was silenced by Ruby, notorious bagman for Latin drug dealers and arms traffickers.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Exposure would have risked disclosure of intimate U.S. ties with anti-Castro firebrands, complicity in Latin assassination plots, secret Central American mercenary bases, etc.

**ALSO SEE:** *Coincidence or Conspiracy?* by Bernard Fensterwald Jr.; *On the Trail of the Assassins* by Jim Garrison; *Legacy of Doubt* by Peter Noyes.

## MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

**PLAYERS:** Pentagon hard-liners, arms manufacturers, oil producers; Lyndon Johnson and White House hawks; right-wing Secret Service agents who stripped the Dallas motorcade of normal security precautions, then helped alter the corpse and destroy autopsy evidence.

**WHY:** Sought deeper involvement in Southeast Asia and an end to détente with the Soviet Union. JFK was planning to dump LBJ from the national ticket in 1964 and pull out of Vietnam in 1965.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** These guys eat Lee Harvey Oswalds for breakfast.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** These guys eat Earl Warrens for lunch.

**ALSO SEE:** *JFK and Vietnam* by John Newman (to be published soon); *Crossfire* by Jim Marrs; *The Secret Team* by Fletcher Prouty; *Best Evidence* by David Lifton.



BY TERRY CATCHPOLE

## RENEGADE CIA CLIQUE



**PLAYERS:** Chief CIA hard-liner James Angleton; fired Bay of Pigs architect Gen. Charles P. Cabell; dark-ops master William Harvey; Dallas mayor Earle Cabell (who rerouted the motorcade as a favor to his brother Charles); professional European assassins, trained by OAS terrorist

Jean Souetre, and coordinated in Dealey Plaza by three agents disguised as tramps.

**WHY:** After the Bay of Pigs disaster, JFK began carrying out his vow to "splinter the CIA into a thousand pieces and scatter it to the wind."

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Recruited by CIA while serving at U2 base in Japan in 1958-59; sent to USSR as an ersatz defector; brought home and—along with a near-look-alike code-named "Saul"—assigned to sow confusion along JFK hit trail; escape to airport where plane would take him to Mexico stymied by patrolman J.D. Tippit; silenced by CIA errand boy Ruby.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Warren Commission member Allen Dulles had been canned as CIA director by Kennedy.

**ALSO SEE:** *Plausible Denial* by Mark Lane; *Appointment in Dallas* by Hugh C. McDonald; *Conspiracy* by Anthony Summers; *Reasonable Doubt* by Henry Hurt.

## ORGANIZED CRIME



**PLAYERS:** New Orleans-Dallas boss Carlos Marcello, Miami boss Santos Trafficante, Chicago boss Sam Giancana, Teamsters boss Jimmy Hoffa, ex-Havana boss Meyer Lansky, Johnny Roselli; Marcello family retainers Banister, Shaw, and Ferrie; mob operative Eugene Hale Braden

(a.k.a. Jim Braden), whom Dallas police picked up in Dealey Plaza on Nov. 22 and subsequently released.

**WHY:** To get back into the Havana casino action; to get Bobby Kennedy off Hoffa's back; to get back at the Kennedys for Bobby's anti-mob vendetta—all the more galling for the mob's having helped Chicago mayor Richard Daley steal the '60 election for JFK.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Fingering as the fall guy by Marcello's New Orleans flunkie, Ferrie; silenced by debt-ridden Mafia underling Ruby, who earned his mob spurs in Chicago running numbers for the Capone gang.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Through JFK's dalliance with Giancana's moll Judy Exner and Peter Lawford's escapades with the Rat Pack in Vegas—not to mention Papa Joe's bootlegging in the '30s—the mob knew about more Kennedy family skeletons than the Kennedys did.

**ALSO SEE:** *The Plot to Kill the President*, by G. Robert Blakey and Richard N. Billings.

## RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS

**PLAYERS:** Oilman H.L. Hunt; European émigrés George DeMohrenschildt and Ferenc Nagy; alliance of wealthy John Birchers, U.S. defense security agents, Cuban exiles, Odessa-

style ex-Nazis and White Russian monarchists, operating under the umbrella of Permindex Corp., a global intelligence-financial network; crack American Volunteer Group riflemen coordinated by paramilitarist Joseph Adams Milteer (the "go" signal was the black-bordered "Welcome" ad in the Nov. 22 *Dallas Morning News*).



**WHY:** Considered Kennedy "soft on communism"; hated JFK's foreign, domestic, and economic policies; didn't much like Bobby, either.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Perfect fall guy—a confused Com-symp defector—for laying the blame at Kremlin's doorstep; plan to have him knocked off by right-wing cop J.D. (for Jefferson Davis) Tippit failed; silenced by Ruby, a devotee of the Hunt-sponsored "Life Line" broadcasts.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Right-wing clout in the FBI, CIA, and U.S. military helped obliterate evidence.

**ALSO SEE:** *Nomenclature of an Assassination Cabal* by "William Torbitt"; *The Men Behind the Guns* by W.R. Morris; *Spy Saga* by Philip Melanson.

## SOVIET COMMIES



**PLAYERS:** Premier Nikita Khrushchev, KGB chairman Yuri Andropov, KGB American expert-turned-defector Yuri Nosenko, Marina Prusakova Oswald; Oswald control agent Albert Osborne; Latin leftist guerrillas coordinated by "second Oswald," code-named Alek Hidell, a trained KGB assassin.

**WHY:** JFK outbluffed Russkies in the Cuban Missile Crisis, and was about to abandon Cold War militarism to attack Soviets where they were weakest: the economic front.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Marxist turncoat "made" as a Soviet agent when his Marine radar training helped bag Gary Powers' U2 spy plane; groomed by KGB in Minsk and assigned "wife" whose uncle was a high-ranking Soviet intelligence official; returned to U.S. with a Soviet double in 1962; slain by low-level KGB agent Ruby.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Warren Commission didn't want to stir up anti-Soviet public opinion that would fuel impeach-Earl Warren rightists, elect Goldwater, and thus risk World War III and the end of civilization as we know it.

**ALSO SEE:** *The Oswald File* by Michael Eddowes.

## THE FBI

**PLAYERS:** J. Edgar Hoover (visiting Dallas Nov. 22 on "private business"); former FBI officials William Sullivan, Louis Nichols, Alan H. Belmont, James Cadigan, J.M. English, and Donald Kaylor, all of whom died under mysterious circumstances in 1977; sharpshooters recruited from FBI-infiltrated anti-Castro and right-wing groups.



**WHY:** JFK was threatening to force the aging longtime director into retirement and to bring the agency under control.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** Former Marxist ideologue-defector was "turned" when he came back to the US; infiltrated pro-Castro groups; set up by being told he was spying on the real assassins; slain by fellow FBI asset Ruby.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** The Warren Commission relied exclusively on the FBI for its investigations and received only what Hoover wanted it to receive.

**ALSO SEE:** *The Assassination Tapes* by George O'Toole; *Act of Treason* by Mark North.

### THE MASTERMIND

**PLAYERS:** Howard Hughes, "Mr. X," operatives recruited from CIA, Mafia, anti-Castro Cubans, right-wing paramilitarists, possibly including hit man Charles Harrelson, courier Chauncey Holt, and communications expert Jim Hicks.

**WHY:** Elimination of wealthy, independent Kennedy; elevation of vainglorious Johnson; discredit of American liberals; election of puppet Nixon. Alternate explanation: The Mafia

had actually taken over Hughes organization from the bedridden recluse, and it was run by a "Mr. X," possibly Meyer Lansky.

**WHAT ABOUT OSWALD:** A cagey chameleon selling his services to the highest bidder and trapped in his own game; left Dealey Plaza in a light-colored station wagon and should have been shot at the Texas Theater while "resisting arrest"; instead, Hughes' toady Jack Ruby—frequent guest at Las Vegas casinos—was told to knock him off.

**COVER-UP RATIONALE:** Not even the Warren Commission could be sure of what Hughes owned, or whom.

**ALSO SEE:** *The Assassination Chain* by Sybil Leek and Bert R. Sugar.



*Research assistance provided by Carl Oglesby and Harvey Yazjian, neither of whom was anywhere near Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.*

## Hollywood Conspiracies, Take One

*JFK* IS THE latest in a rich tradition of dramas about political intrigue stretching back to Shakespeare. Here are the most notable features and documentaries dealing with Nov. 22, 1963, and other assassinations and conspiracies, all available on video.

◆ **THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE** (1962) How the Soviets might have done it. Taut Cold War drama, with a remote-controlled assassin programmed by the Comies to boost the fortunes of a vice-presidential candidate, James Gregory, right. **A-**

◆ **SEVEN DAYS IN MAY** (1964) High-ranking right-wing military officers, angered by a liberal President's policies, plot a coup. Exceptional inside-Washington perspective on the bitterly confrontational political mood of 1963. **A**

◆ **THE DAY OF THE JACKAL** (1973) If professional assassins were used in the JFK hit, they may have been Europeans like the Jackal and involved in one of the early-'60s attempts on the life of French president Charles de Gaulle. This suspenseful, meticulous account of a '63 action on De Gaulle is fictional, but full of dark portent. **A**

◆ **EXECUTIVE ACTION** (1973) Feature cowritten by Warren Commission critic Mark Lane depicts alleged assassins' plottings in a semidocumentary style like *JFK's* (here, a wealthy right-winger is the chief culprit). Excellent com-



panion to Stone's film, but lacking its cinematic flair. **B**

◆ **THE PARALLAX VIEW** (1974) Warren Beatty as a journalist who traces a series of political assassinations to a monolithic killer-recruitment corporation. Stylish melodrama as annoyingly elliptical as its subject. **B-**

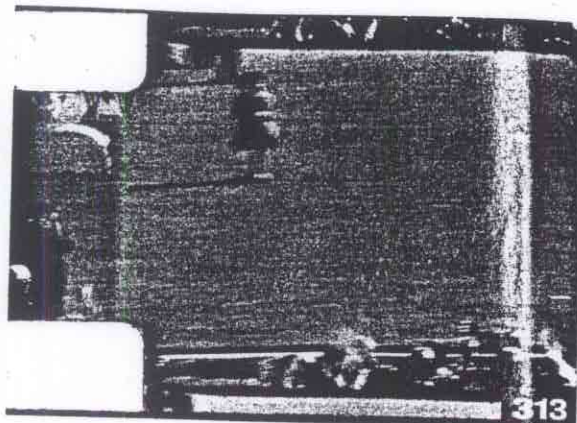
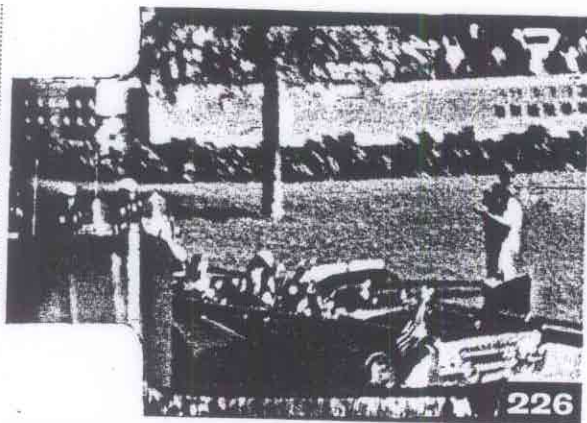
◆ **THREE DAYS OF THE CONDOR** (1975) Renegade CIA operatives plot against each other, with hunky spook Robert Redford caught in the middle. Insightful take on the above-the-law mentality that has been known to infect the U.S. intelligence community. **A-**

◆ **WINTER KILLS** (1979) Brother of a slain President finds evidence of Mafia complicity in the assassination. A dark

comedy that goes overboard with plot convolutions; the fun is mostly in John Huston's robust performance as patriarch of a Kennedyesque family. **B-**

◆ **DECLASSIFIED: THE PLOT TO KILL PRESIDENT KENNEDY** (1983) Capable nonfiction overview written and produced by former CBS documentary filmmaker John Sharnik, including interviews with a mercenary who says he spurned offers to shoot JFK. Emphasizes Mafia-Teamsters angle. **B**

◆ **BEST EVIDENCE: THE RESEARCH VIDEO** (1990) Well-made documentary from producer-author David Lifton's book, showing discrepancies among medical reports and arguing that JFK's body was altered before its autopsy. **A** (*T.C.*)



THE ZAPRUDER FILM

# Shots Seen Round the World

*A journalist's behind-the-scenes story of the most historic home movie ever*

*This account is not consistent with what is known. I think it is not true.*

**R**ICHARD B. STOLLEY was the Los Angeles bureau chief of LIFE magazine when his assignment to cover the events in Dallas led to one of the great scoops in journalism: obtaining exclusive rights to Abraham Zapruder's film of the President's assassination. Here Stolley, now editorial director of Time Inc. Magazines (including this one), recounts that experience in detail.

"Dick, Kennedy's been shot in Dallas!"

Within an hour of the shout that brought me running out of my office, I was on a plane to Texas with another correspondent and two photographers. In the air we learned that the President was dead and that someone named Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested. By dusk I was setting up an office in a downtown hotel.

At about 6 p.m., I got a phone call from one of the magazine's part-time reporters, Patsy Swank. She was at Dallas police headquarters, she said in a confidential whisper; Oswald was being interrogated in an office not far away, and the corridors were a chaotic mob of cops and reporters. What Patsy said next was electrifying: She had been tipped by a Dallas officer that the assassination had been filmed in its entirety by a local garment

Above, key frames from Abraham Zapruder's film: #226, when Kennedy first emerges from behind the sign at left, clutching his throat; #313, the fatal shot strikes Kennedy's head; #346, the President collapses into Jackie's lap; and #371, Jackie climbs onto the limo's trunk

manufacturer, whose name started with a "Z." She sounded out the syllables. I picked up the Dallas phone book, ran my finger down the Z's, and there it was: Zapruder, Abraham. I called the number. No answer. I called again every 15 minutes or so until 11 p.m. Then a weary voice answered.

It was Zapruder himself. He had been driving around trying to calm his nerves. After photographing the shooting, he had literally stumbled back to his office nearby, muttering, "They killed him, they killed him." Zapruder's secretary described him as "incoherent, in a state of shock," but clutching the camera containing what would become the most famous home movie of all time.

Incredibly, nobody in authority was much interested in it. Zapruder had contacted the Dallas police, but by mid-afternoon they had Oswald in custody and the film seemed of marginal importance. Both the Secret Service and the FBI said it was his property to dispose of as he saw fit but that they would like copies. Zapruder took his 8 mm film to a Kodak lab, and by evening had the original and three copies in hand.

I questioned him as gently as I could. Yes, it showed everything. Yes, I was the first journalist to contact him. No, I could not come out to his house at that late hour. He was too exhausted, too distraught. He seemed genuinely grateful that I did not persist, and asked me to be at his office at

BY RICHARD B. STOLLEY

### 'JFK': The Reel Story

**T** Your cover story on Oliver Stone's new film ("Twisted History," MOVIES, Dec. 23) speaks of "the twisted truth of 'JFK,'" but what about the twisted truth of the Warren Commission report? Many rational people, not just kooks and weirdos, believe that the Zapruder film of the fatal motorcade as well as various photographs and conflicting testimonies challenge the commission's conclusion that John F. Kennedy was the victim of a "lone nut." Former Supreme Court chief justice Earl Warren conceded that the truth might not be known in our lifetime, and former president Lyndon B. Johnson reportedly admitted shortly before his death that he believed Kennedy's assassination was the product of a conspiracy. Why do reputable publications like yours continue to give credence to such a dubious investigation?

JAMES L. GITZ  
Freeport, Ill.

It is irrelevant whether or not Stone's account of Kennedy's assassination is accurate. What matters is that his epic seems

**T** Denotes letters received via telephone mail, 1-900-990-MAIL.

MAIL CALL

### Who Killed JFK?

**O**ur Dec. 23 cover story debunking Oliver Stone's film "JFK" proved to be as controversial as the film itself.

Most readers sided with the filmmaker's attack of the Warren Commission's lone-assassin finding. "Oswald was a poor marksman," one reader noted, "and yet experts have failed to duplicate his shooting on Nov. 22, 1963." Others posed fanciful countertheories—that the Vatican was to blame; that Oswald was a misogynist who actually meant to kill Jackie. But one reader stated his disbelief in a government-coordinated conspiracy such as the one Stone's film depicts, explaining, "I can't imagine the federal government ever doing anything that efficiently."



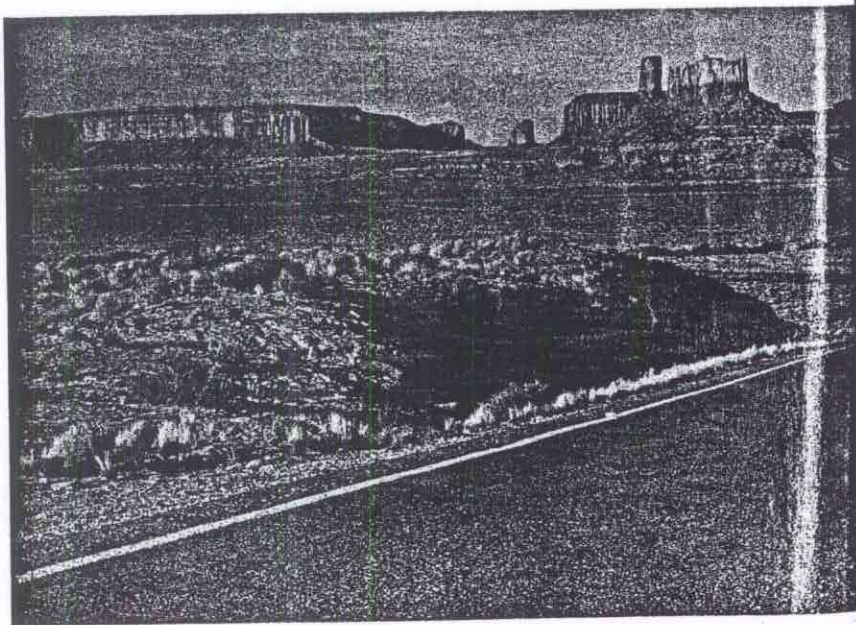
likely to stimulate new concern about what really happened, especially among Americans too young to remember the event. Stone is to be commended for sustaining public interest in a question that should not be dropped until it's answered satisfactorily.

ED SHIFRES  
West Hollywood, Calif.

**T** I'm getting tired of NEWSWEEK's preemptive strikes against conspiracy theorists. This week you were against Stone's "JFK." Earlier you slammed Gary Sick's book "October Surprise." You dissuade people from investigating the evidence.

ROBERT GONSALVES  
Crockett, Calif.

The House Select Committee on Assassinations, you say, "determined that the rearward movement of [Kennedy's] head could have come from nerve damage and was not 'fundamentally inconsistent with a bullet striking from the rear.'" But you conspicuously omit the fact that the HSCA determined that there was a "high probability" a shot was fired from the grassy knoll. The committee further held that Kennedy "was probably assassinated as a



111392 Newsweek



MONUMENT VALLEY, UTAH. 5:32 P.M. STILL GOING. NOTHING

result of a conspiracy," and recommended that the Justice Department investigate matters further. They haven't. Perhaps Stone's film and the fact that most Americans believe there was a conspiracy to kill JFK will prompt the government to tie up some loose ends.

LYN KELLY  
Ft. Worth, Texas

I am sick of the rehashing of President Kennedy's assassination. Whether he was slain by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone or was the victim of a conspiracy doesn't matter now, nearly three decades later. The man is dead. Let his soul rest in peace.

O. RICHARD CUMMINGS  
Manchester, N.H.

### Mastering Managed Trade

As James Bovard points out in his essay challenging the wisdom of trade barriers ("Fair Trade Is Unfair," MY TURN, Dec. 9), much in U.S. trade policy is lamentable. But it is ridiculous for Bovard to assert that because we have managed trade poorly, we should not attempt to manage it at all. Free trade may exist in heaven, but not here on earth. Japan has mastered the art of managed trade. Many other nations are close

behind. We trail them all. Cheap prices gained by dropping trade restrictions will be meaningless when the only jobs left in America are assembling and marketing imported items.

CLAYTON NAFF  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

### Black & White Photos

Your story on the resurgence of bank robbery ("The Bank Robbery Boom," JUSTICE, Dec. 9) says the modern bank robber is "usually white and often carries no weapon." Yet both of the photographs you published of robberies in progress show black men with pistols. These photos only bolster the myth that all violent crime is committed by black Americans.

L. ALLEN EBERT  
Winchester, Va.

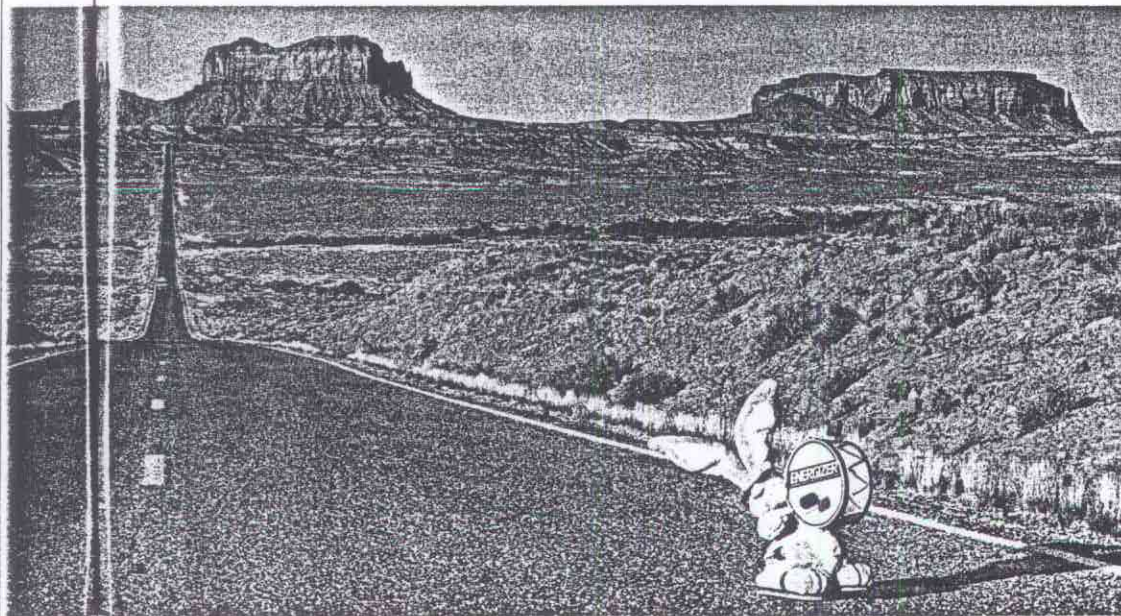
### Keep Schools Selective

If William Dill's ideas for reforming college admissions procedures ("How Not to Get Into College," MY TURN, Nov. 18) are ever put into practice, I will tremble for the future of American education. If top schools were to admit 25 to 50 percent more people than they expect to graduate and to increase the risk of flunking out, as he

suggests, their intellectual climate would degenerate into one of anxiety and petty competition. As the number of students admitted increases, the quality of the education they receive would suffer: classes would become larger, professors would become more overworked and would have to delegate more of their teaching responsibilities to graduate students. Students' opportunities for one-on-one contact with their professors would become less frequent. To make the system work more fairly, we need to convince prospective students, their parents and future employers that academic performance matters more than a prestigious name on a résumé.

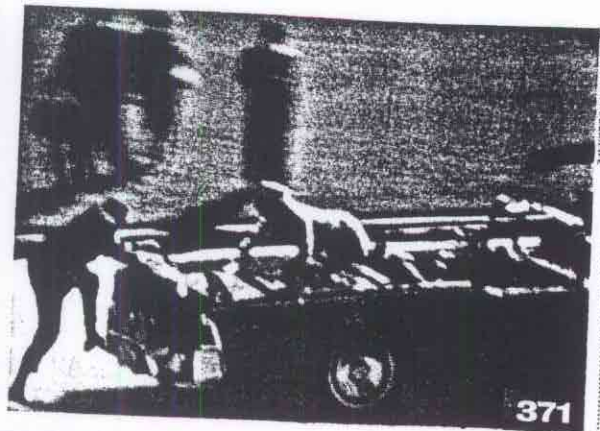
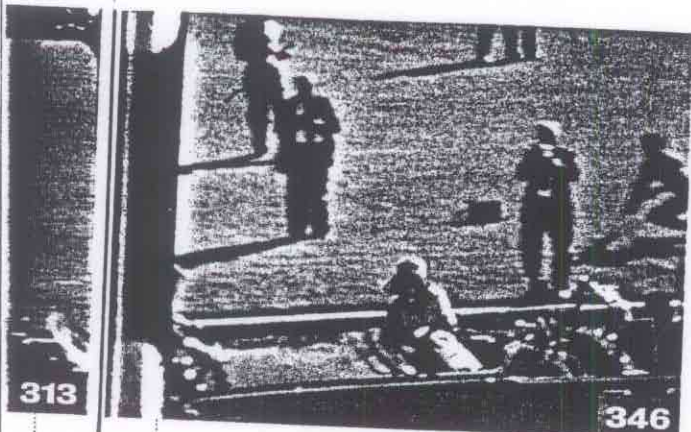
NINA PRYTULA  
Birmingham, Ala.

Letters to the Editor, with the writer's name, address and daytime phone number, should be sent to: **Letters Editor, NEWSWEEK, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022** or faxed to: (212) 350-4120. You may also phone NEWSWEEK'S Telephone Mail Desk, 1-900-990-MAIL, and voice your comments. The cost is \$1.95 for the first minute, \$.95 each additional minute. Calls and letters may be edited for space and clarity.



THING OUTLASTS THE ENERGIZER.





nine the next morning.

I got there at eight: By now other reporters would surely have learned about the film and be in hot pursuit. Standing in the hall at Zapruder's dress factory were several grim-faced men in dark suits—Secret Service agents about to see evidence of their catastrophic failure to protect the President. Zapruder invited us in, darkened the room, and started the film.

It begins with a few frames of employees from his office, then of Dealey Plaza and, suddenly, the motorcade is turning the corner. We held our breath. The President is smiling and waving. The limousine is briefly obscured behind a highway sign. It emerges and now Kennedy's waving arms are clutching his throat, a puzzled look on his face. Governor Connally's mouth is open wide, as if howling in pain.

Remember, this is pre-camcorder; there is no sound, except the creaking of the projector. The camera jerks almost imperceptibly with every shot. The third and last is to the right side of Kennedy's head, caught on sickening frame 313. Brain matter and blood spray up and forward, a trajectory that would have been impossible if the shot had come from anywhere but behind (*JFK* and many conspiracy theorists argue that it came from the grassy knoll in the front).

The furiously bleeding President collapses into his wife's lap. After a split second of terrified contemplation, Jackie clambers out onto the trunk of the limousine, until a Secret Service agent pushes her back into the car. It speeds off for Parkland Hospital.

As those of us in the room tried to recover our composure, I knew that *LIFE* magazine had to have this film. It was a complete photographic record of the death of the President, a unique historical document. I doubted any other existed, and I was right.

By this time I could hear enough commotion outside to realize that other journalists had ar-



Garment manufacturer Zapruder filmed the assassination with all the skill and courage of a veteran combat photographer. "If I had had any sense," he later admitted, "I would have dropped to the ground" as the others in Dealey Plaza did.

rived. I went out to determine who my competition was: the Associated Press, the *Saturday Evening Post*, a newsreel, so far. Zapruder showed the film again to the other journalists, but agreed to talk to me first. We went into his little office and I knew I had to make a deal, right then, or I would likely lose the film. He understood its value to his family's financial future, but was worried about "exploitation," a word he used time and again.

During the night, he told me, he had had a nightmare in which he walked by a sleazy Times Square movie theater and a man on the sidewalk was luring people inside with the promise: "See the President get killed!" I vowed that *LIFE* would treat his pictures with taste and respect. In less than half an hour, we had agreed on a price—\$50,000 for all print rights—and I snuck out the back door of the factory with the original film and one copy, leaving poor Zapruder to face the angry journalists in the hall.

The next day, after the *LIFE* editors in New York had seen the film, I was instructed to try to tie up all rights, print and motion picture. On this mission, I was competing with Dan Rather and CBS, but Zapruder seemed so relieved to be dealing with a familiar face that we quickly reached an agreement: a total of \$150,000, in annual installments of \$25,000.

This grainy snippet of film henceforth became the most crucial piece of evidence in the Warren Commission's investigation of Kennedy's death. It was critical in establishing the timing of the shots, the position of those in the limousine, the reaction of onlookers, and much more. It also dragged *LIFE* into the thicket of conspiracy theories that began springing up as soon as the Warren report offered its lone-gunman explanation. Indeed, there have been hints over the years that I personally was part of the plot. These are the facts:

◆ I wasn't. One reason my name crops up is probably that I still think the Warren report has a better grip on the reality of Nov. 22 than any of the



**Vice President Johnson, flanked by his wife, Lady Bird, and Jackie Kennedy, is sworn in as President aboard Air Force One shortly after the assassination**

*False! and "releasit" to what?*

conspiracy buffs and have said so. My role in the assassination investigation was strictly that of a reporter. I was never interrogated by any government agency or by the Warren Commission; I never met any of the alleged conspirators.

A name mentioned far more often is that of the late C.D. Jackson, who was publisher of LIFE. Because he had served in military intelligence, the theories go, he had both a motive and an opportunity to influence how the magazine handled the Zapruder film. The truth is that all decisions involving its use (or nonuse) were made only by editors, not by anyone on the publishing side.

◆ LIFE did not bury the Zapruder film for 12 years, as Stone charges. All the relevant images were printed immediately except for frame 313. We felt publishing that grisly picture would constitute an unnecessary affront to the Kennedy family and to the President's memory. Today, that may seem a strange, even foolish, decision. But this was 1963, a few years before Vietnam brought carnage into American living rooms. The head wound was described only in words in that issue. LIFE published frame 313 in 1964 and several times later, and for years urged that the Kennedy investigation be reopened.

◆ LIFE decided not to sell the Zapruder film for TV or movie showing for reasons of both taste and competition. Copies were given to the Secret Service and to the Warren Commission. When New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison subpoenaed the film for his trial of alleged conspirator Clay Shaw, LIFE complied. There was no reluctance on

the magazine's part, as *JFK* suggests, although it now seems clear that security at the trial was so lax that the film was illegally duplicated, and bootleg copies were soon sold all over the country. They were shown at conspiracy lectures for years, maybe even a time or two on local TV. My files are full of letters from conspiracy buffs commenting on the film.

◆ There have been charges that LIFE tampered with the film, removed or reversed frames, diddled with it to confound the truth. Nothing like that ever happened. I have inspected the film many

times, as have others; the frames are all there, in proper order. *not in the original.*

In 1975, LIFE sold the Zapruder film back to his family (Abe died in 1970) for one dollar. His son, a Washington tax lawyer, does a brisk business in renting it for one-time use. (Oliver Stone, for instance, says he paid \$40,000 to use the film in *JFK*.) The original is kept in the National Archives, part of the official history of the event that for many of us defined the last half of the 20th century.

Since seeing *JFK*, I have been wondering what that history would be if a middle-aged businessman had not brought his camera to Dealey Plaza. Without knowing that the film went through Zapruder's camera at 18.3 frames per second, we would have no precise way of timing the shots. There would presumably be no controversy about Oswald's ability to fire that often and that accurately. We would probably assume the first shot passed through Kennedy's neck virtually unmarked; thus, the so-called pristine, or "magic," bullet. We would think the second shot hit Governor Connally alone (as he has always believed).

We would...well, you get the idea. There would still be conspiracy theories, since serious questions do remain unanswered. But it is hard to believe that an entire industry of financially rewarding intrigue would have sprung up and still flourish nearly three decades later. No Zapruder film; possibly no wild allegations, totally unproved, of dark crimes committed at the highest levels of American government and society.

As a country, ironically, we might be better off. ◆

## NOW PLAYING

A look at recent releases previously reviewed by OWEN GLEIBERMAN.

**THE ADDAMS FAMILY (PG-13)** The big-screen version of *The Addams Family* turns out to be the sitcom with better set design. The cast is nifty—especially the scene-stealing Christina Ricci, who plays Wednesday with the adorable, saucer-eyed disengagement of a demon child from Neptune. But there's almost no story, and the movie is essentially the same joke over and over: Those Addamses, they sure are wacky and cold-blooded and macabre! **C+**

**BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (G)** Disney's version of the classic fairy tale is a well-crafted animation that never quite finds its heart. What's missing? Mostly, the Beast. He should be a figure of haunting poignance. But as realized by the Disney animators and voiced by Robby Benson, he just comes across as a rather grouchy bison. **B**

**BUGSY (R)** Warren Beatty plays gangster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel as an all-American visionary, a spendthrift dreamer who invents Las Vegas (not the place but the concept) and then watches it become a money pit in the sand. Stylish, clever, and fast on its feet, *Bugsy* is a movie of vast scope and many small pleasures—a lavish, beautifully designed epic that never quite decides what it wants to be. At the film's heart is a splendid joke: That Bugsy, a self-improvement junkie, doesn't really think he's a gangster. At the same time, Beatty is so airy and refined that he never *does* seem quite like a gangster. The movie could have used more of the dirty, low-down kick of the crime genre. **B**

**FATHER OF THE BRIDE (PG)** In this amiable, rather dawdling remake of the 1950 Spencer Tracy vehicle, Steve Martin takes over Tracy's role as the befuddled middle-class patriarch struggling to survive the Oedipal crisis of marrying off his daughter. Martin has all the externals down pat, but he's so naturally stylized—everything he does comes out as a joke—that his performance begins to seem one-note. **B-**

**FRIED GREEN TOMATOES (PG-13)** Set mostly in the picturesque back-country village of Whistle Stop, Ala., during the '30s, this tale



BEAUTIFUL DREAMER: Annette Bening is Beatty's moll in *Bugsy*

of two young-woman friends is at once a portrait of small-town sisterhood and a Southern gothic murder mystery. Mary Stuart Masterson and Mary-Louise Parker give lively and accomplished performances. The movie itself is pushy, didactic, and not very well directed. An extended framing device set in the present day, with Kathy Bates as a put-upon housewife who becomes the confident, new-and-improved "Tawanda," is the sort of ghastly idea that gives feminism a bad name. **B-**

**GRAND CANYON (R)** Set in Los Angeles, Lawrence Kasdan's fortysomething follow-up to *The Big Chill* is way too self-conscious—it has a solemn zeitgeist chic. Yet Kasdan is also a canny, intuitive entertain-

er; he knows actors and how to write for them. Kevin Kline plays an immigration lawyer whose life suddenly acquires purpose when he befriends a black tow-truck driver (Danny Glover)—an act of white-liberal guilt that, miraculously, begins to transcend its own contrivance. The other performers include Mary McDonnell as Kline's wife, who discovers an abandoned baby and realizes that she wants to keep her, and Steve Martin as a producer of shallow, bloody action movies. The movie is finally a very classy soap opera that holds a generous mirror up to its audience's anxieties. **B+**

**HOOK (PG)** Can Peter Pan, now a 40-year-old attorney (Robin Williams), regain touch with the wild child he once was? Steven Spielberg's fantasy is certainly jam-packed with "entertainment value." And yet there's no sense that Spielberg remains in touch with the essential current of everyday experience. Except for Dustin Hoffman's wonderfully understated nuttiness as the impish, effete Captain Hook, nothing in the movie quite gels. **B-**

**JFK (R)** Oliver Stone's movie is full of overheated conjecture, yet Stone has captured—with a dark cinematic flair that leaves you reeling—why the assassination of John F. Kennedy still looms like a sickening nightmare. Beneath its labyrinthine paranoia, the movie is really about the way we see the assassination, about the way it lives inside our minds. Stone keeps returning to that fateful day in Dallas. He weaves

### CRITICAL MASS

Here's how our reviewer and other film critics from across the country grade these current movies.

|                      | PETER TRAVERS<br><i>Rolling Stone</i> | MIKE CLARK<br><i>USA Today</i> | GENE SISEL<br><i>Slate &amp; Esquire</i> | ROGER EBERT<br><i>Slate &amp; Esquire</i> | ELEANOR RINGEL<br><i>Allmovie-Journe &amp; Com.</i> | CARRIE RICHY<br><i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> | OWEN GLEIBERMAN<br><i>Entertainment Weekly</i> | AVG. |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|------|
| THE ADDAMS FAMILY    | C+                                    | C                              | C  | C   | D+  | C+   | C+   | C    |
| BEAUTY AND THE BEAST | A                                     | A+                             | A  | A+  | A-  | A-   | B  | A-   |
| BUGSY                | A-                                    | A                              | B+                                       | A-  | B   | B+   | B  | B+   |
| FATHER OF THE BRIDE  | C+                                    | C                              | B-                                       | B+  | B   | B-   | B-   | B-   |
| GRAND CANYON         | B                                     | B                              | A  | A+  | C+  | B  | B+   | B+   |
| HOOK                 | C-                                    | C-                             | C+                                       | C   | C+  | C  | B-   | C+   |
| JFK                  | C+                                    | A-                             | A-                                       | A   | C   | C  | A-   | B    |
| THE LAST BOY SCOUT   | F                                     | C-                             | C+                                       | B-  | C+  | C-   | B+   | C    |
| THE PRINCE OF TIDES  | F                                     | C                              | C+                                       | A-  | B-  | B+   | C  | C+   |
| RUSH                 | B                                     | B-                             | C  | B   | C-  | C+   | B-   | C+   |

a heady tapestry of audiovisual detail, so that parts of the movie play like a documentary we've miraculously entered. The atmosphere of impotence and invisible doom—the sense of a nation about to crack open—is overwhelming. The film pivots around Jim Garrison (Kevin Costner), the New Orleans district attorney who launched a savvy but reckless inquiry into the assassination. The plot is really just a frame on which Stone can hang the various conspiracy theories. When it comes to dramatizing those theories (the proverbial what-might-have-been), his filmmaking is so supple and alive, his obsession with the *visual* aspect of history so electrifying, that *JFK* practically roots itself in your imagination. **A-**

**THE LAST BOY SCOUT (R)** A cheerfully disreputable buddy thriller that taps into the grimy proletarian charisma Bruce Willis had in *Die Hard*. He plays a tough/jaded/boozing/unshaven private eye who has sunk so low he has stopped caring about whether he lives or dies. Willis is teamed with shaven-headed Damon Wayans, who has the quicksilver charm and confidence of a natural actor. **B+**

**THE PRINCE OF TIDES (R)** Director Barbra Streisand has turned Pat Conroy's 1986 novel into a big, messy, go-for-the-throat soap opera. Tom Wingo (Nick Nolte), a middle-aged Southerner who has spent a lifetime bottling up his guilt and rage, journeys

to New York City to look after his suicidal sister and ends up pouring out his feelings to the sister's psychiatrist, Dr. Susan Lowenstein (Streisand). Nolte gives a weirdly energetic—and unconvincing—performance. He rants, he grins, he yells; he seems furious and giddy at the same time. As a director, Streisand makes the mistake of pumping up the romance, turning Lowenstein into both a godlike healer and a pampered love object. **C**

**RUSH (R)** If you're good-looking enough, there's a certain outré glamour to being totally out of it. Jason Patric, playing an undercover narcotics officer who drifts in and out of heroin addiction, has this negative bohemian bloom to the max in *Rush*—he's James Dean as a junkie Christ. Set in 1975, and based on Kim Wozencraft's autobiographical pulp novel about her experiences working as a narc in Pasadena, Tex., the movie has a raw surface authenticity. But that's about all it has. Patric and Jennifer Jason Leigh (as his new partner) are convincing as small-town cops living a step from the edge of criminality, but they never really become distinctive characters. **B-**

**STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY (PG)** Of all the *Star Trek* movies, this one would fit most cozily onto the small screen. Though touted as the final chapter, *The Undiscovered Country* is just pleasantly diverting hokum. **B-**

**BOX OFFICE**

*Hit Parade*



**HOOKED ON HOOK:** Dustin Hoffman

IT'S REALLY this simple: In the first week of the new year, *everything* is a hit. *Hook, Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Addams Family* are all poised to pass the \$100 million mark.

*The Prince of Tides*, *The Last Boy Scout*, and *Father of the Bride* continue to perform superbly. And, most surprisingly, *JFK* and *Bugsy*, two darker adult-audience films that were slow out of the gate, have established themselves as true contenders in the holiday box office sweepstakes. Their surge in success is due to a combination of media coverage (especially for *JFK*), Golden Globe nominations (*Bugsy*), and word of mouth. Most likely to be joining the hit parade: *Grand Canyon*, which opens wider on Jan. 17.

| WEEKEND GROSS* | TOPTEN   | GROSS TO DATE | WEEKS IN RELEASE |
|----------------|--|---------------|------------------|
| 1 \$11.47      | HOOK<br>TriStar<br>(2,254 screens)                     | \$82.07       | 4                |
| 2 \$9.02       | FATHER OF THE BRIDE<br>Touchstone<br>(1,588 screens)   | \$43.21       | 3                |
| 3 \$8.80       | BEAUTY AND THE BEAST<br>Walt Disney<br>(1,940 screens) | \$82.47       | 8                |
| 4 \$8.51       | THE PRINCE OF TIDES<br>Columbia<br>(1,412 screens)     | \$31.29       | 2                |
| 5 \$7.08       | THE LAST BOY SCOUT<br>Warner Bros.<br>(1,823 screens)  | \$43.81       | 4                |
| 6 \$6.82       | JFK<br>Warner Bros.<br>(1,164 screens)                 | \$30.86       | 3                |
| 7 \$5.37       | BUGSY<br>TriStar<br>(1,245 screens)                    | \$25.31       | 4                |
| 8 \$4.68       | STAR TREK VI<br>Paramount<br>(2,147 screens)           | \$60.54       | 5                |
| 9 \$4.58       | THE ADDAMS FAMILY<br>Paramount<br>(1,974 screens)      | \$38.43       | 7                |
| 10 \$3.81      | MY GIRL<br>Columbia<br>(1,690 screens)                 | \$48.77       | 6                |

SOURCE: EXHIBITOR RELATIONS CO. INC.  
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\*WEEKEND OF JAN. 3-5 (ALL DOLLAR FIGURES IN MILLIONS)

