

"Why We Still Care," LIFE 12/91 article on Stone movie that amounts to a promotion for it and knowingly and deliberately misrepresents the "controversy" about it, which is not once mentioned in the story.

This is the first issue of the "new" LIFE I've seen. It can hardly lay claim to being a really serious publication and the cost is high, \$2.95, or here \$3.10. (I bought a copy because the promised advance copy was not mailed, whether or not one later is.)

It is not only in misrepresenting the nature of the controversy and limiting it to the theories and suggesting that "critics" and/or "researchers" are responsible because Stone ignored them, this is very bad journalism in quoting Stone unquestioningly as saying the exact opposite of what he had earlier said that his movie would say and do.

Based on long phone conversations with Debbie Feyerick who is identified as a reporter on p. 36 but is not listed as one of the masthead, naively I expected a different kind of story. I should not have, LIFE being owned by the corporation that owns the movie company that advanced \$40 million to Stone and is distributing his film.

Lisa Grunwald, a contributing editor, is the author. She has the same last name as an old-time Time, Inc. top official.

Her story begins (35) with a deprecating and inclusive reference to "a persistent footage industry that has provided work- sometimes created careers - for on countless authors, film makers, researchers and conspiracy buffs" who "for nearly three decades" have "dismantled the assassination like a dream, seeking and finding hidden images, echoes of truths, and sometimes, truths."

This is not the only point at which all are presented as conspiracy theorists and not one is presented as anything else. The only suggestion that there could be anything else is the single brief reference to me (36) as having 250,000 FOIA records. There is no further mention of them. This brief quotation of me is the one criticism I recall of the movie.

Further deprecation of all criticism of the movie and of those making it is this again lumping together of us all (36), "Their doubts have inspired a host of alternative theories with a singular caste of characters and a sometimes specialized vocabulary."

The two illustrations are "the 'abushka Lady'" and "The Umbrella Man."

Without mention of how radical a change it is from the original script LIFE says that Stone "doesn't, for example, believe the CIA, a sterminated the plot. He suspects Army Intelligence was involved."

Forgetting what he said often earlier, of which LIFE does not remind him, that his movie would be factual, telling the people their "history" and "who" killed JFK, "why" and "how" LIFE reports, "The best thing this movie could do for me," Stone says, as if it would exist as an alternative myth to the Warren Commission myth...."(36) He hopes it "would be a beacon to another generation," so that it will think of the assassination "in

these new terms," that is, as his movie presents it. Hardly "new terms" is based on the Garrison and Marrs books. There are none in the movie script I have.

LIFE next says, again lumping all together (22 38) except perhaps me from '36, that "other assassination researchers (sic) - even those who might have been expected to ~~resent~~ resent Stone as a Johnny-come-lately - are greeting the prospect of his movie with unconfessed delight." Only Bob Cutler and Mark Lane (with picture) are quoted, Lane with his usual modesty in the caption, "I've made my contribution" and is finished with the subject.

Along with idle conjectures about how people of other ages might feel about JFK Grynwald refers to them as "consumers for the Kennedy industry." (This also deprecates him, not surprising for Time, Inc.)

She quotes Kent Carroll (Carroll & Graf, hardly a political expert): "Kennedy's accomplishments as President were mediocre." (38)

She next quotes the least expert and most dubious as experts, first Jim Marrs, for all the worlds as though his word means anything about anything, "I seek not only the killers of President Kennedy. I seek the persons who killed Camelot." Next Mark North, author of the crappy new (Carroll & Graf) book on J. Edgar Hoover as conspiring with the mafia to kill JFK. North, straight-face and all, is "trying to set the records straight."

Next is Penn Jones, a picture of whom takes up almost half of this page and all of the next (he is holding a frame picture of an issue of his former weekled with the large-type heading "The Disgrace of Dallas." Penn believes "there were nine assassins that day in Dallas, one of them concealed by a manhole cover."

All of this is, I think, also aimed at those who might write about the movie later and is designed to either discourage attention and/or criticism or to prejudice in favor of Stone and his movie. This is carried forward with what next is quoted by Stone, that he did not begin as a Kennedy-lover....with a liberal, ambulance-chasing knee-jery reaction to the murder..." (40)

"But Camelot alone does not explain the assassination industry," that dishonest characterization again, followed by quotation of a psychologist as saying people do not believe "that a partially deranged man would have done this." I am quoted in support of this (42), "People want to give meaning to a random event like the assassination." (42) If I described it as a "random event," which I do not believe I did, I am certain that the quotation is not complete. (I'd suggested to ~~me~~ Feyerick that she tape but she didn't.)

To this point ~~all~~ critics are nutty and greedy but Stone is motivated properly. Again comparing him with critical Grynwald uses Lifton, already identified with his body-snatching and alteration nuttiness and then Mark North. (43) However, North paid little attention to the assassination until he read Garrison's book, which so moved him "I wanted to get this (my emph.) out." (43)

This is the beginning an overt "seel" of the movie, continued on 5 3 44, which begins

with what through Feyerick she knows is a lie, that "Stone immersed himself in the process of research and writing" only to be "deluged by the buff community." "They lined up," he says, "like hogs at a trough. Not all, but some. They wanted to be consulted or to have their theories included, and we could not do that." Why else did he buy the rights to the compendium of them all, "arrs' book? But these "buffs" as he described them "considered him "the golden ~~egg~~ goose."

Later he is quoted as angry "at some of the research community, which he perceives as envious." He refers to his press critics as "Ober Doberman pinschers "who would like to think that they can control people." He earlier as quoted refers to them as "trained to protect the government." More, ~~XXXXXXXX~~

"...certain publications...maintain the official Warren Commission theory."

also in support of Stone is LIFE's reference to "THREE TRAMPS" in a sidebar as "Among the suspects arrested near (my emph) Dealey Plaza were three men dressed in shabby clothing" who "who were "Released soon after their arrest." None of this formulation is true.

"Though Stone ~~xxxx~~ believes that one person did know of the whole assassination plan, he also t says that only a ~~reviewer~~ of his movie 'who is very alert' will be able to say who that person is. His film, he insists, does not solve the murder (which he has just said it does to the "very alert")...I'm not in the business of bringing charges and trying to make a case in a court of law...." (my emph) This suggests he nonetheless makes a case.

She even refers to Blin as a buff" and of them the only exception to "the noise makers." She says "It is difficult to confront their exhortations without being somewhat seduced." (44)

She follows this (pnto 46) wit amidst of the least substantial questions.

So, Stone is not irresponsible od commercial and those ~~xxxx~~ critical of his movie are those who wanted a piece of the action.

LIFE's idea of illustrative of the theories is Eddowes and only his version, of ~~THE~~ "TWO#Oswald's THEORY"(sidebars on 46) the zany version easily rebutted with ridicule and "UMBRELLA MAN."

Another sidebar on this page is a lying representation of the criticism of LIFE for withholding the Zapruder film from any examination: "In fact LIFE published even the most grisly of the movie frames." "his was not the issue at all.

Her treatment of the questions asked by critics, not a decent listing of them, or at all fair, is "The answer to such questions, as provided by the conspiracy buffsx, are unfortunately never simple and lacking evidence, not conclusive." (46) This may be true of some of the trivilaities she gives but it is false about the substantial questions raised by other than the nutty conspiracy theorists.

She builds to her ending by describing on Eric Rinne (of whom I've never heard) as a "researcher" and a teacher (Eastfield College, near Dallas) from whom she proceeds to Larry Howard, photographed at the Assassination Information Center and quoted as saying, "we are close" to a solution. He knows nothing at all about the fact and boasts of not

even having read a book on the subject. He also told me that he paid Marrs to write that book. The story also says that the AIC sponsored the Assassination of J. Edgar Hoover symposium and plans to make it an annual event.

This silliness is the actual ending of the story that for all practical purposes is an in-house and dishonest promotion for the movie.

At no point in all these words is there a single word about the actualities of the actual criticisms, which I began and was quite specific to Stone and reporters, including LIFE, about. Not only the actual criticisms, there is nothing about any nutty ones, either, and this again bears on the in-house intent to promote the movie.

Instead of reporting these criticisms LIFE pretends to report the criticisms of the Warren Report and in that is selective to the point of dishonesty.