



Staff photo by Mark Crummett

The movie "JFK" attracted large crowds at its local showing during the holiday season. It's still playing at the Frederick Towne Mall, being seen by those who remember their questions at

the time of the assassination, as well as students who weren't even born then.

JFK: The assassination mystery, controversy still being explored through film, book

By KAREN GARDNER
Assistant Entertainment Editor

There's a movie, a book, and a lot of talk about an event that happened nearly 30 years ago, but is still fresh in the minds of many of us, and fresh in the history books of those who don't remember.

That event, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, has stirred up the memories, the questions. Did Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, kill Kennedy?

The movie is "JFK." The book is "Plausible Denial" by Mark Lane, the author of "Rush to Judgment," a 1969 best seller that brought to public debate the Warren Commission's conclusion that Oswald acted alone to kill Kennedy.

"All I said then was that the evidence showed that the conclusion of the Warren Commission was not soundly based," Mr. Lane said at a book signing at Waldenbooks in Francis Scott Key Mall Monday evening.

His new book gives details of a little-known trial five years ago. In that trial, he defended a magazine that carried a story linking several CIA officials with the Kennedy assassination. Oswald, he's convinced, never even pulled the trigger of the gun that killed Kennedy, much less engineered the President's assassination.

"The evidence proved the CIA killed Kennedy, and the jurors found for us," he said. "This was the first verdict ever on the question."

To get his evidence, he requested

Plausible Denial

Was the CIA Involved in the Assassination of JFK?

Mark Lane
Bestselling Author of
Rush to Judgment

"Plausible Denial" by Mark Lane and the movie "JFK" are drawing renewed interest in the 1963 Kennedy assassination.

CIA documents under the Freedom of Information Act. He reviewed tens of thousands of documents. The federal agencies involved were rarely willing to release them. In most cases, he sought and won court orders.

The 384-page book reviews these documents and his conclusions.

The book is already in its fifth printing, having sold out its first press run with almost no advance

publicity, and Mr. Lane makes no bones about why.

"I think (Oliver) Stone's film ("JFK") will help place this on the agenda," he said. Massive advance publicity of the movie "JFK" revived the debate in the public forum.

"He's liberal with the facts; nevertheless, it did get people talking about it." The early sales of his book show the interest, he added.

Mr. Lane's problems with the movie lie in the fictionalization of many events. "The truth was dramatic enough," he said. "They didn't have to fictionalize anything." The assassination is too much in question, and too fresh in people's minds, to present half-truths and fiction in a mass-market movie, he said.

Still, he added, the hard evidence is well presented.

Ida Vanaman, manager of the cinemas at Frederick Towne Mall, said the movie drew large crowds during the Christmas holiday season.

"It's a movie that opens your mind and makes you do a lot of thinking," she said.

A group of people from Gettysburg, Pa., stood outside the movie theater for quite a while after an evening showing and discussed it, she said.

"We're getting all kinds of feedback. It really affects people."

Many college students, who weren't even born when Kennedy was assassinated, are seeing the movie. Others who see the movie remember their questions at the

time, Ms. Vanaman said.

"It's all coming back," she said. "I remember I was loading the car to go to Wilmington, Del., for Thanksgiving."

A viewer at a recent showing, Paul Hubbard, said after seeing the film, "I thought it was a great movie." A Texan at the time of the shooting, he said he didn't think the reports were completely factual.

"I definitely think there was a conspiracy," he said.

Ron Ringie, another viewer, said, "It opens a gaping hole." Things might have been different if the assassination had happened today, he said. "With today's intellect and technology, more questions would have been asked."

He called it, "probably the most important movie I'll see in a long time."

Another viewer saw the movie as a personal experience. "I'd rather keep my thoughts to myself," he said.

At the book signing, people were crowding around Mr. Lane. Judith Siegel, a Frederick resident who does mass marketing and direct mail, offered her services for free to Mr. Lane.

"I think what you're doing is so important," she said, handing him her card. "I find it compelling probably because I lived through the assassination as a young mother. There were too many coincidences."

That's not an unusual reaction, Mr. Lane said. "I've never gotten

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