

LIZ SMITH

Let's Open the J.F.K. Files

NEW YORK—"Significant elements of the Establishment media do seem hell-bent on destroying his reputation," says cartoonist-editorialist Garry Trudeau of filmmaker Oliver Stone in the matter of the controversial movie "JFK."

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I think Stone's off-the-wall film is riveting. While I don't really buy his "gay Mafia" thesis, nor many other assertions of former New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison, I do buy a conspiracy theory as the only possible answer to the weird events surrounding the murder of the 35th President of the United States. (And you can tack the murders of Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. to that as well.)



Stone

I think that any movie or book that holds the federal Establishment up to severe examination is probably valuable. We have been lied to in this country until hell won't have it. We have been misled by Presidents, the Senate, the Congress, the CIA, the FBI, the Pentagon—you name it. It's a wonder the average American has any ideals left at all.

But some of us do, and we'd like to preserve our shred of idealism and our belief that truth will win out and justice will triumph eventually.

Now, Stone will address the National Press Club on Wednesday in Washington and will have a chance to answer some of the many critics who seem bent on shutting him up.

Stone's cries in the wilderness for reopening files on the J.F.K. murder have been heard by at least one U.S. representative—Lee H. Hamilton (D-Ind.). The Hollywood trades this week say Hamilton will make a request that the sealed assassination files be opened. That way we could stop this farce of making everybody wait until 2029, when the trail will have grown even colder.

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A conspiracy theory that makes more sense to me than the various theses of Stone's movie is being advanced by Mark North in his new book, "Act of Treason: The Role of J. Edgar Hoover in the Assassination of President Kennedy."

This work from Carroll & Graf takes a day-by-day look at events before and after the violence of Nov. 22, 1963. The author claims Hoover knew all along about Mafia threats to the President and even knew that an assassination attempt would be made. But he never advised the Secret Service about the threats, hoping that J.F.K.'s death would spare him the ignominy of having to accept mandatory retirement.

Again, read it and draw your own conclusions.