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# OLIVER STONE'S BRAIN IS MISSING

BY THOMAS W. HAZLETT

**D**on't laugh, but I did expend seven dollars U.S. to see Oliver Stone's *JFK*. This film screams with lies, distortions, and incredible innuendo in virtually every frame. But worse: It is a boring, bad, D-U-M movie. I don't care where Siskel and Ebert stick their thumbs, if this film is art, Jesse Helms is an intellectual.

*JFK* is idiotically heavy-handed; Stone wouldn't know a nuance if it hit him over the head, which (outside of a Stone film) nuances don't do. The male homosexual characters, for instance, are sensationally played up as drag queens (in violence to the facts). And people Stone thinks are lying are about as good at it as was Martin Short's classic nerve-racked, chain-smoking, stonewalling liar on *Saturday Night Live*. Even the acting stinks; Kevin Costner, constantly on screen, never wavers a micron from his "Concerned American" mode. Just one little tip, Kevin: If you should ever actually go to New Orleans, lose the phony accent.

*JFK* does prove one thing of great value: that even though every single American who has attained any position in business or government is in some way linked to Them (the evil cabal which conspired to kill Kennedy), Oliver Stone can still make a \$40-million movie exposing this skullduggery to the American public. What happened to the combined forces of the CIA, FBI, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, the Dallas P.D., aerospace contractors, the U.S. Supreme Court, the news media, and the Cosa Nostra? Aha! Maybe these powerful and ruthless men were the ones who forced Stone into making this film a snoozer!

But how will our public-school children ever figure this out, you wonder? Not to worry: That's what They put my column here for.

I overheard a woman of about 27 years say to her friends: "You must understand. Everyone was very right-wing then, so of course they were scared when a peace-

loving president got in the White House." But dear, you were only a spermatozoa at the time, so your recall may be fuzzy.

While living, JFK was the guy who stuck 16,000 advisers in 'Nam to begin with. He made up the "missile gap" when running against Tricky Dick in 1960, scaring our patriots about Sputnik and Soviet military superiority. Joe McCarthy's biggest booster was Papa Joe Kennedy, and Eleanor Roosevelt despised the entire Kennedy clan because of their retro anticommunism. Yes, Oliver, there certainly was a massive cover-up, starting somewhere back in the 1930s.

Stone enjoys shadowboxing straw men. You must either believe me (or something close to me), or believe the Warren Commission, bellows the Director of Conscience. This choice is making me rethink the Warren Report, which has never made much sense before. The lone gunman theory is made suspect by the easiest fact: Jack Ruby rubs out Lee Harvey Oswald. The idea that this Mafia-connected night-club owner was distraught over the death of our president challenges even my gullibility. My approach is to connect the simplest points: A president who jails mobsters and cracks Joe Valachi, the very first Mafioso to spill the beans, is going to have to pay a little higher life-insurance premium.

Then he goes and tries to rub out Castro but fails—after contracting the job to the Mob. Well, now....Why wouldn't they just give Fidel a buzz, tell him an angry little tale, and ask him for a nice plump assassin/fall guy, say an Americano who had Communist Anti-American tendencies? Then erase the trail by knocking off the gunman with a mobster about to die of natural causes. Lone nut? Doesn't pass the smell test.

But not even the lacunae of the Warren Commission can *parfum* the odious *JFK*, a film so frantic for conspiracy that it contradicts its own story line. The movie tries to tell us that Oswald wasn't even on

the sixth floor to shoot at the motorcade; he was spotted just minutes before in the second-floor cafeteria and just seconds after downstairs as well.

But...the longest running theme in the movie is that Oswald was a "patsy" for Them (the ubiquitous Patsy should be nominated for Best Supporting Actress). Well, what a blunder to forget to put your patsy in shooting position when the shots are fired. A single random witness may then blow your whole Big Scheme.

The buffoonery goes on. The movie's superhero, Jim Garrison, was in this life a sleaze, and the movie's expert consultant is a Liberty Lobby nut case. And the two interminable monologues linking half of U.S. registered voters to the assassination, or its cover-up, are absolutely preposterous. The film cries out to be subtitled, "Let he who has not conspired cast the first Stone."

**B**ut let me tell you a secret. *JFK: The Nonsense* has been a big thrill for me. I read the juicy exposé in *Esquire*, the dual hit pieces in *GQ*, the cover stories in *Time* and *Newsweek*, Tom Wicker's assassination in *The New York Times*, and a spray of fire in the *Washington Post*. I loved Gary Trudeau's satire on the *Times* op-ed page (charting the course of Stone's limo as it handled small-arms fire from every direction, finally speeding away to the bank as soon as the movie opened to packed houses). I even watched Oliver Stone at the National Press Club: 4 a.m. on C-Span.

For all its shortcomings, this cinematic grotesquery provoked thought and discussion. It prospected a Big Subject and had the guts to stake a claim. Surely I got my \$7.00 worth. God bless you, Oliver Stone, for your gallant, if ugly, tour de farce. I really hope They find your brain, and decide to give it back. You deserve it.

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