

say I was taken quite aback when I glanced at Prof. Fetzer's analysis in his "Reconstruction" of the crime. Fetzer has a real howler here (page 371) when he suggests that the Cabell brothers (Mayor Earle Cabell and CIA Officer Charles Cabell) were pitted as "two rich and powerful right-wing politicians against two powerful left-wing politicians."

I have no real quarrel with Fetzer's description of the Cabell brothers as right-wing but his labeling of both President Kennedy and LBJ as "left-wing politicians" is right out of fantasy land if not Camelot! Can Prof. Fetzer summon up for us any other "rich left-wing and powerful politicians" he knows of before we leave off with JFK and LBJ? And if he can do so how come writers like Chomsky and Cockburn have missed out on this-were they asleep while watching the store? None of the political histories I've read have conjured up any such concoction.

I tried to contain myself at reading this but what I was really interested in was not the political realm (where opinions are offered) but the scientific area (where evidence is required). What follows are only some of the areas in Fetzer's and Twyman's "proofs" I disagree with, before I get into the major theme of alteration and forgery.

(1) Fetzer reprints an alleged signed letter (see page 372) dated in 1994 from Evelyn Lincoln who was President Kennedy's secretary. Twyman prints the contents of this same letter (see Twyman, page 831). The letter purports to be a response to a query to her as to her views on the JFK administration and his assassination. Lincoln says it is her "belief" that there was a conspiracy and names "five conspirators" behind the deed. These five are: LBJ, J. Edgar Hoover, the Mafia, the CIA, and the Cubans in Florida. Fetzer offers this in his work with no commentary while Twyman in his rendition notes only a grammatical error.

There are several problematic and disturbing things about this alleged letter that one must come to grips with before accepting it as gospel truth:

(A) Twyman's notation (catching the grammatical error) makes one suspicious about who is typing the letter. Wouldn't JFK's personal secretary be the kind of typist who would not make such an obvious error? This is the kind of error an amateur would make.

(B) The letter is strangely addressed to "Dear Richard" without the usual full address. Why is that? Again, as in (A), one would not expect that kind of performance from

JFK's secretary.

(C) We see Lincoln telling her innermost thoughts to a perfect stranger. Why choose a stranger to reveal secrets about the century's most famous crime? And why didn't she reveal this before 1994 since undoubtedly others must have written to her?

(D) There seems something odd about the fact that Ms. Lincoln did not mention anything about the "five conspirators" in her book which appeared in 1966. Or did it appear in her work and I missed it?

(E) Ms. Lincoln never brought this information forward before either the Warren Commission or the House Select Committee. Perhaps it was fear that prevented her from doing so but this factor of fear doesn't seem to have entered when she wrote to "Richard".

(F) As a final note there is the matter of the signature which can be seen in Fetzer's book. That signature appears to be different from two other signatures I have in my possession. The validity of this signature would require the determination of a handwriting expert before one can reach a conclusion. I must admit, however, that the points I've raised above do not augur well for validity.

(2) Twyman (page 98) reprints the well known Willis #5 photo (equivalent to Zapruder frame #202). However, his caption reads "taken an instant before Kennedy was hit." But Twyman contradicts himself further on in his book when he writes about Rosemary and Phil Willis and the Betzner photo. (See between pages 144 and 145 the color photo of z-188): "Rosemary Willis...was running along Elm Street...When she heard a shot or explosion. She then stopped and looked back toward the Texas School Book Depository. Kennedy is still waving. The sound of the first shot was indicated to be at approximately this point between frames 186 and 202 by the Betzner photo and Willis photo...one taken before (Betzner) and one after the first shot (Willis)."

Thus we have Twyman having the Willis #5 photo being taken before and after he was shot! Obviously an impossibility having nothing to do with alteration in this case.

But then Twyman further complicates his scenario by stating "that a first shot (or shots) or a diversionary explosion occurred somewhere between frames 160 and 188...it seems plausible to assume the first explosive sound occurred nearer to frame 160 than 188. Gerald Posner says the first shot was fired before frame 166."

Imagine that - relying on Gerald Posner for fixing th

timing sequence on the shots fired! Will he next be using the Warren Commission's evidence in support of z-frame and photo alteration? Well, guess what-as we shall soon see-this is precisely what Twyman does in one of the most crucial areas of research: The First Shot Hypothesis. It is my opinion (which I will demonstrate) that, because Twyman does make use of this, he has utterly destroyed his case for alteration. Another writer is invoked by Twyman to argue for a "first shot" which was "probably fired at (Zapruder) frame 152." If the reader is confused by all of this it is no wonder that

▷ gossip columnist Liz Smith, in her column of December 23, 1997 reviewing Twyman's book, expressed her thoughts on the whole business by stating: "I am totally confused again." (Of course, it should be noted here that Ms. Smith said her last book on the JFK case was Posner's Case Closed" which she "agreed with". I think it safe to say that Smith hardly qualifies as a researcher on the JFK assassination).

(3) Twyman gives Kudos to Walter Cronkite and says of him: "he studied the JFK assassination perhaps harder and longer than any other network newsperson." Naturally after reading this I wondered what the scorecard showed on those other "newspersons" and, you guessed it, most would have flunked in their "studies". There is no need to dredge up who these persons are as most readers are by now familiar enough with their dismal record.

But assigning this accomplishment to Cronkite doesn't square with the facts. If you'll recall, when CBS did a four part series on the assassination back in 1967 (the transcripts are available), Cronkite headed the series. As our treasured national icon, he came off looking very knowledgeable about what he was saying. But, according to an aide who worked on the series, Cronkite did not see the script until moments before going on the television airwaves. Always a good reader, the image left on the screen was that of a very savvy know-it-all guy. But it was all image and who is there to argue that television news then (and more so now) is anything but a jockeying for image portrayal? That I was not fooled by all of this but apparently Twyman is shows how very effectively this was done.

(4) In Fetzer's book he enlists writer Ron Helper to introduce "evidence" that Gov. Connally was hit at Zapruder frame 315 (under his armpit) and at frame 338 (wrist shot) (page 211). But the evidence on these two alleged shots is so shaky and is no way conclusive. As

an example Helper cites as "evidence" one of Robert Groden's books, "The Killing of a President", wherein he lists shot #6 for the wrist wounding; but Groden's "reconstruction" is so utterly flawed it cannot be used as a guidepost.

(5) We come now to writer Chuck Marler whose work is described in one of the chapters in Fetzer's book. On page 256 he discusses what he sees as "alteration" in the Stemmons freeway sign which appears in many frames of the Zapruder film. According to Marler this alteration was done (by the forgers) "to increase the height" in "order to conceal President Kennedy's reaction when struck by the first bullet".

This concealment makes no sense and cannot be true if one carefully studies the Zapruder film before JFK disappears behind the sign. JFK can be seen reacting to something just immediately after Zapruder frame 189 and this is well before frame 207, when JFK begins to vanish from the scene. Even the House Select Committee caught JFK in this act and let us ignore for the moment whether JFK's reaction is due to a sound or a hit; certainly, the conspirators would have known and presumably would have made every effort to "conceal" this. But apparently they goofed as they were too busy editing other frames and so good were they at this that they were able to fool not only the Warren Commission but the House Select Committee as well! But I must say that in the case of the Warren Commission, which is no defense of its role, they never considered determining which shots struck or missed. They simply left it up to the reader to decide!

(6) The longest chapter in Fetzer's book is by Doctor David Mantik and runs some 82 pages (pages 263 to 344). The thrust of his article deals with his claim that the Zapruder film was altered and his evidence is in the form of vertical editing (frames excision), horizontal editing (changes made within the frames) and composite frames (where one frame is combined with another to appear as a single frame).

To cite all my reservations in this article on the myriad of claims Dr. Mantik makes would probably require at least one more article or perhaps two and possibly even a book to deal adequately with the subject, but for our purposes here I'll cite a few objections.

Let us consider Dr. Mantik's reconstruction of "two head shots" which he elaborately prepares for us on pages 286 and 287. I have no quarrel with the argument for two shots to JFK's head (in fact I've written on

210 and before or at z-225 and no later. Since the Zapruder film clearly shows JFK in frames up to and including z-207 after which he disappears out of view and emerges at z-225 which clearly shows him reacting to a hit, the reason for the re-enactment necessarily had to include JFK who is obscured by the Stemmons sign as seen in the Zapruder film.

To complicate the matter further, Dr. Mantik refers to a study by Michael Stroschio ("More physical insight into the assassination of President Kennedy", in "Physics and Society", Vol. 25, no.4 October, 1996) reprinted in Fetzer's book on pages 343 and 344 which deals with a study of the motion of Zapruder's camera while filming the JFK assassination. As Stroschio puts it, the study was conducted because "...it is well known that such neuromuscular reactions are involuntary and that the power spectrum for such jerking motions has a peak near a period of about one third of a second."

Stroschio's study is done by showing 6 vertical lines with the angular acceleration indicated for the various frames which begins with Zapruder frame 150 and ends at around frame 334. The second vertical bar shows excessive movement in the 190's section and it is among the graph's boldest signs of movement. This would, again, be evidence for some event occurring in this time period and that is significantly long enough before JFK disappears behind the sign at z-207. Thus the argument that alteration of the Stemmons sign occurs after z-207 makes no reasonable sense for me. If alteration of any kind were to occur, the time to do it would have been before z-207 and clearly this was not done! It is beginning to look as if the forgers and conspirators are having a very bad day on November 22, 1963: not only have they missed twice (if you believe the House Select Committee Report) but they can't even get their act together to alter the film where alteration was necessary!

But let us not be too hard on these "forgers". They were laboring under a time constraint-all of this had to be done on the first day. You might say they operated on the notion of a "Rush to Judgment".

(9) To return to Twyman's book again: note that in point #2 above I called attention to Twyman's use of the Warren Commission's "evidence" to bolster his contention of Zapruder film alteration. To be specific, I refer you to Twyman's statement occurring between pages 144 and 145 (see his commentary on Zapruder frame 188). He writes: "for my purpose, here, I will go along with the Warren Commission. This means that Kennedy was first

hit somewhere between frames 206 and 210."

I do not know if Mr. Twyman had access to Prof. Fetzer's book, "Assassination Science", but as we've already seen in points #2 and #8 above, he is in serious trouble for making this assertion on several grounds. First, is that what the Warren Commission said about the first shot striking JFK (but not necessarily the first shot)? This was not, as Twyman puts it, "somewhere between frames 206 and 210" but rather JFK could have been hit in any frame from 210 to (and including) 225. Twyman's "purpose" is the problem here since as we have shown that the preponderance of evidence strongly points to a shot occurring slightly before Zapruder frame 206. The "purpose", as I see it, is a lot like having a vagrant opinion desperately flying about in space searching for a fact. Neither of the two shall ever meet as long as we inhabitants occupy the same physical universe in which the laws of physics must apply.

(10) This is the last of the points I'll be raising but most assuredly it is not the very last since space constraints limit what I can offer. The point here I will consider is what I shall call "the back of the head argument".

The argument boils down to this: many witnesses are reported as having seen the back of JFK's head completely blown out and these witnesses include not only assassination witnesses but doctors and nurses who attended both Kennedy's arrival at Parkland Hospital (Dallas) and the subsequent autopsy (Washington, D.C.). And, as the argument continues, if so many did report this, why is it that film evidence (including the Zapruder film and the autopsy photographs and x-rays) do not show this? As a follow-up to this argument, proponents of film alteration have suggested that forgers altered evidence to conform to the notion that there was no back of the head blown out.

But is it true that witnesses did state that they viewed the back of the head "completely blown out"? We can consult both Twyman and Fetzer on this question since some of these witnesses are utilized by the authors in their quest to prove forgery. Twyman makes it very clear that the Zapruder film shows no back-of-the-head blow-out stating "...at no frame in the film do we actually see a blow-out of bone and brains from the back of Kennedy's head..." (See page 231).

Yet Twyman's book cites the testimony of four doctors who attended JFK in Dallas (see pages 191 and 192) and we will just briefly record here what they had to say about JFK's head wound: