

Do Pictures Lie?

I must admit that I did not want to buy Jim Fetzer's book Assassination Science. My normal procedure when dealing with books like this would be to borrow a copy from a local library and copy a few pages which need criticism. But no local library would carry the book. As I pointed out in messages on the Internet, I would have to reserve criticism until I had read the book. I couldn't find the book in any local stores for several weeks. Then one week I happened to find it and skimmed through it. After seeing several obvious errors I decided to buy it only so that I could prove that I had thoroughly read it before criticizing it.

I usually skim through a book which deals with historical issues from back to front, looking for key names in the index and looking for interesting documents in the Appendices. Appendix L surprised, shocked and infuriated me. Fetzer had taken one of the autopsy photographs of JFK's back and drawn in a "circle-x" where Fetzer claims that the HSCA had located the back wound. There appears to be no one else to blame for this horrendous illustration, because the caption lists it as his note:

"[Editor's note: The 'circle-x' mark identifies the location of the back wound as specified by the HSCA. See also pages 16, 34, 157-158, 177, 438 and 441.]"

This is an outrageous lie. The HSCA never said that the back wound was where Fetzer placed the "circle-x." When I checked the referenced pages, none of them dealt with the identification of the back wound by the HSCA. But page 441 turned out to be Appendix K, and the drawing on the bottom is Ida Dox's drawing of the back wound, as commissioned by the HSCA.

Does the hole in the back of the Ida Dox drawing line up with the "circle-x" in Fetzer's illustration? No. Fetzer's "circle-x" is a couple of inches to the right of the hole drawn on Ida Dox's tracing of the autopsy photograph. In her drawing, Ida Dox was instructed by the HSCA medical panel to trace in ONLY where the panel had located the back wound and leave out any extraneous marks on the body. [1H187] In both the drawing on page 441 and the illustration on page 444 the back wound is to the LEFT of the rightmost edge of the President's neck. Fetzer's "circle-x" is to the RIGHT of the President's neck.

Now, if I were trying to demonstrate this in person, I might make a transparency of one Appendix and place it on top of the other, matching up key points. In the computer, we can do the same thing by combining two different scanned JPG files. I have scanned in Appendix K, the Ida Dox drawing, into the file named HSCABACK.JPG and changed the black dots to red. Then I scanned in Appendix L, Fetzer's illustration into the file named FOX5BACK.JPG and changed the color to blue. When the two files are properly scaled and combined, the resulting rgb file shows where the red lines and blue lines overlap as black. This file, named RGB-BACK.JPG, shows that when the rulers in each original file are overlapped, the back wound in the Ida Dox drawing overlaps the actual back wound in the autopsy photograph. This proves that Fetzer's "circle-x" mark does not truly represent where the HSCA said that the back wound was.

What is the reason for Fetzer's misidentification of the HSCA back wound? Is there possibly an innocent explanation? Yes, if Fetzer simply does not know his left from his right. Could there be a more sinister motive for deliberately fabricating an illustration which misrepresents what the HSCA medical panel believes? The desired conclusion it is trying to suggest is that the HSCA medical panel was so incompetent that they could not spot an obvious wound on the back. Study the JPG files below to see what I mean.

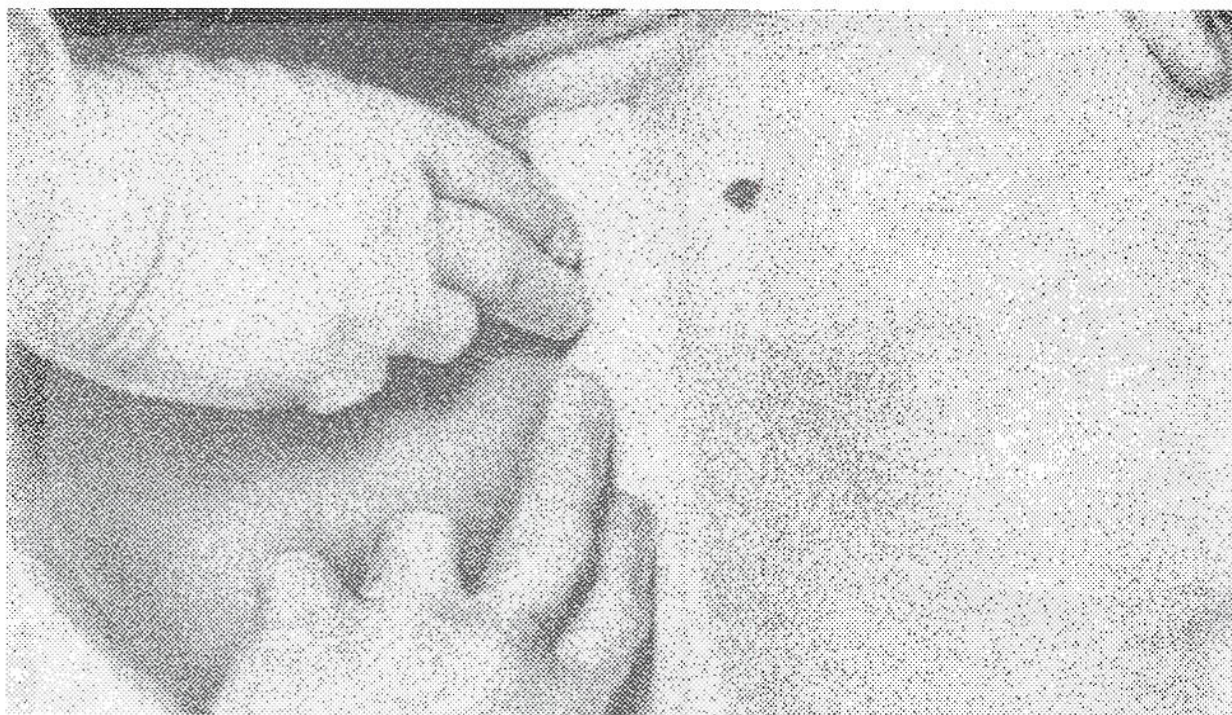
UPDATE:

On July 19, 1998 Jim Fetzer threatened to sue me, claiming that this article was "slanderous." Then on July 22, 1998, after consulting with Dr. David Mantik, who actually designed the illustration for another purpose, Jim Fetzer admitted his error and apologized. It seems that Dr. Mantik had originally

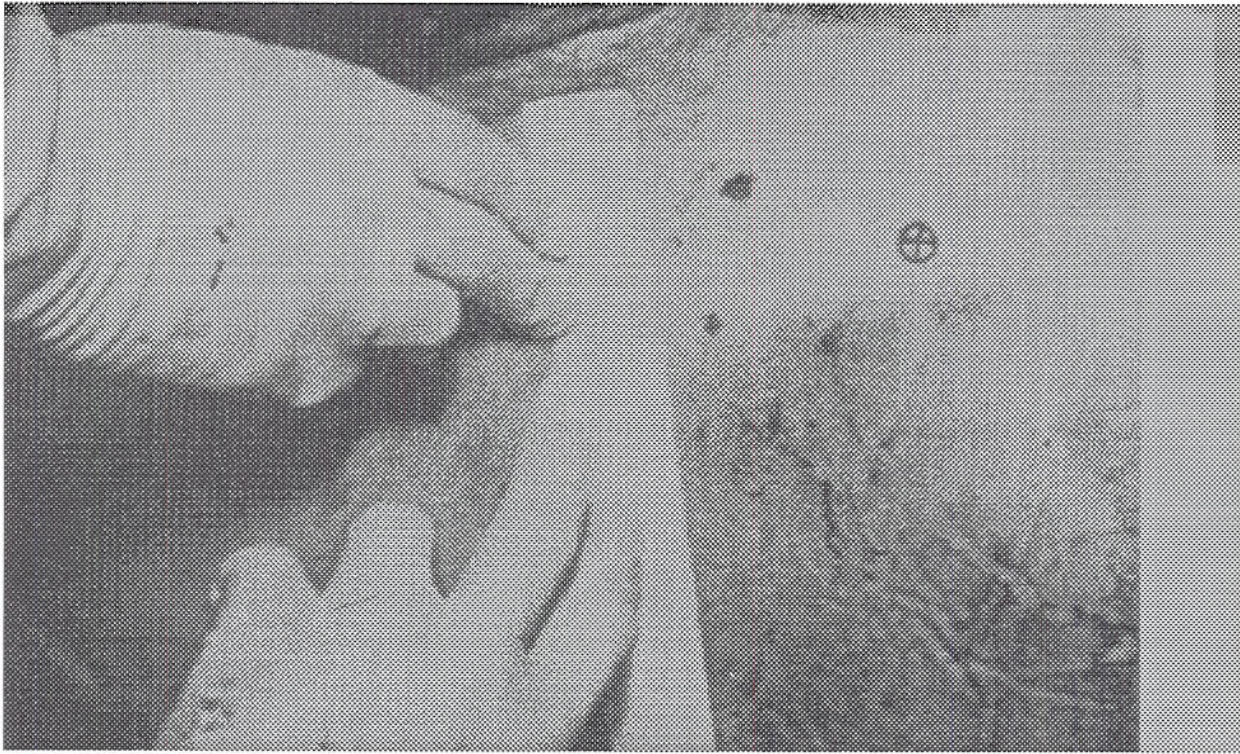
intended to use his illustration to indicate where the Bethesda autopsy doctors located the back wound. Interestingly, Dr. Mantik, although not 100% correct on this point, does bring up an important issue which I hope he will put into print. There may even be five versions of where the back wound was located which came out of Bethesda:

1. The actual location as seen in the autopsy photographs.
2. Where the autopsy doctors indicated it on a diagram.
3. Where the autopsy doctors said it was.
4. Where Admiral Burkley drew it on a diagram.
5. Where the artist Ryberg drew it on an illustration made for the Warren Commission based on a verbal description by Commander Humes.

HSCABACK.JPG



FOX5BACK.JPG



RGB-BACK.JPG

