

THE HARRIS SURVEY

66% of Public Feels JFK Death Was Part of Plot

By LOUIS HARRIS

For the first time since the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, a sizable majority of the American people (66 percent) believes the shooting was not the work of one man but was part of a broader plot.

Within the past 60 days public confidence in the Warren Commission report has been pared nearly by half. Seven out of every 10 Americans are convinced there are still many "important unanswered questions."

A major contributor to this swelling doubt is the investigation into the assassination by the New Orleans district attorney, Jim Garrison. Nearly two out of three people say they have been following the events. Among these there is an even division of opinion on the merits of the Garrison inquiry: 45 percent believe it will shed new light on the assassination, while 46 percent think not much will come of it.

One American in four has been converted to a belief in the conspiracy theory alleged by the New Orleans inquiry. One in three of the less well educated and one in five of the better educated have changed their minds.

Since last September the Harris Survey has asked carefully drawn cross sections of the public:

QUESTION: "Do you feel the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was the work of one man, or do you feel it was part of a broader plot or conspiracy?"

	MAY '67	FEB. '67	SEPT. '66
Part of a broader plot	66%	44%	46%
Work of one man	19	35	34
Not sure	15	21	23

A breakdown of the latest results by key groups is revealing:

	PLOT	ONE MAN	NOT SURE
NATION-WIDE	66%	19%	15%
By age			
Under 36	70	13	15
35-49	65	21	14
50 and over	65	18	17
BY EDUCATION			
Grade school or less	71	13	16
High school	69	15	16
College	57	30	13

With the rise in belief the assassination was part of a broader conspiracy, conviction that the Warren Commission told the full story has dropped sharply:

QUESTION: "Do you feel the Warren Commission report on President Kennedy's assassination told the full story, or do you feel that there are still many important unanswered questions?"

	MAY '67	FEB. '67	SEPT. '66
Told full story	18%	30%	32%
Still many unanswered questions	72	59	54
Not sure	10	11	14

The Garrison investigation in New Orleans has been followed by nearly two out of every three people in the country:

	TOTAL PUBLIC
Followed	64%
Not followed	36

TOTAL FOLLOWED IT:

The 64 percent were asked:

QUESTION: "Do you feel the New Orleans investigation into the Kennedy assassination will shed real light on the killing, or don't you think much will come of it?"

	WILL SHED LIGHT	LITTLE COME OF IT	NOT SURE
TOTAL FOLLOWED IT:			
Nation-wide	45%	46%	9%
BY EDUCATION			
8th grade or less	46	40	14
High school	43	44	8
College	39	54	7