

## Written Expression - Culture des Medias

### Assassination of JFK

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JFK, in full John Fitzgerald Kennedy, born in May 29 1917 in Brookline (Massachusetts) and died in November 22 1963 in Dallas (Texas). He is a well-known figure of the United States because he was the 35th President of the US (61-63) and he faced a number of foreign crisis especially in Cuba and Berlin.

But a lot of foreign people know him unfortunately because of his assassination.

On Friday, November 22 1963, he and his wife (Jacqueline) were in an open limousine riding slowly in a motorcade through downtown Dallas. At 12:30 PM, the President was struck by two bullets, one at the base of his neck and one in the head. He was pronounced dead shortly after arrival at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas.

This terrible event was obviously at the center of attention all around the world and depicted in the media such as newspapers or TV. As a way of organizing this written expression, I'm going to talk at first of the media in the United States and after on the media in France.

### United States

Considering that this event was American, their point of view of this event must be interesting.

Because like many events that happen in a country, everybody's remember what they were doing at that time, this event is pretty much embedded in the hearts and mind of this nation.

So the American newspapers are providing us information about this incident, for instance plethora of newspapers like *The New York Times*, *The Dallas Morning News* or *Los Angeles Times* had their front page only about that with pictures and big headlines / subhead lines more or less explicitly such as " Kennedy Slain on Dallas Street" (The Dallas Morning News). They've all explain what happened during that day with some details about how, where, who did that with some suspicion on *Lee Harvey Oswald* who turns out he was the killer , etc...

This demonstrate that when this episode occurs, newspapers like always try to be the first to deliver information, with some truth but also some false because we don't have the hindsight yet.

Along with newspapers, there is also TV as a way of informing citizens. Channels such as CBS, ABC and NBC have broadcasted the declaration of the White House that Kennedy was dead.

The first reports about the assassination of President Kennedy came in from the New York City newsroom of NBC. Unfortunately, their cameras needed some time to warm up before they could be used for broadcasting. Bill Ryan, a highly-respected newsman who normally fronted afternoon radio broadcasts and was co-anchor with Gabe Pressman of the Ryan-Pressman Report, was told to go immediately to the station's 'flash' studio after word had been received of shots being fired at the motorcade in Dallas. Don Pardo, NBC's continuity announcer, broke into the network's programming to deliver the first bulletin before informing his audience to "stay tuned to your NBC station for the later news".

Anchors of both CBS, NBC and ABC were kind of hesitant to officially declare Kennedy dead and continue to repeat that the report is unconfirmed. But after Sid Davis announcement to the reporters, they've all declared him dead.

His funeral procession was also broadcasted on TV. This funeral was televised on the major networks and approximately 41.5 million households so 81% of US homes have seen it live. Nielsen (mediametrie in France) ranks the event as garnering one of the highest ratings in TV history. And The state of funeral of JFK took place during the three days that followed his assassination.

## France

Succeeding the part on US medias, now we need to talk about French medias.

French medias also talked about this infamous event on their newspapers, to give you an idea newspapers such as *Le Figaro*, *Le Monde* and *Le Parisien* have talked about this incident that occurs in 1963.

Giving the same elements that they were given by the AFP and by they Americans correspondents in New York, and with big headlines and subhead lines as such " Kennedy assassine hier a Dallas". Although those newspapers have something else on their front page most of time it was about the speech of the former French president at that time Georges Pompidou to pay tribute to the President death.

For TV, in the 1960's it wasn't really a thing in French like most of the households haven't got a TV. It was mostly popularize in the 70's even though they were already some TV channels such as RDF that will become RTF and since 1964 ORTF.

Regardless of that, the event was still broadcasted by those TV channels that I refers previously, in the *JT 20H* talking about this event the same way as they did in their newspapers. This illustrates that French medias haven't got a lot of information. The Pompidou speech that I talked earlier was also broadcasted in this TV channel

## Conclusion

To sum up, this massive and terrible event that occurs in 1963 had a lot a media coverage at that time and all around the world since it was one of a kind incident. After the 60's, medias

were still talking about it referring to what they have lived this day, an experience that they don't want to live again.

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