The conclusion is there is no definitive conclusion: The case of JFK.

On November 22nd 1963 in Dallas Texas President John F. Kennedy was brutally assassinated the fallout reverberates to this day from the halls of power to the huts of conspiracy theorists and everywhere in between.

In the immediate aftermath of the assassination the Warren Commission was established to determine what had happened and what best practices could be implemented to prevent any event like this from ever happening again. The Warren Commission concluded that the only captured assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, acted alone. Oswald himself denied this, claiming to a national television audience “I am just a patsy.”

In 1976 the United States House of Representatives established the “House Select Committee on Assassinations.” Its conclusions are a great deal more disturbing than the “Warren Commission.” They determined that through modern audio analysis that there were at least four not three shots fired. That there was a second would be assassin, likely on the so called “Grassy Knoll” behind a fence. In a film that has been subsequently lost or classified beyond the ability of the freedom of information act to retrieve smoke is seen on the grassy knoll in conjunction with the sound of the fourth shot.

There are many problems with the lone gunman theory, one of them has to be do with the very nature of shooting. Specifically the presidential motorcade was traveling through the plaza coming directly at the Texas Book Depository where Oswald has his snipers nest. Simulations show that Oswald had ample opportunity to take a direct headshot at the president when he was moving very slowly directly toward the Texas Book Depository. This would have been the ideal time to shoot the president, because even if the car accelerated it would accelerate directly towards the shooter. Instead Oswald waits for the Presidents motorcade to turn and start moving away from the Texas book Depository prior to beginning shooting. The only scenario where this behavior makes any sense is if he were trying to triangulate the shot with a second shooter in front of the President. The “Grassy Knoll” where smoke was seen was precisely in front of Kennedy’s motorcade at the time Oswald began shooting. This evidence is circumstantial and yet significant when taken as whole with all of the other information such as the smoke at the “Grassy Knoll” and the audio analysis that demonstrates more shots than Oswald fired.

The Select Committee ultimate concluded that the Warren Commission and Secret Service and FBI acted incompetently but in good faith to protect the President. Perhaps most disturbing is that they drew no conclusions as to whom the other conspirator(s) were or what their motivation might be. They specifically eliminated from possibility most of the popular theories yet did not give substantive explanation as to why they were excluded from suspicion.

Perhaps the most disturbing legacy is the lessons unlearned as on March 30th 1981 John Hinkley Jr. A deeply disturbed man trying to impress Jodi Foster shot and nearly assassinated President Reagan. The lessons of JFK clearly were not learned well enough.

Hatter and Alice:

Poems from the Asylum

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