

# 5 Things Rarely Heard About The Kennedy Assassination

by Andrew O'Leary

Try to recall any regular murder conviction you can think of and consider this: there is probably far more evidence linking Lee H. Oswald to the murder of President John F. Kennedy than seen in common courtroom convictions. Why then do so many people think of conspiracy and intrigue when the murder of Kennedy should be nothing more than a simple murder case?

Here are five things you rarely hear about the Kennedy assassination:

## 1. The "magic bullet" was not magic at all.

The Warren Commission concluded that assassin Lee Harvey Oswald fired three bullets from his Italian military rifle. Since then, conspiracy theorists have added bullets, changed firing locations, but have mostly questioned the Commission claim that a bullet entered JFK's back and went through him to hit John Connolly, calling this the "magic" bullet.

The first point to note is that it is extremely difficult to track a bullet from a high velocity rifle travelling downward at over one thousand feet per second. In any firing, predicting what a bullet does on impact with a body is nearly impossible. Why then are the theorists so certain that the Commission is wrong? Worse still, why do almost all theorists display Kennedy's car, Kennedy's sitting position and Connolly's location incorrectly? In the blueprints and images they use to discuss the "magic", theorists display the bodies in mannequin style with perfect posture, seated eyes to the front at the exact same height as each other, with both sets of shoulders well above the car door level. This is wrong in almost every respect. This display ignores mundane issues like

Kennedy's slouched posture and ruffled clothing, Connolly's much lower jump seat and Connolly's real position – turned toward the right side of the car.

If you are trying to trace a bullet's straight line without considering these issues, of course it looks "magic." The Commission and recent TV reenactments show that, when the victims are represented accurately, it is far easier to see how a bullet could enter Kennedy's back, exit his throat and continue downward through Connolly's turned armpit, exit via Connolly's rib and smash his wrist.

There's very little magic involved.

## **2. Oliver Stone's JFK movie is largely a work of fiction.**



One of Oliver Stone's most recent projects is the "Untold History of the United States" where he takes an alternative view of American history since the 1940s. Despite claiming his Untold History would throw the lid off the secrets of the Cold War, Stone refuses to include even one of the two dozen theories he used in his JFK movie.

Look again at the 1991 movie and you'll see why: at the mid point of JFK, Kevin Costner's Jim Garrison admits, "I don't

have much of a case.” He’s right! In reality, in 1969 the Garrison case was laughed out of court in less than an hour!

Just as Stone has run for cover today, Garrison was barely there when his theories collapsed, with the New Orleans District Attorney rarely participating in his own courtroom parade of hypnotized witnesses, convicts and drug addicts.

### **3. Conspiracy theories are not covered up.**

Far from it! Conspiracy theorists are not a minority of courageous truth tellers, they are the most celebrated and most popular part of the murder investigation. Attacking the official Warren Commission report on the murder is an immensely successful industry with thousands of books published and republished. Today, Jesse Ventura’s *They Killed Our President* is on the New York Times bestseller list! But don’t be fooled in to thinking that, “the truth is finally coming out.” There are very few new ideas in over 40 years of conspiracy books.

The most popular and profitable theorists like Mark Lane (of the Jim Jones cult) and Jim Marrs (self styled alien expert) have been bestsellers since the mid 1960s. However, 35 years of “investigating” has not changed much of their arguments or produced new evidence. Any supposed cover up can’t have lasted too long since Esquire magazine published its ‘*Primer of Assassination Theories*’ as soon as December 1966, just two years after the Warren report.

From this point, the track record to the 1990s is clear: conspiracy gets published or broadcast on hugely successfully TV shows like *The Men Who Killed Kennedy* (1988); anything supporting the official Warren Commission conclusions gets ignored. Just look at the so called witnesses who got countless hours of airtime on these TV extravaganzas.

If one takes the time to track their statements to police and FBI in the week of the killing, and then compare what they say

on more recent TV shows, it is easy to see them revise their tales to fit the conspiracy of the decade. Look at Julia Ann Mercer who was near the murder scene on November 22nd, who, in her 1963 FBI interviews, didn't see or recognize anyone.

By 1973, Mercer was telling others that she was sure she saw Ruby but not Oswald. By 1983, Mercer was now sure she had seen Ruby and Oswald together that morning. Mercer is a very popular witness today but the dozens if not hundreds of other witness who stick to their FBI stories never got on TV.

#### **4. Lone nuts are more common than conspiracies.**

Everybody knows the name Lee Harvey Oswald. Many also know the names of Sirhan Sirhan, who killed Robert Kennedy, and James Earl Ray, assassin of Martin Luther King. Many conspiracy authors link these three awful murders and point to a movement or group that was "taking out" reformers who were bucking the system. Oswald, Sirhan and Ray are just patsies, whose strings are being pulled by others. However, if you look beyond these three incidents, you can see that, right up to the 1980s, presidents and presidential candidates were in constant danger from would be assassins.

From 1933 to 1994, the list is depressingly long: Francisco Martin Duran, Samuel Byck, Squeaky Fromme, Sara Jane Moore, John Hinckley, Arthur Bremer, Giuseppe Zangara, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola. Why do the theorists call Oswald a pasty but leave the others as lone nuts? Conspiracy researchers like UMass professor Philip Melanson write of Manchurian candidates, those brainwashed by the intelligence agencies into performing killings. If that's the case, then wouldn't at least one of the unsuccessful assassins show evidence of being a member of this deadly Manchurian group?

In truth, what all of these individuals have in common is personal frustration, a desire to promote a petty political cause or gain notoriety. They are Munchausen candidates not

Manchurian candidates; living in a fantasy world, not part of a fantastic plot.

Oswald fits this mold perfectly, unsuccessful in escaping the poverty of his upbringing and failing to gain status as a political figure in his defection to the Soviet Union, his pro-Castro activities, and attempted defection to Cuba in the month before the murder of Kennedy. Taking a shot at Kennedy was his plan for immortality. While Jackie Kennedy called him just a “shitty little communist,” the conspiracy theorists continue to make his wish come true.

##### **5. The murder of JFK did not alter American history.**



In the decades after the murder, the image of a lost Kennedy Camelot was a popular one. That “things would have been different” had Kennedy lived remains a popular idea. A mini industry was built and encouraged by First Lady Jackie Kennedy and press secretary Arthur Schlesinger, promoting an outsized image of the visionary who had a mere 1,000 days to try to change America.

When the USA had to confront the issues of the 1960s, the radicalism of youth and peace movements, social and cultural tension and faction fighting over civil rights, Vietnam, and the immense national trauma of the Watergate scandal, this lost New Frontier looked better than ever. In truth, Kennedy was as flawed and fallible as any president before or after. Far from a man set on ending the tension with the Soviets, Kennedy was a staunch Cold Warrior who took the might of the Soviet Union seriously, overthrew the socialist president of Brazil, and kept a commitment to intervening in Vietnam and Laos right up to his death.

Kennedy's image as a hawk is precisely the reason he beat out the peace wing of the Democrats, represented by Adlai Stevenson and Eleanor Roosevelt, to win the nomination for president. In attempt to become more than a junior senator from Massachusetts, JFK became a partner of Joe McCarthy and supported the pursuit of "Reds" at home and abroad.

As he rose to power, JFK was far more lukewarm on civil rights than Lyndon Johnson, closely coveting the powerful southern Dixiecrats who held the line on segregation. Kennedy's role in Cuba is most telling. While conspiracy theorists feel the anti Castro CIA targeted the president for murder because he was weak on Cuban matters, Kennedy's real record shows strong anti Castro actions. In fact, in the 1960 presidential election, he beat Nixon for the top spot by looking tougher on Castro's Cuba. It is a lie that Kennedy compromised the 1960 Bay of Pigs invasion.

He was angry at CIA incompetence, not their mission. After the invasion Kennedy ramped up, not decreased, the pressure on Castro, with Kennedy's support of anti Castro paramilitaries part of the reason Castro looked for Soviet nuclear weapons. The missile crisis of 1962 sees Kennedy hold a hard line against the Soviets despite the world coming closer than ever to apocalypse and in the weeks before his death he made public statements and laid secret plans for another coup in Cuba.

