

# A Conspiracy

by

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I don't, generally, have a lot of time for conspiracy theories. They are frequently full of the opinions of the ill-informed and scientifically ignorant. Social Media is full of them. If one believed even half of them one would be inclined to go into a dark room and, either, lie down, or commit suicide, depending upon how worried one was by the subject matter of the theories concerned!

There is a truly wonderful one, which many people believe, despite it being as far-fetched as that the earth is flat, and that is that the moon landings never took place. I have seen programmes on the TV with people seriously putting forward all sorts of quasi-scientific reasons as to why the whole thing was staged in a hangar in Arizona by an American Government intent on putting one over on the Soviets as part of Cold War strategy. On the face of it, many of the arguments look convincing but they don't stand up to scrutiny. The one absolutely irrefutable fact which proves that the landings did take place is that the first TV pictures purporting to come from the moon were received by a radio telescope in Australia. TV signals travel in straight lines and the antenna was pointing into space (that's the only way that radio telescopes point), so they could only have been received from space. They definitely could not have come from the Arizona desert.

Some other theories are equally entertaining in a sort of would-you-believe-it sort of way, but the ones that continue to intrigue and that really do have solid bases for curiosity are those that surround the assassination of President John Kennedy. No act has been so absolutely heinous or has aroused so much passion as this one. The official line is still that Kennedy was shot by a man called Lee Harvey Oswald from behind a window high up in the Texas Book Depository in Dallas, using a World War Two vintage Italian rifle. It was such an important event that it even gave rise to a popular film called 'JFK'. This film was based upon a book written by the District Attorney of New Orleans, a man called Jim Garrison, who believed that the industrial-military complex plotted to murder Kennedy as he wanted to pull out of the burgeoning conflict in Vietnam, having already given away Cuba to Fidel Castro. Kennedy was seen as a weak 'chicken' who could not be trusted to stand up to the march of communism. In this theory, there was more than one shooter and Oswald was set up as a 'stooge'. The film is compelling but, like many of these conspiracy theories, there are questions which it cannot answer. Despite the fact that Garrison brought the only legal case against someone whom he deemed as culpable in the assassination, it remains unsatisfying.

Years after the events which Garrison describes, a retired Australian detective, Howard Donahue, undertook to examine the evidence surrounding the 'assassination' (the word is now in quotation marks, the reason for which will become apparent). He unearthed some astonishing facts.

The first, and most compelling, was that Kennedy was killed by a 'frangible' bullet; that is a bullet which breaks up on impact, causing great damage but leaving no exit wound, a fact apparently overlooked by everyone else who investigated. Oswald did not fire any such bullets. The bullets he fired were metal-jacketed which have great penetrating power. Oswald did manage to hit the President once, the bullet passing through, and out of, his body, then through that of Governor

Connelly, who was also in the presidential car, and so on out. The idea that such a bullet could have come to a halt a few inches inside a human skull is simply not tenable.

The second was that the trajectory of the bullet was low; it could not have come from a 7th floor window.

The third was that several bystanders reported smelling gun smoke at street level and hearing four shots, not the three which Oswald had fired.

Lastly, an astonishing photograph, taken by a bystander, surfaced. This showed a Secret Service agent standing up in the security vehicle which followed the President's car, brandishing a rifle. The conclusion reached was that, on hearing shots (from Oswald's rifle), this agent had bent down and retrieved this rifle from the floor of the vehicle and started to look around for the source of the firing. It was postulated that the vehicle hit a bump, or otherwise caused the agent to lose his balance, and that he accidentally shot his own president. This horrific reconstruction is entirely credible.

So where is the conspiracy? The conspiracy lies in the fact that, if true, the Secret Service simply could not own up to the appalling truth that it had killed the one man that it was its duty to protect and it did its best to hush the whole thing up, apparently successfully. Oswald was a well-nigh perfect 'patsy', as he himself always claimed. The facts are these. After the autopsy, controlled not by a medical practitioner but by very senior military personnel, the President's brain disappeared and has never been located. This would have demonstrated the evidence of the frangible bullet, a type routinely used by the Secret Service, but not by Oswald. Notes taken by FBI agents at the autopsy were confiscated by the Secret Service and destroyed. Numerous witnesses amongst the spectators were subjected to extreme pressure to change and retract statements which could have been relevant. Successive American governments have failed to grasp the nettle of trying to discover the truth. The story that Oswald actually killed the President is such manifest nonsense that it makes one suspicious that, by not investigating, there really is something just too appalling for the Government to reveal! Now that really IS a conspiracy!

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