

# **The Warren Commission and beyond: The question of conspiracy in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy**

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation dissects a small segment of the evidence in the case of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in the quest to demonstrate whether it is more reasonable to conclude that he was murdered as a result of conspiracy, meaning by two or more people, or whether the lone assassin finding of the Warren Commission was correct. By using the testimony of witnesses, especially concerning the medical and autopsy evidence, this work argues that President Kennedy was hit from two different directions, thus showing that the conspiracy conclusion is the more tenable.

An overview of presidential assassinations in America, both attempted and successful, is presented. This dissertation evaluates the major works of the Kennedy case, both pro and anti-conspiracy, and then goes on to explore the core of the conspiracy issue. By means of a micro-analysis of only two of the President's wounds, the back wound and throat wound, using material from the Warren Commission in 1964 through the House Select Committee on Assassinations in the late 1970s and the Assassination Records Review Board in the 1990s, right up to the present releases of information, it is argued that it is far more likely and reasonable that two or more shooters fired bullets at Kennedy on November 22, 1963 than that one person alone was responsible. If two or more shooters were firing from different directions that day, a conspiracy existed, and it is argued that this indeed is a more credible conclusion than that just one person fired only three shots from behind.

Although many works have been written by historians on the Kennedy era and administration, there is a void regarding details of the murder itself. Conversely, the many assassination books written by lay researchers are often filled with speculation as to where certain shots originated, who the assassins were, why the crime was committed, and who or what organization was behind it. This dissertation attempts to apply historical methods in order to understand the conspiracy issue, and it seeks to establish an evidentiary base for future needed inquiry.

## **Subject Area**

HISTORY, UNITED STATES (0337); AMERICAN STUDIES (0323); POLITICAL SCIENCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (0617)

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