

1) Your job description with the ARRB was that of an "Analyst." What's an analyst?

Each of the four records teams consisted of a team leader (a supervisory analyst) and about 4 analysts. The job of the analyst was to define search criteria for records; liaise with pertinent agencies; and then analyze records with proposed redactions that were submitted for review by the ARRB. The "analysis" consisted of determining which portions of the document were important, which portions were unimportant, and developing recommendations for the Board Members regarding whether or not the records should be opened up, or whether the agencies' proposed redactions should stay in place---applying the standards in the JFK Records Act.

2) As the Chief Analyst for Military Records for ARRB you handled many classified records and were approved to handle such records based on your previous work in the Navy. In your opinion why are there still so many records about the assassination still classified?

The redactions that remained in place in the military records I saw pertained only to military operational plans which were still in effect and had not changed since the assassination. Other redactions which remained in place in CIA or FBI records often pertained to protecting someone's true identity when a pseudonym had been used; or protecting a source or method which was in use at the time the record was created and was still in place in the mid 1990s. I am not aware of any redactions which were an attempt to withhold JFK assassination facts per se. The language and codes put in place by the ARRB analyst to explain the reason for each redaction is recorded on each redacted document---and in every case the codes/language used identifies the language in the Act that justified the redaction.

3) A question came to mind that I should have asked earlier, and it is whether you think yourself qualified to review the medical records without having an academic background in science or medicine?

The readers of my book can judge, one by one, whether they think I am qualified to discuss particular medical issues on a one-by-one basis. I can say this: one of the persons who edited and peer-reviewed my book (who shall go un-named) was an M.D., and I benefited tremendously from his assistance. I also learned a lot from the 5 medical consultants who assisted the ARRB in evaluating the evidence: Ubelaker, Fitzpatrick, Kirschner, Lee, and DiMaio. My chapter on the x-rays, furthermore, was reviewed by a board-certified radiologist.

I have been immersed in reading about the medical evidence since 1967, so have gradually gained a pretty good understanding (for a layman) of the key medical issues surrounding the assassination. Most of the points I raise do not require an M.D. to understand or evaluate; most of the points I raise are where one person's testimony changes over time, or conflicts with that of another person, or with photographs in the official record. Anyone can connect those dots the same way I

did. All you need is time and patience---not a medical degree. Dr. Cyril Wecht implored his audience at the 2003 conference in Pittsburgh NOT to defer to the so-called "experts" or to "authority" when evaluating the medical evidence in the Kennedy assassination, because, as he pointed out, the experts all disagree with each other. As he also pointed out, the positions taken by many of the so-called "experts" on the medical evidence defy logic and are really unsupportable from an intellectual standpoint.

4) To jump to the chase, you conclude from your analysis of the records, that the President was killed as a result of a coup d'etat. Was there any specific record that made you come to that conclusion or was that based on the overall review of the records?

The FBI's then-Top Secret December 1966 report on its bugging of the KGB Residency in New York City (which named LBJ as responsible for the assassination); the February 14, 1964 "Seven Days in May" Secret Service memo from Thomas Kelley to James Rowley (which implied a coup had already taken place, and cast suspicion on J. Edgar Hoover); and the 1968 Army Intelligence document that named Vice President Johnson as a close associate of George DeMohrenschildt (Oswald's surrogate father and handler before he went to New Orleans) in 1963, were three specific documents that led me to believe in a coup d'etat. What those documents did was confirm my previous sense that there had been a coup, based on (1) my study of the serious frictions between JFK and his military leadership: Arleigh Burke, Lyman Lemnitzer, Curtis LeMay, and George Anderson; and (2) the publicly available knowledge of serious frictions between JFK and the CIA. The confessions of former DCI Allen Dulles to an interviewer after JFK's death that JFK had been "set up" at the Bay of Pigs; and the Northwoods documents (about pretexts for invading Cuba) from February-March of 1962, and the April 10, 1962 memo to McNamara from the Joint Chiefs strongly recommending an immediate invasion of Cuba, all further confirmed that the national security establishment was at war with JFK. The last straw was clearly JFK's decision not to invade Cuba during the Missile Crisis. This was the proximate cause of the assassination plot, given all that had come before the Missile Crisis. The Peace Speech in June of 1963; the Test Ban Treaty in July of 1963; the 1963 decision to withdraw from Vietnam; and the secret attempt to establish a rapprochement with Castro in the fall of 1963, merely strengthened the resolve of the coup plotters, who I am convinced made their decision after the Cuban Missile Crisis was resolved through diplomacy, rather than on the battlefield. The confessions of two CIA officials (David Sanchez Morales and the dying E. Howard Hunt) that they were either involved in the operational details of the assassination, or had personal knowledge of CIA involvement, was the clincher for me. In summary, it was a combination of all of the above factors that allows me to state with confidence that JFK was eliminated by a coup, and That the coup was carried out for reasons of foreign policy at the height of the Cold War.

5) In pointing to one of the items that the records appear to indicate quite firmly - that there were two distinct post-autopsy brain exams involving two different brains - why

doesn't this automatically require a new, proper, forensic autopsy, which it would normally do under any other circumstances?

The fact that there were two brain exams after JFK's autopsy (instead of one, as there should have been), and that the second exam was the vehicle for placing false and misleading brain photographs into the official record, does in fact invalidate the autopsy and casts all of the so-called official findings about JFK's death into serious doubt. The problem is that this is not an official finding of the government or of any medico-legal body---it is the opinion of one individual, me. Never mind that it has been endorsed by Drs. Mantik and Wecht in a 2003 paper---it is a private finding of one staff member. Perhaps if a grand jury was also persuaded by the same evidence that persuaded me, an exhumation and a new autopsy could be ordered.

6) Congress gave the ARRB the powers to subpoena records and require the sworn testimony of witnesses, powers that were apparently used sparingly. Why didn't the ARRB utilize its powers to answer the outstanding questions related to the records?

According to my boss, Jeremy Gunn, none of the Board Members believed there had been a conspiracy to kill JFK; their minds were made up before the ARRB began its efforts. Since they did not believe there was anything to be "solved" or "uncovered," they were not engaged with the details of the medical depositions or the CIA depositions related to Mexico City. None of the Board Members attended any of these depositions; they considered them to be academic exercises in "clarifying the record." They were motivated to release previously withheld records simply because they had an inherent dislike of excessive Cold War secrecy. They had a great interest in participating in an experiment in citizen review of government records, because all historians generally want to see more records released. I believed they thought they could do two things at once: restore faith in governmental institutions by releasing previously sealed records; and in the process, discredit unfounded conspiracy theories. This latter goal was, I am convinced, perhaps "the" major hidden agenda of the Board Members. It was not an official goal of the JFK Records Act, but it was clearly a personal desire of all five Board Members, whether they publicly admit it now or not. (Anna Nelson did admit it to one author circa 2000.) On the few occasions when Jeremy Gunn tried to brief the Board Members about some of the strange findings coming out of the medical depositions---about serious irregularities in the medical evidence---he told me he was summarily cut off by several Board Members, who didn't want to hear about any reasons to doubt the official record of what had happened. They had closed minds about the JFK assassination; generally trusted the Warren Report's conclusions; and were only interested in releasing records (without comment) and placing them in the Archives. They were completely unwilling to stretch the envelope and engage in any activities that could have been viewed as a reinvestigation---this was forbidden by the JFK Records Act. Jeremy Gunn and I were damned lucky that these five Board Members let us play in our medical evidence "sand box" as much as they did. Four of the five Board Members were almost completely unaware of the results we were gathering, and wished to remain

so. This is what happens when G. Robert Blakey is allowed to write legislation which forbids a reinvestigation of the case, and which allows an establishment which is more interested in institutional stability, than in truth, to nominate the Board Members.

7) In the course of your studies of the assassination you had a couple of “epiphanies,” that changed the way you looked at it, particularly in regards to Tink Thompson’s “Six Seconds” and David Lifton’s “Best Evidence.” Can you say how those two books affected your thinking?

Thompson's "Six Seconds" still provides clear evidence of crossfire in Dealey Plaza. Lifton's "Best Evidence" provided clear evidence that the wounds observed at Bethesda Naval hospital (at the autopsy) were no longer the same wounds that had earlier been observed at Parkland hospital in Dallas (during emergency treatment). In both cases, the evidence of eyewitnesses was so strong, and so persuasive, that it caused me to question not only official findings, but some photographic evidence.

8) In the course of your work as an analyst for the ARRB you had some similar “epiphanies.” Can you say what they were and how that changed your thinking?

Dr. Boswell's 3-D diagram on a skull model depicting the area of missing bone on JFK's skull constituted proof for me that there was indeed post mortem surgery prior to the autopsy; the statements of former FBI agents Sibert and O'Neill about the inaccuracy of the autopsy photos of the back of the head impugned those photographs as evidence and proved to me that the Parkland physicians made accurate observations of a posterior exit wound; and John Stringer's testimony about the film he used at the brain examination he attended convinced me that the brain photos in the Archives cannot possibly be of JFK's brain.

9) You pretty much divide many of the critical characters into Good Guys and Bad Guys, some surprising, such as FBI Agents Sibert and O'Neill and autopsy doctor Finck being basically good guys who were hoodwinked, while Greer and Kellerman and G. Robert Blakey are clearly bad guys who were in on the shenanigans going on behind the scenes and chose to cover it up.

These characterizations of yours are oversimplifications; there are many shades of grey here. For example, Finck was certainly unaware of the illicit, post mortem surgery to JFK's cranium when he first arrived at the morgue at 8:30 PM, and as a result (per John Stringer) "caused too much trouble at the autopsy." Certainly he knew something was seriously amiss when he arrived a week later for a brain exam (the second one) and saw a brain that looked different than the one he had previously seen already removed from the body at the autopsy---and yet, did he walk out and refuse to participate in a charade? No; he simply left a clue for us in his written report to General Blumberg. He "went along to get along."

FBI agents Sibert and O'Neill are to be commended for stating under oath that the single bullet theory of Arlen Specter is an impossibility based on what they saw at the autopsy; and they are personal heroes of mine for impugning the accuracy of the dishonest autopsy photos which (incredibly) show the back of the head to be intact. But they also failed in their mission to "stay with the body," and allowed themselves to be separated from the Dallas Casket by the Secret Service while manipulations were being performed on JFK's wounds. They hinted at this in bureaucratic doubletalk in their official report of November 26, 1963, but ever since they have "stonewalled" and refused to admit outright that they were separated from the Dallas casket and kept sequestered outside the morgue for a considerable period of time prior to the start of the autopsy. This stonewalling (which O'Neill continued until his death) has been a disservice to history.

Unlike Finck and the two FBI agents, Robert Blakey (Chief Counsel and Staff Director for the HSCA) is someone who I have absolutely no sympathy for, and no respect whatsoever. He withheld the results of his staff's medical interviews (about the Harper fragment and the observations of the autopsy witnesses) from his own Forensic Pathology Panel, and then approved a report which lied about what these autopsy witnesses said about the autopsy photos. He refused to question the Dallas treating physicians about the autopsy photos under oath, as he should have. He elected not to call in the autopsy photographers and x-ray technicians and question them under oath for the purposes of authenticating the autopsy photos and x-rays. (Some of them were questioned by the staff while not under oath, and then those interview reports were buried for 50 years.) He buried the HSCA deposition of Robert Knudsen for 50 years, as he also did with the depositions of Finck and Ebersole. (Thanks to Oliver Stone, and the resulting JFK Records Act, he did not get away with that.) He misrepresented what the Department of Defense said about the autopsy camera. I could go on and on. He only reluctantly reached a finding of probable conspiracy, when forced to by the acoustics evidence---and then had the arrogance to support the single bullet theory anyway and claim that shots impossibly close together in time had been fired by the same junk rifle, when he knew that was a physical impossibility. He told the press immediately after the HSCA issued its final report that the Mafia had killed the President, even though the HSCA's report did not say so. With virtual unanimity, his entire staff (except perhaps Richard Billings, co-author of both the HSCA Final Report and of Blakey's subsequent book) disagreed with that conclusion of his. In the final analysis, all Blakey gave America was a modified, limited hangout---a conspiracy we could all believe in, and still sleep well at night. His very limited conspiracy (blaming the assassination on the Mafia) still proposes that Oswald's bullets (alone) killed the President, and that there was no government coverup. Like Gaeton Fonzi, I believe Blakey had a mission---and that mission was to uphold support for America's institutions, no matter the cost to the truth, or to his personal reputation. As a result of his actions and decisions, both have suffered terribly.

10) Do you believe, as it has been alleged on internet forums, that Greer shot JFK in the head with his pistol?

No, I do not "believe" this as an article of faith, or as a firm finding. It is merely an unpleasant and disturbing possibility. I raised it as an "evidentiary afterthought," because there were so many nagging and interlocking indicators of both a left temporal entry wound, and of a pistol being discharged during the assassination. Four physicians at Parkland have strongly supported a left temporal entry at one time or another: McClelland; Jenkins; Jones; and Puerto (Porto). So did father Oscar Huber. So did Dr. Charles Wilbur (a renowned pathologist) in a 1992 letter, in which he stated his reasons in detail. Since the head of the deceased President was not shaved at autopsy, the autopsy photos do not answer this question. The autopsy report has been rewritten at least twice, so it is not trustworthy. The fact that Triage Nurse Bertha Lozano smelled gunpowder as JFK and Connally were wheeled past her at Parkland implies that there was a firearm discharged in the limousine and that particulate matter was embedded in someone's clothing--- otherwise she would not have smelled gunpowder.

Hugh Betzner observed a nickel-plated revolver in someone's hand inside the limousine during the assassination; and Jean Hill observed plain clothes men "shooting back." Both Clint Hill and Sam Holland heard a pistol discharged near the end of the shooting sequence. The fact that we do not see Greer doing so in the extant Zapruder film is meaningless, since we now know the film has been altered and the brief car stop was almost certainly removed from the film. This disturbing pattern of evidence is simply one of the many reasons why an exhumation should be conducted, and is further evidence that we really don't know exactly what happened in Dealey Plaza.

11) As the agency responsible for protecting the president, the Secret Service not only failed to do its duty in Dallas, but they also controlled the assassin's wife, the body and the Zapruder film, and then purposely destroyed assassination records after Congress passed the JFK Act. Didn't that anger the board, the staff or any Congressman, and what were their reactions to that brazen act?

Executive Director David Marwell and General Counsel Jeremy Gunn were initially extremely angry that the Secret Service had destroyed assassination records related to Presidential protection (including the cancelled trip to Chicago in November of 1963). At first they wanted to conduct public hearings which would embarrass the Secret Service, call them on the carpet (so to speak), and set an example so that other agencies would not emulate that behavior. Tempers on the ARRB staff eventually cooled, and no public hearings were ever held---no Secret Service officials were censured. I have always assumed that Board Chair Jack Tunheim (and perhaps other Board Members) had something to do with the watered down approach taken by the ARRB to this Secret Service malfeasance, but this is just an impression of mine and I cannot prove it. As far as I know, no member of Congress was aware that the Secret Service had destroyed assassination records until the Final Report of the ARRB was released.

12) The person who destroyed the records is named in your book. Was he ever questioned by the Review Board, the staff or Congress?

I do not know the answer to that question. Only Jeremy Gunn or David Marwell would know the answer to that question.

13) Besides the Secret Service records that were destroyed, your book is replete with instances of numerous other records that were either destroyed or went suspiciously missing, like for instance the autopsy records turned over to Mrs. Lincoln, the missing autopsy photos, the missing bullet fragments, Dr. Finck's notes, RFK's appointments book, the negative of the "wink" photo from the inauguration, the AF1 unedited radio transmissions and transcript. The "wink" photo negative must have been stolen from a vault safe at the NARA administered LBJ library. How is that possible, with no retribution?

How is it possible for these things to occur without a proper investigation and punishment, where it is appropriate? It occurs when the national government (the Executive Branch) does not want to know the truth---or be forced to deal with the truth. The Justice Department has either run away from, or ignored, numerous chances to deal with these matters. From this I draw two conclusions: (1) there are insiders within the Executive Branch who know today, and who always have known, that there was a coup d'etat in America in 1963, and that there was a coverup afterwards; (2) incumbents do not want to deal with exposing this because they are afraid it will completely destroy what little faith is left in American institutions, and they don't have the guts to be at the center of the shitstorm that would ensue if the truth were to be told. The short answer to your question is that at the national level, within officialdom, we are a nation that would rather believe in myths about itself than deal with the truth; we are a nation engaged in denial, on a massive scale.

14) Many of your key witnesses are technicians, like photographers, the Navy grunts like Paul O'Conner and funeral hall employees like Robinson. Do you trust these people a little more than those above them?

In general, yes, I have trusted them much more than highly ranked officials above them. They had no motive to lie about what they had seen, and most of them were not attempting to spin any theories when they provided their recollections. They also had no "turf" to protect, and therefore no axe to grind. Most of them were unaware of how important certain aspects of their testimony was, because they didn't have the big picture. The more unaware these people were about the serious conflicts in the evidence, the more I tended to trust them.

15) Then there are those obstructionist, like the ARRB staff analyst who was fired for trying to sabotage the taking of medical witness testimony and the guy who tried to plant a false story to discredit you. Why do you think they don't want any more sworn testimony in this case and will do anything to prevent it?

The ARRB analyst who opposed the medical depositions was not fired; he was simply summarily removed from that project. (He resigned less than a year after that.) My colleagues on the staff who opposed "clarifying the record" with depositions and interviews were simply Warren Commission true believers who didn't think anything good could come of such efforts---they believed that creating new records by taking new testimony would only cloud the record and create doubt. When people already have their minds made up, they never want to be confused with facts from a new data set. Human beings are very stubborn animals--territorial animals. And human beings defend ideas as territory.

On another level, I do believe the government has engaged in infiltration of the research community for decades, and has used surrogates to oppose views considered dangerous, and to spread confusion and discord. As you know, I had an experience with this myself, as recounted in my Epilogue.

16) Of course if there are Congressional Oversight Hearings, one of the things Congress can do is to subpoena records and require the sworn testimony of witness. Is there any specific document that you'd like to see if you could call for it, and is there any particular witness still alive who you would like to have testify, if there is ever oversight?

It is very important that the American people see, in their entirety, the materials associated with the interviews conducted of Jackie Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy by author William Manchester. They are currently under a 100-year court seal (because the Kennedys sued to withhold the interviews that they originally voluntarily granted) and are not to be released until 2067; Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg refused the ARRB's request to open the court seal and release those records. I find this patently unacceptable; the American people deserve to know what their own history is. I would also like very much to see a concerted effort by Federal investigators to find the original Air Force One audiotapes---the unedited version. (The ARRB was unsuccessful in this area because of stonewalling and indifference by both WHCA and the USAF.)

17) Just as you figured out how there were two brain exams, you now have evidence that there were two photo sessions at the NPIC, using two different types of film that is supposed to be the Zapruder film. One of these sessions made briefing boards for a briefing of CIA director McCone. Do you know who the other set of briefing boards were made for, and who was briefed? And what became of the briefing boards?

We do not know with any certainty who the second (sanitized) set of briefing boards was made for, using the photo enlargements made by Homer McMahan and Ben Hunter (at NPIC event # 2). Apparently there were three sets (of four panels each) made from those photos; only one set (of four panels) survives. It was turned over to the Archives in 1993 by the CIA's Historical Review Group.

18) If you are correct, and those who killed JFK also controlled his body, the autopsy, the Zapruder film, and took over the government, then wouldn't the evidence be in the government records, and the suspects be well known to us?

The suspects ARE well known to us, and are named in Chapters 15 and 16 of my book. I am doubtful that there is any "master report" of what happened in government files. If there is, it was withheld---willfully---from the ARRB in violation of the JFK Records Act. I do believe there is probably oral knowledge of what likely happened in 1963, passed down from one official to another within the government, but there is not likely any master written report in existence.

19) After seeing how the Warren Commission, HSCA and ARRB worked, or didn't work, do you think there's any hope at all of getting a resolution to the assassination or will it always be just a big debate?

Like Gaeton Fonzi, I am very skeptical about the government ever coming clean with the American people about the coup d'etat in 1963. It is simply too embarrassing to those in power, and all they can see is a downside to such admissions---whoever attempted to try to do so would be branded as "unpatriotic" and would be discredited (or removed) by those who are still engaging in spin control over this issue. The best we can do is press for additional documents, one at a time, and try to put the puzzle together ourselves.

20) Now that you've done your part, what do you think should happen now, as far as determining the truth and seeking justice in the assassination?

I would love to see the mainstream historians remove their heads from the sand and stop acting like ostriches---and admit that there is overwhelming evidence of crossfire in Dealey Plaza, and therefore of conspiracy; and furthermore, that there is now also overwhelming evidence that there was a medical coverup immediately following the assassination. If the mainstream historians would do this, some in the national media might do the same. The American people should hold the national, mainstream media accountable for their blind, willful, and stubborn support of an indefensible position (the Warren Report) which has been discredited since 1966 or 1967. I suspect that the media in this country is still riddled with part-time intelligence assets, as it was in the 1960s and 1970s. (This was all well-documented by reporter Carl Bernstein and the New York Times during the mid-1970s.) People sense this, which is why they don't buy what Posner or Bugliosi or Tom Brokaw or Roger Mudd or Peter Jennings or Chris Matthews have to say on this subject. If the mainstream historians would come around, this might help break the logjam in the media.