



The Zapruder Film: Reframing JFK's Assassination

By David R. Wrone

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It is the most famous home movie of all time, the most closely analyzed 26 seconds of film ever shot, the most disturbing visual record of what many have called "the crime of the century."

In 486 frames—a mere six feet of celluloid—Abraham Zapruder's iconic film captures from beginning to end the murder of President John F. Kennedy in broad daylight. An essential piece of evidence, the film has become nearly synonymous with the assassination itself and has generated decades of debate among conspiracy theorists and defenders of the Warren Commission's official report. Until now, however, no scholar has produced a comprehensive book-length study of the film and its relation to the tragic events of November 22, 1963.

David Wrone, one of our nation's foremost authorities on the assassination, re-examines Zapruder's film with a fresh eye and a deep knowledge of the forensic evidence. He traces the film's history from its creation on the "grassy knoll" by Dallas dressmaker Zapruder through its initial sale to *Life* magazine and early reproductions and its analysis by the Warren Commission and countless assassination researchers, licensing by the Zapruder family, legal battles over bootleg copies, and sale to the federal government for sixteen million dollars.

Wrone's major contribution, however, is to demonstrate how a close examination of the film itself necessarily refutes the Warren Commission's lone-gunman and single-bullet theories. The film, as he reminds us, provides a scientifically precise timeline of events, as well as crucial clues regarding the timing, number, origins, and impact of the shots fired that day. Analyzing the film frame-by-frame in relation to other evidence—including two key photos by Phil Willis and Ike Altgens—he builds a convincing case against the official findings.

Without fanfare, he concludes that more than three gunshots were fired from more than one direction and that most likely none were fired by alleged assassin Lee Harvey Oswald. If true, then JFK's death was the result of a conspiracy, for the Commission's nonconspiracy conclusion requires a maximum of three shots and one gunman.

Wrone, however, does not speculate as to who actually shot JFK or why—or even if Oswald was a part of the conspiracy. In fact, he is no fan of conspiracy-think and is just as critical of the legion of conspiracy theorists as he is of the Warren Commission (which, he reveals, crushed dissent within its own ranks).

Doggedly pursuing the evidence wherever it leads, Wrone has produced a meticulous, clear-eyed, and provocative new reading of this remarkable cinematic Rosetta Stone.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The famous Zapruder film of the Kennedy assassination lasts a grand total of 26 seconds. In this 400-page book, Wrone (professor emeritus of history at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point) dissects Zapruder's footage frame by frame, only to end up restating at length the well-worn argument, expressed much more succinctly in scores of other publications, that the film shows shots fired from three different angles, none of them correlating with Lee Harvey Oswald's perch at the Texas Book Depository. While Wrone's exhaustive consideration of the film itself quickly becomes tedious, he provides a few chapters that tell some intriguing stories, such as Zapruder's early actions in the initial hours after the assassination (when he first realized he possessed a valuable "property"), the several subsequent court fights over ownership in various sections of the film and the tangled history of the U.S. government's acquisition, decades after the event, of the film. Wrone also chronicles the various ways in which the film has been used and abused by both adherents and critics of the Warren Commission and summarizes the theory, advanced by the commission's more crackpot critics, that Zapruder's footage has been altered in order to eliminate the most damning evidence of conspiracy. Aside from these anecdotes, however, there is nothing new here, just reiteration of the scathing criticisms of the Warren Commission's conclusions. Wrone's book will appeal to only the most die-hard and detail-driven assassination buffs, though these findings by a sober historian may draw attention as we mark the 40th anniversary of the assassination. 40 photos, 22 in color.

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Review

"An important, valuable, and compelling addition to the literature on the assassination that argues convincingly that the film is both authentic and contains evidence of a conspiracy."—**Michael L. Kurtz**, author of *The JFK Assassination Debates: Lone Gunman versus Conspiracy* "Wrone's knowledge of the assassination's complex and daunting evidentiary base is unparalleled."—**James H. Lesar**, founder and president of the Assassination Archives and Research Center "The vivid images captured by the Zapruder film are eminently recognizable, perhaps more so than any other film footage ever captured, so much so that anyone who reflects on JFK's assassination quite likely does so from Abraham Zapruder's vantage point."—**Walter E. Dellinger III**, Maggs Professor of Law at Duke University and former Solicitor General of the United States

"Wrone is neither a Warren Commission defender nor an outlandish conspiracy theorist but a careful historian who presents a strong case that the Warren Commission hastily and wrongly concluded that Oswald murdered Kennedy. . . . Strongly recommended."

Library Journal

"One of the most sober JFK assassination books of any year. Wrone seems to be without an ideologically motivated agenda. He seems interested only in finding and presenting the evidence responsibly. . . . Of all the Zapruder film analyses I have read, Wrone's is the most lucid for a non-expert, and the calmest in tone."

Cleveland Plain Dealer

"Wrone's knowledge of the assassination's complex and daunting evidentiary base is unparalleled."—**James H. Lesar**, founder and president of the Assassination Archives and Research Center

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From the Back Cover

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Steven Parrish:

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a stroll, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or even read a book titled *The Zapruder Film: Reframing JFK's Assassination*? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You know beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have different opinion?

Erica Logan:

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happy read one together with theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. The particular The Zapruder Film: Reframing JFK's Assassination is kind of guide which is giving the reader capricious experience.

Robert Murphy:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always try to and must have the time or they will get great deal of stress from both everyday life and work. So , whenever we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely indeed. People is human not only a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to an individual of course your answer will probably unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative within spending your spare time, the book you have read is The Zapruder Film: Reframing JFK's Assassination.

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