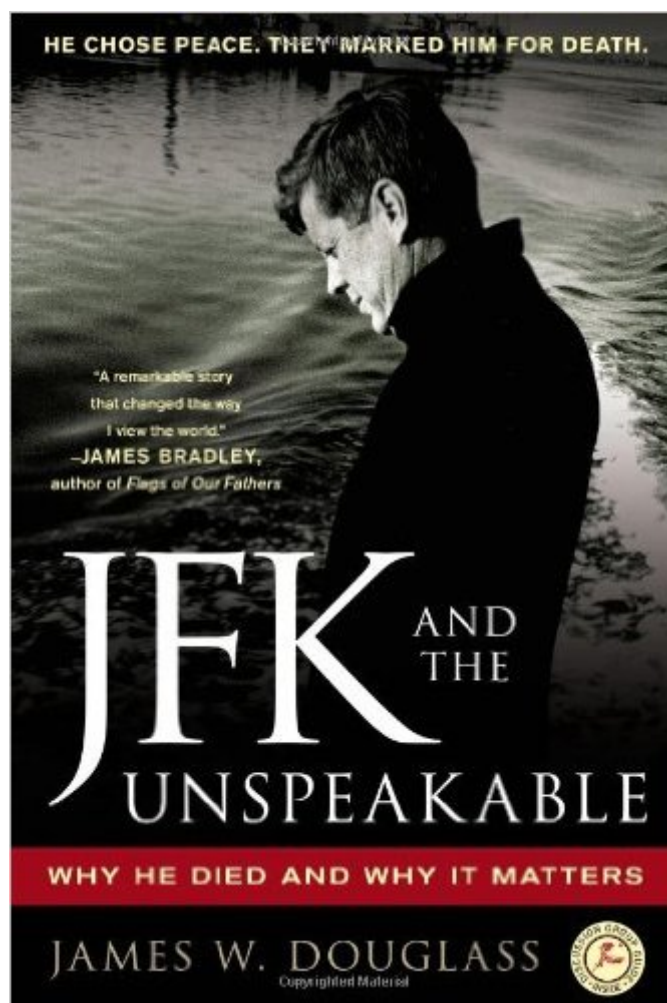


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JFK And The Unspeakable: Why He Died And Why It Matters



Synopsis

The acclaimed book Oliver Stone called "the best account I have read of this tragedy and its significance" details not just how the conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy was carried out, but WHY it was done and why it still matters today. At the height of the Cold War, JFK risked committing the greatest crime in human history: starting a nuclear war. Horrified by the specter of nuclear annihilation, Kennedy gradually turned away from his long-held Cold Warrior beliefs and toward a policy of lasting peace. But to the military and intelligence agencies in the United States, who were committed to winning the Cold War at any cost, Kennedy's change of heart was a direct threat to their power and influence. Once these dark "Unspeakable" forces recognized that Kennedy's interests were in direct opposition to their own, they tagged him as a dangerous traitor, plotted his assassination, and orchestrated the subsequent cover-up. Douglass takes readers into the Oval Office during the tense days of the Cuban Missile Crisis, along on the strange journey of Lee Harvey Oswald and his shadowy handlers, and to the winding road in Dallas where an ambush awaited the President's motorcade. As Douglass convincingly documents, at every step along the way these forces of the Unspeakable were present, moving people like pawns on a chessboard to promote a dangerous and deadly agenda. > shot up to the top of the bestseller charts when Oliver Stone first brought it to the world's attention on Bill Maher's show. Since then, it has been lauded by Mark Lane (author of >, who calls it "an exciting work with the drama of a first-rate thriller"), John Perkins (author of >, who proclaims it is "arguably the most important book yet written about an American president), and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., who calls it "a very well-documented and convincing portrait" || urge all Americans to read this book and come to their own conclusions.

Book Information

Paperback: 560 pages

Publisher: Touchstone; Original edition (October 19, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1439193886

ISBN-13: 978-1439193884

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (649 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #23,890 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #100 in Books > Biographies &

Memoirs > Historical > United States > US Presidents #108 inÂ Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Communication & Media Studies #131 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Presidents & Heads of State

Customer Reviews

In James W. Douglass' outstanding new book, "JFK and the Unspeakable," the author explains the title in his introduction. Coined by spiritual writer Thomas Merton, The Unspeakable refers to "an evil whose depth and deceit seemed to go beyond the capacity of words to describe." Regarding the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the Unspeakable succeeded due to deniability by the nation's citizens of the horrifying truth of the event and to plausible deniability by the government agencies responsible for the murder. (Vincent Bugliosi's recent fictional paperweight is a perfect example of the plausible deniability that allows the Unspeakable to thrive.) Many excellent books have proven that the assassination of JFK was the result of a conspiracy. Douglass verifies the certainty of the conspiracy and, as the subtitle of the book states, explains "Why He Died and Why It Matters." He scrutinizes the historical facts surrounding the assassination, from the creation of the CIA to the gradual obliteration of the freedoms upon which this nation was founded. This book is primarily the story of John F. Kennedy who changes from a Cold Warrior to an altruistic leader willing to risk his life to ensure that the world's children will not become victims of a nuclear catastrophe. Equal time is spent on JFK's presidency as on the assassination but one of the many rewards of this book is the author's capacity to show the relationship between his policies and his death. And the book is a tragedy because it gradually becomes obvious that each step he makes toward peace steadily increases the hatred of his enemies who will eventually betray him. It is also the story of the designated patsy, Lee Harvey Oswald. Moved around the country like a pawn by government agencies (as was the second "Oswald"), he was being set up as the scapegoat. Enter some despicable characters, including David Atlee Philips, James Hosty and, of course, Michael and Ruth Paine. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union was being set up as the evil empire behind the assassination, along with its satellite Cuba. Douglass credibly illustrates the origin of the Crime of the Century. During President Truman's administration, the CIA was empowered to be a paramilitary organization with unlimited powers. Truman's successor, President Eisenhower, fell out of favor with the CIA when he planned a summit meeting with Soviet Premier Khrushchev. This was cancelled after a U.S. spy plane crashed in Russia. Eisenhower had reportedly ordered such flights cancelled and had his suspicions about who had ruined his peace plan. He subsequently issued his warning about the "military industrial complex" in his farewell address. But he didn't defy "this conjunction of

an immense military establishment and a large arms industry." He left that task to his successor, JFK. The Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was planned by the CIA to regain control of the island and to re-open the casinos for organized crime. President Kennedy refused to provide air support for the Cuban brigade because he knew that he had been lied to by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and by the CIA; the invasion had been designed to fail without U.S. support but they hadn't told this to JFK who refused to fall into their trap. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, JFK once again enraged the CIA and the Joint Chiefs by resisting their tremendous pressure on him to take military action which would have led to nuclear war. Following that crisis, JFK became intent on ending the Cold War by establishing a peaceful relationship with the Soviet Union. However, many CIA and Pentagon personnel believed that it was better to be "dead than red" and that it was preferable to destroy civilization rather than let the Communists rule. They also knew that war generated billions of dollars into the arms industry. As a result, they would repeatedly subvert the President's policies and isolate him within his own government. Enter some more despicable characters: Richard Bissell, Charles Cabell, Henry Cabot Lodge, Lyman Lemnitzer, Curtis LeMay and perhaps the most contemptible of all, Allen Dulles. Ironically, JFK learned to trust Khrushchev more than people within his own government. At American University on June 10, 1963, JFK spoke about his desire for world peace. He communicated his resolve to form a new relationship with Khrushchev. He spoke about the necessity of a pursuit toward disarmament. He related his intentions to establish a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. He acknowledged his country's past faults and recognized the Russian people as wanting peace as much as the American people. "And we are all mortal," he stated. Though this extremely important speech was ignored in the United States, it was disseminated throughout the Soviet Union, per order of Khrushchev, who was prepared to respond favorably to JFK's peace initiative. The speech also certified JFK's death warrant. With so many powerful enemies opposing his policies and hating him, JFK didn't have a chance as he was being maneuvered into the crossfire in Dallas. President Kennedy was aware of the power of his enemies and he knew the dangers facing him. But he persevered and mandated that all U.S. personnel would be withdrawn from Vietnam; he was determined to never send in combat troops even if this meant defeat. He also refused to intervene militarily in Laos. He exchanged private letters with Khrushchev, which infuriated the CIA, and secretly initiated plans to attain rapprochement with Cuba, which further incensed the Agency. Cuba's Fidel Castro, whom the CIA hated as intensely as it hated Kennedy, was equally eager to begin an American-Cuba dialogue. In fact, Castro was meeting with a JFK representative when the President was murdered. JFK died a martyr and the forces of evil that killed him also killed his vision of peace. Lyndon Johnson, the CIA's ally, assumed the presidency. He cancelled talks with

Khrushchev and refused Castro's pleas to continue the dialogue. He reversed JFK's withdrawal plan from Vietnam as well as his plan to neutralize Laos. The military industrial complex took control of the country. The policy of plausible deniability led the way to assassinations of foreign leaders, the overthrowing of foreign governments and horrors committed all over the globe. If JFK had not been murdered, we would not have had the prolongation of the Cold War, the Vietnam War, Watergate, the purported War on Terror and the steady moral deterioration of America. Interestingly, one month after JFK's assassination, President Truman wrote an article for The Washington Post cautioning about the threat of the CIA taking over America. The author meticulously examines the evidence and draws conclusions which ring with unassailable truth: (1) The CIA coordinated and implemented the assassination of President Kennedy, an act of treason which destroyed democracy in the U.S. (2) The Warren Commission was created to propagate lies to conceal the truth from the American people. (3) There has been a continued cover-up by successive administrations and their stooges in the mass media. (4) The murder of JFK is directly related to the current domination of the American people by powerful oppressors within a shadow government that will continue to insist that only sustained war can keep the country safe from its enemies, never admitting that they themselves are the supreme evil. This is an exceptional book that will be used by future historians to determine the truth about the assassination and how it changed America. And it will also be used to honor John F. Kennedy as a courageous president who believed in doing God's work on earth. In doing so, he came into conflict with the Unspeakable and his life was extinguished.

(Possible Spoiler Alert for 2nd Part) In more than 37 years spent as a researcher into the JFK assassination, and having read more than four dozen books, this is the first time I have ever written a review. The reasons mainly boil down to one: with each book I always found some manner of untied up loose string, or defect that rendered my judgment tentative. I simply didn't feel it worth the time, or energy to invest in writing something I didn't accept completely. I confess I was also very skeptical of Douglass' book to start. I worried he'd go over the same well-trod ground as others, merely regurgitate many of the same issues with no new insights, while repeating most of the mistakes. I am happy to report I was wrong on all counts. When I finished Douglass' book I had the sense (that I had received from few others) that this 46 year mystery and all the attendant, ambiguating "Operation Mockingbird" tricks, pseudo-evidence and propaganda that engulfed it, were finally finally unravelled. And not only unravelled, but the new story woven into a credible and coherent narrative. More importantly, using a key criterion (how much it dovetailed with the other

most serious books I have read), I score it a '10'. Here, I want to digress and say the best accompanying book one can have to read along with this book is Military Science Professor John Newman's: 'Oswald and CIA'. Important because while Douglass makes the coherent anecdotal case for Lee Harvey Oswald being an intelligence operative, Newman proves it using his insights, and vast troves of FOIA -released documents. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that one cannot fully appreciate Douglass' achievement here, without first reading Newman's book. Okay, why have I never done a review of Newman's? Probably because, while worthwhile, I beheld one or more reviews that already said pretty much what I would have. There was nothing new to add. In reading the book, I strongly advise people not to immediately skip to the end and Douglass' assassination scenario. I believe it is much more important to first: read his Introduction (and the basis for the definition of the "unspeakable" predicated on Thomas Merton's insights) then the Chronology of Events: 1961-63 and then the first three chapters: 1) A Cold Warrior Turns, 2) Kennedy, Castro and the CIA, and 3) JFK and Vietnam. These comprise 134 pages, but every page is essential to the overall picture Douglass is portraying. The reason for the first two is to get into the context in which the author is placing his book. Without the context, it will be difficult to appreciate what he puts forth as relevant. People will become too impatient for the "meat" and neglect the "veggies". The first three chapters proper lay the moral perspective for how and in what deep ways JFK altered his stance from being a cold-warrior ab initio. What threads and dynamics turned him? These are critical to grasp, if one is to understand who had the means, motive and opportunity to kill him. In (2) the most important aspect that Douglass brings to light is the now well-documented rapprochement which JFK initiated with Castro via the latter's aide-de-camp, Rene Vallejo. Peter Kornbluh, of the National Archives, has done yeoman work in making the series of events known, via a book as well as NA documents - and terrific articles in The Baltimore Sun wherein I first became aware of it. It is essential more people know about it to understand how it may well have been the key and final "nail" in JFK's coffin, after his withdrawal of air cover for the Playa de Cochinos debacle (finally fessed up and owned by the CIA itself in its secret report on the events, made public some ten years ago), his reluctance to use aggressive force (invasion, bombing) during the October, 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis (I lived in Miami at the time), and his NSAM-263 to remove all personnel from VietNam by 1965. Another reason the Cuban-CIA link is so meaningful to me is personal. Many of the same CIA-trained elements that were causing problems for Kennedy ca. 1961-63 (via Operation Mongoose, etc.) re-emerged years later in the right-extremist group "Alpha 66" - which also was responsible for the worst act of terrorism in the hemisphere before 9/11. That, of course, was the bombing of the Cubana Airlines Flight 455 over BARBADOS on Oct. 6, 1976 - resulting in the

deaths of all 73 on board. I saw the plane explode then break up in the sea while swimming at Paradise Beach, Barbados, with my nieces- visiting in Barbados at the time from Trinidad. To this day, they still have terrible nightmares driven by those grotesque images - and they are now all grown women. My wife, who worked at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital as a radiographer at the time, was there when the hundreds of body parts were brought in. Anyway, there is still an immediacy there, and the pain and horror from that bright, clear skies day remains with me, and why I still have trouble understanding why people (trapped in denial and the "unspeakable") are more attuned to blaming the "left" for assorted horrors than the extremists of the Right. (Just look at the recent faux outrage that erupted when the Right's terrorists were being noted by the Justice Dept. for extensive scrutiny. Weeks after the Dept. relented an abortion provider was murdered- then people were shot at- 1 killed- in the Holocaust museum by another loonie) But I digress. Once the potential reader has covered the chapters above, it is okay to plow full steam ahead with the rest. You will be especially impressed with how the various narratives, interviews are intertwined and integrated to make the connections that need to be made. Among these, the interviews with Thomas Arthur Vallee's sister is critical - along with other documents Douglass has - to show how an early assassination attempt was originally scheduled for Nov. 2, 1963 in Chicago - the same day the Diems were to be offed in Vietnam. As fortune transpired, an operative named "Lee" phoned in to Chicago FBI HQ and gave the heads up, whereby the hit was thwarted. Also thwarted, was the effort to trot out the first patsy or scapegoat, who was to be Thomas Arthur Vallee, another former Marine like Oswald. In any case, it all became academic as plans to go to the football game at Soldier Field were cancelled. Douglass makes the excellent case that it was none other than Lee Oswald who alerted the feds in Chi-town, but in so doing he placed himself in the cross-hairs, as the next patsy- but now in Big D. One omission I am having trouble processing is that there was no mention by Douglass of the next attempt on JFK's life in Miami, on Nov. 18. I lived in Miami and to all intents, the motorcade went off uneventfully. However, years later undercover FBI tape recordings (of a Joseph Milteer) were released of the plan to shoot Kennedy from a tall office bldg. Some of these recordings were presented in the A&E Special: 'The Men Who Killed Kennedy' - but I have not seen or heard of this program since last shown in 2002. The other most critical interview is that with Sgt. Robert Vinson, who on Nov. 22 was trying to get home to Colorado Springs. He took a bus to Andrews AFB in Washington, DC, and got on a C-54 (the first available flight to "the vicinity" of COS is what he wanted, and was informed it was about to depart for Lowry AFB near Denver. What Vinson recalled most about this particular flight, is that it had no crew chief or manifest. (Usually the crew chief always asked him to sign a manifest). The flight itself didn't land at Lowry, but in Dallas, as Vinson

made out the skyline. Vinson noted a lot of dust blew up as the craft landed near the Trinity River. Two men boarded, just after 3:30 p.m. central time, one a "Latino", 6' or 6'1" weighing 180-190 lbs. and wearing a mustache, the other 5'7" to 5'9" and Caucasian, 150-160 lbs. Only later, when press photos materialized and circulated in newspapers, did Vinson realize the latter guy was the spitting image of Lee Harvey Oswald. I don't wish to give any more of the Vinson narrative away here - especially as it connects to other critical segments, but suffice it to say many researchers (including me) had always suspected an Oswald double may have been employed to paint the necessary patsy. The process itself is known in CIA lingo as "sheep dipping". While the patsy was being marched through Dallas Police HQ, one of the actual mechanics - an Oswald lookalike, was making his getaway from the airfield near the Trinity River. Needless to say, when the authorities found Vinson had been on this flight (by mistake), they put the guy through the wringer. Including making him work as a covert operative to keep him under close scrutiny, and on a short leash in case he might have tempted to blab. Now, some aspects of the latter part of the book, nailing down the time frames and personnel for the assassination, that I found credible and compelling:

- 1) No where is any mention made of "James Files" or the Files claimed-evidence that he was the Grassy Knoll shooter. It is clear from this that Douglass is either leery of the evidence put forth, or of the credibility of Files. This discloses a caution that is redeeming, especially for many new readers to the literature- who might at first balk at "Oswald doubles" and earlier patsies set up for earlier assassination attempts.
- 2) There is no attention whatever to the claimed "Murchison Party" - ostensibly held the night before to "sign all parties onto the deed". The Murchison party, at the home of oil tycoon Clint Murchison, has figured prominently in the online research community and also certain books (e.g. 'Killing the Truth', By H.L. Livingstone)
- 3) There is no attempt to pinpoint the number or timing of the shots, or diagnose the magic bullet and its "evidence" or the autopsy photos, or the x-ray images. Again, this is heartening and discloses that Douglass is only content to deal with he believes is most credible and which backs up other facets of his presentation, and propositions.
- 4) The personal notes and effects that showed Lee "loved and respected JFK", totally dovetail with interviews Marina Oswald gave for the 30th anniversary, which I still have on tape. In one particularly intense altercation with Tom Brokaw, she makes clear that the Warrenites twisted her arm (and testimony) in not so subtle ways, threatening deportation if she refused to play ball.

In toto, when read right through, this book is absolutely terrifying. It reveals the unspeakable still in our midst, especially amongst those who would still defend the Warren Commission's version of history, despite the fact it is now essentially consigned to the dustbin. Douglass - as well as Newman, cited earlier- give numerous examples of outright fraudulent or manipulated evidence. In short, this is the

best book I have ever read on this topic. For the first time it powerfully shows the moral force and character in Kennedy, even - following the past ten years or more- numerous cowards have sought to make their names and profits off the stories circulating about a dead man, who can no longer defend himself. None of this is "Kennedy worship" it is important to grasp, since as author Michael Parenti (The Dirty Truth) has noted, the error of all who claim it is that they typically conflate the low political value of the victim with the high political value of the assassination". Thereby effectively deflating the widely held perception amongst media mavens that people so worshipped JFK and "Camelot" it was unfathomable he could be offed by a lone loser....WRONG. What we, including Douglass, want - is for the nation to finally face this tragic event without pretense for the first time. NO denials, no subterfuge, no deflections. We do so not to try and "run from reality" but to face it. As Michael Parenti notes (op. cit. p. 186), we are citizens who are effectively: "raising grave questions about the nature of state power in what is supposed to be a democracy." It is more than past time those questions got answered, and Douglass' book is an excellent start.

Along with over ten years of meticulous research and one hundred pages of footnotes (worth reading), this book has soul. For those tempted to despair that our national leaders are not capable of turning our nation toward peace, this book tells us how it has already happened. John F. Kennedy was taking stands for peace that risked his life as well as his presidency and it seems that the nation hardly noticed. For those who are willing to engage in hard-headed thinking and research, this book will belie the ho-hum assumption that we will never know why Kennedy was killed nor who is responsible. We can know and we need to know as citizens. If you can read only one book on the life of JFK, this is it.

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