

Review of *The Hidden History of the JFK Assassination*

by Daesia Nisbett

Published in 2013, *The Hidden History of the JFK Assassination*, written by Lamar Waldron, details one of the most controversial crimes of the twentieth century. The book goes on to debunk the public's belief that Lee Harvey Oswald murdered JFK. Lamar Waldron draws on exclusive interviews and incorporates information never published before to solve the notorious murder case. Chronologically, throughout the book Waldron vividly exposes the deceit hidden in the information released to the public about the assassination, while uncovering the faithful motive of the assassination in order to prove that Carlos Marcello was the true murderer of President John F. Kennedy.

Waldron's first act of exposing JFK's true murderer comes when he demolishes the single bullet theory. According to the Warren Report, Oswald was a "communist who fired the only shots at JFK's motorcade, all from the sixth floor of his workplace, the Texas School Book Depository."¹ The Warren Commission further reported that only 3 shots were fired at JFK's motorcade. One of the shots fired supposedly entered Kennedy's back, "exited his throat just below his Adam's apple, and then dived down to hit Governor Connally, who was sitting in front of JFK."² Although it was reported that the same bullet that struck Kennedy's back struck Governor Connally, Governor John Connally always stated that he was struck by the first shot and that a separate shot struck JFK, and Nellie Connally agreed in her testimony.³ Waldron illustrates his belief that a separate bullet struck Governor Connally when he states, "even if the bullet somehow ricocheted off one of JFK's bones, theoretically turning upward to exit JFK's throat, it would have been impossible for the bullet to change course midair to dive down to hit Connally."⁴ Additionally, witnesses at the crime scene reported hearing shots come from the "grassy knoll," meanwhile witnesses at the Depository reported hearing less than three shots.⁵ Unfortunately, due to the fact that the FBI wanted to prove Oswald was the lone assassin, witnesses such as Powers and O'Donnell were pressured to change their testimony. In addition to Powers and O'Donnell being pressured to change their testimonies, "at least 60 witnesses claimed that the FBI in some way altered what the witnesses had reported."⁶ Along with the FBI, the Warren

¹ Lamar Waldron, *The Hidden History of the JFK Assassination: The Definitive Account of the Most Controversial Crime of the Twentieth Century*, (Melbourne: Scribe, 2014), 29.

² Waldron, 30.

³ Waldron, 31

⁴ Waldron, 33.

⁵ Waldron, 32.

⁶ Waldron, 32.

Commission went through extreme lengths to keep up the idea of the single bullet theory, such as changing the description of the back wound in the original report. According to Waldron, "in 1997 Warren Commissioner Gerald Ford admitted to the Associated Press that he had changed the description of the back wound in the Warren Report into a back of the neck wound."⁷ Changing the description of the backwound made the single bullet theory look more reliable. Lastly, in order to support the "magic bullet," people account the fact that Oswald was labeled a "marksman" while he was in the Marines. After doing some research, Waldron realized that the rank "marksman" was the lowest of the three Marine shooting titles. In conclusion, the Warren Commission's version of the magic bullet theory is impossible to physically support.⁸

In addition to demolishing the single bullet theory, Waldron continuously throughout his book exposes the hidden deceit, lies, and secrecy that occurred during the aftermath of JFK's assassination. For example, after President Kennedy's murder, the Naval Intelligence went on to destroy Oswald's files, in addition to keeping the files away from the public.⁹ Moreover, on November 24, 1963, a secret investigation that lasted six weeks was conducted on Oswald. This secret investigation surprisingly concluded that Oswald was not the shooter. According to the investigators, "Oswald was incapable of masterminding the assassination or of doing the actual shooting."¹⁰ Not only was the FBI's hidden investigation on Oswald kept a secret, a plan that JFK had devised before he was assassinated was hidden from the public as well. JFK's secret coup plan consisted of making Cuba a democratic Cuba with no mafia influence. It was later revealed that, "if made public, JFK's role in the plan to overthrow Castro could have triggered World War III in those tense Cold War times."¹¹

Not only did Waldron expose the lies and deceit hidden within President Kennedy's assassination, he also answered the intense question of "why?" by explicitly quoting Marcello's confession. Before Marcello's role in President Kennedy's assassination can be examined, his role in mafia crime must be learned and examined first. Carlos Marcello, born Calogero Minacore on February 6, 1910, was a prominent mobster who dominated New Orleans, Louisiana. His first act of crime occurred when he robbed at bank and the young age of seventeen.¹² As Marcello's passion for crime continued to expand, he soon realized that he needed a secure way to stay out of the spotlight while trying to stay out of prison. In order to prevent being in the spotlight and prison, Marcello secured his dominance through fear and bribery of public officials. One great piece of evidence that illustrates just how much power and control Marcello

⁷ Waldron, 33.

⁸ Waldron, 38.

⁹ Waldron, 52.

¹⁰ Waldron, 53-54.

¹¹ Waldron, 26-27.

¹² Waldron, 78.

had comes from the very incident in which Marcello “personally helped torture and murder Thomas Siracusa in semi-public fashion at the Willswood Tavern, a rustic restaurant just outside New Orleans owned by Marcello’s family.” Although a female witness walked into this attack occurring, when she went to the police to recount the events, she was told on multiple occasions to keep her mouth shut so she would not get hurt.¹³ This particular incident proves that even before JFK’s assassination, Marcello had unspoken protection from the FBI. While in office, President Kennedy began to notice the growing mafia influence on American culture and society. President Kennedy and his brother, Robert Kennedy, soon started to take action against Marcello. Finally, on December 15, 1987, Carlos Marcello gave his long-awaited confession while sitting in a prison yard gazebo. During his confession, Marcello claimed that the Kennedys had a crusade against him. “First they’d hauled him before Congress, then briefly deported him to Central America, and finally they had him prosecuted in New Orleans, the center of his multistate criminal empire.” Finally, Marcello confessed to the assassination with his only regret being that he couldn’t pull the trigger himself.¹⁴ Through use of various techniques, Marcello’s chilling confession was obtained through an extreme secret investigation code named CAMTEX. “CAMTEX used FBI informant Jack Van Laningham not only to obtain Marcello’s 1985 JFK confession but to glean additional details as well, including some in conversations secretly taped by the FBI.”¹⁵

Throughout the book, Waldron provides helpful facts and background information while exposing the true murderer of John F. Kennedy. While providing facts detailing the assassination of President Kennedy, Waldron took the time to teach us about each important character and their role in the assassination. Before reading this book, I had no idea on any of the facts of President Kennedy’s assassination. In fact, I was so confused when I had started reading this book that I had to take a break from reading and do my own research on the assassination. I am grateful that Waldron taught his readers the background of the characters such as Jack Ruby and Carlos Marcello. Before reading this book, I did not know who Carlos Marcello was. I enjoyed reading the book. As I turned each page, I felt as if I was cracking a murder case. The most interesting topic that I came across in the book was about informant Van Laningham. I believe that him wearing a wire while sharing a cell with Marcello was extremely risky and brave. I wish this information would have been released to the public earlier. Lastly, I was shocked to see that the FBI knew all of the information exposed in this book previously but still decided on several occasions to keep the true facts hidden from the public.

¹³ Waldron, 81.

¹⁴ Waldron, 61.

¹⁵ Waldron, 62.