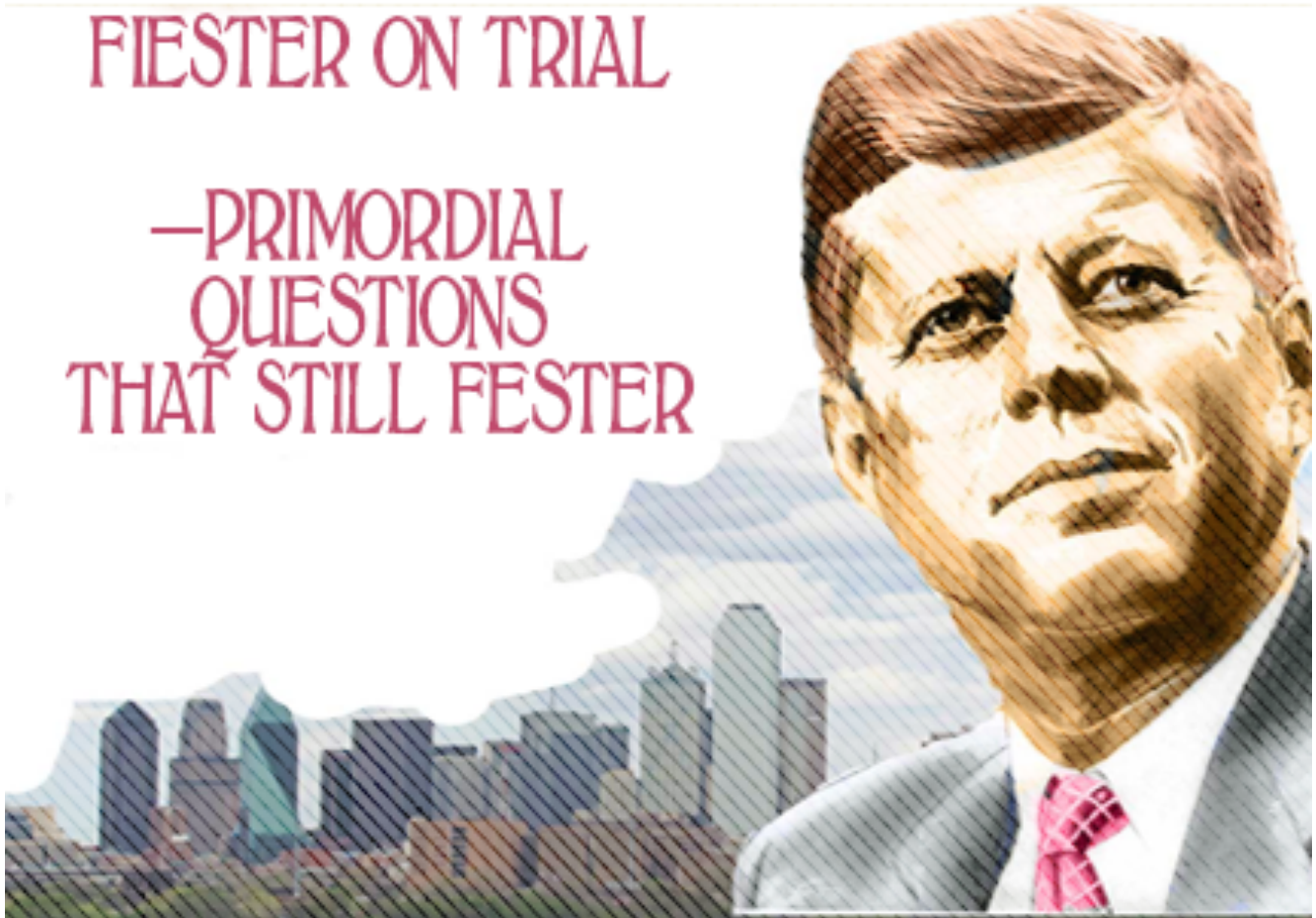


THE MANTIK VIEW

FIESTER ON TRIAL

—PRIMORDIAL
QUESTIONS
THAT STILL FESTER



FIESTER ON TRIAL—PRIMORDIAL QUESTIONS THAT STILL FESTER¹

David W. Mantik October 7, 2017

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NOTE: Page citations are for *Enemy of the Truth*, by Sherry P. Fiester

Mantik Abstract. *Fiester's chief hypothesis is this: Only one headshot struck JFK—it was frontal, and it occurred at Z-312 (with results seen in Z-313). The issues raised here in my truncated review are all quite devastating for this hypothesis. On the contrary, at least one more (successful) headshot occurred a short time later—and this cannot be from Fiester's proposed site of origin.*

Fiester's Chief Hypothesis: Z-312 is the only headshot—and *there is no headshot after this*. On the number of headshots, she insists:

Current forensic research supports a single gunshot originating in front of the President, and front is not the Grassy Knoll. All other explanations are myths [sic] and are to be discounted as such.

Unfortunately, a very long list of witnesses disagrees with her.² And listen to Clint Hill—most likely Fiester did not.³ Even Josiah Thompson (*Last Second in Dallas*) claims a shot well after Z-312.

Fiester's Figure 14: It *excludes* an entry near the right ear—a site confirmed by many witnesses.⁴ If Figure 14 is your primary hypothesis, then you will never find a Grassy Knoll shooter.⁵ Finally, none of her arguments can exclude a shot that missed—but she never addresses this possibility.

Secret Service photographs were taken shortly after the assassination. Traffic cones marked three shots on Elm Street, but *the final cone lay well beyond Z-313* (Harold Weisberg, *Whitewash II* (1966), p. 248). Fiester persistently avoided these photographs.⁶

¹ Like a skilled tightrope acrobat, Fiester always adeptly evaded any discussion of these many issues. These thorny problems (including images) were addressed in my previous review: <https://kennedysandking.com/john-f-kennedy-reviews/fiester-sherry-p-enemy-of-the-truth-myths-forensics-and-the-kennedy-assassination>.

² These many witnesses (who all recalled a shot *after* Z-313) include Mary Moorman (19H487), Jean Hill (6H206 and 6H214), Charles Brehm (22H837), George Hickey (18H762), both Connallys (4H133 and 4H147), Chief Curry 4H161), Sheriff Decker (9H458), James Foster (CD897), Royce Skelton (19H496), and Mrs. Phillip Willis (CD1245). Even Dan Rather reported that the *second* shot (of three total) struck JFK's head.

³ Clint Hill reached the limousine at Z-328, and only then did he hear his "third" (and final) shot, at which time he (finally) saw the "gaping hole in his head" (<http://jamesfetzner.blogspot.com/2011/01/whos-telling-truth-clint-hill-or.html>).

⁴ Nearly a full deck of witnesses saw a shot near the right ear: both Newmans, Abe Zapruder, Roy Kellerman, Thomas Robinson, Clint Hill, James Jenkins, Quentin Schwinn, Herschel Jacks, Seth Kantor, Douglas Jackson, an NBC broadcast, the *NY Times*—and possibly even Pierre Finck. We might also recall the Belmont memo that described a bullet behind the ear. This shot cannot possibly be the same as the forehead shot that is discussed here. See my e-book for a complete discussion of this vexing issue.

⁵ A policeman sees a drunk man searching for something under a streetlight and asks what gives. The drunk says he lost his keys, so they both look together. After a few minutes the policeman asks if he is sure he lost them here, and the drunk replies, "No, I lost them in the park." So the policeman asks why he is searching here, and the drunk replies, "This is where the light is" ([David H. Freedman](#) (2010). Wrong: *Why Experts Keep Failing Us*. Little, Brown and Company. ISBN 0-316-02378-7).

⁶ See my full review (footnote 1 above) for these images. In addition, I personally recall a meeting at Harry Livingstone's house in Baltimore (during the Houston Rockets' run to the NBA title—over 20 years ago now), where Darryl Weatherly had pointed out the absurd disagreements between Z-313 and the WC tables.

Here is the image prepared by the FBI (recently resurrected by David Josephs⁷), which shows the final shot, well after Z-313. It is located nearly at the bottom of the stairs, precisely as many witnesses recalled. (A shot near Z-313 is also shown.)



Newsweek (November 22, 1993, p. 74) displayed a Warren Commission map that showed a *final shot at 30-40 feet beyond Z-313*, based on early reenactments, data tables and documents; all were ignored by the Warren Commission. And Fiester also ignored them.⁸

So, where was the entry wound? According to Fiester: ‘*However, there is no credible evidence to support identification of a specific, definitive point of entry or exit wound to the head*’ (p. 169);

On the contrary, the X-ray trail of metallic debris across the top of JFK's skull strongly suggests a bullet trajectory, i.e., an entry from the front. In fact, the entry site can be rather well defined via consistent use of the AP and lateral X-rays. To assist us, we also have the forehead laceration⁹ in the autopsy photographs. Furthermore, we now also have (since Fiester's book) the inspired observations of Michael Chesser, MD, who closely inspected a lateral X-ray while at NARA; he saw a hole in the forehead at this same site—and he saw tiny metallic particles clustered near this same site. All of this supports a forehead entry. Astoundingly, all these data coincide precisely with the autopsy photo seen by Quentin Schwinn (as discussed, and illustrated, in my e-book, *JFK's Head Wounds*). After a while such a symphony of facts becomes irresistible evidence for a hairline entry site.

But now we come to a moment of truth: Is this trail of metallic debris on the X-rays even consistent with a frontal shot at Z-312? Recall Fiester's fundamental—and never-questioned—assumption throughout the book: there was only one headshot, and it struck at Z-312. But here is what is truly disturbing: *This X-ray trail cannot derive from a frontal shot at Z-312!*

And here is why. First notice JFK's head orientation in Z-312. See Fiester (p. 178) – but also see Figure 5 here (excerpted from my full review). Then compare Fiester's trajectory to the trail of metallic debris on the X-rays: *they are grossly inconsistent!* This is now not merely a paradox, but rather a bone-crunching clincher: a headshot

⁷ <https://kennedysandking.com/content/warren-commission-document-wcd-298-how-the-bureau-made-a-fourth-shot-beyond-z-313-disappear>

⁸ See my full review (footnote 1 above) for these images.

⁹ This laceration was not seen at Parkland, but a bullet entry was apparently seen at this site by Crenshaw, McClelland, Kilduff, David, Robinson, O'Donnell, Custer, Knudsen, and Schwinn.

at Z-312 *cannot* explain the metallic trail on the X-rays. The explanation for Fiester's impasse is absurdly simple—she simply ignored the X-rays. So, the bottom line is this: Fiester's primary hypothesis of one, and only one, headshot at Z-312 cannot possibly be correct—and this shocking denouement throws her entire book into a deep, dark shadow.¹⁰

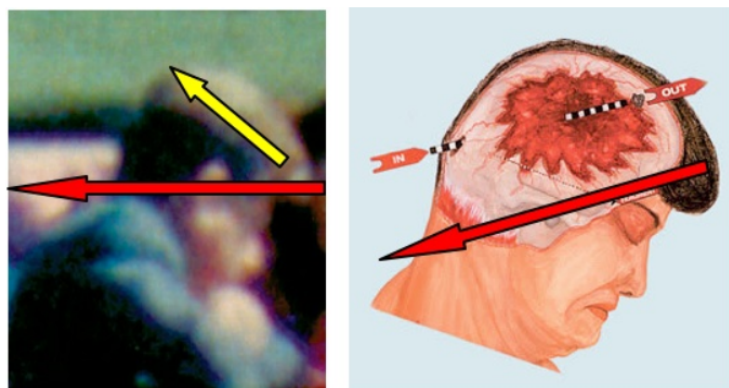


Figure 5. The solid red arrow (in both images here) shows the approximate path of a bullet in Z-312 (a nearly horizontal trajectory) for a shot from the South Knoll, as proposed by the author. The yellow arrow represents the trail of metallic debris on the JFK lateral X-rays. This is a gross paradox. The solid red arrow must be wrong. But the yellow trajectory (which is real) could not have resulted from a shot at Z-312; instead it must have occurred when JFK was more nearly erect, well after Z-312.

There is even more trouble with that trail of debris. Let us agree that this trail (yellow arrow—Figure 5 above) suggests a bullet trajectory.¹¹ This trail is *inconsistent* with several other fundamental pieces of data in this JFK case, as follows:

- It is inconsistent with the large occipital hole that was so widely reported, both at Parkland and at Bethesda. The trail of metallic particles on the X-rays just simply dissipates (without exiting) and—*it is far too superior to explain that hole.*
- It is totally incompatible with the location of the 7x2 mm fragment above JFK's right eye (the fragment that Humes removed). Since Fiester routinely ignored most of the X-ray evidence, she never even tried to explain the odd location of this 7x2 mm fragment. (See my e-book for further discussion of this issue.)
- It disagrees utterly with the beveled skull site near the EOP that the pathologists interpreted as the entry for a posterior bullet. *The debris trail is simply far too superior to explain this EOP site.* Although she closes her mind to a posterior headshot, such a shot could nonetheless explain several critical items, *which are otherwise inexplicable*: the pathologists' report of just such a shot, debris on the hood ornament (way too far forward for back spatter from a frontal bullet), the dent in the windshield chrome (*inside* the limousine), the location of the 7x2 fragment (above JFK's right orbit), the leftward (i.e., counterclockwise) head jerk—reported by early viewers of the Z-film, and the location of the metallic smear on the Harper Fragment (also discussed in my e-book). None of these issues merited the slightest attention from her.

¹⁰ For well over 15 years now, I have claimed that the metallic trail on the X-rays was *grossly incompatible* with a shot at Z-312, due to JFK's forward orientation during that time interval. Much later, it was quite striking for me to learn that James Altgens agreed with me about this. In June 1967 he had told CBS that JFK was "upright" when struck (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNQeECIGSDc>). But Fiester never noticed this.

¹¹ No one has seriously challenged the authenticity of these metallic particles; furthermore, I have observed this trail many times at the Archives and it certainly seems authentic. Moreover, Larry Sturdivan told the HSCA that tiny fragments would remain very near the initial trail due to their great "tissue drag" as compared to larger fragments (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=95#relPageId=405&tab=page>).