

Fall, 2013

Lecture Tuesday and Thursday, 4- 5:45 PM
Social Sciences 2 – Room 071

Section Thursday 6- 7:10PM
Social Sciences 2 – Room 071

Cowell 103 - Syllabus
The Alternative Theories of the JFK Assassination
&

The Implications of Each for Our Political, Social and Legal Order

Lecturer: **Daniel Sheehan**
Office Hours by Appointment
TAs: Tobias Rushing: torushin@ucsc.edu
Robert Modellmog: rmodellm@ucsc.edu

Introduction

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dealey Plaza, Dallas, Texas at 12:30PM CST on November 22nd, 1963 stands as a pivotal moment in the consciousness of the American people, especially the most idealistic generation: the Baby Boomers. Since that tragic day, there have been multiple government investigations, reports, and review boards, and over 600 books published on the Kennedy assassination. The result: an entire spectrum of theories as to what happened that day and who, exactly, was responsible for that terrible event. Cowell 103 will explore, within context, the ten principal theories, and their political, social and legal implications for America.

Expectations

The purpose of this course is NOT to “advocate” any particular theory but, instead, to familiarize a new generation of Americans with the specifics of each such major theory and to allow each student to evaluate the comparative strengths and weaknesses of each. Each student will subsequently come to his or her own conclusion as to what they believe happened. Each student is expected to show up to every lecture, attendance will be taken. Weekly readings must be completed before your section, and students must be ready for group discussion. Each student will write two, 2-3 page summaries, and one Final Paper (10-12 pages). Extra-credit will be assigned to final papers that display exemplary quality, increased length, and thorough research; talk with TA’s for more information.

Grading

Attendance (Lecture and Section) - 15%
Participation (Lecture and Section) - 15%
(2) 3 page summaries- 20% (10% each)
Rough Draft of Final Paper - 10%
Final Paper - 40%

*****Plagiarism** will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade.

(Plagiarism is the deliberate use of someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging the source. For the library's guide to citing sources, see <http://library.ucsc.edu/help/howto/citations-and-style-guides> and <http://nettrail.ucsc.edu>. Specific instructions for citation style for each assignment in this class will be given with the assignment.)

To learn more about campus procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty, see http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acd_integrity/

Section

Each student is mandated to come to the Thursday evening section, after the lecture, from 6-7:10pm. There are 9 scheduled sections, and failure to attend will result in a substantial reduction in the student's participation grade.

Disabilities / Accommodations

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to Daniel Sheehan or one of the T.A.'s in person, outside of class (e.g., office hours) within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY), or <http://drc.ucsc.edu> for more information on the requirements and/or process.

Required Texts: (selections)

1. *Someone Would Have Talked* by Larry Hancock
2. *The Best and The Brightest* by David Halberstam
3. *Brothers: The Hidden History of the Kennedy Years* by David Talbot***
4. *The Nazi Hydra in America* by Glen Yeadon and John Hawkins

All books can be purchased used and very cheaply on Amazon or other internet bookstores. All required texts will soon be on reserve at McHenry Library. Other readings are available on the class eCommons site.

IMPORTANT: We are distributing on Ecommons Sheehan's (extended), 147 page syllabus and will reference the PDF PAGE NUMBERS in it, NOT the page numbers in the bottom left hand corner. You do not have to read the whole 147 pages, but only the assigned readings. The rest can be used by you for research.

***We have bought the first book, *Brothers*, for you. This way, you don't have to wait for it to ship. We will sell it to you for \$8, which was how much it cost us.

Calendar

Week 0: Introductions

Sep 26: Brief Introduction, Administrative Matters

Readings:

- Brothers: Ch.1- 2

Week 1: Overview and Methodologies

Oct 1: The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy *In Historical Perspective: Its Place in American & World History.*

Oct 3: Discussion of the Varying Methods and Standards of Facts in Different Worldviews and Professions

Readings:

- “Study of Politics, Logic, Approaches, Methods”
(http://www.academia.edu/801138/The_Study_of_Politics_Logic_Approaches_and_Methods) (Ecommons)
- Sheehan's Chronology: p.1-16 (Ecommons)
- Best and Brightest: Ch.1- 2

Week 2: Lee Harvey Oswald and the “Lone Gunman” Theory

Oct 8: Theory #1- Effects of Assassination Upon the World, Lee Harvey Oswald and the “Lone Gunman” Theory, as advocated by the Dallas P.D. And the F.B.I.

Oct 10: The congressional Warren Commission Report- The “Magic Bullet” Theory supporting the “Lone Gunman” Theory.

Readings:

- Sheehan's 147 page Syllabus, Footnote #8 - Lee Harvey Oswald (Ecommons)
- Sheehan's Chronology: p.17-27 (Ecommons)
- Someone Would Have Talked: p.83-86,98,99,179-192, 259-266

Week 3: Challenges to the “Lone Gunman Theory”

Oct 15: Challenges to “Lone Gunman” Theory

Oct 17: The Later Discovered Facts That Challenge the Lone Gunman Theory

Readings:

- Someone Would Have Talked: p.29-37.
- Daily Mail Article - New Evidence Ends JFK Conspiracy:
(<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2063459/End-JFK-conspiracy-theories-Digital-technology-proves-Lee-Harvey-Oswald-acted-alone.html>) (Ecommons)
- Sheehan's Chronology: p.28-35 (Ecommons)
- Sheehan's 147 page Syllabus: p. 2-17 (Ecommons)*

* All syllabus page numbers correspond to the PDF page numbers when viewed on the computer.

Week 4: The Possibility of Alternative Explanations for the Crime

2-3 page summary on Theory #1 DUE

Oct 22: The Now Indisputable Facts Pertaining to the Assassination

Oct 24: The Still-Controversial Facts that Point Toward an Alternate Explanation

Readings:

- Brothers: p.85-125
- Someone Would Have Talked: p.38-49
- Sheehan's 147 page Syllabus, Footnote #129 - Garrison Playboy Interview (Ecommons)
- Sheehan's Chronology: p.36-45 (Ecommons)

Week 5: Theories of the Cuban Exiles and Organized Crime (The Mob)

Oct 29: Theory #2: House of Representatives' 1979 Report Points to Cuban Exiles and Organized Crime

Oct 31: Theory #3: The Mob Killed JFK: Havana Crime Boss Santos Trafficante and New Orleans Crime Boss Carlos Marcello Plot

Readings:

- Someone Would Have Talked: p.50-58, 59-75, 169-178, 267-287.

Week 6: Garrison Investigation, Oliver Stone, L.B.J. And Hoover

Nov 5: Theory #4- Jim Garrison's Theory and Oliver Stone's "JFK"

Nov 7: Theory #5 – The Torbitt Document- Vice President Lyndon Johnson, J. Edgar Hoover, and the F.B.I. Did It.

Readings:

- <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/JFKoperation40.htm> - (Ecommons)
- Brothers: Ch.9
- Family of Secrets: Ch.10&11 (Ecommons)
- The Torbitt Document (Ecommons)

Week 7: The S-Force, Cuban Backfire

2-3 Page Summary of Any Theory

Nov 12: Theory #6- The S-Force and/or Santos Trafficante Did It

Nov 14: Theory #7- Cuban Backfire and a Certain Element (Richard Helms) within the C.I.A. Did It

- Brothers: p.214-234

- Best and Brightest: p.50-65. Ch.5
- Watergate: The Hidden History (Ecommons)

Week 8: The C.I.A., “7 Days in May”

Nov 19: Theory #8- The C.I.A. As an Institution Did It

Nov 21: Theory #9- 7 Days in May- Joint Chiefs of Staff Coup

Readings:

- Brothers: p.145-174
- The Nazi Hydra, selected chapters (to be announced)

Week 9: “Rulers of the Realm” Thesis, Thanksgiving

Nov 26: Theory #10- Daniel Sheehan and Chief Staff Writer on the House Select committee on Assassinations Dick Billing's “Rulers of the Realm” Thesis

Nov 28: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK!

Reading:

- Sheehan's 147 page Syllabus, Appendix 5: Primer p.63-89 (Ecommons)
- Someone Would Have Talked: Ch.19

Week 10: Rulers of the Realm and Conclusion

Rough Draft due in Section, Thursday December 5

Dec 3: Deep Background for “Rulers of the Realm”, Political and Legal Implications of the All the Various Theories

Dec 5: Social, Legal and Political Implications for the “Rulers of the Realm” thesis.

Section: Discussion of Social, Legal and Political Implications for all theories.

Reading:

- Intro to Rulers of the Realm (Ecommons)

*****Final Paper Due By Midnight on December 9, 2013.*****