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January 1992

The Authority of the Profession: Recollecting Through History

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Recommended Citation (OVERRIDE)

Zelizer, B. (1992). The authority of the profession: Recollecting through history. In *Covering the body : The Kennedy assassination, the media, and the shaping of collective memory* (pp. 177-188). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/73

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The Authority of the Profession: Recollecting Through History

Abstract

The tale of President Kennedy's death was, of course, more than a story about journalism. This meant that journalists needed to do more than perpetuate narratives that emphasized their own authority for the story: they needed to account for other authorities too.

Nearly three decades after the assassination, journalists' competition with the independent critics had taken on familiar forms. Some critics had either voluntarily abandoned the story or been marginalized by mainstream journalism. Those who continued to investigate it coexisted with reporters tensely, in recognized, circumscribed channels.

Historians, on the other hand, who had not yet played an active part in recording the assassination, had no such familiar patterns of interaction with journalists. Yet history remained the main discipline with a clear claim to the tale. Journalists were attentive to the fact that historians had not yet fully addressed the story, and they began to consider the role of history in its retelling. History gave journalists a way to tailor their assassination memories into a consideration of the structure of their own profession. These tales privileged considerations of the profession of journalism over those of the individual, organization, or institution.

Comments

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What is accessible to all of us is the memory of ourselves during that bleak November weekend.¹

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Nearly three decades after the assassination, journalists' competition with the independent critics had taken on familiar forms. Some critics had either voluntarily abandoned the story or been marginalized by mainstream journalism. Those who continued to investigate it coexisted with reporters tensely, in recognized, circumscribed channels. Historians, on the other hand, who had not yet played an active part in recording the assassination, had no such familiar patterns of interaction with journalists. Yet history remained the main discipline with a clear claim to the tale. Journalists were attentive to the fact that historians had not yet fully addressed the story, and they began to consider the role of history in its retelling. History gave journalists a way to tailor their assassination memories into a consideration of the structure of their own profession. These tales privileged considerations of the profession of journalism over those of the individual, organization, or institution.

History: Privileged Record or Anachronism?

The relevance of the historical record for all retellers derived from its ability to lend depth and context to the events it retold. In one view, history was a "discipline which [seeks] to establish true statements about events which have occurred and objects which have existed in the past."² In terms of perspective, narrative standard, and analytical method, historians were recordkeepers of a system predicated on distance.³ They focused on the long rather than short term, favored

counts were preliminary yet essential to the final draft to be written by historians. One article in the *Progressive* noted that "the commentators, responding in the tragic passion of the moment, have had their say about Mr. Kennedy, and the historians, writing in the coolness of time, will have theirs one day."¹⁸ History was expected to take up where journalism left off, by offering a finite end point that would discard or immobilize contradictory claims to the story. But it was unclear where or when that point would be.

Television documentaries became occupied with the point at which "history reexamined the facts."¹⁹ Journalism lingered as a form of uncooked history, where "the participants' memories haven't yet entirely faded and the historians haven't yet taken over."²⁰ Because journalists were closer to the story and their authority was derived from their presence, they began to recognize the advantage they had over historians, whose authority would come only after the facts became clear.

This advantage was derived from several circumstances, all of which blurred traditional distinctions between journalists and historians. Journalists' continued presence in the assassination story was to a large degree supported by the timing of the event, occurring as it did before the president had completed a first term. Kennedy's time in office was too short for historians to gauge his reign, yet journalists had been granted easy access to the 1,000 days of Kennedy's administration. This placed them in the position of becoming its preferred evaluators. This was certainly the case with Theodore White, whose stature with the Kennedy family later gave him access to the assassination story.²¹ As Norman Mailer said, "Much of what we had to say, intended to have the life of contemporary criticism, [became] abruptly a document which speaks from . . . a time which is past, from history."²² Journalists were thus cast as instant historians by the circumstances of Kennedy's death.

But there were other circumstances that derived from the insufficiency of traditional modes of recordkeeping. While historians became less competent to tell the story as its retellings persisted, due to their discomfort with the reflexive quality of sixties-era narratives, their detached mode of storytelling, and their assumption that the assassination's contradictory events could be woven into a coherent narrative, the distinctions between contemporaneous and after-the-fact accounts also became less relevant. It was unclear where journalism ended and history began. "Past events," said one reporter, "become history when the public forgets its details. America has not yet let go of the details of that afternoon."²³

This was in part because the media kept replaying them. Indeed, news reports themselves seemed to lack a temporal finiteness: "The [New York] Times would not be thrown away by readers a day later, it was a collectors' item. . . . It would pass on, as a family heirloom or a relic or a vague testimony to existence on the day a President was shot."²⁴ Media accounts took on a historical cast. One compilation of assassination coverage collected years later by the *Dallas Morning News* was flagged on the back cover by the following statement: "Much has been written and recorded about the assassination of John F. Kennedy, but no source in the world has more to offer on the events of November 22, 1963 than the *Dallas Morning News*. Here . . . is a permanent record of coverage from the city's largest newspaper."²⁵ The state of limbo in which historians were expected to wait before they began their analysis of Kennedy's death never ended. Instead, the story's persistence prevented them from "being able to complete a coherent account of this extraordinarily complex event."²⁶ This put them in the peculiar position of having a "nonrole" in the assassination's retelling. It also meant that expectations that the historical record would finalize the interim nature of news were not upheld. This raised serious questions about how long journalists were expected to retain their positions as spokespersons for events, and when historians were expected to take over.

All of these points that worked to the disadvantage of historians worked simultaneously to the advantage of journalists: proximity and presence upheld their professional perspective, their mode of storytelling was valorized within larger attempts to reconsider the assassination record, and the memories they provided were seen as a legitimate mode of recordkeeping. Rather than define themselves as aides to historians, journalists began to see themselves as independent makers of the historical record.

Other Challenges to Traditional Historical Authority

Traditional historians also faced other challenges than those posed by journalists. Pragmatic challenges to traditional historical authority came from the independent critics, who contested limitations on the right to reconsider the official documentary record. The critics' activities fit in with the reflexivity of the time and supported a larger appeal to history in making everyday life meaningful. As time passed and the volume of material produced by the critics increased, their presence within the assassination story contrasted with the role generally played by historians.

Other challenges came from within the discipline of history itself, where scholars like Philippe Ariès, Fernand Braudel, and Pierre Nora reconceptualized the relationship between memory and history in a way that suggested a more complicated link between the two.²⁷ A surge of work by scholars like Hayden White and Hans Kellner addressed the literary qualities of historical writing and its function in reality construction.²⁸ Other pragmatic challenges came from the professionals situated between historians and journalists—a hybrid alternatively called participant historians, historians of popular memory, or popular historians. Individuals such as David Halberstam and Gary Wills sought to achieve an alternative mode of documenting history, one that attended to their own participation in it. Unlike traditional historians, who were wont to sift through documents from a temporal distance, popular historians made use of their experience *within* events.

Popular historians lent a fresh perspective to retellings of the assassination, particularly by the early eighties. Their views and actions became a legitimate part of the stories they wrote, a point that linked them with ongoing discourses about participation, self-reflexivity, and the relevance of memory. For example, although it did not address Kennedy's death, Halberstam's *Best and the Brightest* documented the trappings of American politics in a way that left little doubt about his own perspective on them, and he wrote it while events relevant to his chronicle were continuing to take place.²⁹

This trend worked to enhance the authority of the assassination's chroniclers. Books like Gary Wills's *Kennedy Imprisonment*, John H. Davis's *Kennedys*, and Peter Collier and David Horowitz's *Kennedys: An American Drama* implanted the assassination within larger contexts that were generally concerned with issues of corruption, power, and domination. While Collier and Horowitz tracked the effect of the assassination on family members, Davis incorporated an epilogue in 1984 that addressed the Justice Department's investigation of the assassination.³⁰ Herbert Parmet concluded one of his books about Kennedy with a detailed description of the events in Dallas and consideration of its flawed investigation.³¹ Even challenges from oral historians, memoirists, and biographers—all of whom emphasized the value of memory as preferred documentation of the past—suggested a mode of historical recordkeeping that was more in tune with the assassination story. Their versions were less detached and often "based on remembered experiences."³² This meant that challenges to traditional views of historical recordkeeping were taking place within the discipline itself.

All of this had direct relevance for the journalistic community, whose method of recordkeeping and perspective on events were closely aligned to those suggested by other challenges to traditional modes of historical recordkeeping. Even in discourse about history, then, journalistic practice was seen as a possible resolution to problems surrounding historical recordkeeping.

Journalism's Critique of History

The existence, however tentative, of challenges to traditional modes of recordkeeping suggested that there was room for flexibility in defining the role to be played by historians. This caused journalists to rethink the criteria that distinguished them from historians. It also generated revealing tensions between journalists and those popular historians, memoirists, and biographers who did address the assassination.

As that work began to punctuate the record, journalists tended to criticize it for the very qualities that made it different from that of their traditional colleagues. Popular historians' accommodation of their own reflexivity was met with skepticism among many reporters. Journalists lambasted them for being subjective, too close to events, too hasty, and not sufficiently detached.³³ Their attempts to adopt either a more participatory stance on events or a less analytically remote perspective were harshly appraised. This was perhaps because reporters felt that nontraditional historians were encroaching on their domain. Popular, or participant, historiography especially was seen as being too similar to journalism.

In that light, William Manchester's publication of *The Death of a President*, touted as the official history of the assassination, was brushed off in media reviews during the late sixties as "compelling narrative but hardly impartial history."³⁴ When columnist Mary McGrory examined biographers who produced, in her view, "early, perhaps hasty, memoirs," she asked whether it was possible to "once see Kennedy plain."³⁵ Reporter Meg Greenfield questioned "the proprieties and improprieties of all this secret-baring" in the chronicles of Kennedy's biographers.³⁶ She argued that they had overstepped the boundaries of appropriate participation:

History—even somewhat precipitately written—has its claims. . . . The circumstances under which these books were written would dictate that they meet the same set of criteria: that the history at a minimum be accurate, the as-

assessments be reasonably fair, and that the disclosures be made for some recognizably serious purpose.³⁷

Greenfield accused the biographers of undermining their commitment to accuracy, and concluded that drama had been served "at the expense of history."³⁸

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., bore the brunt of the journalistic community's scorn. "Brief, Not a History" was the headline of *Newsweek's* critique of Schlesinger's *Thousand Days*, published in 1965.³⁹ His attempts to tamper with the historian's detachment and so-called objectivity ruffled many journalistic observers. Said Andy Logan:

It's all right to be taken aback when Schlesinger in the *Life* serialization of *A Thousand Days* has the President crying in his wife's arms after the Cuban setback and then removes the scene from his published book. . . . Apparently where John Kennedy is concerned, the previous winner of the Bancroft, Parkman and Pulitzer prizes in history thinks of historic material as something that may be tried this way, turned around and tried that way, and balled up and discarded if it doesn't seem entirely becoming to the subject.⁴⁰

An accompanying drawing portrayed Kennedy and his "instant historians"—including Schlesinger, Theodore Sorensen, William Manchester, and Pierre Salinger—as Jesus and his disciples.⁴¹

Thus attempts by historians to infuse their own chronicles with a reflexive, participatory mode of analysis were denigrated by the journalistic community. Journalists paid little attention to the corrective this offered to traditional historiography. Their criticism had to do in no small part with the fact that popular historiography brought historians substantially closer to journalists' own mode of chronicling. By adopting alternative modes of historical recordkeeping, historians interested in accommodating their own reflexivity seemed to be stepping into the journalists' domain.

Historians' growing involvement in the assassination story in ways that resembled the reportorial mode of storytelling thus encouraged journalists to define clearly their own involvement in the story. Rather than contextualize their activities as assisting in the making of the historical record, journalists began to see themselves as its makers. They moved from acting as facilitators of historians to becoming historical facilitators. This suggests that retellings gave journalists authority not only among themselves but among other interpretive communities as well, underscoring basic assumptions about the structure of the journalistic profession.

Journalists' narratives about the Kennedy administration and assassination thus addressed notions about history and the historical record overlooked by historians. They began to promote themselves within the larger corpus of historiography. One reporter in 1988 asked whether history was "beyond the reach of ordinary Americans."⁴² Memoirs, biographies, and popular histories were penned by reporters and writers such as Theodore White, Hugh Sidey, Henry Fairlie, Benjamin Bradlee, and Pierre Salinger.⁴³ They continued to define themselves as reporters despite their forays into historical interpretation.

Journalists felt that they were capable of addressing points in the record that historians missed, and they stressed that they were doing the work of historians. Media critic Gay Talese said that for reporters, "the test in Dallas was like no other test . . . [New York Times correspondent Tom] Wicker was writing for history that day."⁴⁴ A *New York Times* book called *The Kennedy Years* was labeled a "history prepared by *New York Times* staff under H. Faber's direction."⁴⁵ Referring to his hunger "to contribute to the recording of contemporary history," reporter Benjamin Bradlee recounted how he was motivated by his "unique, historical access" to the Kennedy administration: "I knew enough of history to know that the fruits of this kind of access seldom make the history books, and the great men of our time are less understood as a result."⁴⁶ Bradlee seemed to maintain that he had been compelled to act as a historian by the larger force of history. His comments also implied that his history would be preferred to that offered by professional historians. A similar view was implicit in comments about Tom Wicker's articles and books about Kennedy, which were called "non-textbook histories."⁴⁷ In that view, Wicker was praised for having worked against the distortions effected by the historical record on memories of Kennedy.

Journalists made attempts across media to recast their retellings as history. In 1988 reporter Jack Anderson justified his televised report on Kennedy's death by lamenting the suspended involvement of historians. "The government has sealed the most sensitive files on the Kennedy assassination—the key CIA file, the critical FBI file—all in the name of national security. By the time these files are jarred loose from the agencies that could be embarrassed by them, the information will be ancient history, and only the historians will care, but we care now."⁴⁸ Anderson felt that journalists could provide a degree of participation that historians had missed.

One particularly illustrative example was NBC's set of videocassettes about Kennedy's administration and assassination, produced

assassination story, as well as their role in it, broke down the boundary between the two professional communities.

This in turn blurred distinctions about where the journalistic record ended and the historical record began. In his novel *Libra*, Don DeLillo relayed how the investigator of Kennedy's murder took refuge in his recordkeeping strategies. "The notes are becoming an end in themselves . . . it is premature to make a serious effort to turn these notes into coherent history. Maybe it will always be premature. Because the data keeps coming. Because new lives enter the record all the time. The past is changing as he writes."⁵² Journalists' unwillingness to surrender the story to historians was rooted in concerns that they would impose closure on the tale, perhaps prematurely. The possibility of historians' involvement thus became a threat to journalists' own involvement in the story.

Journalists thus refused to turn the assassination story over to historians in part because they wanted to remain its authoritative spokespersons. As long as the story remained part of their domain, the perpetuation of their authority remained a realistic objective. By invoking history, and passing off journalistic practice as being historically motivated, journalists transformed themselves into historians.

And what kind of history did they write? Unlike historians, who tended to make sense of what other people remembered, journalists made use of their own memories, recording historical events through lived recollections. It was significant that the distinction between journalists and historians pivoted on the issue of memory, because through memory journalists assumed the role of historians. Their assumption of that role was facilitated by television technology.

The repeated images and recastings of events provided by technology allowed journalists to gain access to the record of the record in a way that made its surrender to historians less appealing. Television coverage made it easier to enter the archives of memory provided by television networks or newsmagazines than to go back to the original documents. As John Connally said in 1988:

I don't think the time has come when history will really look at the Kennedy administration with a realistic eye. And how could we? When you see a beautiful little girl kneeling with her hand on her father's coffin, and when you see a handsome little boy standing with a military salute by his slain father, how can you feel anything but the utmost sympathy? It's a scene of pathos, of remorse, of tragedy, and that's the way we now view President Kennedy.⁵³

Television interfered with historical progression by not allowing memories to move beyond the images it repeatedly showed. In Halberstam's view, "Television had no memory, it was not interested in the past, it erased the past, there was never time to show film clips of past events, and so, inevitably, it speeded up the advent of the future."⁵⁴ The idea of a history frozen by images worked to the advantage of journalists.

In this way television helped journalists offer and perpetuate their own version of historical narrative. One observer recalled how ABC used a re-creation of the shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald as a promotional trailer for a Kennedy-related mini-series. He noted that "as the fictional clip was rebroadcast over and over again, the memories of the real event faded away. A clone had taken its place."⁵⁵ Television relied, in Pierre Nora's words, on "the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image."⁵⁶ It led to a mode of historical recording that was based on archives of memory. Becoming a "veritable history machine, spewing out a constant stream of historical, semihistorical and pseudo-historical recreations,"⁵⁷ television helped journalists create an archive of their memories that was now referenced as history itself. It was for this reason that discussions around Oliver Stone's movie *JFK* were so heated: Stone, in effect, was using technology to authorize his own version of events in a way that resembled journalists' use of television.

As long as journalists' memories remained, reporters were reluctant to yield the authority they lent. The emergence of journalists as custodians of memory about the assassination made them into archivists of its story. Journalists did their best to build a history of the story through memory. In short, memory became the basis of the preferred retelling of the assassination story.

By perpetuating their assassination tales through the memory system offered by history, journalists emerged as retellers through issues vital to the structure of the profession. They perpetuated their retellings by contextualizing archetypal journalistic tales as a vital part of history. Drawn by the privileged status of history, they created a record of the assassination that suggested not only the depth, perspective, and stability of interpretation of historical record, but also the proximity, personal memories, and experience of journalistic accounts. Journalists thus personalized the history of the assassination through their own professional codes of practice, collective memory, and journalistic authority. They gave texture to the historical record of Kennedy's death.

It was once said that "most historians would give a great deal to

have had the chance of being actually present at some of the events they have described."⁵⁸ The proximity journalists cherished as their right to the assassination story could be assumed by no other retellers of the tale. Journalists' possession of what other retellers wanted—power, media access, visibility, authority—made their experience of covering Kennedy's death a preferred mode of retelling the assassination. As one reporter said, "Those of us who shared it will never forget."⁵⁹ In recollecting the assassination through tales that highlighted the authority of the profession, journalists made certain that journalism would not be forgotten.

39. Matusow, *Evening Stars*, p. 107.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
41. "The Moments You Can Never Forget," *TV Guide*, 6 May 1989, p. 4.
42. "Four Days in November," CBS News.
43. Halberstam, *Powers That Be*.
44. Wright, *In the New World*, p. 71.
45. Robinson, "Reporting the Death," p. 8E.
46. Peter Kaplan and Paul Slansky, "Golden Moments," *Connoisseur*, September 1989, p. 136.
47. Kurtz, *Crime of the Century*, p. v.
48. Dan Rather, in "Four Days in November: The Assassination of President Kennedy," CBS News.
49. Quoted in Robinson, "Reporting the Death," p. 8E.
50. *Ibid.*
51. Dan Rather, in "Four Days in November: The Assassination of President Kennedy," CBS News.
52. "Icons: The Ten Greatest Images of Photojournalism," *Time*, special collector's edition, Fall 1989, p. 8.
53. "New Challenges: 1950–80," *Time*, special collector's edition, Fall 1989, p. 56.
54. *Ibid.*
55. See Greenberg and Parker, *Kennedy Assassination*.
56. Walter Cronkite, quoted in "Fifty Years of Television: A Golden Anniversary," CBS News, 26 November 1989.
57. Lance Morrow, "Imprisoning Time in a Rectangle," *Time*, special collector's edition, Fall 1989, p. 76.

11. The Authority of the Profession: Recollecting Through History

1. Richard A. Blake, "Two Moments of Grief," *America*, 24 November 1973, p. 402.
2. Murray G. Murphey, *Our Knowledge of the Historical Past* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973), p. 1.
3. See, for example, Daniel Boorstin, *Hidden History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987). Also see Hayden White, "Value of Narrativity," and Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation*.
4. Michael H. Frisch, "The Memory of History," in *Presenting the Past*, ed. Susan Porter Benson et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), p. 11. It is worthwhile mentioning that oral historians in effect use memory in much the same way that journalists do, suggesting that they offer a different form of recordkeeping than traditional historians.
5. Patrick H. Hutton, "Collective Memory and Collective Mentalities: The Halbwachs-Ariès Connection," *Historical Reflections* 2 (1988), p. 312. This is also discussed in Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*.
6. Hutton, "Collective Memory," p. 317.

7. Leuchtenburg, "John F. Kennedy, Twenty Years Later," p. 58.
8. *Editor and Publisher*, 30 November 1963, p. 6.
9. "Assassination: History or Headlines?" *Newsweek*, 13 March 1967, p. 44.
10. One of the first examples was found in *Editor and Publisher* (30 November 1963, p. 67), but references to the assassination photographs were found over the entire time span of assassination narratives. Among the first of many discussions of films was Stolley, "Greatest Home Movie."
11. As with both photographs and films, claims to having made historic coverage were employed directly after the assassination (see, for example, *Broadcasting*, 2 December 1963).
12. Theodore White, *America in Search of Itself*, pp. 1–2.
13. William Manchester, *Portrait of a President* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967 [1962]), p. x. Manchester went on to say that his book constituted journalism because it had been "written while moving along the advancing edge of the present. It is not definitive in any sense" (p. x).
14. Halberstam, *Powers That Be*, p. 229.
15. *Broadcasting*, 2 December 1963, p. 50.
16. *Editor and Publisher*, 30 November 1963, p. 67.
17. *Broadcasting*, 2 December 1963, p. 51.
18. "Shores Dimly Seen," *Progressive*, January 1964, p. 3.
19. "Plot to Kill President Kennedy," Hollo with Fox/Lorber.
20. Kenneth Auchincloss, "The Kennedy Years: What Endures?" *Newsweek*, 1 February 1971, p. 21.
21. Theodore White, "Camelot, Sad Camelot."
22. Norman Mailer, "Kennedy and After," *New York Review of Books*, 26 December 1963; rpt. in *Current*, January 1964, p. 14.
23. David Marannis, "In Dallas, the Lingering Trauma," *Washington Post*, 22 November 1988, p. E-1.
24. Talese, *Kingdom and Power*, p. 34.
25. Dallas Morning News, *November 22: The Day Remembered* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing, 1990).
26. Don DeLillo, "Matters of Fact and Fiction," *Rolling Stone*, 17 November 1988, p. 117.
27. For a discussion of Ariès, see Hutton, "Collective Memory." See also Fernand Braudel, *On History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les lieux de mémoire*," *Representations* (Spring 1989), p. 13.
28. See Hayden White, "Value of Narrativity"; Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation*. Also see Canary and Kozicki, *Writing of History*.
29. Halberstam, *Best and Brightest*.
30. Wills, *Kennedy Imprisonment*; John H. Davis, *The Kennedys* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984); Collier and Horowitz, *Kennedys: An American Drama*. Also see Manchester, *Portrait of a President*, pp. 239–66.
31. Parmet, *JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, pp. 341–49.
32. Murphey, *Historical Past*, p. 11. Examples include Schlesinger, *Thou-*

sand Days; and Sorensen, *Kennedy*. Other examples include memoirs by Kennedy staff, such as Paul B. Fay, Jr., *The Pleasure of His Company* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) and Frank Saunders, *Torn Lace Curtain* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982). Still another alternative mode of historiography was represented by *American Heritage* magazine, which was praised for its successful application of photojournalism techniques to history. Like other forms of historiography, the magazine signified a mood of transition when it began to accommodate contemporary topics and abandoned the chronological emphasis of its predecessors. It was hailed as “the lively offspring of the marriage of history and journalism” and defined as “the newsmagazine of the past” (*History News* 13 [February 1957], p. 26; cited in Roy Rosenzweig, “Marketing the Past,” in *Presenting the Past*, ed. Benson et al., pp. 32, 39, 44).

33. Initial disapproval came from McGrory, “And Did You Once See Kennedy Plain?”; Greenfield, “Kiss and Tell Memoirs”; and “Peephole Journalism.” Additional disapproval was recently registered during the uproar over Oliver Stone’s movie *JFK*. See, for example, Edwin M. Yoder, Jr., “With ‘JFK,’ Filmmaker Oliver Stone Shows He Isn’t Up to the Job of Historian,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 December 1991, p. A10; Tanya Barrientos, “‘JFK’ Film Has Students Talking About History,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 24 January 1992, p. D1.

34. “Presidency: Battle of the Book,” p. 18.

35. McGrory, “And Did You Once See Kennedy Plain?” p. 279.

36. Greenfield, “Kiss and Tell Memoirs.” Greenfield held that the memoirs of Kennedy’s administration suffered from the chroniclers’ overindulgent attitude toward Kennedy.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Raymond Moley, “Brief, Not a History,” *Newsweek*, 20 December 1965, p. 108.

40. Logan, “Stained Glass Image,” p. 75.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

42. Morley, “Camelot and Dallas,” p. 649.

43. Sidey, *John F. Kennedy, President*; Fairlie, *Kennedy Promise*; Salinger, *With Kennedy*; Bradlee, *Conversations with Kennedy*; Theodore H. White, *In Search of History* (New York: Warner, 1978) and *America in Search of Itself*.

44. Talese, *Kingdom and Power*, p. 34.

45. *New York Times*, 29 August 1964, p. 46.

46. Bradlee, *Conversations with Kennedy*, p. 8.

47. Berendt, “Ten Years Later,” p. 141.

48. Jack Anderson, in “Who Murdered JFK?” Saban Productions.

49. *Week We Lost John F. Kennedy*, NBC News.

50. Stone’s claim to be a “cinematic historian” was made in Stephen Talbot, “60s Something,” *Mother Jones*, March/April 1991, pp. 46–49. He is, said the article, “a de facto historian for a generation whose ideas and views are being increasingly shaped by movies and TV” (p. 49). Stone called for the turning

over of history to the people on the "Today Show" ("Who Killed JFK?" "Today Show," NBC News, 7 February 1992).

51. William Manchester, "No Evidence for a Conspiracy to Kill Kennedy," letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 5 February 1992, p. A22.

52. DeLillo, *Libra*, p. 301.

53. John Connally, quoted in "25th Anniversary of JFK's Assassination," "Nightline," ABC News.

54. Halberstam, *Powers That Be*, p. 568. Interestingly, similar claims were advanced about *American Heritage* magazine, which "because of its commitment to visualizing U.S. history" generated a different kind of historical documentation (Rosenzweig, "Marketing the Past," p. 39).

55. Eric Breitbart, "The Painted Mirror," in *Presenting the Past*, ed. Benson et al., p. 116.

56. Nora, "Between Memory and History," p. 13.

57. Breitbart, "Painted Mirror," p. 111.

58. Tillinghast, *Specious Past*, p. 171.

59. Steve Bell, in "Return to Camelot: Steve Bell and the JFK Years," Group W Television, 22 November 1988.

12. Conclusion: On the Establishment of Journalistic Authority

1. Morrow, "Of Myth and Memory," p. 22.

2. Hayden White, "'Figuring the Nature of the Times Deceased': Literary Theory and Historical Writing," in *The Future of Literary Theory*, ed. Ralph Cohen (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 27.

3. Davis and Starn, "Introduction," p. 5.

4. See Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), and Carolyn Marvin, "Experts, Black Boxes and Artifacts: News Categories in the Social History of Electric Media," in Brenda Dervin et al. (eds.), *Rethinking Communication*, Vol. 2: *Paradigm Exemplars* (London: Sage, 1989), pp. 188–98, for a discussion of how social exchange is shaped by new media.

5. See Barbie Zelizer, "CNN, the Gulf War, and Journalistic Practice," *Journal of Communication* 42(1), Winter 1992, pp. 68–81.

6. Michael Arlen, *The Living-Room War* (New York: Viking, 1969).

7. Davis and Starn, "Introduction," p. 2.

8. Peter C. Rollins makes a similar point about journalists and the Vietnam War. See Rollins, "The American War: Perceptions Through Literature, Film and Television," *American Quarterly* 3 (1984), pp. 419–32. The notion of archival memory is discussed in Nora, "Between Memory and History," p. 13. Also see Hayden White, "Figuring the Nature," p. 20.

9. Halbwachs, *Collective Memory*, p. 7.

10. Mary Douglas, *How Institutions Think* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), p. 70.