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Subject: FYI: positive review of "Assassination Science" in a major paper
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette , Sunday, May 31, 1998[circulation: half a million readers for the Sunday editions]"Books" Section"Another round of JFK theories""Assassination Science: Experts Speak Out On The Death Of JFK"Edited by James H. Fetzer.Catfeet Press. \$36.95. [sic?]"By Paul RosenbergJust mention the word "conspiracy," and a chorus of pundits larger thanthe Mormon Tabernacle Choir will respond, "Oliver Stone!" as if thatsaid it all. Yes, there was the movie "JFK," and then there are bookslike "Assassination Science: Experts Speak Out on the Death of JFK,"edited by James H. Fetzer, a University of Minnesota philosophyprofessor, author and editor of numerous books on the philosophy ofscience and related fields. It contains articles by doctors, lawyers and professors, along withresearchers who've spent years studying specific aspects of the KennedyAssassination. This book addresses two major concerns with one eye on the subject,the other on lapses of logic and methodology. First is substantialcontradictions in medical evidence, some of which indicates shots firedfrom in front. This material was gathered in response to articles in the Journal ofthe American Medical Association (JAMA), which claimed to prove the lone-assassin theory. Fetzer and others critique both the articles and JAMA's high-handedstonewalling of the objections raised, including those of Dr. CharlesCrenshaw, a doctor attending President Kennedy at Parkland Hospital inDallas, who eventually sued JAMA for slander. Some early documents from Parkland doctors indicate a head woundinflicted from the front. And David Mantic [sic], who holds a Ph.D. inphysics, offers corroborating arguments undermining the credibility ofthe autopsy pathologists (who had no experience with gunshot victims)with a list of 16 errors or inconsistencies. The second subject is a recent development---questioning thelegitimacy of the Zapruder film of the assassination. It's a step evenmany Warren Commission critics are reluctant to take. Nonetheless, thereare numerous eyewitness statements that agree with each other, but notwith the film. It's difficult to assess the mass of evidence presentedthat the film has been altered, but it seems obvious that seriousquestions have been raised that Warren Report defenders continue toignore. "Assassination Science" is disturbing for what it reveals about thebreakdown of rational discourse, particularly the shoddy reasoning andshabby conduct of powerful Warren Report defenders. The postscript by historian Ronald F. White, which provides amasterful overview of the problems involved, moves well beyondfinger-pointing. He focuses on philosophical assumptions andprofessional and institutional shortcomings---not least of which is thatlawyers, trained to build cases, directed the Warren Commissioninvestigation, establishing a framework fundamentally at odds withscientific inquiry. This isn't an easy book to read, digest or come to terms with. Fewquestions are answered, many are raised. Given the seriousness of thesubject, that's just the way it should be.Paul

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