

ASSASSINATION
PARALLELS
(LINCOLN & KENNEDY)

DRAWER / 3A

THE KENNEDY EXHIBIT / 10/1/1963

7 / 2005 OCT 03 260



The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln & Kennedy Assassination Comparisons

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Lincoln-Kennedy Penny



ABRAHAM
LINCOLN
1809-1865



JOHN F.
KENNEDY
1917-1963

This uncirculated Lincoln Head penny is stamped with a profile reproduction of John F. Kennedy looking-at-Lincoln. This unusual commemorative piece is truly a collector's item.

ASTONISHING COINCIDENCES

Lincoln was elected in 1860
Kennedy was elected in 1960
There are seven letters in each name
Both Presidents were slain on Friday
Both were slain in presence of their wives
Both were directly concerned with Civil Rights
Both Presidents had legality of elections contested
Kennedy's secretary Lincoln warned him not to go to Dallas
Lincoln's secretary Kennedy warned him not to go to the theater
Both of their successors were named Johnson
Andrew Johnson, Lyndon Johnson
Each name contains 13 letters
Both served in the U.S. Senate
Both were southern Democrats
Lyndon Johnson born 1908
Andrew Johnson born 1808
Booth and Oswald were both southerners favoring unpopular ideas
Oswald shot Kennedy from a warehouse and hid in a theater
Booth shot Lincoln in a theater and hid in a warehouse
Booth and Oswald were murdered before trial could be arranged
Lincoln and Kennedy were carried in death on the same caisson
Booth and Oswald were born one hundred years apart
Lee Harvey Oswald, John Wilkes Booth — each name has 15 letters

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"Sound As A Bell"

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MEMBER FDIC

Lattimer, John K. M.D.

See 1966-59

~~0-11.~~ (~~Assassinate~~
~~High File~~)

(Reprinted from NEW YORK STATE JOURNAL OF MEDICINE, Vol. 66, No. 13, July 1, 1966.)

Similarities in/Fatal Woundings of/John Wilkes Booth and/
Lee Harvey Oswald (Caption title)

(A description of Corbett, Booth's capture, and Booth's autopsy, as compared with Kennedy's killer, capture and autopsy.)

Pamphlet,(13) pp., illus.



KENNEDY



LINCOLN

STRANGE BUT TRUE

KENNEDY & LINCOLN

THERE ARE SEVEN LETTERS IN EACH NAME. BOTH PRESIDENTS HAD LEGALITY OF ELECTION CONTESTED. BOTH WERE DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH ISSUE OF CIVIL RIGHTS. BOTH WERE SLAIN ON FRIDAY AND IN PRESENCE OF THEIR WIVES.

LINCOLN WAS ELECTED IN 1860. KENNEDY WAS ELECTED IN 1960. THEIR SUCCESSORS WERE NAMED JOHNSON, AND WERE SOUTHERN DEMOCRATS, WHO PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN THE U.S. SENATE.

ANDREW JOHNSON BORN 1808. LYNDON JOHNSON BORN 1908. BOOTH AND OSWALD WERE MURDERED BEFORE TRIAL COULD BE ARRANGED. BOOTH AND OSWALD WERE SOUTHERNERS FAVORING UNPOPULAR IDEAS. LINCOLN'S SECRETARY, NAMED KENNEDY, ADVISED HIM NOT TO GO TO THEATRE. KENNEDY'S SECRETARY, NAMED LINCOLN, ADVISED HIM NOT TO GO TO DALLAS. JOHN WILKES BOOTH, LEE HARVEY OSWALD EACH CONTAIN FIFTEEN LETTERS.

ANDREW JOHNSON, LYNDON JOHNSON EACH CONTAIN THIRTEEN LETTERS.
LINCOLN AND KENNEDY WERE CARRIED ON THE SAME CAISSON.



New York Times
New York, New York
December 5, 1963

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1963.

2 KENNEDY BABIES BURIED WITH HIM

Mrs. Kennedy has talked often about the death of Lincoln ever since her husband was assassinated in Dallas on Nov. 22. Shortly after he was shot down in that city and while his body was being carried to Washington, she asked Angier Biddle Duke, Chief of Protocol of the State Department, to look into the ceremonies attending the death of President Lincoln. In at least this one poignant incident, the Lincoln precedent was followed.

Assassination parallels

■ There are many strange parallels in the assassinations of Presidents Lincoln and Kennedy. But Lincoln scholar Dr. John K. Lattimer is fascinated by the medical confusion spawned in the aftermath of both slayings.

Dr. Lattimer, chairman of the department of urology at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, points out that in Lincoln's case, as in Kennedy's, there was doubt about the direction from which the fatal shot had come.

He traces the confusion from the moment the first physician to attend Lincoln in his box at Ford's Theatre, Dr. Charles A. Leale, made a mistake in reporting the site of the wound in the President's head. And the Lincoln controversy, much like the confusion over Kennedy's wounds, has not been resolved.

Dr. Lattimer, who acquired Dr. Leale's personal letters in the course of his Lincoln studies, notes that four doctors who were present at the autopsy could not agree on the location of the wound. Two said the bullet entered Lincoln's head just off the midline at the left side, lodging above the left eye. Two others, including the surgeon general, said the bullet ended up over the right eye.

The evidence gathered by Dr. Lattimer indicates that Mrs. Lincoln leaned over and held the President to prevent him from sliding to the floor after he had been shot. When Dr. Leale entered the box moments later, the President had stopped breathing.

"The physician gave Lincoln mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, something that we consider to be a new technique, and he also per-

formed what probably was external cardiac massage," Dr. Lattimer said. "Lincoln, of course, was revived and lived about nine hours.

"Just as with Kennedy, there

was no possibility of saving Lincoln. The contamination alone would have done him in, but he couldn't have been saved anyway, even with modern neurosurgery.

They first probed for the bullet with unsterile fingers, then used an unsterile probe, and, finally a longer unsterile probe in the brain. He was contaminated thoroughly."

Dr. Lattimer also draws these parallels:

- The fatal wounds in both Lincoln and Kennedy were in the back of the head, although Kennedy's wound, inflicted by a modern, high-speed military rifle, was far more devastating than the single lead ball that hit Lincoln.

- Both assassins, or suspected assassins—John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald—were slain with a single bullet from a Colt revolver.

- Both Oswald and Booth were shot under bright lights, Booth in the glow of a barn fire, Oswald under the lights of television cameras about one hundred years later.

- Both assassins died about two hours after being shot.

Lincoln memorabilia in Dr. Lattimer's personal collection include the collar worn by the President the night he was shot, the scarf Mrs. Lincoln wore, and bits of the bloodstained bandages. He also owns the knife with which Secretary Seward was stabbed that same night.

Because of his previous investigations into Lincoln's assassination, Dr. Lattimer has been allowed to examine some of the Kennedy exhibits.

Factors in the Death of President Kennedy

Had it not been for a pair of remarkable coincidences, the assassin Lee Harvey Oswald would not have been able to kill President John F. Kennedy, despite Oswald's elaborate and skillful advance preparations. For a place from which to shoot, Oswald had selected a window with a low windowsill, so that he might steady his forward hand both on boxes on the sill and on the lateral wall of the window frame, if necessary, for both horizontal and lateral stability. He had selected for a seat, a box just high enough so that he could sit on it, rest an elbow on each knee, and further steady his rifle along the two boxes of books which he piled in front of the window and a third box which he placed directly upon the low windowsill. He also steadied his rifle with a homemade sling, fashioned from a carrying-case strap, and had piled a wall of other boxes of books so that his fellow workmen could not see his preparations.^{1(p138)} Although he was firing downhill, from his position on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository Building, he had selected a place where the President's car would also be going downhill away from him, since the roadway slanted downward toward a railroad underpass. Thus, during the time of his most effective shots, the President's back would be moving almost directly away from his line of fire, and it would not be necessary to aim the rifle much higher as the car moved farther away.

However, repeated careful tests of Oswald's rifle, made by the FBI after the assassination, revealed that the telescopic sight was pointed incorrectly, causing the rifle to fire all of its shots about 4 inches to the right of the target point and a little high.^{1(p194)} Unfortunately, the President's automobile was pursuing a course which curved slightly to the right and was moving slightly upward in Oswald's field of fire. Thus the defect in Oswald's telescopic sight was exactly compensated for by the turn and pitch of the roadway, causing two of Oswald's three bullets to strike home with remarkable effectiveness. If the telescopic sight had not been incorrectly pointed, so as to cause the bullets to strike to the right of the aiming point, Mrs. Kennedy might very well have been hit by the fatal bullet which struck her husband in the head.

It is, of course, conceivable that the very slight defect in the adjustment

of the telescope came about when Oswald put the rifle down between some boxes of books at another location on the sixth floor of the building, before descending the stairs toward the lunchroom and his escape. If we assume that the telescope was accurately pointed at the time of the shooting, we would then have to assume, however, that Mr. Oswald "led" his target by exactly the correct amount to allow for the curving of the road at distances of between 200 and 300 feet. The descriptions and detailed photographs of the rifle and the telescope, given by the FBI in the report and hearings of the Warren Commission, gave no indication that the telescope was battered in a way to suggest that it had received a forceful blow, as from being dropped. The rifle weighed 7 or 8 lb, and it seems probable that Oswald laid it down carefully and quietly so that there would be no loud clatter which might have attracted the attention of the police. The police actually did intercept him while he was still in the building, but, at that time, they had no evidence to connect him with the fatal rifle.^{1(pp181-182)}

It therefore seems unlikely that the rifle was dropped and the telescope jarred out of adjustment after the shooting.

Still another possibility is that Oswald carefully adjusted his telescope in advance, to fire 4 inches to the right and high, in anticipation of the curving path of the automobile. This also seems unlikely because the path of a car on the roadway immediately under Oswald's window curved first slightly to the left and later slightly to the right, so that it would seem improbable that Oswald would have made this adjustment in advance. Furthermore, there was no evidence that Oswald conducted extensive firing tests with his rifle and telescope, so as to be able to adjust it with the delicacy and dependability needed for this very slight deviation at these distances. Thus we have the first coincidence: the curvature of the path of the automobile appears to have exactly compensated for the defective adjustment in Oswald's telescopic sight.

The next coincidental circumstance came into play after Oswald's first bullet had struck. This first bullet entered President Kennedy's back, just below the juncture of his neck and his thorax, about 4 cm to the right of the midline, 14 cm below the tip of the

right mastoid process, and 14 cm from the tip of the right acromion process. It missed both the bodies and the transverse processes of the vertebrae, traversed the strap muscles and soft tissues of the neck, traveled through the esophagus and then through the trachea, and exited in the midline at the level of the third and fourth tracheal rings, causing a nick in the knot of the President's necktie.^{2(pp30-46)} Since it was a fully jacketed, military-type bullet of the long slender 6.5-mm caliber, and since it did not strike any bone, this first bullet did not expand or deform and left only a tiny perforation at its point of exit on the front of the neck. It then appeared to have gone on through Governor Connally's chest, tangentially, entering just lateral to the right scapula, shattering 10 cm of the anterolateral portion of the fifth rib. Fragments of the rib lacerated and almost bisected the middle lobe of his right lung. The bullet exited through a narrow wound, 5 cm in length, below the right nipple. It then traversed his right wrist, entering on the dorsum and shattering the distal one fourth of the right radius. The bullet then partially entered the soft tissues of the inner surface of the midleft thigh of Governor Connally, from which location it apparently became dislodged and was found later on the stretcher on which Governor Connally had been lying. One tiny fragment was left imbedded in his femur.^{2(pp16-20)}

The fact that bullets of this caliber do not distort readily was well known to the military surgeons who treated patients struck by Japanese bullets of this caliber during World War II.³ The fact that the exit wound in the President's neck was just as small as the wound of entrance and that the wound of exit was later used as a portal through which to insert a tracheostomy tube (after transverse surgical enlargement of the hole) led to the erroneous reports which were rampant immediately after the shooting, that one of the shots must have come from in front of the President rather than from the rear. It was only after the autopsy findings were revealed some months later that the truth became generally known. Because the President's body was removed immediately to Washington by federal officials, before an autopsy could be performed in Dallas, as would ordinarily have been done, the doctors in Dallas were prevented from

having an opportunity to do a more complete examination.

While there was any hope that electrical cardiac activity could be revived or respiratory function stimulated, the Dallas physicians had been frantically busy and preoccupied with the massive bleeding from the head wound which commenced as soon as the circulation was stimulated. When bubbles began appearing alongside the tracheotomy tube, it was feared that the pleura had also been opened, and bilateral thoracotomy tubes were installed. As soon as it became obvious that the President could not be saved, no one had the heart to turn his body over to search for other wounds. It was realized that an autopsy would be performed, and it was assumed that this would be done within the next few hours in the same hospital, with the same physicians present, as in the normal course of events. The fact that the body was removed to Washington, and that none of the physicians who had operated upon his neck were present at the autopsy, brought about some delay, while telephone conversations were held to clarify the events which had taken place. The autopsy satisfactorily indicated the course of the first bullet through the soft tissues of the neck, grazing the pleura on the right side, and causing a hematoma with some ecchymosis of the pleura, but no perforation of it. There was apparently not even any extensive blood loss from this wound. These findings indicated that the wound from the first bullet would not have been fatal by itself.

Because of his persistently painful back condition, which had been treated by operative fusion of the lumbar spine,^{3(p35)} and subsequently had necessitated numerous injections of medications into the painful areas of his back, President Kennedy was wearing a back brace at the time of the shooting. The brace consisted of the customary canvas corset with metal stays, which was laced tightly around the President's waist at the lumbar level, giving some rigidity to his spine. In addition to this, however, he had immobilized himself further by wrapping a knitted elastic bandage around the lower portion of his body and the lower portion of the frame in a "figure-eight" arrangement, between his legs and around the brace in such a way as to give his back added rigidity and support.

The unfortunate consequence of this arrangement, which caused his spine and body to be more rigidly supported than usual, was that after he was struck by the first bullet, he did not topple or crumple forward or laterally where he would have been out of sight behind the rear-seat cushion. Instead, he could only tilt stiffly and slightly to his left, towards Mrs. Kennedy, with the back of his head still exposed to Oswald's tele-

scopic rifle sight. It was while he was in this position that he was struck by a second bullet from Oswald's rifle, which entered the back of his head 2.5 cm to the right of the midline and slightly above the external occipital protuberance, and shattered into several fragments upon striking the skull. Some of these tiny fragments proceeded through the brain and lodged above the right eye, whereas the large fragments exited, making a large wound in the center of the right parietal area, tearing away an area of scalp and skull approximately 13 cm in diameter. The right side of the skull was severely shattered into myriad fragments, with fractures extending in stellate fashion, even into both orbits. Three pieces of the skull were found later in Dallas, the aggregate of which accounted for the missing area of skull. Fragments of cerebral tissue were splattered through the front portion of the Presidential car, and large chunks of cerebral matter were present on the seat of the car and upon the stretcher. A fairly large fragment of the base of what was assumed to be the same bullet was found on the front seat of the car and there was a dent in the frame of the windshield of the automobile, which may have been caused by this fragment. The fate of the third bullet fired by Oswald is unknown, and it appears to have missed the automobile completely. It is not known which of the three bullets missed, but it seems most likely that the first bullet missed, since a small tree came directly into the line of fire, at a point and time which might well have coincided with the first shot fired by Oswald. High-speed rifle bullets of this type are easily deflected, even by tiny twigs, and a complete miss might well have resulted. A mark caused by a leaden fragment was found on the curb farther down the roadway, but contained no traces of copper as would have resulted had the intact bullet, with its copper jacket, struck the curb primarily, without first striking some other object. This lends credence to the possibility that a twig or other object was struck first, disrupting the bullet, and that a fragment of the lead core of the bullet might have gone on and caused the mark on the curb as recorded.^{1(p116)}

Thus another coincidence, in that President Kennedy was wearing a stiffer back brace than ordinary, may have been a factor in his death.

Much has been written about the President's reported adrenal insufficiency, and indeed, the anesthesiologist who instituted the efforts at resuscitation remembered this and gave President Kennedy hydrocortisone sodium succinate (Solu-Cortef), 300 mg intravenously, in an effort to compensate for any such insufficiency, if it did exist.^{2(p5)}

Since the autopsy record, as published, does not include any mention

NARRATION

of the adrenal glands, either gross or microscopic (although the kidneys are well described), it is impossible to judge whether or not he had a deficiency of the adrenal glands until such information is released. In any case, President Kennedy's cerebral wound was so severe that whether he had adrenal insufficiency or not had no bearing upon his death. It is obvious that he would have died in any case, from the severity of the head wound. Any adrenal crisis which the neck wound might have caused, would have been easily treated had that been the only wound.

Similarities to the Assassination of President Lincoln

It is interesting that the assassination of President Lincoln was also attended by confusion as to the direction from which the bullet was fired, since Booth approached from Lincoln's right, but the bullet hole was in the left side of Lincoln's head. This discrepancy was resolved later by a spectator who happened to be watching intently at the moment the bullet was fired, and saw Lincoln twist his head sharply to his left, sufficiently to receive the bullet in the left side of the back of his head.¹ In Lincoln's case, there was also a remarkable coincidence which made it possible for Booth to do his evil deed. General Grant and Mrs. Grant were to attend the theater with President and Mrs. Lincoln that night, and an announcement had been made in the newspapers to this effect. Late in the day, however, Mrs. Grant, who disliked Mrs. Lincoln, persuaded General Grant, with the urging of Secretary of War Stanton, to renege on the theater invitation and to leave Washington early to visit their children in New Jersey, whom they had not seen in some time. As a consequence of the Grants not accompanying the Lincolns, the large military bodyguard, which always accompanied General Grant, was not present in the theater. Had they been present, Booth would never have had a chance to get near either Grant or Lincoln, and his elaborate preparations, made earlier on the day of the shooting, of arranging a bar with which he could block the door of the box once he was inside, and a hole drilled through the door of the box so that he could determine the precise location of his victim in advance of showing himself in the theater box where he would fire his shot, would have all gone for naught. Unfortunately, in both the Lincoln and Kennedy instances, fate worked to the advantage of each of these fanatical enemy sympathizers, and permitted their murderous deeds to succeed.

Summary

President Kennedy apparently sustained his second and fatal bullet wound in the back of the right side of his head, only because of a pair of unusual coincidences which made it

possible for Oswald's lethal bullet to hit him. The first was the fact that the telescopic sight of Oswald's rifle was aimed defectively, so that the bullets struck approximately 4 inches to the right of the aiming point and a little high. Coincidentally, however, the presidential automobile was following a course which curved to the right just enough to compensate for this error in the telescope, making it possible for Oswald to hit the President with two bullets in the course of some eight seconds. Otherwise the fatal bullet might have struck Mrs. Kennedy.

The second coincidence lay in the fact that President Kennedy was wearing not only a rigid metal and canvas back brace, but he had further reinforced its rigid support for the lower portion of his body by binding the brace to himself with an elastic knit bandage. The first bullet inflicted a nonfatal wound in the soft tissues of the neck and was deformed by these tissues so little that the wound of exit resembled a wound of entrance, leading to confusion as to the direction from which the shot had been fired. This confusion was resolved when the complete information from the autopsy became known. As a result of the unusual rigidity of his body, his torso did not crumple or topple over out of sight, as it might have done if he had not been wearing an extraordinarily rigid support. Instead, his stiffened body merely tilted slightly sideways, leaving the back of his head exposed to Oswald's rifle with its telescopic sight.

It is of interest that in the assassination of President Lincoln there was also temporary confusion as to the direction from which the fatal shot was fired, and that this too was cleared up when all the information was reported. In the case of President Lincoln there was also the coincidence that General and Mrs. Grant reneged on their agreement to accompany the Lincolns to the theater, and Grant's military bodyguard therefore was not present to protect Grant and the President. Had this coincidence not occurred, the presence of the bodyguard would have prevented Booth from coming near President Lincoln that night.

Last, both Lee Harvey Oswald and John Wilkes Booth prepared the settings for their shootings, earlier in the day, with great attention to detail. Even so, had they not been assisted by multiple coincidences, their evil deeds could not have succeeded.

JOHN K. LATTIMER, MD
New York

1. *Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*, US Government Printing Office, 1964.

2. *Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*, US Government Printing Office, 1964, vol 17.

3. *Wound Ballistics in World War II*, US Army Medical Service, 1962, p 97.

4. Lattimer, J.K.: The Wound That Killed Lincoln, *JAMA* 187:480-489 (Feb 15) 1964.

After the Shooting: Psychiatrists Draw Profile of an Assassin

Combination of Factors Is Found to Be Conducive to Assassinations in America

By JANE E. BRODY

A national emphasis on civil liberties for the mentally ill, the lack of cultural restraints upon expressions of hostility and the ready availability of pistols are combining to make assassination an increasingly common American event, according to psychiatrists who have examined the problem.

Assassination and assassination attempts are more common here than in any other country, experts on violence maintain. In fact, assassination is the leading cause of death of American Presidents in office.

Unlike other countries, where assassinations of heads of state are carried out either by political fanatics or in the course of a military coup, in this country nearly all assassins have been personally, not politically, motivated.

"Here, assassination is often the product of a single mentally disturbed person who is alienated from society, who feels like a zero, is wanted by no one and can't get a job," said Dr. Zigmund Lebensohn, a Washington psychiatrist. "We used to lock such people up, but our current legal attitude permits them all to wander about."

Dr. Shervett Frazier, psychiatrist in chief at McLean Hospital in Belmont, Mass., said:

"In this democracy, you can get away with a lot of things. Unlike the English, there is no cultural restraint against expressions of hostile feelings in public. Nor do we have much moral restraint in our society right now; people can do and do to anything they want to. Also, there are a lot of handguns around — one for every two persons."

Dr. Frazier is one of 27 experts preparing a report on the prediction of violent behavior for the National Academy of Sciences at the request of the Secret Service. The group held a three-day meeting on the subject last month.

Except in the case of the two Puerto Rican nationalists who tried to kill President Truman in 1956, psychiatric studies of the backgrounds and motivations of assassins of American Presidents and similar authority figures have shown that nearly all were mentally unstable, alienated persons who were failures in their own eyes. By killing a powerful and respected person, such as the President, they sought personal aggrandizement — status and fame — the analyses suggest.

Though some assassins professed affiliation with a particular political viewpoint, the groups they identified with did not regard them as representatives. In fact, the assassins were often rejected by their chosen group or had ended their affiliation with the group because of philosophical or tactical disagreements.

Background of Suspect

John W. Hinckley Jr., the 25-year-old son of a Denver oil company executive who has been charged with the attempt Monday on President Reagan's life, had either left or been expelled from the National Socialist Party of America, a neo-Nazi group, because Mr. Hinckley felt the group was not militant enough.

Mr. Hinckley has been described as a drifter with a history of psychiatric problems. He had attended college off and on over a six-year period but had not completed his education. Nor did he have a job. His older brother, Scott, is a vice president of the Vanderbilt Energy Corporation, of which their father is chairman and president.

The suspect's profile fits the pattern of American assassins, according to Dr. Irving D. Harris, a Chicago psychiatrist who has made a study of the problem.

"America's assassins have almost always been younger children in their families, and in most cases they have had older brothers," Dr. Harris wrote in *Psychology Today*.

The list includes John Wilkes Booth, who killed President Lincoln; Charles Julius Guiteau, President Garfield's assassin; Leon Czolgosz, who shot President McKinley; Lee Harvey Oswald, who killed President Kennedy; Sirhan B. Sirhan, who killed Senator Robert F. Kennedy in the course of his campaign for the Presidential nomination, and Arthur H. Bremer, who shot Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama.

"Their one-down family position predisposes them to rebel against authority and tradition, to resent their unequal status, and to wish to gain status by competing with the successful rival or by weakening the power of authority," Dr. Harris said of the assassins. "If these feelings find no constructive outlet, then a shortcut to fame may seem reasonable."

Dr. Harris has isolated two characteristics that he believes characterize American assassins: depression and despair over one's self-worth, and attempts to counter this despair by seeking a new self-image that commands attention and respect.

Judge and Executioner

These characteristics are quite common and "fairly normal," the psychiatrist said. What differentiates the assassin is the route chosen. Rather getting society to confer the new identity, the assassin makes himself a "hero" by becoming judge and executioner.

Dr. Lawrence Z. Freedman, psychiatrist at the University of Chicago, observed that American assassins were unable to avoid a sense of personal failure. "Ambitious out of all proportion to their prospects," he noted, "they were lonely and alienated from an immediate community of friends and sought their private solution in a massive assault on the head of the Republic."

Other psychiatrists have emphasized the schizophrenic personalities of American assassins. According to the late Dr. Donald Hastings, who was director of psychiatry at the University of Minnesota, most assassins were of the "paranoid" type who had lost contact with reality, harbored delusions of persecution and grandeur and had a strong hatred of authority.

"Hatred of a powerful father before whom a boy is helpless can become a murderous loathing," Dr. Hastings wrote. "In later years, the father is symbolized by figures of public authority. With the exception of John Wilkes Booth, all the assassins were 'little people,' and even Booth was the lesser light in a family of actors more successful than he."

As Dr. John K. Lattimer of Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center notes in his new book, "Kennedy and Lincoln: Medical and Ballistic Comparisons of Their Assassinations," a psychiatric evaluation of Lee Harvey Oswald described him as having a "schizoid personality disturbance" with "a vivid fantasy life turning around the topics of omnipotence and power."

Dr. Freedman said that "in this country, the President is the locus of power, a highly visible celebrity and object of envy — all things the assassin is not." The real question, he said, is not why Presidents are sometimes shot but why they are not shot at more often. "The opportunities number in the billions," he remarked.

Aside from the ready availability of pistols, which differentiates this country from nearly all of Europe, Dr. Freedman believes that "it's dangerous to make generalizations about an entire culture based on the actions of eight or 10 people."

Dr. Frazier added that the loose cultural climate that seems to be encouraging self-expression through assassination tended to go in cycles. "Everything loosens up, then it tightens up later," he said, suggesting that a more restrictive cultural climate in years to come might suppress assassination tendencies.

THE ULTIMATE LIST OF
KENNEDY-LINCOLN COINCIDENCES

Compiled by:

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1. Both were shot in the back of the head,
2. on Friday,
3. in public, before many witnesses
4. from behind,
5. before a holiday, (Easter and Thanksgiving)
6. seated beside their wife
7. who was uninjured,
8. who held his head in her lap until a doctor took over.
9. Both were in the presence of another couple,
10. and the other man was wounded by the assassin,
11. later recovered,
12. and later suffered adversity. (Rathbone killed wife, Connally suffered bankruptcy and bribery allegations.)
13. Lincoln and Kennedy both: liked rocking chairs (Kennedy for his injured back, Lincoln was sitting in one when shot),
14. and had deviate eye or wondering eye in some portraits.
15. Both had a brother who died before the presidential election,
16. both of whom were named after their father,
17. and neither of whom is buried in a marked grave. (Joe Kennedy was blown up in plane and Thomas Lincoln's grave is unknown except as to general location.)
18. Both Kennedy and Lincoln had a sister who died before the election,
19. were tall,
20. athletic,
21. were known for wit, and
22. had books published relating to their wit.
23. Both known for stand on civil rights,
24. were famous for expressing themselves well, (Kennedy won a Pulitzer Prize and Lincoln's speeches are literary classics)
25. were related to a senator, (Lincoln to Isaac Barnard, Pa.-1827)
26. were boat captains, (Lincoln was co-captain of a small Miss. River boat)
27. in the military, (Lincoln was a captain in the Black Hawk War)
28. elected to Congress in '47,
29. elected president in '60 and
30. had a son die while he was president.
31. Lincoln had a son graduate from Harvard; Kennedy had a brother graduate from the same school.
32. Both of the above men were named Robert, and
33. served on the cabinets of later presidents.
34. Kennedy and Lincoln both had sons who were lawyers.
35. Both had relatives who were mayor of Boston (Lincoln's cousin, F.W., and Kennedy's grandfather),
36. had close relatives who were ambassador to Great Britain (Lincoln's son,

- Kennedy's father), and
37. had a relative who graduated from Harvard and became Attorney General (Levi Lincoln in Jefferson's cabinet)(Robt. Kennedy)
 38. Kennedy and Lincoln were both known for quoting Shakespeare.
 39. Kennedy was survived by his mother, and Lincoln was survived by his step mother who had raised him from the age of 9.
 40. Kennedy's sister and Lincoln's wife were held to be mentally incompetent,
 41. and confined to an institution for the insane.
 42. Kennedy and Lincoln were both concerned with rights of Blacks,
 43. and their work was culminated in '63, (Emancipation Proclamation-1863 and civil rights message to Congress in 1963).
 44. Both knew a prominent Illinois Democrat named Adlai Stevenson,
 45. had same number of letters in last name, (7)
 46. and had successors with the same number of letters in their full names (19).
47. Lincoln and Kennedy were both succeeded by men who were born in '08.
 48. Both successors profited from having an educated wives who aided them greatly,
 49. had two girls,
 50. were opposed for re-election by men with names starting with "G" (Goldwater and Grant),
 51. and choose not to run in '68
 52. because they had grown very unpopular.
 53. Both succeeding vice presidents had been senators,
 54. came from a poor background,
 55. both named "Johnson",
 56. survived a sister,
 57. had a brother,
 58. died at about the same age (66 & 65)
 59. and lived about the same length of time after leaving office (6 & 4 years).
 60. Both successors were near to the president when he died. (LBJ at hospital and Andrew came to the Peterson House.)
 61. Both of the Johnsons had been officers in the military. Andrew was a brigadier general, and Lyndon was a commander in the navy.
 62. Both successors were large men and
 63. known to be coarse and vulgar.
 64. Both succeeding vice-presidents were followed in '68 by a Republican successor, (Nixon and Grant)
 65. who was later reelected,
 66. and had the second administration clouded with scandal.
 67. The Johnsons were the only presidents known to have urethral stones.
 68. Lincoln's and Kennedy's wives were both 24 at marriage,
 69. both had been proposed to by someone else,
 70. were from affluent families,
 71. raised with step brothers and sisters and a step parent,
 72. were well educated and socially prominent,
 73. spoke French,
 74. had four children,
 75. two of whom died before becoming a teen,
 76. had three children living in the White House,
 77. lost a son in the White House, (Patrick Kennedy, Willie Lincoln)
 78. one before the presidential election,
 79. and had the care of a minor son at the death of her husband.

80. Both wives lived in Europe after their husband's death,
 81. and in a major U.S. city other than where they had lived during marriage.
(Mrs. Kennedy in New York and Mrs. Lincoln in Chicago.)
 82. Both wives spent lavishly on White House decorations
 83. and renovated the White House after years of neglect.
 84. Both wives were known to spend lavishly on clothes.
 85. Both had lived in Washington before the presidential election.
-
86. Both assassins were in their mid-20's (born '39),
 87. were enemy sympathizers,
 88. and possibly or allegedly were a spy for the enemy.
 89. had the same number of letters in their full names (15),
 90. fled and escaped after the shooting and
 91. were captured later.
 92. Both were shot
 93. and killed within a short time of being discovered,
 94. attempted to shoot captor,
 95. were injured in prior to being shot
 96. in a theater (Booth broke leg and Oswald had cuts on head received in Texas theater), and
 97. had it questioned later whether or not they were in fact killed,
 98. and had both attempted to commit a political crime earlier. (Oswald tired to shoot General Walker and Booth had tried to kidnap Lincoln.)
 99. Oswald's father was named, "Robert E. Lee" and Oswald was named after Lee. Booth greatly admired Robert E. Lee as did Lincoln who offered him command of the Union army before Lee resigned his commission. Kennedy is buried at the foot of the hill upon which stands Lee's Arlington home.
 100. Both Booth and Oswald learned of the president's location by reading it at their place of employment, and selected it as the place of the attempt,
 101. altered their place of employment to make shooting easier (Booth drilled a hole in the box door and Oswald set up boxes),
 102. fired the fatal shots from their workplaces,
 103. and were trapped by officers named Baker. (Barn door was being held by Luther Baker, and Oswald was confronted at the School Book Depository door by Officer Marion Baker).
 104. Both workplaces are now museums because of the assassinations.
 105. Those associated with the events received financial rewards. (Zupruder sold film, Corbett and others received rewards for capture of Booth.)
 106. Both assassins were overshadowed by two older brothers in a profession they greatly admired (Oswald's brothers were in military, Booth's were famous actors),
 107. and they could not attain the same success,
 108. Both kept a diary or journal,
 109. which was partly withheld from the public, and
 110. were deprived of a father figure. (Booth's died when he was 13, and Oswald's parents were divorced).
 111. Both were shot with a single shot from a Colt
 - 112 while being subdued by captures in strong light (fire and TV and camera lights),
 113. then lived only a matter of minutes
 114. and denied the world further knowledge and insights into their deeds.
 115. Formal investigations were conducted after each presidential death.
 116. Both investigations were later reopened (Surratt's trial in 1867 and Johnson's impeachment in '68, and 1975 and 1978 inquiries).

117. None of the further investigations or inquiries resolved who else may have been involved in the assassinations.
118. Many conspiracy theories in both cases still exist today but are unproven,
119. some of which suggest possible involvement by prominent persons.
120. The killers of Booth and Oswald were both volatile, unstable,
121. unmarried
122. and later declared insane.
123. Both had earlier opportunities to kill (Ruby in police station and Corbett at closer angles in barn).
124. Booth shot in a theater and was captured in a warehouse or barn. Oswald shot from a warehouse, and was captured in a theater.
125. Kennedy's secretary was Mrs. Lincoln and advised him not to go to Dallas. A Lincoln advisor (& secretary in some accounts) who was the former chief of police in New York and was named John Kennedy, advised him not to go to the theater according to some sources.
126. Kennedy's secretary's husband was known as Abe.
127. A major reason for going to the theater and Dallas was to be seen by the public.
128. Lincoln was at Ford's Theater and Kennedy rode in a Ford product, a Lincoln.
129. Both knew a Dr. Charles Taft. (One was son of Pres. Taft and the other was a half-brother of Lincoln's son's playmates who was one of the first doctors who reached Lincoln after shooting.
130. Kennedy was advised by Billy Graham, and Lincoln was advised by Billy (Menter) Graham.
131. Both had their brain destroyed by the shot, removed during a partial autopsy.
132. were buried without it,
133. had their bodies moved after burial from a temporary site to a permanent memorial, and
134. were laid on the same catafalque
135. in the East Room of the White House,
136. and Capital rotunda.
137. Both had artificial respiration and closed chest cardiac massage and
138. had a leading doctor rushed to his side who could not save the patient since the brain was partially destroyed.
139. Many high government officials were present nearby at both deaths at the Peterson House and Parkland.
140. Both were buried with a predeceased son,
141. after having their journey to the cemetery witnessed by millions in a great outpouring of national grief.
142. In both cases it was claimed and later discredited that shots were fired from another direction.
143. Both had sons who are not now buried with them. (Robt. Lincoln is buried in Arlington near Kennedy.)
144. Both exposed themselves to danger to please crowds many times.
145. Lincoln and Kennedy succeeded Buchanan and Eisenhower whose homes are about 60 miles apart in Pennsylvania, and
146. who were the two oldest presidents at the time when they came to office (69 and 70).
147. Both Kennedy and Lincoln are well known for highly quoted speeches.
148. Both vice presidents were from states beginning with the letter "T".

149. Lincoln and Kennedy were both runners-up candidates for vice president in '56, and
150. ran against the incumbent vice president in '60,
151. who later suffered disgrace. (Nixon resigned, Breckenridge fled the country to escape capture as a traitor for serving with the South.)
152. In each case press photographs of the president's body were forbidden by a cabinet member,.
153. but photos of the body were published in later years.
154. The chair in which Lincoln was sitting and Kennedy's car are now both in the same building in Dearborn, Michigan. (Ford Museum)
155. Both Lincoln and Kennedy were in mid-30's when married, (33 & 36)
156. and had proposed to other women and had been rejected.
157. Both had children ride ponies on White House grounds,
158. who later became lawyers.
159. Lincoln and Kennedy were both the second born child,
160. the older sibling having predeceased at the time of election to House.
161. A woman named Paine got Oswald his job; a man named Paine helped Booth in his crime. Oswald Swan also helped Booth escape.
162. Both assassins were stopped by diligent officers and released. (Booth at bridge, Oswald at the entrance to the Depository.)
163. Kennedy and Lincoln both could trace ancestors to suburbs of Boston. (Lincoln's were from Hingham.)
164. Both won their party's nomination against older, more experienced and influential candidates
165. who were later selected for high places in government. (Seward-Sec. of State, Stevenson-U.N. Ambassador, Johnson-Vice Pres., etc.)
166. Lincoln shared with his successor the fact that he had been born in a state other than his residence at the election. Kennedy and his successor were elected from their birth state.
167. Both called troops for a war which was unpopular with many, and had citizens flee to Canada to avoid the draft, and
168. had a revolution occur in a neighboring country. (Cuba and Mexico)
169. It was questioned later whether or not Booth and Oswald were really killed and buried in their graves.
170. Of the four presidential assassinations, Robert Lincoln was near all except Kennedy's. (After McKinley's death, Robert considered himself a jinx, and would not go near a president.)
171. Women affected at the time by the crimes suffered similar fates: Mrs. Kennedy and Fanny Seward, the Sec. of State's daughter, both of whom were raised in New York, suffered amnesia of the events following the attempts on their husband and father. (Seward's was attacked the same time as Lincoln.)
172. Likenesses of both Kennedy and Lincoln appear on U.S. coins.
173. Both Kennedy and Lincoln liked to quote from the Bible, and
174. suffered from genetic diseases. It is suspected that Lincoln had Marfan's disease and Kennedy suffered from Addison's disease. It has been alleged that both of their lifespans would have been limited had they not been shot.
175. Neither was known to carry money and constantly borrowed from friends.
176. Both showed no fear of death and disdained bodyguards,
177. often stated how easy it would be to shoot a president, and
178. received many death threats. In the year of death Lincoln received over 80 such letters and Kennedy over 800.
179. Lincoln sat in Box 7 at Ford's, and Kennedy rode in car 7 in the Dallas motorcade.

180. Both died in a place with the initials P and H. (Parkland Hospital and the Peterson House)
181. Both were buried in mahogany caskets.
182. Mrs. Kennedy insisted that her husband's funeral mirror Lincoln's as closely as possible.
183. Both assassins used three names: John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald, both with 15 letters.
184. Both were in the military (Militia and Marines).
185. Both used aliases ("J. Wilkes" and "A. Hidell")
186. A part-time concession operator who held Booth's horse at Ford's was Peanuts Burroughs, and the concession operator at the Texas Theatre was Butch Burroughs.
187. Both assassins received their fame posthumously since they were shot before they achieved it.
188. Both assassins were shot by religious men,
189. who had changed their names. (Corbett changed his name from Thomas to Boston. Ruby changed his from Jacob Rubenstein.)
190. Both presidents were named for their grandfathers.
191. Both birthplaces are National Monuments.
192. Lincoln had sons named Robert and Edward. Kennedy had brothers by the same name.
193. Both moved a short distance away from their birthplaces in early childhood,
194. had a brother born there,
195. and then moved out of state at about 9 years of age.
196. Shortly after the assassinations Robert Lincoln moved to 3014 N Street, N.W., in Georgetown, and John Jr. moved to 3017.
197. Autopsies were performed on both assassins to clarify identity.
198. Both assassinations were carefully planned after the location where the president would be was published shortly before his appearance.
199. Both Lincoln and Kennedy were much younger than their successors.
200. Both presidents were greatly vilified during their term of office, and became very popular at death.
201. In '60 both Kennedy and Lincoln defeated better known candidates of the other parties born in '13. (Nixon and Douglas)
202. The '60 election win was at least partly due to a famous debate held before the election with the other main candidate,
203. both of whom had been a senator,
204. who was better known at the time of the debate, and
205. who sat near the president elect at the inauguration.
206. Both Oswald and Booth adopted nearly identical slings for their carbines.
207. Both Kennedy and Lincoln came near drowning early in life. (Lincoln's life was saved by a playmate at Knob Creek, Ky. and Kennedy's boat was sunk by the enemy in WW II.
208. More is known today about Lincoln and Kennedy because of their assassinations as they became very popular after death and had a number of books written about them by many people who had known them and detailed many personal incidents which would have been otherwise lost to history but for the sudden increase in public interest and fame.
209. In both cases a Robert (son of Lincoln and brother of Kennedy) tried to surpress many of the books.
210. Many books also have been written about possible conspiracies, none of which have been generally accepted.
211. Possible conspiracies have been the subject of two recent movies. ("JFK" and "The Lincoln Conspiracy".)

ADVICE

Lincoln-JFK coincidences strange

Dear Ann Landers: A friend sent me something in the mail that stopped me dead in my tracks. I don't know what to make of it, so I'm sending it to you for comment. How much of it was coincidence? The similarities are eerie. I refer to the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy. What follows are documented facts:

Both Lincoln and Kennedy were concerned with civil rights.

Lincoln was elected president in 1860, Kennedy in 1960.

Both were slain on a Friday, in the presence of their wives.

Both were shot from behind and in the head.

They were both succeeded by Southern Democrats named Johnson, who held seats in the U.S. Senate.

Andrew Johnson was born in 1808, Lyndon Johnson in 1908.

John Wilkes Booth was born in 1839. Lee Harvey Oswald was born in 1939.

Booth and Oswald were Southerners favoring unpopular ideas.

Both presidents lost children through death while in the White House.

President Lincoln's secretary, whose name was Kennedy, advised him not to go to the theater.

Kennedy's secretary, whose name was Lincoln (Evelyn), advised him not to make the trip to Dallas.

John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln in a theater and ran to a warehouse.

Lee Harvey Oswald shot Kennedy from a warehouse and ran to a theater.

The names Lincoln and Kennedy each contain seven letters.

The names Andrew Johnson and Lyndon Johnson each contain 13 letters.

Both Johnsons were opposed for re-election by

men whose names start with "G."

Both assassins were killed before they could be brought to trial.

Can all the above be coincidental? It doesn't seem possible. Please let me know what you think. Thanks, Ann. — A Student of American History in Mexico City

Dear Student in Mexico City: The list of rare coincidences you have cited has been floating around for several years. In fact, I have printed it before.

I can offer no explanation. Mighty strange is all I can say.

Dear Ann Landers: I'm losing my best friend of 20 years. "Betty" is a warm, funny, interesting woman with whom I've been very close since high school. The problem is that she has two wild, undisciplined children, ages 2 and 4, and she insists on including them whenever we visit.

Ann, we have not had an uninterrupted conversation in four years. Because our homes are such a distance from one another, weekends are the only time we can get together. But Betty works outside the home, and weekends are the only time she has to spend with her children. This means our visits always seem linked with taking the kids to the park, the beach or soccer practice.

I miss my friend's company, but her kids make our visits a nightmare. Is there a nice way to tell her that her children drive me crazy? — Loony in Little Rock

Dear L.R.: Don't mention the kids. Tell Betty you long for a real visit — just the two of you. Suggest meeting halfway for a quiet supper. I hope for the sake of the friendship that she agrees.

Gem of the Day: The easiest way to teach children the value of money is to borrow some from them.

Ann Landers is a Creators Syndicate columnist whose work appears daily. Write to Ann Landers, The Journal Gazette, P.O. Box 88, Fort Wayne, IN 46801-0088. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for a reply.



Ann Landers

ADVICE

Lincoln, Kennedy not really alike

Dear Ann Landers: I've seen the list of similarities between the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy before. It's not very impressive.

Some of those "striking coincidences" are actually quite common: Both the names Lincoln and Kennedy contain seven letters. Yeah, so does Landers.

Both of their vice presidents were Democrats who had served in the Senate. Many vice presidents served in the Senate, including Al Gore, Dan Quayle, Walter Mondale and Hubert Humphrey.

Consider all the ways that Lincoln and Kennedy were different. They didn't belong to the same party, come from the same state or even the same part of the country. They didn't have the same first names or even the same initials. One came from a rich family; the other from a poor one. One went to Harvard; the other didn't go to college at all. One was bearded, and one was clean-shaven. One was elected to a second term, and the other didn't finish his first.

Neither is there that much resemblance between the two assassinations. One was inside; the other was outside. One president lingered for almost a day, and the other died within a couple of hours.

Coincidences are often the result of sloppy reporting. — W.W., Greenbelt, Md.

Dear W.W.: Thanks for striking a blow for accuracy. Your research is right on.



**Ann
Landers**

quite some time. Batteries are supplied by a local business, free of charge to the city. Fire department personnel offer free batteries to any citizen. The fire department also offers to place the batteries in the smoke detectors for any resident having trouble doing so.

Anyone who needs a battery for a smoke detector should contact the local fire department and ask whether it provides them. Let your readers know that a smoke detector can double their chances of surviving a fire. No one should ever go to sleep knowing that the smoke detector is not working. — Gerald Simon, fire chief, Santa Clara Fire Department, Calif.

Dear Chief: People should realize that a smoke alarm without a battery is like a fire hydrant with no water. Thanks for the reminder.

Dear Ann Landers: I hope you have room for one more story about pets.

Many years ago, a neighbor's dog had pups. I took two. Those brother pups shared their lives. What one did, the other also did. They played with our cats, but they respected them. After a few years, one of the pups was accidentally poisoned and died. I buried him in the backyard and didn't realize that his brother, "Walter," was watching. Each day, for about three weeks, Walter would go and sit by his brother's grave.

Years later, Walter became so ill he could hardly crawl. I came home from work one day and found Walter had gotten out the back door, down the five steps, across the yard, and to his brother's grave, and there he died. He never forgot.

I was teary-eyed as I buried him beside his brother. Humans could learn a lot by observing the little creatures around us. — Virginia in Anadarko, Okla.

Dear Virginia: How true. Thanks for the poignant

John F. Kennedy/Abraham Lincoln coincidences

Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.
John F. Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.

Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860.
John F. Kennedy was elected President in 1960.

The names Lincoln and Kennedy each contain seven letters.

Both presidents were particularly concerned with civil rights.

Both presidents' wives' lost children both while living in the White House, and after living in the White House.

Mrs. Kennedy advised Lincoln not to go to the theatre and Mrs. Lincoln advised Kennedy not to go to Dallas.

Both were succeeded by Southerners.

Both successors were named Johnson.

Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.
Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.

Abraham Lincoln died in 1865.
Andrew Johnson died in 1875.

John F. Kennedy died in 1963;
Lyndon Johnson died in 1973.

Both Johnsons faced the next election against men whose names began with "G"
(Grant and Goldwater.)

Both successors left the presidency in disgrace without running for reelection.

Both presidents were shot on a Friday.

Both presidents were shot in the head.

Both presidents were shot while seated next to their wife.

Both presidents were assassinated by Southerners.

John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839.
Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939.

Both assassins were known by three names, both names contain fifteen letters.

Booth ran from the theater and was caught in a warehouse.
Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a theater.

Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials.

Lincoln was shot in the Ford theatre and Kennedy was shot in a Ford Lincoln.

(Some have contended that Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy,
and vice-versa, but this is NOT true. . .
and please, no speculations concerning Marilyn Monroe and Monroe, Maryland.)



The Coincidences of Lincoln & Kennedy

Here's a little part of US history which makes you go hmmmmm.

Coincidence?

Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.

John F. Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.

Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860.

John F. Kennedy was elected President in 1960.

The names Lincoln and Kennedy each contain seven letters.

Both were particularly concerned with civil rights.

Both wives lost their children while living in the White House.

Both Presidents were shot on a Friday.

Both Presidents were shot in the head.

Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy.

Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln.

Both were assassinated by Southerners.

Both were succeeded by Southerners.

Both successors were named Johnson.

Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.

Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.

John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839.

Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939.

Both assassins were known by their three names.

Both names are comprised of fifteen letters.

Booth ran from the theater and was caught in a warehouse.

Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a theater.

Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials.

And here's the kicker,

A week before Lincoln was shot, he was in Monroe, Maryland.

A week before Kennedy was shot, he was in Marilyn Monroe.

Spooky Huh?!?

Does History Repeat Itself?



THE LINCOLN AND KENNEDY COINCIDENCES

by Tom Slemen

This strange story is about a series of uncanny coincidences which link two of America's most popular presidents: Abraham Lincoln and John F Kennedy...

Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846, Kennedy was elected 100 years later, almost to the day in fact. After their deaths from assassination, both of these presidents were succeeded by Southerners with the surname Johnson. Lincoln was succeeded by Andrew Johnson, who was born in 1808, and Kennedy was succeeded by Lyndon Johnson, who was born in 1908. Both Johnsons have 13 letters in their names and both of them served in the US Senate.

Mary Lincoln and Jackie Kennedy both had children who died while their husbands were in the White House.

Both Lincoln and Kennedy studied law.

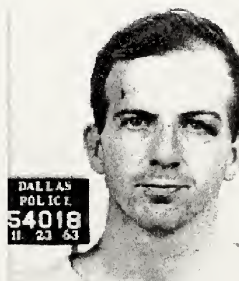
John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald both had fifteen letters in their name, and were both Southerners, were both in their 20s, and of course, both assassins were shot before they could stand trial. Kennedy

had a secretary named Miss Lincoln, and Lincoln had a secretary named John Kennedy.



John Wilkes Booth

John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln in a theatre and ran to a warehouse, and Oswald shot Kennedy from a warehouse and ran to a theatre. Stranger still, the car Kennedy was travelling in when he was shot was a Ford Lincoln. Lincoln was shot in Ford's Theatre.



Lee Harvey Oswald

Both assassinations took place on a Friday, and the two presidents were shot in the back of the head while their wives were at their side.

Kennedy and Lincoln were both historic civil rights campaigners who were heavily criticised while in office but were glorified after they died.

On the day of the assassinations Kennedy and Lincoln made strange

prophetic statements. Hours before Lincoln was shot, he said to his personal guard, "If somebody wants to take my life, there is nothing I can do prevent it."

And hours before Kennedy went to Dallas in 1963, he said to his wife Jackie, "If somebody wants to shoot me from a window with a rifle, nobody can stop it, so why worry about it?"

And finally, both presidents were said to have been victims of a conspiracy. When Lincoln was shot, the telegraph lines out of Washington D.C. remained silent for three hours on the orders of a high-ranking official who has never been identified. It is thought this information blackout was arranged to give John Wilkes Booth - who was fleeing from the scene of the crime - a head start.

For offbeat stories from Liverpool writer Tom Slemen, go to these sites:

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June 27, 2007

Lincoln and Kennedy: A Tale of Two Assassinations

By James Piereson

Immediately after John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963, Jacqueline Kennedy, along with other members of the Kennedy family, decided that the slain president should be viewed, like Abraham Lincoln, as a martyr for civil rights and equal justice for all. The funeral rites for President Kennedy were organized on the model of Lincoln's, provoking continuous pronouncements by journalists and television commentators covering the funeral about the similarities between the two fallen leaders. Russell Baker, covering the mourning ceremonies for the *New York Times*, wrote that "the analogy to Lincoln's death must have been poignantly apparent to most of those who passed (Kennedy's) flag-draped coffin."

Few called attention to the disquieting fact that President Kennedy had been shot by a communist whose motives were probably linked more closely to the Cold War than to the civil rights struggle. Lee Harvey Oswald, the likely assassin, was no arm-chair or academic communist out to impress relatives or associates with his radical theories, but a dyed-in-the-wool communist who had defected to the Soviet Union in 1959 and had spent nearly three years there before returning to the United States in 1962 with his Russian wife and infant child. During the months leading up to the assassination he had been active in a front group in New Orleans that defended Castro and attacked U.S. efforts to oust his communist regime in Cuba.

The attempt to portray President Kennedy as a modern-day Lincoln was inspired by the purest of motives but it turned out to have had the most unfortunate consequences for the nation and for the liberal movement that Kennedy represented. Kennedy's assassination, as it happened, was not at all like Lincoln's. The two shattering events had political consequences that were directly opposite of one another: Lincoln's assassination tended to unite the nation around the ideals of union, freedom, and emancipation; Kennedy's assassination divided the nation against itself, sowing endless division, confusion, and controversy that continued for a generation afterwards. Much of this was caused by the false portrayal of President Kennedy as a martyr for civil rights.

The historian Merrill Peterson remarked, in his fine book on *Lincoln in American Memory* (Oxford University Press, 1994), that "the public remembrance of the past...is concerned less with establishing its truth than with appropriating it for the present." The man or woman on the street does not look back on history or on historical figures with the historian's concern with evidence and objective assessment. The memory of Lincoln was refracted through the lenses of his assassination and the final victory of the Union army. These events turned the politician who eight months earlier was certain that he would lose his bid for re-election into a martyr for the Union. Lincoln was the final casualty of the war and in that sense a symbol for everything it represented.

In a parallel way, Kennedy, after his sudden death and solemn funeral, was turned into something different in public memory from how he was understood in life. Like Lincoln, Kennedy too was viewed as a martyr, but in devotion to a most ambiguous cause. Here was a source of much bewilderment about the man and the event. What exactly did John F. Kennedy stand for? What was the link between the assassination and the ideals he stood for? The great difference between Lincoln and Kennedy is that the former died at his moment of victory while the latter was killed before he was able to achieve any great success. Lincoln was assassinated at the end of a Civil War, Kennedy at the

beginning of a long-running cultural war. Lincoln was mourned but also celebrated for his magnificent achievement; Kennedy was mourned in a spirit of frustrated possibility and dashed hopes. This spirit, as things turned out, infected the liberal movement in America, and cast a pall over the nation in general in the tumultuous years that followed.

Lincoln was assassinated by the itinerant actor and southern sympathizer John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865, Good Friday on the Christian calendar, while he and Mrs. Lincoln were watching a play from the presidential box at Ford's Theater. Booth was immediately recognized by veteran theater-goers as he leaped from the box down to the stage, shouting *Sic Semper Tyrannis* ("Thus always to tyrants."), the motto of the Commonwealth of Virginia and an exclamation attributed to Brutus after the assassination of Caesar. Booth did not view his deed as the killing of a republican leader but rather as an act of revenge against a tyrant, one of the great themes of classical drama in which he was well versed. In keeping with that theme, Booth had hoped to shoot Lincoln the day before, on April 13, the monthly day of reckoning (the "Ides") in the Roman calendar, but a change of schedule on Lincoln's part aborted those plans. Booth regained his opportunity the next day when he learned, quite by accident, that Lincoln planned to attend that evening's performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater. Thus, as Michael W. Kaufman wrote in his study of the assassin (*American Brutus: John Wilkes Booth and the Lincoln Conspiracies*, Random House, 2004), "Booth had hoped to kill Lincoln on the Ides and highlight his resemblance to Caesar; but instead he shot him on Good Friday and the world compared him to Christ."

Lincoln's assassination occurred just five days after the Civil War had ended with Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox. When news of Lincoln's death spread, victory celebrations across the North were replaced by rituals of grief and mourning. "The Songs of Victory Drowned in Sorrow," ran a headline in the *New York Times*.

One immediate reaction (also an enduring one) was to view Lincoln as a martyr for Union and freedom. The fact that he was killed on Good Friday magnified the image and brought forth obvious comparisons between the slain president and Jesus Christ. As one correspondent wrote, "The two events have been providentially associated and henceforth no human power can disassociate them." The Sunday following the assassination was known as "Black Easter" across the North. Ministers preached sermons in churches draped in black praising Lincoln and trying to find meaning in his death. "Lincoln as martyr" was the common theme. "Yes, it was meet that the martyrdom should occur on Good Friday," said a minister in Hartford. "It is no blasphemy against the Son of God and the Savior of men that we declare the fitness of the slaying of the Second Father of our Republic on the anniversary of the day on which He was slain. Jesus Christ died for the world. Abraham Lincoln died for his country." When Lincoln was not being compared to Jesus Christ, he was compared to Moses, who led his people through hardship to the Promised Land, but then could not enter.

A second response to the assassination was to blame the South and its sympathizers for the criminal deed. No one doubted that a rebel or a group of rebels was responsible for the crime. The assassination fit perfectly within the moral framework of the war according to which the slave owners were to blame for the violence and death that had torn apart the nation. The morning after the assassination, the *New York Times* ran a headline saying the murder was "The Act of a Desperate Southerner" even before the editors even knew that Booth had been identified as the assassin. Many were convinced that Booth was at the head of a broader conspiracy that had been hatched by the leaders of the Confederacy. Henry Ward Beecher, speaking from his pulpit in Brooklyn, said that Booth "was himself but the long sting with which slavery struck at liberty... Never while time lasts will it be forgotten that slavery, by its minions, slew him and in slaying him, made manifest is whole nature and tendency." Many called for vengeance and harsh measures against the rebels, thereby undermining Lincoln's hopes for reconciliation between the sections.

Edwin Stanton, Lincoln's Secretary of War, organized the funeral rites in order both to demonstrate what the nation had lost when Lincoln was killed but also what acts of perfidy the slave owners were capable of committing. Lincoln's flag-draped coffin was borne slowly westward from Washington to Springfield where he was finally buried on May 4, three weeks after he was shot in Ford's theater. Along the way Lincoln's open casket was made available for public viewing in eleven different cities, including Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York,

Albany, Buffalo, Columbus, Indianapolis, and Chicago, where it was viewed by more than one and a half million Americans. Lincoln's hearse or coffin had been looked upon by at least seven million mourners, counting those gathered in parades and city streets or alongside railroad tracks, a number representing more than a third of the population of the entire North.

Lincoln had turned out to be the "redeemer president" that the poet Walt Whitman had written about years earlier - a rough-hewn leader out of the West who had the strength to purge national politics of its petty corruptions. Whitman saw that Lincoln, by his life and death, had given the Union a strength and solidity it had previously lacked:

"The final use of the greatest men of a Nation," he wrote in 1879, "is not in reference to their deeds in themselves, or their direct bearing on their times or lands. The final use of a heroic-eminent life - especially a heroic-eminent death - is its indirect filtering into the nation and the race, and to give, often at many removes, but unerringly age after age, color and fiber to the personalism of the youth and maturity of that age and of mankind. Then there is a cement to the whole people, subtler, more underlying than anything written in the constitution, or courts or armies - namely the cement of a death identified thoroughly with that people, at its head, and for its sake. Strange (is it not?) that battles, martyrs, agonies, blood, even assassination, should so condense a nationality?"

There was little doubt that Booth had acted to avenge the South and as a last-ditch attempt to save the Confederacy from final defeat. In the end, Booth achieved far less than he intended. Few saw him as a hero; his deed was repudiated in the South; Lincoln's death united the North; no one (after the assassination) voiced agreement with his portrait of Lincoln as a tyrant; indeed, Lincoln was immediately held up as a symbol of liberty and savior of the Union.

We can only imagine what cultural confusion would have been visited upon the supporters of Lincoln and the Union if, instead of being killed as we was by a conspiracy of Southern partisans, Lincoln had been assassinated by an abolitionist. Such an act would have been nearly impossible for northerners to assimilate within the moral framework of the Civil War era. For one thing, it would have rendered somewhat illogical the assertions of martyrdom on behalf of the slain president. The Christian ministers who portrayed Lincoln as a martyr would have had to wrestle with the discordant reality of his death. On the other hand, the rebels who had brought about the war by trying to break up the Union would have to be held blameless in Lincoln's death. In such a case, the outpouring of grief following Lincoln's assassination would have been mixed with confusion as to the moral meaning of the event. The anger across the North that was in fact directed against the South would in this case have had no rational outlet in relation to the great conflict that had just been waged.

Something bizarrely similar to this happened with the assassination of John F. Kennedy, which is one reason why the aftermath of that event was so confusing to Americans - and especially to liberal Americans, who were convinced in the aftermath of McCarthy period that the gravest threats to the Republic came, not from communists, but from the radical right at home in the form of racial bigots, anti-communists, and fundamentalist preachers. That a beloved president had been killed by a communist proved a most difficult reality to absorb and assimilate for those shaped by the assumptions of post-war liberalism. It made far more sense to believe that he was a victim of bigotry and intolerance; indeed, the thought that JFK was a martyr for civil rights seemed to require that his assassin was linked to the far right or was motivated by hostility to civil rights. It was but a short step from here to the conviction that, notwithstanding the plain facts, Kennedy's assassination was really engineered by some kind of right wing conspiracy.

The idea that Kennedy was in some way a victim of the radical right surfaced on the day after the assassination in an influential article by James Reston that appeared in the *New York Times* under the title, "Why America Weeps: Kennedy Victim of a Violent Streak He Sought to Curb in Nation." Reston wrote that, "America wept tonight, not alone for its dead young president, but for itself. The grief was general, for somehow the worst in the nation had prevailed over the best. The indictment extended beyond the assassin, for something in the nation itself, some strain of madness and violence, had destroyed the highest symbol of law and order." Reston, among the nation's most

distinguished political reporters, was searching for an explanation that went beyond the identity of the actual assassin. "The irony of the president's death," he continued, "is that his short administration was devoted almost entirely to various attempts to curb this very streak of violence in the American character. When historians get around to assessing his three years in office, it is very likely that they will be impressed with just this: his efforts to restrain those who wanted to be more violent in the cold war overseas and those who wanted to be more violent in the racial war at home." Reston went on to observe that "from the beginning to the end of his administration, he was trying to tamp down the violence of the extremists from the right." The fact that the assassin was actually a communist did not influence Reston's judgments as to who was ultimately responsible for the crime, even though an extensive report on Oswald and his communist activities appeared that very day in Reston's own newspaper adjacent to his article.

The *New York Times* was not alone in setting forth this interpretation of Kennedy's interpretation; or, perhaps as in other situations, it was influential in establishing a framework within which others began to interpret the event. Earl Warren, chief justice of the Supreme Court, observed in a statement on the afternoon of the assassination that, "A great and good president has suffered martyrdom as a result of the hatred and bitterness that has been injected into the life of our nation by bigots." In a eulogy for President Kennedy delivered at the Capitol two days later (on invitation from Mrs. Kennedy), Warren said that "such acts are commonly stimulated by forces of hatred and violence as today are eating their way into the bloodstream of American life." Warren went on to denounce "the hatred that consumes people, the false accusations that divide us, and the bitterness that begets violence." He made no mention of communism or of left wing doctrines that might have motivated the assassin.

Senator Mike Mansfield, Democrat from Montana and majority leader of the Senate, delivered another eulogy the same day making a nearly identical point: "He (President Kennedy) gave us his love that we, too, in turn, might give. He gave that we might give of ourselves, that we might give to one another until there would be no room for the bigotry, the hatred, prejudice and the arrogance which converged in that moment of horror to strike him down." One might have wondered what connection Mansfield's words had to the facts of the assassination. Oswald, so far as anyone knew, was not a bigot at all but something quite the opposite. Like many communists, Oswald saw the unjust treatment of Negroes in the United States as a further indictment of the nation and its institutions. Mansfield, however, like Reston and Chief Justice Warren, was interested in crafting a comfortable interpretation of the event, not in wrestling with the discordant facts of Kennedy's death.

President Lyndon Johnson, in a message to Congress tow days after Kennedy's funeral, announced that "No memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy's memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill for which he fought so long." The next day, in a Thanksgiving Day message to the nation, Johnson advanced this theme further and perhaps finally established it as the official interpretation of the assassination. He reflected on the tragedy wile praying that profound lessons might be drawn from it: "Let us pray," he said, "for His divine wisdom in banishing from our land any injustice or intolerance or oppression to any of our fellow Americans, whatever their opinion, whatever the color of their skins, for God made all of us in His image." He continued: "It is this work that I most want to do -to banish rancor from our words and malice from our hearts, to close down the poison springs of hatred and intolerance and fanaticism." Like other national leaders, Johnson suggested that Kennedy's death was a consequence of hatred, bigotry, and intolerance that had seeped into the nation's culture.

The cultural and political understanding of the assassination had become detached from the details of the event itself. It appeared that the liberal leadership of the country -the *New York Times*, James Reston, Earl Warren, Mike Mansfield, President Johnson, religious leaders, even Mrs. Kennedy - had come together to blame the assassination of the president on hatred and intolerance which (they said) had engulfed the country. It was but a short step from here to the conclusion that the nation itself had to bear the guilt for Kennedy's death.

Taylor Branch, in his history of Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement, described Kennedy's surprising legacy as it was crafted from the public ceremonies surrounding his death:

"In death the late president gained credit for much of the purpose that King's movement had forced upon him in life.

No death had ever been like his - Niebuhr called him an elected monarch. In a mass purgative of hatred, bigotry, and violence, the martyred president became a symbol of the healing opposites. President Johnson told the nation that the most fitting eulogy would be swift passage of his civil rights bill. By this and other effects of mourning, Kennedy acquired the Lincoln-esque mantle of a unifying crusader who had bled against the thorn of race."

Branch seemed to understand that the anomalous facts surrounding Kennedy's death had been redirected by the culture along more familiar and established paths. There was an irony in this for Kennedy had come slowly to the support of the movement King led. It was not even the case that the slain president "had bled against the thorn of race." Yet this is what was believed, and this surprising response to the assassination had profound consequences. Branch went on to observe that "The reaction to Kennedy's assassination pushed deep enough and wide enough in the high ground of political emotion to allow the civil rights movement to institutionalize its major gains before receding." Kennedy had indeed come to be seen as a martyr for civil rights and the heir to the legacy of Abraham Lincoln.

A week after President Kennedy was assassinated, Reston wrote in the *New York Times* (in an article titled, "A Time to Heal") that, "The death of President Kennedy and the shock of brutality that caused his death have changed the direction of American politics from extreme conflict toward moderation." It would be hard to find a well-intentioned political prediction that turned out to be more profoundly mistaken. Kennedy's death led almost immediately to a period intensifying political conflict that originated in attacks from the far left against liberals and moderates. Some of these attacks originated in differences in policy, as in protests against the war in Vietnam; others were cultural in character, as in attacks on American capitalism, on greed and selfishness, on the boredom of suburban life, on racism and sexism, and so on. In the wake of Kennedy's assassination, liberal leaders pointed the finger of blame against the far right. Within a few short years, they were themselves under attack from the far left with a level of vitriol and violence that far overshadowed anything the far right had ever been able to muster.

Lincoln had said that the Civil War was divine punishment for the sin of slavery; now, in the late 1960s, liberals and leftists began to say that violence and civil disorder were deserved punishments for the sins of racism, militarism, imperialism, and anti-communism. The idea of national guilt, which first surfaced in more innocent form following Kennedy's assassination, quickly spread through the institutions of politics, academe, and journalism that shaped liberal culture. The reformist emphasis of American liberalism which up to that time had been pragmatic, optimistic, and forward looking was overtaken by a spirit of national self-condemnation. Thus, in a few years from 1963 to 1968, the liberal movement in the United States absorbed a disposition that was increasingly pessimistic about the future and skeptical about American institutions and the nation's role in the world.

There is little doubt that the animus that pushed many Americans on the left onto this path had its origins in the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination. Once having accepted the claim that Kennedy was a victim of the national culture, many found it all too easy to extend the metaphor into other areas of life, from race and poverty to the treatment of women to the struggle against communism. These were no longer seen as challenges to be overcome but as indictments of the nation. Unlike Lincoln's assassination, which united the nation, Kennedy's assassination turned the nation against itself.

The intense radicalism of the 1960s, mixed as it was with anti-Americanism and romantic conceptions of socialism and third-world dictators like Castro, might never have developed as it did if blame for Kennedy's assassination had been properly assigned to a communist acting out of ideological motives. The conspiracy theories about Kennedy's death that developed later arose out of precisely this kind of confusion about the meaning of Kennedy's death. It was as plain then as it is now that Oswald shot President Kennedy and that in doing so he probably acted alone. He acted on the basis of motives that were linked closely to the Cold War: he shot President Kennedy in order to disrupt his administration's efforts to assassinate Castro and to oust his communist government in Cuba. He was prepared to be captured or killed in this venture - as indeed he was. It was wrong for national leaders at the time to blame the far right or the nation at large for Kennedy's death. In twisting the truth, they laid the groundwork for decades of mistrust and division that followed from Kennedy's untimely and unfortunate death.

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