

In 1963, Ms. Sandra K. Spencer was in the Navy as an E-6 photographer's mate first class, tasked with being in charge of a room known as White House Laboratory, situated on the third floor of the Naval Photographic Center (NPC) in Anacostia, Maryland. According to official documents, the NPC was where the photographic film from the autopsy was processed, and where some of the prints were made ([ARRB MD 121, 2/16/1967 statement by James Fox](#); [ARRB MD 122, Feb. 1967 joint statement signed by Roy Kellerman, Robert Bouck, Edith Duncan, James Fox, and Thomas J. Kelley](#); [HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36, Medical Panel Report, Section III. Chain of Custody of the Materials Acquired During the Autopsy](#) [text]; [ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays by Doug Horne](#)). There is no record of Sandra Spencer speaking on the assassination until more than 30 years after. Spencer was questioned by the Assassination Records Review Board, in an effort to identify witnesses involved in processing the autopsy photographs. She described seeing photos of what looked like Kennedy's body, cleaned up, with a hole in the back of the head, and a defect on the front of the neck. She described the throat wound as appearing to be smaller than the official length of the tracheotomy - about the end of a thumb in size (Spencer's 12/13/1996 interview by the ARRB [audio]; [Spencer's ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]; [Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence by William Law](#); [In The Eye Of History by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer](#)). In Spencer's deposition on 6/5/1997, after being shown the official autopsy photographs, she indicated that she could not recognize them, and also mentioned that she had seen some of the leaked autopsy photos published in books ([Transcript](#) [text] [audio]). Spencer said that in the images she remembered seeing at the Photographic Center shortly after the assassination, she didn't think there were any human figures besides Kennedy, and no rulers (Spencer's 12/13/1996 interview by the ARRB [audio]; [Spencer's ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]). She also described at least one image with a brain displayed next to the body ([Spencer's ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]; [Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence by William Law](#); [In The Eye Of History by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer](#)). Spencer suggested that the pictures she saw looked like they may have been snapped during the cosmetic restoration of the body ([ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]), which took place after the autopsy and before the burial. Officially, there were no pictures of the body known to have taken during or after the restoration, which was performed in the same room as the autopsy. The current official photographs show Kennedy with an open skull cavity, open throat defect, and no visible incision made for opening the chest. In Sandra Spencer's first 12/13/1996 interview for the ARRB, indicated that she remembered seeing the post-mortem photographs on Saturday 11/23/1963 ([Audio](#); [ARRB MD 233, ARRB report on 12/13/1996 interview](#)), but in her deposition, she said that she couldn't recall an exact date, but her description of the rest of the day matches Sunday 11/24/1963 - with her watching people gather to watch JFK's casket being escorted from the White House to the Capitol building ([ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]). Spencer said that on the same day she saw the post-mortem photos, she was also working on making copies of prayer cards to be handed out at the funeral (ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 [audio]; [ARRB MD 233, ARRB report on 12/13/1996 interview](#); [ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]) - the funeral which took place on Monday 11/25/1963. Spencer said that she remembered being given the film by a government agent possibly named "Fox" (ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 [audio]; [ARRB MD 233, ARRB report on 12/13/1996 interview of Spencer](#); [ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]; [Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence by William Law](#); [In The Eye Of History by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer](#)), who told her it was from President Kennedy's autopsy in Bethesda ([Spencer's ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997](#) [text] [audio]). According to official records, Secret Service agent James K. Fox was involved in the handling of autopsy photos at the NPC, as directed by Robert I. Bouck, Secret Service Special Agent in Charge of the Protective Research Section ([ARRB MD 121, 2/16/1967 statement by James Fox](#); [ARRB MD 122, Feb. 1967 joint statement signed by Roy Kellerman, Robert Bouck, Edith Duncan, James](#)

Fox, and Thomas J. Kelley; HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36, Medical Panel Report, Section III. *Chain of Custody of the Materials Acquired During the Autopsy* [text]; ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, *Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays* by Doug Horne). Bouck reportedly acquired the undeveloped film from the autopsy on 11/23/1963, given to him by Roy Kellerman (ARRB MD 122, Feb. 1967 joint statement signed by Roy Kellerman, Robert Bouck, Edith Duncan, James Fox, and Thomas J. Kelley; HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36, Medical Panel Report, Section III. *Chain of Custody of the Materials Acquired During the Autopsy* [text]; ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, *Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays* by Doug Horne), the Secret Service agent who rode in the right-front passenger seat of the Presidential Limousine (Warren Commission Report, p. 45, Chapter 2: *The Assassination, ORGANIZATION OF THE MOTORCADE* [link 2] [link 3]), and who attended the autopsy. As reported, the x-rays and camera film from the autopsy were immediately handed over to Agent Kellerman (ARRB MD 78, 11/22/1963 receipt for autopsy photos from J. H. Stover to Roy Kellerman; ARRB MD 79, 11/22/1963 retyped receipt for autopsy photos from Stover to Kellerman; ARRB MD 190, 11/22/1963 receipt for autopsy x-rays from John Ebersole to Roy Kellerman; ARRB MD 191, 11/22/1963 retyped receipt from Ebersole to Kellerman, certified to be a true copy and signed by J. H. Stover and C. B. Galloway; WC Vol. 17, pp. 30-44, CE 397, handwritten autopsy protocol; WC D 77, typed autopsy protocol [text]; WC D 7, pp. 280-285, Sibert and O'Neill's FBI report on the autopsy, 11/26/1963; WC Vol. 18, pp. 724-727, Kellerman's 11/29/1963 statement [text]; ARRB MD 122, Feb. 1967 joint statement signed by Roy Kellerman, Robert Bouck, Edith Duncan, James Fox, and Thomas J. Kelley; HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36, Medical Panel Report, Section III. *Chain of Custody of the Materials Acquired During the Autopsy* [text]; ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, *Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays* by Doug Horne). According to the earliest surviving records, the undeveloped film wasn't sent to the NPC until on or around 11/27/1963, and then, on or around 12/9/1963, prints were made from the film at the NPC (ARRB MD 122, Feb. 1967 joint statement signed by Roy Kellerman, Robert Bouck, Edith Duncan, James Fox, and Thomas J. Kelley; HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36, Medical Panel Report, Section III. *Chain of Custody of the Materials Acquired During the Autopsy* [text]; ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, *Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays* by Doug Horne). But Sandra Spencer only described one visit with the autopsy photos, with both film and prints being processed on the same occasion, on her earlier given date of 11/23/1963-11/24/1964 (Spencer's 12/13/1996 interview by the ARRB [audio]; Spencer's ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 [text] [audio]; Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, *New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence* by William Law; *In The Eye Of History* by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer). In Spencer's 12/13/1996 interview, she said that she was given three or four film holders, which held two frames of film each and thus contained between six to eight frames, all color negatives, 4 X 5 inches in size, and that a set of 8 X 10 inch test prints were made for color correction, followed by a second set of corrected prints being made (Audio). In her deposition, she said that she remembered four or five film holders (ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 [text] [audio]). Spencer reportedly told William Law that there were four holders (Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, *New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence* by William Law; *In The Eye Of History* by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer). The frames of film in the official autopsy collection, not including the frames from the later brain examination, are counted as follows: eighteen 4 X 5 inch black and white negatives, nineteen 4 X 5 inch color positive transparencies, twenty 4 X 5 inch color negatives which are duplicates made from the positive transparencies, as well as one roll of 120 Kodak Ektachrome E3 color negative film (ARRB MD 95, NARA Document-Annual Inspection of Kennedy Autopsy Material dated January 19, 1996 (attached to cover letter forwarding same to ARRB on March 15, 1996); ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, *Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays* by Doug Horne), which was originally thought to have been spoiled by exposure to light, until it was later reported that three frames from the roll actually show very faint images of what appears to be Kennedy's body laying on a table (*A Review at the National Archives of the ARRB enhancements of*

[the exposed roll of 120 Ektachrome E3 film from the JFK autopsy by Randolph Robertson M.D., Nov. 2015](#)). Also possibly included in the non-brain category are five 4 X 5 inch unexposed but developed black and white negatives, as well as two frames of 4 X 5 inch unexposed Ektachrome color film, one developed and one not ([ARRB MD 95, NARA Document-Annual Inspection of Kennedy Autopsy Material dated January 19, 1996 \(attached to cover letter forwarding same to ARRB on March 15, 1996\)](#); [ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays by Doug Horne](#)). Saundra Spencer said that she only recalled seeing color negative film of the body, no black and white or color positive film ([ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 \[audio\]](#); [ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 \[text\] \[audio\]](#)). This is despite the fact that the color negatives in the official collection are supposed to be copies made from the color positives, as it is easier to make prints from negatives ([Reclaiming History by Vincent Bugliosi, 2007, Endnotes, Kennedy's Autopsy and the Gunshot Wounds to Kennedy and Connally](#)). Spencer didn't mention having access to any equipment which could have been used to copy an image from a positive onto a negative, and she even said that she didn't think her section of the NPC was capable of developing color positives. As she explained, the White House Laboratory was one of multiple rooms situated in the Naval Photographic Center, and the building had another room which had equipment capable of developing color positive transparencies, but she didn't think that room was used, as it was not occupied on the day described ([ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 \[audio\]](#); [ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 \[text\] \[audio\]](#)). Spencer said, in her deposition, that there were different occasions when she personally used those facilities to process color positives. Spencer also said that the Kennedy photos were developed using the “*color negative C-22 process*”, and that an “*internegative cannot be processed C-22*” – an internegative is a piece of negative film with an image copied from another piece of film. When asked “*So that you are certain then that they were not internegatives that you developed?*”, Spencer replied “*No, they were original*”. Spencer also took issue with the Kodak logo on the prints of the official autopsy photos, saying that they looked smaller than the logo on the prints she remembered having worked with in 1963. She provided a sample print from her possession ([ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 \[text\] \[audio\]](#)), but, as Doug Horne reported, “*Her comments about the watermark were indicated to be in error later when Kodak examined her print and compared it with other paper from 1963*” ([Educationforum.ipbhost.com, comment 69253 \[link 2\]](#)).

The story of Saundra Spencer relates to one of many issues in the chain of custody for the official autopsy photographs – there is no clear identification for who developed the film and made the prints at the Naval Photographic Center. There are at least 4 potential candidates for who could have done the hands-on processing there – besides Saundra Spencer and James Fox, there is U.S. Navy Lieutenant j.g. Vincent Madonia, White House photographer Robert Knudsen, and NPC employee Carol Ann Bonito. There doesn't seem to be any single definitive account. There is also a lack of information on how the color negative film in the official collection was duplicated from the color positive film. The HSCA tried publishing a report on the chain of custody for the autopsy materials ([HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36 \[text\]](#)), but it was not very detailed, and more information came afterwards.

The earliest known records on the photos' chain of custody are less than desirable. There seems to have been at least two relevant documents, now missing, only known because they were labeled in a 4/26/1965 receipt, written by Dr. George Burkley for the transfer of custody for autopsy materials to JFK's former personal secretary Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln - “*Office Memorandum from James K. Fox to SAIC Bouck Nov. 29, 1963, co Spencer concerning the processing of film in the presence of Lt. (jg) V. Madonia, USN (orig. & 2 ccs)*”, “*Orig. memo from Lt. Madonia to J.K. Fox, U.S. Secret Service, White House, Special Officer, dated Nov. 29, 1963, concerning receipt of certain films and prints and the processing thereof (Orig. & 1 cc)*” ([ARRB MD 70](#)). Later in 1967, more documents were created attempting to explain where the photographs came from. It is not clear if this information was based on earlier documents, or just their later recollections. A memo from James Fox, dated 2/16/1967, reads “*I*

have been asked to furnish certain information concerning my participation in the handling and processing of photographic negatives and positives made during the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy. At this time, I have no way of positively determining the dates and times I handled the negatives and positives. To the best of my recollection, the following information is correct: On November 27th, 1963, I was instructed by my supervisor, SAIC Robert I. Bouck, Protective Research Section, to make arrangements with the Naval Processing Center located in Anacostia to have processed both black and white negatives and color positives made during the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy at the Bethesda Naval Hospital. On the same date I proceeded to the Naval Processing Center, Anacostia, accompanied by Chief Robert L. Knudsen, Mrs. Kennedy's personal photographer. Negatives and positives were processed the same day and returned to SAIC Bouck, November 27, 1963. On December 9th, 1963, I was instructed by SAIC Bouck, to have 8" x 10" color prints made from the color positives and I again proceeded to the Naval Processing Center with Chief Robert L. Knudsen where several photographs were made under my personal supervision. I returned them to SAIC Bouck at approximately 5:45 p.m., December 9, 1963" (ARRB MD 121). This is not a clear identification for who developed the film, and not a clear identification who made the color prints. It does not explain how the images on the positives were copied over to negatives. There is no mention of black and white prints, only prints "made from color positives", even though the prints in the official collection were supposed to have been made from the negatives. A 2/23/1967 statement, signed by Roy Kellerman, Fox, Bouck, Bouck's secretary Edith Duncan, and Thomas J. Kelley of the Secret Service, reads "(2) On or about November 27, Bouck handed the photographic film to James K. Fox, U.S. Secret Service, and instructed Fox to take the photographic film to the U.S. Navy Photographic Laboratory. (3) Fox took the photographic film to the U.S. Navy Photographic Laboratory on or about November 27, 1963. The black and white film was processed, black and white negatives were developed, and color positives were made from the colored film. The processing and development was done by Lt. V. Madonia, U.S. Navy, at the laboratory. During the processing and development, Fox remained with the photographic film at the laboratory and at the conclusion of the processing and development, all the photographic film which Fox had received from Bouck was returned by Fox to Bouck on or about November 27, 1963 at about 2:00 p.m."... "(5) A few days later, black and white prints were made by Fox in the Secret Service photographic laboratory. On or about December 9, 1963, at the direction of Mr. Bouck, Fox took the colored positives back to the U.S. Navy Photographic Laboratory and observed while enlarged color prints were made. All the color positives and prints were delivered to Bouck by Fox about 6:00 p.m. that same evening, at which time they were returned to the locked safe" (ARRB MD 122). Again, there is no mention of color negative film, or an acknowledgment of the prints being made from negatives with images copied over from positives. Vincent Madonia is described as if he was the one and only person who processed the film at the NPC. Fox is described as having personally made the black and white prints a "few days" later at the Secret Service laboratory, located at the Executive Office Building (EOB) in Washington, D.C. Fox is not directly credited with having developed the film at the Photographic Center, and is only said to have "observed" color prints being made there. The 2/23/1967 statement appears to have been the basis for a 5/19/1970 letter from the Secret Service's Thomas Kelley to Harold Weisberg, which said basically the same thing: "...On or about November 27, 1963, Bouck gave the photographic film to Secret Service employee, James K. Fox, who took the film to the U.S. Navy Photographic Laboratory. The black and white film was processed, black and white negatives were developed, and colored positives were made from the colored film. The processing and development was done by Lieut. V. Madonia, U.S. Navy, at the laboratory. Fox remained with the film at the laboratory and all the photographic film was returned to Mr. Bouck the same day. The processed film was placed in a combination lock-safe file; the combination was known only to two persons. A few days later, black and white prints were made by Mr. Fox in the Secret Service photographic laboratory. On or about December 9, 1963, Mr. Fox took the colored positives back to the U.S. Navy Photographic Laboratory and observed while enlarged color

prints were made. All the color positives and prints were returned by Fox at 6 p.m., the same evening and returned to the locked safe” (*Post Mortem* by Harold Weisberg, 1975, p. 274). There are more witness statements, but they came over a decade after the events described. Robert Bouck spoke to the HSCA twice – According to the report on Bouck’s 8/30/1977 interview, “Bouck said that James Fox was his photographer at the White House and believes that he processed the black and white prints (“...little snapshots...”). Bouck said “...I believe they had nothing to do with the big prints or the color ones.” Bouck said that James Fox processed one or two or several rolls of color film at another facility. He said that while there is a photo lab in the Executive Office Building it did not have color facilities and was not equipped to do large prints” ([ARRB MD 123](#)). There was officially only one roll of film from the autopsy, the main set of film comes from large format film holders ([ARRB staff memo, 5/18/1998, Doug Horne to Jeremy Gunn, Requested Lists of Information Re: All of ARRB's Medical Witnesses, and All New ARRB Medical Evidence Not Previously in JFK Collection; ARRB, 12/27/1996 letter from Jeremy Gunn to Carol A. Roberts](#)). The report on Bouck’s 8/18/1978 interview reads “Mr. Bouck recalled that he had directed Mr. James Fox, also of the Secret Service, to process the autopsy photographs. He said he wasn't certain whether or not Mr. Fox did the black and whites but believes the Secret Service facility did not have the capability for color, so he assumes that Mr. Fox had to have the color work done elsewhere. Mr. Bouck said he was given the autopsy photographic materials and x-rays by Mr. Roy Kellerman. Mr. Bouck said Mr. Kellerman told him that some of the photographic materials were not developed and Mr. Kellerman told Mr. Bouck that he wanted the photographs printed”... “Mr. Bouck does not recall receiving any specific instructions concerning the printing of the photographs or their subsequent distribution. He did say he didn't get the impression the material was to be handled like court evidence such that a very strict chain of custody had to be preserved. He did say that he and Mr. Fox were very careful with the material because of the sensitivity of the subject matter...”, “It is Mr. Bouck's present recollection that only one print of each negative was made. He believes that he simply told Mr. Fox to get the films developed and printed...”, “...He said that he could not be certain whether more prints were made when they were in Mr. Fox's custody but said that Mr. Fox never told him that the number of prints were made and he said he "would trust Fox with my own grandmother."...” ([ARRB MD 125](#)). The report on James Fox’s 8/7/1978 interview by the HSCA reads “Who developed film? He did black and white at Secret Service lab. Color was done at Naval Processing Center---recalls Lt. Madonna (he wrote memo on it.)---White House photographer [Robert L. Knudsen] was in drying room. He (Fox) checked and there was film on each side of color film holders. (some black+white missing) Negatives put in files 4-5 days.---Bouck then ordered him to have prints made. He + Knudsen did it. Two women in drying room passed out when came through. He did not help Knudsen put prints in holders. Recalls one or two sets of prints being turned over to Bouck. (It was four years after assassination that he was asked for statement.) Burkley told Fox to have prints made up, he went to Bouck for okay. He said fine but would need special arrangement for color. Knudsen not there when black and white done. No metal probes present; doctors were taking measurements, ruler and hands visible in autopsy photos” ([ARRB MD 124](#)). Again, the names of Vincent Madonia and Robert Knudsen show up, but with a less than precise description of what their roles were. Some have suggested that the “two women” might fit the description of Sandra Spencer and Carol Ann Bonito ([Reclaiming History](#) by Vincent Bugliosi, 2007, Endnotes, *Kennedy's Autopsy and the Gunshot Wounds to Kennedy and Connally*; *JFK: From Parkland to Bethesda* by Vincent Palamara, 2015), in which case Fox’s statement might conflict with Spencer and her later description of images that were not as gruesome as the official photographs. Spencer never recalled anything like that, and she said that she had previous experience with photographs of gunshot wounds (Spencer’s 12/13/1996 interview by the ARRB [[audio](#)]). James Fox passed away in 1987 (*JFK: From Parkland to Bethesda* by Vincent Palamara, 2015).

It may be possible to argue against the general credibility of James Fox and Robert Bouck, which in turn raises further question to the photos' authenticity. Fox was reportedly the secret owner of several Kennedy autopsy photos, which were shared with Mark Crouch and David Lifton. Both Crouch and Lifton would openly admit their role in leaking the Fox set (*Best Evidence* by David Lifton, 1992 edition, *Afterword* [[link](#)]; *High Treason 2* by Harrison Livingstone, 1992 [[link 2](#)]; *Killing The Truth* by Harrison Livingstone, 1993). A 2014 story from the National Enquirer told of an alleged audio tape involving Fox and/or Crouch offering to sell the photographs to a reporter ([National Enquirer, 11/18/2014, EXCLUSIVE! JFK: BY THE SECRET SERVICE BETRAYED!](#)). The "Fox" collection appears to consist of only black and white images ([Kennedy Autopsy Photographs Research Video #1, 1991 film by Mark Crouch](#) [[link 2](#)]), which do basically match the images in the official collection, except that they are cropped, and so they appear to be photographs of photographs (*The JFK Medical Coverup*, 2021 presentation by Doug Horne [[video, 38:08](#)]). It may never be absolutely known how Fox came to acquire these pictures - Harold Weisberg wrote in a personal letter, dated 8/6/1991, "*There are several parts of Crouch's letter to Rich that I do not believe*"... "*I do not believe that Bouck told Fox to make prints of this film for each of them*" ([Link](#) [[link 2](#)] [[link 3](#)]). According to Weisberg's notes on a 10/2/1991 phone call with Mark Crouch "*Fox did say that SA Robert Bouck did tell him to make a set of prints for himself for historic purposes, which I still have trouble believing*" ([Harold Weisberg Archive, jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg Subject Index Files/L Disk/Livingstone Harrison Edward/Item 008](#) [[link 2](#)]). Harrison Livingstone wrote in his 1992 book *High Treason 2*, citing a 11/16/1990 interview his colleague Richard Waybright did with Bouck, "*Robert Bouck, the former head of the Secret Service, denies having given permission to James K. Fox to make a set of the autopsy pictures for himself*" (*High Treason 2* by Harrison Livingstone, 1992, p. 327, Chapter 15. *The Autopsy Photographs and Evidence of Forgery*). David Lifton, in the afterward to the 1992 edition of his book *Best Evidence*, wrote of personally meeting James Fox. Fox, according to Lifton, said that he acquired his copies after being told by Roy Kellerman "*Here, make a set of these for yourself. They'll be history someday*" (*Best Evidence* by David Lifton, 1992 edition, *Afterword* [[link](#)]). Mark Crouch wrote in a 2/5/1993 affidavit that Fox had claimed Bouck handed him a stack of autopsy negatives and told him "*here... make a set of these for me and a set for yourself. They'll be history someday*" - the same language Lifton reported that Fox used in reference to Kellerman, not Bouck. Crouch stated that he thought the version with Bouck was correct because "*I am sure I spoke to Jim Fox at least a hundred times about this, and Lifton spoke to him once*", "*Since Lifton was recording the conversation when he spoke to Fox, I guess that's what Fox said on the tape but it was simply because Lifton was talking to him late in the afternoon when he spoke to Fox, I guess that's what Fox said on the tape but it was simply because Lifton was talking to him late in the afternoon when he was more likely to get things mixed up which in fact he did that day when I introduced him to Lifton*". Crouch goes on, as summarized in Harrison Livingstone's 1993 book *Killing The Truth*, to make the point that "*Fox was past seventy, unwell, and exhausted. Crouch has stated that he has tried many times to get Lifton to correct this historical inaccuracy, published in Best Evidence*", but as Crouch said, "*he (Lifton) just shrugs*" (*Killing The Truth* by Harrison Livingstone, 1993, pp. 270-271, Chapter 9. *The Autopsy Photographs*). A secret, extra set of copies would suggest that some level of dishonesty was involved in the photos' handling. And one guilty party may be less likely to raise alarm at the improper behavior of others. Mark Crouch reported that James Fox described Robert Bouck taking a number of autopsy pictures and burning them. Crouch wrote in a letter dated 9/9/1990 "***THERE IS OTHER UNRELEASED EVIDENCE THAT SUGGESTS THIS. IN MANY TALKS WITH FOX HE ONCE SAID, IN REFERENCE TO THE PHOTOS, "OH THEY (THE SECRET SERVICE) BURNED A SAFE FULL OF THIS STUFF" REFERRING TO THE AUTOPSY PHOTOS. HE MADE THIS STATEMENT NO LESS THAN 3 TIMES OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL MONTHS***" ([Link](#)). Crouch wrote in a letter dated 3/17/1991 that Fox had told him "*Look, what difference would it make if I had stolen them? ... We burned a safe full of that shit*". Crouch continued: "*Fox was saying that he didn't steal the pictures, but*

even if he had, he would have been taking something that the government was going to destroy. All he ever said about the burn party was that it occurred several days after he was allowed to copy the black-and-white pictures (around December 6, 1963). His 'boss' called him into the office where the Secret Service safe was located. Fox stated that they got two wastepaper baskets and filled them up with autopsy pictures and possibly X-rays from the safe". On whether Fox was telling the truth, Crouch wrote "Yes, absolutely. Jim Fox may have confused people at times but he never made up anything that I can determine. I asked him why he remembered the burn party and his answer was so logical. He remembered the burn party because the very next day he was told to take some negatives of the autopsy pictures back to the Naval Photo Lab at Anacostia and make additional prints.... The boss comes to him one night and they burn a bunch of photos and the very next day he has to make more. I think the burn party was a cover-up. When you look at Robert Bouck's testimony to the House Select Committee it coincides almost perfectly with Fox's recollections" ([Killing The Truth by Harrison Livingstone, 1993](#), pp. 277-278, Chapter 9. [The Autopsy Photographs](#)). Harold Weisberg's notes on a 10/2/1991 phone call with Mark Crouch read, "Fox was explicit and angry in stating that Bouck told him to collect a buschel-basket of Secret Service autopsy materials, not only pictures, and taking them to the White House burn room and on these instructions burning them. I do not recall the criticism, directed or implied, that led to what Crouch described as an outburst. Crouch made notes that, among other things, he promised to send me. As we talked about this, it occurred to me that the date given 12/5/63, coincides with the completion of the FBI five-volume reported ordered by LBJ, CD 1, and that it is possible this destruction could have been to eliminate what could be inconsistent with that report. In this regard, I have always believed that the number of pictures taken during the autopsy and before it began that are supposed to be all of them is quite insufficient. (Maybe it was 12/7.)" ([Harold Weisberg Archive, jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg Subject Index Files/L Disk/Livingstone Harrison Edward/Item 008 \[link 2\]](#)). [High Treason 2](#) reported "Mark Crouch tells us that on the night of December 6 or 7, 1963, just two weeks after President Kennedy was murdered, Robert Bouck went through his safe in the presence of James K. Fox, another Secret Service agent, and burned much of the photographic and X-ray evidence in the assassination of President Kennedy. If true, this was a great crime, but Bouck denies that it ever happened. Crouch says that Fox told him that Bouck burned the materials because of fear that some of the evidence might conflict with what he thought Life magazine was about to publish the next day by way of frames from the Zapruder film..." ([High Treason 2 by Harrison Livingstone, 1992](#), p. 322, Chapter 15. [The Autopsy Photographs and Evidence of Forgery \[link 2\]](#)). A Historian named Michael Kurtz claimed to have interviewed, among others, Roy Kellerman, William Greer, and Robert Bouck of the Secret Service ([Kurtz, The JFK Assassination Debates: Lone Gunman versus Conspiracy, 2006](#)). Kurtz authored the 1982 book [Crime of the Century: The Kennedy Assassination from a Historian's Perspective](#) ([Link](#)), and the 2006 book [The JFK Assassination Debates: Lone Gunman versus Conspiracy](#) ([Link](#)). In the later book, Kurtz reported on his alleged interviews with Kellerman and Greer on 1/16/1984, and 10/13/1989 interview with Bouck: "...I asked Roy Kellerman why he confiscated the photographs and x-rays at Bethesda, and he replied that he simply followed orders from Bouck. When I asked Bouck why he ordered Kellerman to confiscate the materials, Bouck stated that his boss, Secret Service director James Rowley, had received strict instructions from Robert Kennedy to maintain custody over the materials. Both Bouck and Kellerman grew indignant when I asked them what authority Robert Kennedy held over the Secret Service, claiming that because Kennedy was the slain president's brother, he possessed legal jurisdiction over the autopsy evidence. When I asked Bouck about the discrepancies between the medical reports and the contents of the photographs, he hesitated, then stated, in quite cautious tones, that all of the autopsy materials have never surfaced, that the ones in the extant collection in the National Archives consisted only of those that tended to support the lone assassin thesis. This startling revelation implied that other autopsy materials that disproved that thesis did exist. Agents Kellerman and Greer both agreed with this hypothesis. Both men told me that they had seen autopsy photographs

showing the exit wound in the back of President Kennedy's head, although they had no idea of the ultimate disposition of these photographs..." ([Link](#)). But researcher Pat Speer argued, in his online book *A New Perspective on the Kennedy Assassination*, that Michael Kurtz was guilty of fabricating information, including witnesses statements ([Link](#)). Bouck spoke to the ARRB on 4/30/1996. The interview report simply reaffirms that Fox was directed to bring the pictures to the NPC. Bouck indicated that he maintained custody of the photos by request from Dr. George Burkley, and that it was Burkley who suggested the Navy lab in Anacostia for where they should be processed. Also, *"Toward the end of the interview Mr. Bouck stated that his personal opinion was that although Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin, he did feel that there was a conspiracy. Mr. Kelley had stated to him that there were many leads which were promising, but that they all eventually led to dead ends..."* ([ARRB MD 258](#)).

There may be another issue with the credibility of James Fox, Robert Bouck, and others involved in the processing of the autopsy photos – A lot of information suggests there were even more unauthorized copies of autopsy pictures, and viewings of pictures, at the time of the Warren Commission. Eventually, key figures like Arlen Specter and Earl Warren would confess to having seen one or more images purported to be autopsy photos, but without explaining an origin for the images they were shown. According to the transcript of the Warren Commission's executive session on 1/21/1964, Commission member John J. McCloy said *"Let me ask you about this raw material business that is here. What does it consist of? Does it consist of the raw material of the autopsy? They talk about the colored photographs of the President's body -- do we have those?"*, to which Chief Counsel J. Lee Rankin replied: *"Yes, it is part of it, a small part of it"*, McCloy: *"Are they here?"* Rankin: *"Yes. But we don't have the minutes of the autopsy, and we asked for that..."* ([Link](#) [link 2](#)). It is not completely clear whether Rankin was meaning to say that the Commission had access to the autopsy photographs, or merely documents related to the autopsy. During the Commission's executive session on 1/27/1964, J. Lee Rankin stated *"...it seems quite apparent now, since we have the picture of where the bullet entered in the back, that the bullet entered below the shoulder blade to the right of the backbone, which is below the place where the picture shows the bullet came out in the neckband of the shirt in front..."* ([Transcript](#) [link 2](#)). Many readers have interpreted this passage as a reference to the autopsy photos (*Post Mortem* by Harold Weisberg, 1975, p. 307, 28. *"An Original and Six Pink Copies"*; *Medicolegal Investigation of the President John F. Kennedy Murder* by Charles G. Wilber, 1978, p. 139, Chapter 6. *The Presidential Commission And Its Conclusions* [link 2](#); *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: A Comprehensive Historical and Legal Bibliography, 1963-1979* by Delloyd J. Guth and David R. Wrone, 1980, Introduction, xxix; *High Treason* by Robert Groden and Harrison Livingstone, 1989, Part II: *The Medical Evidence*, 5. *The Autopsy and the Autopsy Photographs* [link](#); *JFK: The Book of the Film: The Documented Screenplay*, Screenplay by Oliver Stone and Zachary Sklar, 1992, p. 158; [Kennedysandking.com](#), 12/18/2013, Howard P. Willens, *History Will Prove Us Right* by Martin Hay), but others have suggested that Rankin was simply referring to the face sheet diagram or the photographs of the clothing ([David Von Pein](#), *DVP's JFK Archives*, *JFK ASSASSINATION ARGUMENTS (PART 1190)*). The Rydberg drawings were not made by this point ([ARRB electronic records](#), *ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne*, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 *memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman*, *Specter/Warren Commission Milestones*, *Final Revision: July 29, 1998*). A Warren Commission memo, dated 4/16/1964 and addressed from Arlen Specter to J. Lee Rankin, subject title *"Remaining Work in Area 1"*, reads *"2. Obtain further medical evidence"*, including *"a. Photographs and x-rays of the autopsy should be examined to make certain of the accuracy of the artist's drawings of President Kennedy's wounds"* ([Link](#)). In a 4/30/1964 memo from Specter to Rankin, titled *"autopsy photographs and x-rays of President John F. Kennedy"*, it opens with *"In my opinion it is indispensable that we obtain the photographs and x-rays of President Kennedy's autopsy..."*, *"Someone from the Commission should review the films to corroborate the autopsy*

surgeons' testimony...”, then goes on to list multiple reasons for holding this opinion, including “The Commission should determine with certainty that there are no major variations between the films and the artist’s drawings. Commission Exhibits Nos. 385, 386, and 388 were made from the recollections of the autopsy surgeons as told to the artist. Some day someone may compare the films with the artist’s drawings and find a significant error which might substantially affect the essential testimony and the Commission’s conclusions. In any event, the Commission should not rely on hazy recollections, especially in view of the statement in the autopsy report (Commission Exhibit #387) that: “The complexity of those fractures and the fragments thus produced tax satisfactory verbal description and are better appreciated in the photographs and roentgenograms which are prepared.””. The memo concludes by referencing the opinions of Robert F. Kennedy - “When Inspector Kelly talked to Attorney General Kennedy, he most probably did not fully understand all the reasons for viewing the films. According to Inspector Kelly, the Attorney General did not categorically decline to make them available, but only wanted to be satisfied that they were really necessary. I suggest that the Commission transmit to the Attorney General its reasons for wanting the films and the assurances that they will be viewed only by the absolute minimum number of people from the Commission for the sole purpose of corroborating (or correcting) the artist’s drawings, with the film not to become a part of the Commission’s records” (Link [link 2] [link 3]). The Commission’s executive session on 4/30/1964 included talk of potentially viewing the autopsy pictures in the future. Rankin stated “The staff feels that we should have some member of the Commission examine those pictures...”, “...We also have some drawings of President Kennedy which are reconstructions by the men that participated in the autopsy. And these men have not seen these pictures of the autopsy, but they had these drawings made, and we don’t know whether these drawings conform to the pictures of the autopsy or not. Now I thought we could avoid having these pictures, possibly avoid these pictures being a part of the record, because the family has a strong feeling about them, and I think we should respect it insofar as can possibly be done, and carry out the work of the Commission—because they don’t want the President to be remembered in connection with those pictures. That is their basic thought. I know that the Commission would like to respect that and not have them in any way become a part of the records which the public would get to see. But I do feel that a doctor and some member of the Commission should examine them sufficiently so that they could report to the Commission that there is nothing inconsistent with the other findings in connection with the matter in those pictures. In that way we can avoid any question that we have passed anything up that the Commission should know or that we haven’t tried to take advantage of information that should be available to us”. Commission member Allen Dulles responded “Would the people who made the pictures have access to these photographs—because they would be the ones to tell, as to whether the pictures were consistent with the drawings they made?”, to which Rankin said “Well, they were made, as I understand it, under the supervision of the doctors conducting the autopsy. And so they just have never been developed because of the family’s wishes. And I think that the Attorney General would make them available now—although they were denied to us before because he said that he didn’t think there was a sufficient showing of our need. But upon a showing now, I think that he would recognize the need and permit that limited examination. And then I feel that in dealing with the Attorney General, however, we should make it plain to him that if the member of the Commission who examines them, with the doctor, feels the whole Commission should see them, that there would be that reservation—because I don’t know what might appear to some member of the Commission or the doctor in connection with them”. During the meeting, Chief Justice Earl Warren said “Well, I think you can work that out, Lee, to do that, but without putting those pictures in our record. We don’t want those in our record”, to which McCloy said “Certainly not”. Warren: “It would make it a morbid thing for all time to come”, Rankin: “Is that effort to proceed in that manner, without having them in the record, and having an examination by the doctor and one of the members of the Commission satisfactory then?”, Warren: “Only for verification purposes. Yes, I think that would be all”, Dulles: “By the doctor and a member of the Commission”, McCloy: “Oh yes, you would need a

doctor present to interpret it to you” ([Transcript \[link 2\]](#)). In a 5/12/1964 memo from Specter to Rankin, subject title “*Examination of Autopsy Photographs and X-rays of President Kennedy*”, it reads “*When the autopsy photographs and x-rays are examined...*” - Specter’s words imply certainty that the pictures would be examined in the future. After listing a number of issues that may be resolved by such an examination, the memo continues “*I suggest that we have a court reporter present so that we may examine Dr. Humes after the x-rays and photographs are reviewed to put on the record: 1. Any changes in his testimony or theories required by a review of the x-rays and films, and 2. Corroboration of the portions or all of his prior testimony which may be confirmed by viewing the photographs and X-rays...*” ([Link \[link 2\]](#) [\[link 3\]](#)). There is no such record from this time of Humes examining the pictures, or being questioned on the basis of them. Specter would again advocate for fuller access to the pictures, in his 5/12/1964 memo to Rankin titled “*Agenda for On-The-Site Tests at Dallas*”, which suggests that the Commission “*Construct a dummy with the measurements of the President’s body so that it may be positioned in the precise location President Kennedy sat. Inspector Malley of the FBI is arranging to have such a dummy prepared. I suggest that Commander Humes mark the point of entrance of the head wound when he reviews the x-rays and photographs of the autopsy*”... “*Under your supervision, this project should be handled by the same people who worked on these problems during the numerous viewing of the films and slides: 1. Inspector James R. Malley, Inspector Tom Kelley, Inspector Leo Gauthier, SA Lyndal L. Shaneyfelt and SA John Joe Howlett should be present. 2. Norman Redlich and I should be stationed interchangeably at the window on and on the street*” ([Link](#)). There is a 4/16/1964 memo by Gerald Behn of the Secret Service, titled *Appearance Before the President’s Commission*, which reads “*The Commission has also requested our cooperation in having available to the Commission two x-ray viewing boxes at 9:00 am, on April 21, 1964. Arrangements have been made by Inspector Kelley with Commander Boswell at the Bethesda Naval Hospital to make these viewing boxes available to a representative of this Service on Monday, April 20, 1964. Inspector Kelley has requested SA Morgan Gies to make the necessary arrangements for picking these boxes up on April 20, delivering them to the Commission at 200 Maryland Avenue, N. E., Washington, D. C. (4th floor of the VFW Building) in the afternoon of April 20, returning them to the Bethesda Naval Hospital at the conclusion of the hearings on April 21*” ([Link](#)). Researcher Howard Roffman, however, would write that he thought this memo was referring to the X-rays of John Connally, not Kennedy ([MEMO: re: Secret Service 4/16/66 memo on X-ray viewing boxes by Howard Roffman to Harold Weisberg, 5/22/1977](#)). In a 10/7/1966 memo from the FBI’s Alex Rosen to Cartha DeLoach, which attempted to refute talk of a conspiracy, it reads “*...the FBI was precluded from disclosing in its preliminary report to the Commission (because of the desires of the Kennedy family) any information concerning the actual autopsy report...*”, “*We have for some time been checking to find the specific basis upon which the statement has been made in various FBI memoranda (example attached) that the Kennedy family specifically asked that the autopsy report not be released. The fact is that Secret Service specifically claims that Bobby Kennedy had gotten in touch with that agency and had given specific instructions that the autopsy report, as well as photographs, were not to be released. Secret Service has advised that no information from the autopsy was released by that agency until it was turned over to the Warren Commission on 12-23-63. We, therefore, have a basis for any statements made by FBI representatives that the Kennedy family specifically requested that the autopsy report was not to be released*” ([ARRB MD 169](#)). This account of the family’s wishes sounds somewhat different from the 4/30/1964 Warren Commission memo which stated “*...the Attorney General did not categorically decline to make them available, but only wanted to be satisfied that they were really necessary...*” ([Link \[link 2\]](#) [\[link 3\]](#)). In 1966, history professor Jacob Cohen received a letter from David C. Acheson, special assistant in the United States Secretary of the Treasury, which stated that the “*X-ray films were made available to the Commission and were in fact used in briefing the Commission staff on the autopsy procedures and results*”. Cohen reported that, during an interview with Arlen Specter on 6/13/1966, Specter told him that, referring to the photo graphs and x-rays, “*he had not seen any of these documents, and that when*

he asked Justice Warren for them Warren said that the commission had decided “not to press the matter.”” ([Nation, 7/11/1966, What the Warren Report Omits: The Vital Documents by Jacob Cohen \[link 2\]](#)). Arlen Specter was asked during a 6/28/1966 interview by researcher Gaeton Fonzi “*Did you see the x-rays yourself?*”, to which Specter replied “No”. When asked “*You relied strictly on testimonies of Finck and Humes?*”, Specter said “*Boswell and Humes*”. Then, when asked “*Did you ask to see the x-rays and photographs?*”, Specter chuckled while answering “*Did I ask to see the x-rays and photographs? Ahh- ahh- That question was- was- was considered by- by me, and the Commission decided not to press for the x-rays and photographs. Have I dodged your question? Yes, I’ve dodged your question*”, then after a long pause, Specter interrupted his interviewer and said “*I don’t want to dodge your questions - I don’t want to say that I dodged your question, I don’t want to dodge your question. As the assistant counsel in that area, I was interested in seeing the photographs and x-rays. As I was interested in every conceivable bit of evidence which would have any line on the issue of direction of the bullet. The Commission considered whether the x-rays and photographs should be put into the record and should be examined by the Commission’s staff, and the Commission reached the conclusion that it was not necessary, and the reason for the Commission’s decision was based, to the best of my understanding, on the considerations of taste and respect for the dead President. I think there were significant family wishes which were weighed by the Commission in deciding whether it was necessary to see the photographs and the x-rays in order to come to it’s conclusions. I- I specifically leave out my personal attitude on the subject because I don’t think it’s really a main factor*” ([Audio \[transcript\]](#)). There is a 6/14/1966 memo by the Treasury Department’s Robert E. Jordan, III, titled “*Responding to Inquiries Concerning Autopsy Films*”, which states “*The X-ray films were used for the briefing of the Warren Commission’s staff on the autopsy procedure and results*” ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). Another memo with similar language was given to Paul Hoch on 6/21/1966 by the Secret Service’s Jack Warner: “*Inquiries have been received concerning the handling and disposition by the Secret Service of certain X-ray and photographic films relating to the autopsy performed at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, in connection with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The X-ray films were used for the briefing of the Warren Commission’s staff on the autopsy procedure and results...*” ([Post Mortem by Harold Weisberg, 1975, p. 555, Appendix; Harold Weisberg Archive, jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg Subject Index Files/A Disk/Autopsy JFK Pictures and X-rays Aguilar and Weisberg/Item 34 \[link 2\]](#)). In the 1966 book *Inquest* by Edward Epstein, the author cited Commission Assistant counsel Francis W. H. Adams as stating that “*the FBI had color photographs of the autopsy as well*” ([Inquest by Edward Epstein, 1966, Notes, 3. Vulnerability of Facts \[link 2\]](#)) – however, Jacob Cohen the same year responded to Epstein’s information with “*his only citation for these statements is an interview with Francis W. H. Adams of the commission staff. When I called Mr. Adams to check, he told me that he did not remember talking to Epstein, did not have Epstein’s name on his calendar for July 8, 1965, the date Epstein claims the interview took place and, most important, that he had no knowledge whatsoever of whether or not the FBI had seen the autopsy and photographs*” ([Nation, 7/11/1966, What the Warren Report Omits: The Vital Documents by Jacob Cohen \[link 2\]](#)). Specter authored a 8/9/1966 letter addressed to Earl Warren, and as summarized in a 1996 ARRB staff memo addressed from Joe Freeman to Jeremy Gunn and titled “*Specter/Warren Commission Milestones*”, Specter’s letter was “*expressing his concern over the fact that the Commission never viewed the autopsy photos and x-rays and suggesting that the now-former Commissioners reconvene to do so. Specter also expresses his concern that there appears to be some doubt even as to the whereabouts of the photos and x-rays*” ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). On 8/10/1966, Edward Epstein was interviewed on Pacifica Radio, broadcast as WBAI in New York city,

New York and KPFA in Berkeley, California. Epstein said, according to notes kept by Harold Weisberg, *"I know that some lawyers on the Commission - one in particular was on the verge of tears when he found out that they wouldn't have the autopsy photographs to work from. And the reason I'm bringing this out is that this whole question of where the bullets struck the President ... could be settled in a matter of minutes, even today, by looking at the autopsy photographs..."* ([Harold Weisberg Archive, jfk.hood.edu/Collection/McKnight Working Folders/Part 2/JFKs Collar Folder 5/JFKs Collar Folder 5 23 \[link 2\]](#)). Arlen Specter was featured in a 10/10/1966 article in the *U.S. News & World Report*, and in response to the question *"Could we get to this matter of the pictures of the President's body? Have you seen the pictures?"*, Specter replied *"The complete set of pictures taken at the autopsy was not made available to me or to the Commission. I was shown one picture of the back of a body which was represented to be the back of the President, although it was not technically authenticated. It showed a hole in the position identified in the autopsy report. To the best of my knowledge, the Commission did not see any photographs or X-rays"*. Then, when Specter was asked *"Why were all the pictures not shown?"*, he said *"Because the Commission decided that it would not press for those photographs, as a matter of deference to the memory of the late President and because the Commission concluded that the photographs and X-rays were not indispensable. The photographs and X-rays would, in the thinking of the Commission, not have been crucial, because they would have served only to corroborate what the autopsy surgeons had testified to under oath, as opposed to adding any new facts for the Commission"* ([Link \[link 2\]](#)). When journalist Richard Whalen interviewed David Acheson on 11/1/1966, Acheson said according to Whalen's notes that *"at least one [staff] member of the WC saw them [autopsy photos]"*, and that one or more of the Commission members saw the photos. Whalen then spoke to Acheson again on the same day, at which time Acheson reportedly retracted what he said earlier, and that he *"could certainly resolve any question in favor of Specter's recollection"*. Whalen wrote of speaking to Acheson a third time that day: *"in reply to my question, Acheson clarifies the nature of the Secret Service custody [of the autopsy materials]. The photographs and X-rays did not ever leave the Protective Research Section of the Secret Service; they were never turned over to the Commission, although Acheson assumes that Specter must have had at least one photo briefly in his hands at some point"*. Whalen's handwritten notes also read *"Photographs examined by Specter evidently were in his custody at some point"* ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). The New York Times on 11/2/1966 reported *"As had been reported previously, the photographs and X-rays were not seen by the full commission, but Chief Justice Warren had viewed them"* ([New York Times, 11/2/1966, Autopsy Photos Put In Archives By The Kennedys by Fred P. Graham \[link 2\]](#)). A memo was sent to Earl Warren by one of his aides, informing him of the news media reporting that he had viewed the autopsy pictures, to which he refused to further comment publicly ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). When Arlen Specter spoke to Richard Whalen on 11/3/1966, he said according to Whalen's notes *"I saw one picture taken at the autopsy, which was not technically authenticated, which showed the back of a body with a bullet hole, apparently of entry, in the picture in Dallas. It was shown to me by a Secret Service man. He showed it to me then and there because he's have a chance to show it to me"*. Specter's viewing, as Whalen wrote, was *"very private and quite unofficial"*, and Specter said that he did not ask to see any photos, but that the Secret Service's Thomas J. Kelley *"presumably volunteered to show the picture to Specter and thereby set his mind at ease"*. Specter reportedly said that it was his belief that Warren himself did not view any autopsy photos ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). Whalen reportedly spoke to Kelley on 11/7/1966. As summarized in the ARRB staff memo

Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Kelley “*can't confirm or deny*” the accuracy of Specter's recollection. re: being shown the autopsy photo. Whalen relates Kelley as being unwilling to say whether or not Rankin asked him to show the photo to Specter in Dallas. Whalen cites Kelley as being “*very nervous on the phone, long pauses, trembling voice and breathing.*” (ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, *Specter/Warren Commission Milestones*, Final Revision: July 29, 1998). Whalen had a 11/8/1966 interview with Warren Commission assistant counsel Howard P. Willens. Whalen's notes on this interview, as summarized in the ARRB document *Specter/Warren Commission Milestones*, “*Whalen apparently raised the issue of Specter's admission of having seen an autopsy photo: Whalen cites Willens as stating that Rankin did not ask Kelley to show the picture to Specter. Says Willens: 'These fellows [Specter and Kelley] had close working relationships.' He adds: 'Specter, I'm sure, didn't tell you you saw a picture for certain. He just saw a picture [emphasis in original].'*” (ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, *Specter/Warren Commission Milestones*, Final Revision: July 29, 1998). The Warren Commission was criticized by its own former assistant counsel Wesley J. Liebeler, in a 11/8/1966 memorandum titled “*Autopsy Photographs and X-rays of President Kennedy*”. The memo, inspired by Liebeler's interactions with David Lifton and sent to other former Commission members, states “*It does not appear from the Commission's Record that these pictures and X-rays were ever examined by any member of the President's Commission or by any of its counsel. There is strong feeling that the Commission should have examined them in connection with its investigation. This is particularly true because of the importance of the autopsy findings in determining the number and direction of shots which struck the President*”, “*The availability of these photographs and X-rays provides an opportunity to verify the autopsy findings and the conclusions which the Commission reached on the basis of those findings*” (*Barefoot Sanders, Ramsey Clark, and the Dallas Invasion of Washington: The Later Coverup of the Medical Evidence* by Harrison E. Livingstone, 1996). Commission member Hale Boggs appeared on the 11/27/1966 edition of CBS's *Face the Nation*, where he answered the question of whether the assassination should be re-investigated: “*If the objective of the investigation is to pursue new evidence, that is one thing. If the objective is to answer some of the things that have been raised up to the present, I would say that I would have grave questions about it--except for the autopsy or x-rays. The only thing that I have seen that has been presented in all these books, essays, speeches, comments, has been the fact that the commission did not look at the x-rays of the President's body at the autopsy*”, “*Of course, the members of the commission themselves are not doctors. Looking at them, just looking at x-rays, would not prove anything for me. I don't know how to read medical x-rays. We brought before the commission the man who performed the autopsy. We examined him in great detail. Now, if it would please anyone, if it would help to clarify any doubts that may exist in the minds of objective people, then I would say that if the Attorney General or some appropriate authority wants to appoint a totally objective group--of doctors and others--to look into these x-rays, maybe it should be done. But I would try to disassociate myself from those who are making these comments for gain, for notoriety, for profit, rather than those who have legitimate suspicions in their minds*” (*New York Times*, 11/28/1966, *Warren Panel Member Suggests Independent Group Study Kennedy X-Rays* by Peter Kihss [link 2]). J. Lee Rankin replied to Liebeler's 11/8/1966 memo with a letter dated 12/1/1966 which reads “*...For myself, I am satisfied with the testimony of the doctors who performed the autopsy and whose statements, in my opinion, were the best evidence of what was seen and heard at the autopsy...*” (Link). Warren sent a 12/12/1966 letter to Rankin telling him, of his response to Liebeler, “*I think what you said was correct and in the right tone*” (ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, *Specter/Warren Commission Milestones*, Final Revision: July 29, 1998). Commission assistant counsel Albert E. Jenner Jr. appeared in a 12/23/1966 broadcast on WNYC-TV, New York City, and as summarized by Mark Lane, when a

reporter asked Jenner to discuss the autopsy photos and X-rays, Jenner said *"They were never—I'll put it this way: some members of the Commission saw both the film and the colored pictures, and the X-rays. We did not, as staff members, introduce those before the Commission at any formal hearing. We of the staff saw them ourselves"*. Lane also reported *"During a subsequent television broadcast, I confronted Jenner with the contradiction and asked him if he had in fact ever seen the photographs and X-rays. He said that he refused to answer the question", "Jenner began to summarize the proof that all the shots had originated from a sixth-floor window of the Texas School Book Depository"...* *"Immediately following that broadcast a young lady unknown to me but said by some members of the studio audience to be Jenner's daughter rushed to him and asked him if he ever seen the photographs and X-rays. Jenner urged her to be quiet, but she repeated the question. Jenner replied that he had not seen them but that he did not wish to discuss it then and there. The young lady then asked him why he had said that he had seen them. Jenner's answer was not audible"* ([A Citizen's dissent: Mark Lane replies by Mark Lane, 1968, pp. 146-147, 23: Albert E. Jenner, Jr., Esq.— On Irresponsible Authors](#)). Richard Whalen authored an article in the 1/14/1967 edition of the Saturday Evening Post, where he reported on Specter *"Just recently Specter admitted in an interview that he saw a single autopsy photograph under certain circumstances. Over the weekend of May 23-24, 1964, the commission staged, at his insistence, an elaborate reenactment of the assassination in Dallas. Specter's sole concern was to gain support for the single-bullet theory. While in Dallas, Secret Service Inspector Thomas J. Kelley, who knew about Specter's argument within the commission and perhaps sensed concealed doubts, drew him aside and privately showed him a photograph", "In the absence of the other pictures and of the autopsy doctors testifying under oath, the picture Specter saw proved little if anything"*. The article quotes Specter as saying *"I saw one picture taken at the autopsy, which was not technically authenticated", "It showed the back of a body with a bullet hole, apparently of entry, where the autopsy report said it was"* ([Link](#)). The New York Times on 11/2/1966 reported *"As had been reported previously, the photographs and X-rays were not seen by the full commission, but Chief Justice Warren had viewed them"* ([New York Times, 11/2/1966, Autopsy Photos Put In Archives By The Kennedys by Fred P. Graham \[link 2\]](#)). Follow-up reports by AP and UPI stated that Warren refused to comment ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). In the Earl Warren papers at the Library of Congress is a letter from Warren to Specter, dated 2/23/1967, which reads *"Sometime ago - in fact, so long ago that I hesitate to specify the date - you wrote me concerning the photographs and x-rays of President Kennedy made while his body was at Bethesda Naval Hospital..."*, *"Before the Commission was dissolved, I took occasion to see that these items would be preserved, but I did want to keep them from any ghastly dissemination to the distress of the Kennedy family. I felt that if they were in the Report they would be used for sordid commercial purposes, and perhaps for spite purposes. I saw them myself and they were horrible. The other members of the Commission had no desire to see them. They were satisfied with the testimony of the doctors who performed the autopsy. As a result, the pictures and x-rays were sequestered but in a matter which would guarantee production of them should it ever become a matter of official concern. I saw you on television and thought you made a very forceful explanation of some of the challenged aspects of the Report. I hope this finds you well and enjoying your work in which I am much interested. Should work or pleasure bring you to Washington, I would be happy to have a visit with you"* ([Link](#)). Specter, in response to Warren, addressed to him a letter dated 2/27/1967 which read *"I am very much assured by the contents of your letter"* ([ARRB electronic records, ARRB Electronic Files of Douglas P. Horne, Chief Analyst for Military Records, 5/1/1996 memo to Jeremy Gunn from Joe Freeman, Specter/Warren Commission Milestones, Final Revision: July 29, 1998](#)). A 6/2/1967 interview of Commission member John J. McCloy appeared on part 4 of A CBS News Inquiry: The Warren Report, aired 6/28/1967. McCloy said *"I think that if there's one thing that I would do over again, I would insist on those photographs and the X-rays having been produced before us. In the one respect, and*

only one respect there, I think we were perhaps a little over-sensitive to what we understood was the sensitivities of the Kennedy family against the production of colored photographs of the body, and so forth. But those exist. They're there. We had the best evidence in regard to that - the pathology in respect to the President's wounds...". ([Video \[transcript\]](#)). A full transcript of the interview also quoted McCloy as saying "...We had the pathologist testify -- that -- we couldn't have interpreted the X-rays, if we'd had them. But probably would have been better to have them for the sake of completeness, in view of all the to-do that occurred since. But we had the best evidence. We were completely satisfied with the -- with the doctors' testimony. And, even though we had the best evidence, perhaps, we ought to have had the photograph to do along with it. They -- they exist. They're in the archives, and, on proper arrangement, they can be seen now". When Walter Cronkite responded "What you had was the -- were the doctors -- Dr. Humes' report...", McCloy said "Doctors that conducted the autopsy. And, after all, that's the best evidence. And we were -- I was satisfied that their -- how in the world could they have distorted their testimony? They knew these pictures were around -- the X-rays were around. But that was the best evidence, what these men themselves had seen in -- in that hospital that night when the autopsy was performed". Question: "Was there any -- ever any suggestion that one independent medical examiner might take a look at the X-rays, and records to corroborate the autopsy at the time?", answer: "Well, we had -- there were a number of doctors who conducted the autopsy, all of whom we were -- were available to us. Subsequent to the -- to the publication of the report, I understand, that suggestion has been made. I have no doubt under proper arrangements at any time those could be examined. Bear in mind we don't set the rules. The Commission didn't set the rules. We are no longer in existence. We didn't set them when we were in existence. These are rules of the national archives, and they -- the government determined what is available to be exposed, and what isn't", question: "Well, isn't the contradiction to the President's order to you that you should have all the facilities you needed for this investigation?", answer: "Well, we had all the facilities we needed. We could subpoena anything we wanted. It was our own choice that didn't subpoena these -- the photographs, which were then in the hands of the Kennedy family. I say, I wish -- I don't particularly -- subpoena them. We could have gotten them. Mr. Justice Warren was talking to the Kennedy family about that at that time. I thought that we was really going to see them, but it turned out that he hadn't. But there was no limitation on our ability to go anywhere, get any documents. We had the most secret documents exposed to us" ([Link \[link 2\]](#)). John J. McCloy said during an oral history for the LBJ Library on 7/8/1969, when asked about what restrictions may have been imposed upon the Commission, "...If there was anything that the Commission didn't do that it should have done, I think it was the Commission's responsibility rather than anything that came from the Executive"... "We weren't barred from anything. The Commission did have some sensitivity as to how far it should go in terms of public exhibits. Chief Justice Warren particularly had some sensitivity about publication of some of the photographs, of the X-rays, that -- looking back on it now, I would say that some of the X-rays that were taken in connection with the autopsy should have been part of the public record. But it was with the recognition of the sensitivity of the family and the requests of the family that caused Mr. Chief Justice to lean over backwards in that connection. Later on I was sorry that we had not insisted on the full publication, or the publication at least of the X-rays. There were some colored pictures of the President's dead body that you wouldn't want to have a part of a public record in the archives, but there were some X-rays...", "...since that time another panel has looked at those X-rays, by the way, and it confirmed the fundamental conclusions of the commission" ([Transcript](#)). James Gochenaur, in a 11/4/1970 letter to Harold Weisberg describing his interactions with Secret Service agent Elmer Moore, wrote "...Then he said something that did surprise me to no end. He said he and others studied the photos of President Kennedy's head wounds and that nothing was out of the ordinary?!? He told me that the photos could not prove anything worthwhile. I asked him about having competent medico-legal personnel take a look at the photos. again, he said something to the effect, "It wouldn't prove anything". I believe that agent Moore was either lying to me or that the Warren Report statements are a

fraud as to the status of the autopsy photos. Could you make a comment on this?" ([Link](#)). In another letter from Gochenaur to Weisberg, dated 12/11/1970, it reads "After talking for some time on the value of the Mooreman Photo with Moore I asked Him why no one was allowed to view the autopsy photographs. Mr. Moore said, "I did." The following paragraph is an attempt at what Moore followed this remark with verbatim. "Lots of people saw em. Look, let me ask you something, what would prints prove anyway. They couldn't give you angles or anything like that. We looked over that rail yard, or bullets, nothing. If there were others shooting at him, where did they go? Do you know Garrison? Well, he thinks a guy popped up and hit him with a 45 from a sewer. Look, I must have seen the zapruter film a thousand times---nothing, nothing at all. We saw several movies, lots of photos, and there just isn't anything to prove from them. Pictures can't tell you as much as you seem to think." ([Link](#) [[link 2](#)]).

Weisberg wrote in his 1975 book *Post Mortem* of being personally told by Thomas J. Kelley that autopsy x-rays were shown to Commission staff, on page 275: "...Kelley confirmed to me verbally the accuracy of the previously quoted and almost entirely ignored Secret Service statement that it had shown the Commission staff the X-rays, which gives a special perspective to Specter's belated effort to overcome his own transgressions against the requirements and obligation imposed upon him by his job and destroys his innocence. Kelley said of this three things, all of which I do believe: a) that he, personally, had done this, had shown the staff the X-rays; b) that it was prior to the taking of the medical testimony and included the medical witnesses (if in seeming contradiction of the Commission's record, personally, I believe Kelley); c) that, as of that time and to the best of his knowledge, the mechanical damage to X-rays reported by the 1968 panel did not exist. Where Kelley's explanation falls short, among other places, is in his accounting of what pictures he showed to whom. He confirmed that he had shown a picture of the rear nonfatal wound to Specter in Dallas. He did not report any other showing of any pictures to anyone"... page 284-285: "...under date of February 24 1970 Kelley invited me to a conference in his office the morning of Wednesday, March 4, "with a list of the material which you claim is being withheld from you"..." "It was on this occasion that Kelley first told me that it is he who showed the X-rays, not the pictures, to certain members of the Commission's staff. Although he did not know the exact date, he is certain it was before the autopsy doctors testified and as a preparation for the taking of that testimony. The Secret Service also provided the viewer in which the X-rays - all those the Secret Service had - were shown"... page 305: "How, innocently, accept the official poppycock that the investigators could not see the actual pictures of the autopsy and did not see the X-rays? How, innocently, explain Specter's silence in the hearings he conducted and that part of the report he wrote about having seen a picture of this back wound (WHITEWASH: 109), confirmed to me by Tom Kelley, who showed it to him? Or Specter's failure to correct the fake record he manufactured? Or his pseudo-campaign for access to the X-rays already shown to the staff?"

([Link](#)). In a document by Weisberg, dated 5/17/1977 and titled *What the Commission knew about the JFK Autopsy That it pretended it did not know*, it reads "Tom Kelley had told me that he, personally, was part of the showing of the X-ray films to the Commission staff. On April 16, 1964 he drafted a memo for Rowley's signature. It begins by going into the testimony the Commission planned to take from named agents. The final graf says he personally arranged for an X-ray viewing box at the Commission's request, that they wanted two for 9 a.m. April 21, and that he, Kelley, arranged for this with Boswell at the Bethesda hospital. Kelley designated SA Morgan Gies to pick these boxes up on April 20. Gies was then able to deliver these boxes to the 4th floor of the Commission's offices and to return them to Bethesda after they were used on 4/21. The Bethesda doctors testified April 15 or 16, so it would appear that the Commission was shook up a bit. It appears from the memo that Kelley expected the boxes to be used at a hearing. This is not certain but is a fair interpretation of his closing words about what Gies is to do, "returning them to the Bethesda Naval Hospital at the conclusion of the hearings on April 21." ([Harold Weisberg Archive, jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg Subject Index Files/K Disk/Kelley Thomas Secret Service Inspector/Item 01](#) [[link 2](#)] [[link 3](#)] [[link 4](#)]). In the memoirs of Earl Warren, which were posthumously published in 1977, it reads "...I saw the pictures when they

came from Bethesda Naval Hospital, and they were so horrible that I could not sleep well for nights. Accordingly, in order to prevent them from getting into the hands of these sensationmongers, I suggested that they not be used by the Commission..." ([Link](#) [\[link 2\]](#)). Robert Bouck reportedly told the HSCA on 8/30/1977 that at some time prior to his relinquishing custody of the autopsy materials to Evelyn Lincoln, there were possibly around two occasions where the photos were taken out and shown to "...some representative of the Warren commission who asked to see the inventory or the materials", and that he "...at least gave them the inventory to see, but a copy was not given to them", "...stuff basically remained in the drawer". Bouck said that "...he is not sure the materials themselves were viewed and believes Tom Kelley may have been present during the inspection by the Warren Commission representative", "...possibly the general counsel or a staff attorney", and that the other instance was "...rather early, when someone from Secret Service and possibly Mr. Kelley looked to see what was in there" ([ARRB MD 123, 9/6/1977 report on Bouck's 8/30/1977 interview by the HSCA](#)). On 11/8/1977, Arlen Specter was interviewed for the HSCA. While he did complain that that the Commission couldn't view the official autopsy pictures, at no point did Specter acknowledge his prior statements that he saw at least one image of Kennedy's body ([HSCA Vol. 14, pp. 79-108](#)), including his own prior statements of seeing an unauthorized copy of an autopsy photo. The 1994 book *Pictures of the Pain* by Richard Trask includes quotes from a 3/19/1986 interview of Thomas Maurer Atkins, who had been a Navy man working as a White House photographer alongside Robert Knudsen: "...He sat there in the rocker, and I stood beside him and the hairdresser came in and was doing his hair. I remember looking at that long hair, and what nice hair he had – as he was watching that film. And the following Monday he was buried at Arlington. Those three Mondays. And to see pictures of the autopsy and what the bullet had done to the hair – I was admiring. Those are things that just stick in your memory" ([Link](#)). Trask's book does not explain when Atkins supposedly saw the autopsy photos – the general public didn't get a chance to see the leaked photos until 1988 ([Best Evidence](#) by David Lifton, 1988 edition; [Associated Press, Herald-Zeitung, 10/30/1988, Book claims photos from JFK autopsy](#); [Associated Press, El Paso Times, 10/30/1988, Book contains photos author says show Kennedy body at autopsy](#); [Associated Press, San Angelo Standard-Times, 10/30/1988, Author: Apparent JFK autopsy photos support cover-up](#); [Associated Press, Abilene Reporter-News, 10/30/1988, Book's new edition claims photos are of JFK autopsy](#); [Associated Press, Victoria Advocate, 10/30/1988, Book Offers New Evidence Of Assassination Cover-Up](#); [Associated Press, Bryan-College Station Eagle, 10/30/1988, Grisly photos of Kennedy are defended](#); [Nova, 11/15/1988, Who Shot President Kennedy?](#) [\[link 2\]](#) [\[link 3\]](#) [\[link 4\]](#); [Christopher Callahan, Associated Press, 11/15/1988](#) [\[link\]](#) [\[link 2\]](#) [\[link 3\]](#) [\[link 4\]](#) [\[link 5\]](#); [KRON, 11/18/1988, JFK: An Unsolved Murder](#); [Los Angeles Times, 11/20/1988, His J.F.K. Obsession: For David Lifton, the Assassination Is a Labyrinth Without End](#) [by Lee Green](#) [\[link 2\]](#); [JFK: From Parkland to Bethesda](#) by Vincent Palamara, 2015 [\[link\]](#)). The ARRB interviewed Robert Bouck on 4/30/1996, and as summarized in a report, "Mr. Bouck stated he never opened any of the autopsy cannisters which contained biological materials, and initially said he never looked at any of the photographs, but then thought he remembered that Robert F. Kennedy may have asked to see them on one occasion". Bouck was asked about the report on his 8/30/1977 interview by the HSCA - "In this interview report you mention a Warren Commission staffer, or the Chief Counsel looking at the autopsy photographs. Do you remember that?", and his response was (not verbatim) "Yes, now I do. It was one person. Earlier I said it was Robert Kennedy, but now I think that was wrong--it was a Warren Commission attorney". Bouck was then shown photos of J. Lee Rankin and Arlen Specter circa 1964, and asked "Was it one of these two men?", to which he replied "I don't remember--it was too long ago. Both of these men look familiar, but I don't remember where I know them from. I can't remember who saw the photos" ([ARRB MD 258](#)). In 1999, Specter got the chance to view the official autopsy photos at the National Archives. In his 2000 book *Passion for Truth*, Specter wrote "Tom Kelley, the Secret Service liaison officer to the commission tried to ease my concern about the photos. In May, Kelley and I, among other, traveled to Dallas to conduct our on-site tests at the assassination scene. When Kelley

and I were alone in a hotel room, he showed me a small picture of the back of a man's body, with a bullet hole in the base of the neck, just where the autopsy surgeons said Kennedy had been shot. I was eager, of course, to examine the picture. My trust in Tom Kelley led me personally to accept his assurance that he was showing me a photograph of Kennedy's body. But an unauthenticated photo was no way to establish facts for the record. I never mentioned it officially. I finally saw the original autopsy photographs and X rays, along with recent computer-enhanced images, at a branch of the National Archives in April 1999. I took the occasion to reexamine the once-elegant suit, shirt, and tie the president had been wearing that day, which had been reduced to bloodied rags. The Kennedy family turned over the materials to the archives in 1966, but access remains highly restricted. The photos are gruesome...”, “Dr. Boswell, who lived near the archives center, came over to help me interpret the materials during my two-hour inspection...” ([Link](#)). Specter gave a presentation at Duquesne University, 2003, where he said out loud that Elmer Moore was the Secret Service man who showed him the unauthorized autopsy photo, no acknowledgment of his earlier statements saying it was Thomas Kelley: “...I made no bones about my thinking that we should've seen the x-rays and the photographs, and we did not, and I have commented about that publicly, wrote a hot memorandum to J. Lee Rankin on the subject on April 30th of 1964, saying that although the x-rays and photos would be corroborative only from what the autopsy surgeons had testified to, I thought we should see them, we should see all the evidence, and we were not permitted to see them, and that was a bad judgment...”, “...But at any rate, I thought- I thought they should've been seen, and I made as strong a case as I could, and there was never any official reason given, but we speculated that there was a concern about having these photos in the public domain, almost everything gets into the public domain that isn't under lock and key and double-barred, et cetera, et cetera, and when I wrote my book, I- I asked permission to see the photos, and I got to see them because I was a senator, I wouldn't have gotten to see them if I hadn't been a senator, but I did take a look at them. Burke Marshall was in charge of them, a man who was close to the Kennedys and an Assistant Attorney General, and why Mr. Marshall was in charge them, I could never figure out, but he was in charge of them, but I did get to see them, and they corroborated what- what we had found out. The only thing the Commission had to work on were some rough drawings. When Joe Ball and I talked to the autopsy surgeons that afternoon in Bethesda, we were asked if we'd like to have some artist drawings, and I said 'well Joe', and I said 'yeah, fine, let's have them, better than nothing', and we were wrong about that, because they were inexact, and they've been the subject of a lot of controversy. We put them into the record, but they were artist renderings without having the- the photos or- or other more detailed information available as to- as to what they would- as to what they would copy from. The report was that the chief justice had seen the photos. That was not in the report, and that was not official, and even if you'd seen them, it wasn't sufficient. The staff should have seen, the other commissioners should have seen them, and Elmer Moore, who was the chief's bodyguard, showed me a photo which he said was the back of the President, and I told him I didn't want to look at an unauthenticated photo, I wanted- I wanted to see the real McCoy. But at any rate, that was one of the of the points of controversy...” ([Video, 21:47](#)). In 2021, James Gochenaur claimed that Elmer Moore actually showed him an autopsy photograph (Black Op Radio, show #1071, 12/2/2021 [[audio](#), 31:33]; *JFK Revisited: Through the Looking Glass*, 2022 book by James DiEugenio) – as opposed to his earlier statements where he described just being told of the pictures by Moore. When interviewed by researcher James DiEugenio, Gochenaur said “...*And then he showed me—another shock—he showed me a color photograph, 8 x 10, of President Kennedy in autopsy I assume. It was different from Mr. Groden's pictures in that this side of the face, the right side of the face, the eye was swollen. And it was black and blue*”. When DiEugenio replied “*I don't remember ever seeing an autopsy photo like that, that you described*”, Gochenaur said “*I don't like to talk about it. I'll talk about it with you*” (*JFK Revisited: Through the Looking Glass*, 2022 book by James DiEugenio). There doesn't seem to be any known prior instance of Gochenaur claiming that Moore showed him an autopsy photo – and in a 5/10/1971 letter to Weisberg, Gochenaur gave a

detailed list of materials that he said Elmer Moore showed him, and autopsy images were not mentioned ([Harold Weisberg Archive, jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg Subject Index Files/G Disk/Gochenauer James/Item 12](http://HaroldWeisbergArchive.jfk.hood.edu/Collection/WeisbergSubjectIndexFiles/GDisk/GochenauerJames/Item12) [\[link 2\]](#)).

A lot of information on Robert Knudsen did not support the official narrative on the autopsy photographs. Knudsen was featured in the August 1977 issue of *Popular Photography* magazine, where it was reported “*He was the only photographer to record the autopsy*”, and he was quoted as calling it “*the hardest assignment in my life*” ([Link](#) [\[link 2\]](#)). Officially, John Stringer was the photographer who shot the pictures in the autopsy room, and there is no documented evidence that Robert Knudsen was there at Bethesda. Researcher Jacob G. Hornberger raised a series of questions- “*What then are we to make of this? Why would Knudsen make up a story that could easily be exposed as false? Why would he take the chance of sullyng the reputation for integrity that he had built up over the decades? Why would he risk a highly prestigious job as a White House photographer by lying about having been the official photographer for the Kennedy autopsy? Why would he give a false story to a national photography magazine knowing that it would be easy to expose the falsity of it? Why didn’t anyone in the U.S. military, which conducted the president’s autopsy, come forward and expose Knudsen’s story as false?*” (Future of Freedom Foundation, *The JFK Autopsy Cover-Up: The Testimony of Sandra Spencer*, 5/28/2015). In the issue of *Popular Photography*, it was also reported that Knudsen had been hospitalized with “*steel slivers in his eye*” shortly before the assassination ([Link](#) [\[link 2\]](#)) – this detail could potentially mean that Knudsen’s vision was impaired at the time. When Robert Knudsen made sworn statements to the House Committee on 8/11/1978, he apparently didn’t take credit for shooting the photographs, but he did say that he helped development film from the autopsy at the NPC ([ARRB MD 135](#) [\[text\]](#) [\[audio\]](#)). Knudsen’s statements to the House Committee are only available in the form of a transcript, which appears to have Knudsen’s signature. The audio tapes labeled for the meeting only contain excerpts of an unknown female voice which seems to be reading the transcript out loud. For some reason, the tapes also include portions of audio with irrelevant material ([Link](#)). In the transcript of the meeting, Knudsen estimated that on the morning of 11/23/1963, Dr. George Burkley handed him a paper bag that contained film holders, and directed him to go along with Agent Fox to the Photographic Center. Knudsen said that he didn’t remember the number of individual film frames or images, just that they were all negatives of color and black and white, no positive transparencies. Knudsen said that after the film was processed, he brought it to the White House, and that some time within the four-day period after the assassination, they came back to the Photographic Center and made color prints. Knudsen said that he thought seven sets of only color prints were made ([ARRB MD 135](#) [\[text\]](#) [\[audio\]](#)), even though James Fox reportedly told the HSCA that just one or two sets of prints were made ([ARRB MD 124, report on James Fox’s 8/7/1978 HSCA interview](#)). Knudsen described seeing at least one image of what appeared to be surgical probes sticking through Kennedy’s body, including one probe in the throat area. Knudsen said that he thought the image was on a frame of black and white negative film. The official autopsy pictures do not appear to show any probes in the body. Knudsen admitted that he only really remembered “glancing” at the negative with the probes, and that he generally didn’t study the negatives very closely. But, he also said that he didn’t think he misinterpreted the image with probes in the body. Knudsen said that he didn’t remember seeing a print that showed the probes, but that he only checked the prints “for quality but not for detail”. When Knudsen was shown copies of the existing autopsy photos during his interview, he said that they roughly corresponded to the images he remembered seeing, and that he remembered seeing rulers in the autopsy photos he handled. Knudsen named Vincent Madonia as being present, and suggested that Madonia could have personally helped do some of the processing, possibly the color film. Knudsen indicated that there was no direct participation from Agent Fox. When asked “*Do you remember some assistants?*”, Knudsen replied “*There would be another technician. I am trying to think about that time. I think a fellow by the name of Knowlin was our number one technician over there. I will not*

swear to that”. Question: “*Do you remember there being some women technicians?*”, answer: “*We had Sandy Spencer*”, question: “*Did Sandy Spencer or anyone else at Naval Photographic Center have an occasion to look at the black and white negatives, to your knowledge?*”, answer: “*No. Sandy was basically color. As I say, I went into the dark room, processed it, went out the door, stayed outside the door. When it was dry, I went back and checked them. They were dry, and we departed*”. Knudsen denied knowing of any woman in the room passing out upon seeing the images. Sandra Spencer said in her 12/13/1996 interview for the ARRB that she recognized the name of Mr. “Knowlin”, and thought his name was spelled N-O-L-A-N. But, Spencer said she couldn’t remember his first name, and didn’t think he was involved ([Audio](#)). The name of Knowlin/Nolan was reportedly not recognized by Vincent Madonia ([ARRB MD 232, reports on 6/25/1996 and 11/22/1996 interviews with Vincent Madonia](#)), or another former NPC employee named Velma Reumann ([ARRB MD 234, ARRB Call Report of October 4, 1996 Telephonic Interview of Velma Reumann \(nee Vogler\), Formerly Stationed At NPC](#)). The House Committees’ records on Knudsen were not released in the late 1970’s, like some of the other medical evidence was – instead, they were among many records that remained sealed until they were released in the late 1990’s by the ARRB ([Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Vol. 4, Issue 4, Winter 1998, pp. 12-17, Persuasive Evidence of a Government Cover-Up Following the Kennedy Assassination by Douglas Horne](#)). After Knudsen passed away on 1/27/1989, an obituary published in the Washington Post read “*...His pictures included Eisenhower’s meeting with Nikita Krushchev in 1959, the first steps of John F. Kennedy Jr., and President Kennedy’s autopsy...*” ([Washington Post, 1/29/1989, ROBERT KNUDSEN, 61, DIES](#)), and an obituary from the New York Times read “*He photographed the 1948 and 1952 elections of Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower, the historic 1959 meeting between Eisenhower and Nikita Khrushchev, the autopsy of the slain President Kennedy in 1963...*” ([New York Times, 1/31/1989, Robert Knudsen Dies; Photographer Was 61](#)). In 1996 and 1997, the ARRB tried talking to some of Robert Knudsen’s family members – wife Gloria Knudsen, daughter “Terri”, and son “Bob”, who said they remembered Robert telling them that he photographed the autopsy. As specified in the interview reports, “*All family members agreed that he had met Air Force One at Andrews, accompanied the official motorcade to Bethesda, and had photographed the autopsy of President Kennedy. He had told them it was the hardest thing he had ever had to do in his life, in the emotional sense, since he reportedly had a brotherly relationship with President Kennedy. All 3 family members said that they did not see their father for 3 days after he left the house (i.e., until after the funeral on November 25, 1963), with the exception of Saturday, November 23, 1963 when they were allowed to view the casket lying in state in the East Room of the White House, where Mr. Knudsen was working that day. His son, Bob, said he thought his father had ridden in the last car in the motorcade with some Secret Service agents from Andrews to Bethesda, and had entered Bethesda through the back door at the loading dock; he was present and began working at “set up” for the autopsy. Mr. Knudsen had recounted to family members the following substantive remarks*”, “*he witnessed and photographed probes inserted in the President’s body which left no doubt of the number and direction of bullet trajectories; son Bob thought that his father had described 3 probes in the body (2 in the thorax/neck, and one in the head)*”, “*although none of the family remembers any discussion of type of camera, film, format of film, or number of pictures taken, they all claimed their father told them that he was the only one in the morgue with a camera, and believed he was the only person to photograph the autopsy*”, “*the Secret Service took his film from him as soon as he had exposed the various pieces of film, which he thought strange, since he was personally acquainted with the agent and thought that the agent trusted him; the only family member who remembered Mr. Knudsen talk about having developed autopsy film was son Bob, with whom he had been a business partner in the family photography business for approximately 10 years before his death*”, “*The Knudsen family members who met with ARRB staff were very proud of their fathers career and his service to the White House, and vouched repeatedly for his trustworthiness, candor and honesty*”. Gloria Knudsen corroborated the story about Robert having an injury involving a piece of metal in his eye at the time. The family members said they

thought Robert had been questioned by staff from the Warren Commission, but couldn't recall names or details. There are no known documents from the Warren Commission that mention trying to get in contact with him. According to his daughter Terri, Robert said that based on his own observations at the autopsy, he was skeptical of the Warren Commission's conclusions on how the shooting occurred. After Robert's interview for the House Committee in 1978, he allegedly told his family members at different times that *"...4 or 5 of the pictures he was shown by the HSCA did not represent what he saw or took that night, and that one of the photographs he viewed had been altered. His son Bob said that his father told him that "hair had been drawn in" on one photo to conceal a missing portion of the top-back of President Kennedy's head". Gloria "...reiterated her husband's firm belief that the photographs of the back of the head which show it to be intact were forgeries". She also said that "...their house was burglarized shortly after the HSCA deposed her husband, and that she had always wondered if there were any connection between the two events". All agreed that the transcript of Robert's meeting with the HSCA appeared to have his signature, but Gloria communicated that "...her 3 children had reviewed the transcript of Robert Knudsen's 1978 HSCA testimony, and that one of them, in particular, thought that the first 6 pages of the transcript "did not sound like her father." By this she explained that her husband was a perfectionist about everything, including spelling, and he would not have misspelled the word Annandale, nor would he have misspelled the last name "Stoughton," a man who was his co-worker (Cecil Stoughton, USAF Major) at the White House for years, nor would he have signed a transcript which had these items misspelled without correcting same. She said it was her opinion, and that of her family, that after the first 6 pages, the transcript did sound like her husband". All three told of a time around 1988 when Robert participated in what they thought was an unknown government "investigation", which involved looking at Kennedy autopsy photos. As summarized in the interview report, Gloria stated that "...her husband had participated in another investigation into the assassination which she thought the public knew nothing about, and said she would bring the letter which invited him to appear in this forum with her on Friday to ARRB. She thought that the letter was received in September, 1988"... "all 3 family members agreed that Mr. Knudsen appeared before an official government body again sometime in 1988, about 6 months before he died in January 1989. They all had the impression that it was "on Capitol Hill," and that it may have been a Congressional inquiry of some kind. They were unanimous that Mr. Knudsen came away from this experience very disturbed, saying that 4 photographs were "missing," and that one was "badly altered;" Mrs. Gloria Knudsen used the phrase "severely altered" regarding the one altered photograph when recounting her husband's statements afterwards. She further elaborated that the wounds he saw in the photos shown him in 1988 did not represent what he saw or took. He also told them that some of the details in the room in the background of the photos were "wrong." He had recounted that this experience was a waste of time for him because as soon as he would answer a question consistent with what he remembered, he would immediately be challenged and contradicted by people whom he felt already had their minds made up". Gloria responded to skepticism regarding the story of her husband photographing the autopsy, as summarized in the interview report: "...she verified to me that last week she called several former Navy associates of her husband's, in an attempt to find out if anyone he formerly worked with could verify that he photographed the President's autopsy. Without naming names, or telling me the precise number of her husband's former associates that she called, she said that she spoke last week with some former Navy people who in one case (along with her husband, Robert Knudsen) saw, and in another case helped Robert Knudsen print, photos of President Kennedy's autopsy. She said that these former Navy people said they never directly asked Bob Knudsen whether he had been present at the autopsy, and he never volunteered such information either, but that from certain remarks he had made, and by evaluating the quality of the photographs, these people were of the belief that he may well have been present at the autopsy. When I asked her for the names of these former Navy people, she said that she had promised these people last week not to divulge their names, and consequently would not do so under any circumstances. When I made a second attempt later in the*

conversation to impress upon her the importance of the ARRB's pursuit of photographic leads pertaining to the autopsy, she again politely but very firmly refused to divulge names, and said that her word of honor was the most important principle at stake here. She elaborated that one of the former Navy people she called said that he did recall one particular photo which showed the back of the President's head "blown out." I asked her to recall as precisely as she could whether this person said "back of the head" or "top of the head," and she said the person to whom she spoke last week definitely said the "back" of the head was blown out in the photograph he—sighted. She told me that her husband told her on one occasion that he knew who had previously had custody of the autopsy photographs, and that he therefore could deduce who had been responsible for some of them disappearing, but that he was not going to stick his neck out on something this big, because he had a family to protect" ... "She somewhat cryptically reminded me that her husband was a man who did not talk much, and who very reliably could keep secrets, and told me that sometimes people in the military are required to "take secrets to the grave" with them, when ordered to do so by competent authority, regardless of what attempts are later made to get them to talk. She told me her husband had impressed upon her that his loyalty was to the Presidency as an office and institution, not to any particular office-holder (without elaborating on what this meant)". When Gloria was asked if her husband kept any diary or journal, she said "...she thought that he did, and said she would have to look for them" ... "...she said she would try". It would appear that no such journal ever turned up. An address book that reportedly belonged to Robert Knudsen listed the information of John Stringer, the official autopsy photographer ([ARRB MD 230 - ARRB report on interviews with Ms. Gloria Knudsen and children Terri and Bob](#)). But Stringer, in his Review Board deposition on 7/16/1996, said that he could not recognize the name of Robert Knudsen ([Transcript \[text\] \[audio\]](#)). Researcher Fred Litwin suggested that the 1988 "investigation" Knudsen's family referred to may have had something to do with a three-day conference hosted by Dr. Cyril Wecht in 1988 at the University of Pittsburgh to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the assassination ([Litwin, onthetrailofdelusion.com, 1/14/2022, "JFK Revisited" Misleads on Autopsy Photographs of JFK](#)). 1988 was the year the leaked autopsy photos were first seen by the public. Another story about Robert Knudsen came from one of his colleagues, Joe O'Donnell, who had been a photographer employed by the U.S. Government. O'Donnell was interviewed by the ARRB on 1/29/1997 and 2/28/1997. O'Donnell claimed to remember two occasions shortly after the assassination, where Robert Knudsen showed him approximately twelve 5 X 7 inch black and white prints which appeared to be post-mortem images of JFK. On the first occasion, O'Donnell said, the body in the photos had a small defect above the right eye and a large hole in the back of the head. And, some days afterward, Knudsen showed him an apparently different set of about twelve 5 X 7 inch black and white prints – which inexplicably showed a body with an intact back of the head and no defect above the right eye. He said that he attributed the difference to the restoration work done by the morticians. One of the pictures, O'Donnell reportedly said on 1/29/1997, "*showed President Kennedy lying on his back, with an aluminum probe emerging from his stomach or right side (details were vague)*". O'Donnell gave a different timing of events in his two different interviews for the Review Board, as reported: "*Mr. O'Donnell's memory was uneven. He sometimes had trouble remembering the names of Presidents. He also gave a different timing on his viewing of the two different showings of post-mortem photographs (i.e., both events within a month or so of the assassination) from his first interview (in which he said both viewings occurred within a week or so of the assassination). On the other hand, he appeared to remember with apparent precision some events from the 1940s through the 1960s*". In the 2/28/1997 interview, O'Donnell provided another strange claim which couldn't possibly be true according to the official story: "*Mr. O'Donnell further volunteered that he was asked to show Jacqueline Kennedy the Zapruder film in a private screening within a few weeks of the assassination; his recollection of the timing was uncertain. He said no one was present except Jacqueline Kennedy and him, and that the screening was held at the USIA screening room at the USIA building at 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue. He said that when he asked her why she tried to escape from the limousine, she*

told him she was not trying to escape, but rather was trying to pick up pieces of the President's head from the top of the car's trunk lid, so that his head could be put back together. He said that following her viewing of the head shot sequence in the film, Jacqueline Kennedy told him in a very forceful way, "I don't ever want to see that again," which he said that he interpreted as an order to alter the film so as to remove the offending images of the head shot--namely, a halo of debris around the President's head. He told us he knows it was wrong, but that he removed about 10 feet of film from the Zapruder film. After Mr. O'Donnell was asked what format the film was, he stated it was 16 mm film; when asked if he was sure that it was 16 mm film said that yes, it was 16 mm film. When asked to estimate how many frames he removed, he simply repeated that he removed "about 10 feet of film." He said he has not seen the Zapruder film since that time. When he was asked whether he altered a copy of the film or the original, he said, "I had the original." (ARRB MD 231, ARRB report on 1/29/1997 and 2/28/1997 interviews with O'Donnell). In what is currently known as the original Zapruder film, there are 486 frames showing images of Dealey Plaza (New York Times, 11/15/2013, *Cross Cuts, Footage of Death Plays On in Memory* by A. O. Scott), measuring a total 6 feet, 3 inches in length (*The Two NPIC Zapruder Film Events: Signposts Pointing to the Film's Alteration* by Douglas P. Horne). Zapruder's camera had a normal running speed between 18.0 and 18.5 frames per second, an average of 18.3 frames per second (FBI 62-109060-2360, JFK HQ File, Section 44, 1/31/1964 memo from Mr. Conrad to W. D. Griffith; HSCA Vol. 5, pp. 722-724, Friday, December 29, 1978, *Closing Remarks by Chairman Louis Stokes*, 2/22/1979 memo from G. Robert Blakey to all Select Committee members, RE: *Fine Points of Correlation of Tape to Film*). The camera also had the option of shooting films at 48 frames per second. A new uncut roll of the same "double 8" film would be 25 feet in length and 16 millimeters wide. The camera would record images on one 8-millimeter-sized half of the film strip, and then the roll of film could be taken out and turned over, so images could be recorded the other half of the same film strip. Processing the used roll of film would involve physically cutting it down the middle, creating two 8 millimeter-wide strips. Side A of Zapruder's roll of film reportedly showed scenes with his family members, while side B is the assassination (*The Two NPIC Zapruder Film Events: Signposts Pointing to the Film's Alteration* by Douglas P. Horne). Joe O'Donnell told the same basic story about the autopsy photographs when he appeared on a 2003 episode of *The Men Who Killed Kennedy* - "I was at the White House in the press room, and Knudsen came to me, and he said 'Joe, I have something I want to show you'. So, I went back to his- sort of a work room- and he pulled out an envelope and showed me about twelve pictures, five by seven, and had all these pictures of the President on his stomach and on his back, and you could see the hole here [points to right forehead], about three-eighths of an inch, and the back of his head above the- [gestures to shirt collar] the line- big hole [makes circle shape with hands] about the size of a grapefruit. And then a couple days later, maybe a day later, he said 'Joe, you have a minute?' and I said 'Sure', he said 'I want to show you something, those pictures I showed you the other day, these are the same ones but a little different', and I said 'What do you mean?', he said 'Let me show you'. He got the first one out, and I said 'No hole' [points to right forehead], he said 'No, they covered it up', and I looked in the back, the hole was neatly covered up, and I said 'Who did that?', he said 'Well, I didn't do it'. I said 'Well, I'm not saying you did, but I'm surprised'" (*The Men Who Killed Kennedy*, episode 7: *The Smoking Guns*, 2003, 21:14). Joe O'Donnell, as a witness, may have credibility issues. After passing away on 8/9/2007, it surfaced that O'Donnell had allegedly tried to take credit for a number of well-known photographs that he did not take (Digital Journalist, Aug. 2007, *The Bizarre Story of Joe O'Donnell* by Marianne Fulton; Editor & Publisher, 9/5/2007, *UPDATED: Questions Raised about Claims by Photographer -- His Son Responds -- 'NYT' Corrects* by Greg Mitchell; NPPA, 9/15/2007, *A Photographer's Legacy Tarnished* by Heather Graulich; New York Times, 9/15/2007, *Known for Famous Photos, Not All of Them His* by Michael Wilson). His son, Tyge O'Donnell, stated that he believed Joe had been suffering from dementia, with noticeable memory problems since the 1990's (*The Oklahoman*, 9/20/2007, *Photo Causes Uproar Among Photographers* by Travis Loller).

When Vincent Madonia spoke to the Review Board on 6/25/1996 and 11/22/1996, he acknowledged his poor memory, and said that he did not think he personally developed any pictures from the autopsy, just that he may have seen some prints by happenstance. As Madonia explained, he was more of a supervisor who didn't do hands-on work. He indicated that he could not remember any details about the wounds on the images, only adding in his second interview that Kennedy looked "*pretty beat up*". Madonia said that he could not remember meeting Robert Bouck or James Fox, but he mentioned Sandra Spencer as somebody who could have worked on the autopsy photos. On Robert Knudsen, Madonia said in his first interview "*he may have been there that weekend*", but then said "*take that out of your notes, I shouldn't have said that, I'm not sure*". As reported from Madonia's second interview, "*He believes he saw Robert Knudsen...*", but "*...is not sure when*". Madonia indicated on both occasions that he remembered the photos being handled the weekend of the assassination, and that some time later within the one-month period afterwards, he remembered another instance of autopsy photos being handled. In the later instance, Madonia was shown and asked to comment on the official documents for the autopsy photographs' chain of custody – the same ones that claim the autopsy film first came to the NPC around Wednesday 11/27/1963, not the weekend of the assassination. The report on the meeting ends with "*Those interested in specifics should refer to the tape recording of the interview*" ([ARRB MD 232](#)). The tape recording is not currently available on the internet, but it is stored at the National Archives II building in College Park, Maryland.

The statements of Sandra Spencer clearly don't corroborate the official story, but she did suggest some other potential witnesses. When Spencer was asked in her first 12/13/1996 interview "*... Was there anyone else you know of at NPC who had any role in developing any autopsy photograph-photographs other than yourself?*", she said "*I- I was trying to think of who the two people were that were working that day, and I- I can't think of it*". Spencer said that whoever else was helping would have been a military rank below her. Spencer then suggested the name of "Bonita" as somebody who could have helped process the photos ([ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 \[audio, 22:27\]](#)). The name of Carol Ann Bonito was listed on a Navy Enlisted Distribution and Verification Report from 1963 ([ARRB MD 144](#)). In 1963, Carol was in the Navy as a third class E-4 photographer's mate ([ARRB, 12/16/1996 email from Douglas Horne to Dave Montague; ARRB Electronic Files of T. Jeremy Gunn, Executive Director and General Counsel, INTERVIE BONITO.WPD](#)). When Spencer was asked in her deposition about who else could've been there helping with the photographs, she said "*They secured the regular color lab crews and we stayed*"... "*There was about three of us up there*"... "*Carol Bonito was the only one I can identify. There was a 2nd Class that had come aboard just recently, but I didn't remember. The only thing I remember is Kirk was on his name*"... "*...the gentleman I was talking about was a 2nd Class...*". Question: "*When Mr. Fox or the person came to the White House lab, approximately, how many other people were working in the lab at that time?*", answer: "*Two others*", question: "*Do you remember who they were? Was one Ms. Bonito, for example?*", answer: "*Yes, and the 2nd Class. The day crew was on. We had two, usually two 2nd Class that worked the evening shift*" ([ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 \[text\] \[audio\]](#)). Carol Ann Bonito, whose last name was later changed to Roberts, was found and contacted by the ARRB in 1996 ([ARRB staff memo, 5/18/1998, Doug Horne to Jeremy Gunn, Requested Lists of Information Re: All of ARRB's Medical Witnesses, and All New ARRB Medical Evidence Not Previously in JFK Collection; ARRB, 12/27/1996 letter from Jeremy Gunn to Carol A. Roberts](#)), but further details do not seem to be currently available on the internet. Sandra Spencer did not describe Agent "Fox" as having directly participated, just that he closely monitored ([ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 \[audio\]; ARRB MD 233, ARRB report on 12/13/1996 interview of Spencer; Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence by William Law; In The Eye Of History by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer](#)). When Spencer was asked in her 12/13/1996 interview if Naval Captain John H.

“Smoky” Stover could have been involved in the processing, she said no, but that he still worked “*in the main color lab*” ([Audio](#)). Captain Stover had been present at the Bethesda autopsy ([WC D 7, pp. 280-285, Sibert and O'Neill's FBI report on the autopsy, 11/26/1963; HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 6-16, Medical Panel Report, Section II. Performance of Autopsy, Part II. Facts and Issues \[text\]](#)), and he signed documents acknowledging the transfer of custody for the autopsy photographs and x-rays to the Secret Service ([ARRB MD 78, 11/22/1963 receipt for autopsy photos from J. H. Stover to Roy Kellerman; ARRB MD 79, 11/22/1963 retyped receipt for autopsy photos from Stover to Kellerman; ARRB MD 191, 11/22/1963 retyped receipt from Ebersole to Kellerman, certified to be a true copy and signed by J. H. Stover and C. B. Galloway; ARRB MD 122, Feb. 1967 joint statement signed by Roy Kellerman, Robert Bouck, Edith Duncan, James Fox, and Thomas J. Kelley; HSCA Vol. 7, pp. 23-36, Medical Panel Report, Section III. Chain of Custody of the Materials Acquired During the Autopsy \[text\]; ARRB staff memo, 5/9/1996, Chain-of-Custody Study of Autopsy Photographs and X-Rays by Doug Horne](#)). When asked if Vincent Madonia was involved, Spencer said that she did not think he was ([ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 \[audio\]; ARRB MD 233, ARRB report on 12/13/1996 interview of Spencer; ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 \[text\] \[audio\]](#)). When asked in her first interview “*Did you ever talk to Chief Knudsen about photography there? I mean, did you ever mention this to him or discuss it with him?*”, Spencer replied “*No*”. Then, when asked “*Was Mr. Knudsen with the Agent at the time that the Agent came?*”, Spencer replied “*No, as far as I know, he- he was never involved with it*”, and when followed up with “*Okay, are you reasonably confident in your memory of this, or is this something that seems to be a little bit vague?*” Spencer responded “*As far as I know, he never knew of it*” ([ARRB interview, 12/13/1996 \[audio\]](#)). In her deposition, Spencer was asked “*Mr. Fox also refers to going with Chief Robert Knudsen. You knew Mr. Knudsen, is that correct?*”, to which she replied “*Yes. Chief Knudsen was our liaison boss between the White House and the Photographic Center, he was not with the agent when the agent came, and if he was in the building, he would have come up*”, and when asked “*So to the extent that Mr. Fox is correct in what he makes on the statement, this is not the event that you yourself witnessed, would that be fair to say?*”, Spencer replied “*That is correct*” ([ARRB deposition, 6/5/1997 \[text\] \[audio\]](#)). But, William Law reported that when he asked Spencer about the Agent who brought the film “*Did someone call and tell you he was coming*”, she said “*Yep. Chief [Robert L.] Knudsen had called saying that an agent would have film negatives to be developed. We were not to pay too much attention to what was on them*” ([In The Eye Of History by William Law, 2004, Sandra K. Spencer](#)).

From Sandra Spencer’s 12/13/1996 interview by the ARRB ([Audio](#)):

[...16:35]

Gunn: Alright. Do you have any rec- What kind of recollection do you have of the appearance of the President’s head, the skull, back of head, were there photographs of that?

Spencer: Right. It was- I remember seeing a wound at the base of his neck, and then a two, two and a half inch piece out the back of his head.

Gunn: If we talk about the neck wound, is that in the front or in the back for the neck wound?

Spencer: In the front.

Gunn: Okay. And about how large was the- would you estimate the wound was in the neck?

Spencer: About the size of a thumb.

Gunn: Is that sort of the round part of the thumb, or the length of the thumb?

Spencer: The round part.

Gunn: Okay. Was it- was it something circular, or something more like a gash or a cut?

Spencer: Looked circular to me.

[...18:37]

Gunn: Any other description that you can make of the appearance of the wound? The one in the back of the head?

Spencer: No, I- you know, I- when I first seen it- it, you know, [inaudible], I thought it probably went in his neck and out the back of his head. But that, you know, that was just my off-the-wall analysis.

[...19:19]

Gunn: Did you see anything on what I'll call the right side of the head? That is, we'll assume the President now is lying down on his back, this would be the area above the right ear.

Spencer: No, I didn't see anything.

Gunn: The only hole, then, that you saw in the President's head would be the one that's two and a half inches?

Spencer: Right.

Gunn: In the back of the head. Okay. About how much time did you- were you able to spend looking at the photographs?

Spencer: Just from the time that we took them out of the processing basket and laid them on the-drying- dryer, and then when they came off I just took my filters and flipped through and made the correction. I was basically worried about color correction at that time. And then when we processed the next batch, again laying them on the dryer, as soon as they came off the dryer, we counted them, signed for them, and the agent was gone.

Gunn: Do you feel that you had a pretty good opportunity to- to see them? One thing in particular, the photograph with the- with the head wound? Are you fairly confident of your view of that or was it pretty hurried and not able to quite have time to look at it?

Spencer: Well, I didn't examine it or anything. It's just, you know, just cursory [inaudible].

From Sandra Spencer's 6/5/1997 deposition to the ARRB ([Transcript](#) [[text](#)] [[audio](#)]):

Q: Did you ever see any other photographic material related to the autopsy in addition to what you have already described?

A: Just, you know, when they came out with some books and stuff later that showed autopsy pictures and stuff, and I assumed that they were done in—you know, down in Dallas or something, because they were not the ones that I had worked on.

Q: Do you recall any books that you have seen with autopsy photographs in them?

A: I can't quote the titles of them.

Q: But you have seen commercially published books with what appear to be autopsy photos in them?

A: Yes.

[...]

Q: Did you see any photographs that would have shown any wounds in either the neck or shoulders or back?

A: It seems like I seen—there was at the base of the neck.

Q: When you are pointing, you are pointing to the front of your neck to the right side?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember approximately how large that injury was?

A: Just about the size of like your thumb pressed in.

Q: About how much time were you able to look at the photographs, did you get a good observation of them, was it fleeting? How would you describe that?

A: It was—they traveled. You placed them on the drum, they would travel around, so after you place it on, probably about 15 seconds or so, they start under the drum and it rotates around, and then they drop off, and you grab them and stack them. So probably just 10 or 15 seconds.

Q: Are your observations based upon the prints rather than the negatives?

A: Yes. Like I said, the negatives have masking on them, and you don't see too much on a color negative when you are printing.

[...]

Q: What is your best recollection of the approximate size of the wound on the throat that you identified before?

A: Just about like that, just like a finger, half-inch.

Q: Do you remember whether the wound was jagged or how that appeared?

A: No, just—it appeared just indented. It was, again, clean, pristine, no—you know, it wasn't an immediate wound, it had some cleaning done to it or something.

[...]

Q: Ms. Spencer, could you look at the wound in the throat of President Kennedy and tell me whether that corresponds to the wound that you observed in the photographs you developed?

A: No, it does not.

Q: In what way are they different?

A: This is a large, gaping gash type.

Q: That is, in the fifth view, it's a large, gaping gash, is that correct?

A: Yes. In the one that we had seen, it was on the right side, approximately half-inch.

Q: Is the wound in a different location or is it just a larger wound on the throat?

A: It could be just a larger wound.

On this occasion, Spencer also marked a diagram of a skull, indicating a hole in the center-back of the head:

https://www.history-matters.com/archive/jfk/arrb/master_med_set/pdf/md148.pdf

From William Law's reporting of his interview with Sandra Spencer in 1998 ([Kennedy Assassination Chronicles, Volume 4, Issue 2, 1998, pp. 12-15, *New Witness Speaks on Medical Evidence* by William Law](#)):

I asked Sandra if she could describe what wounds were on the body of President Kennedy from the pictures. "The two that I remember were the back of his head and the one at his throat. The throat wound was small, slightly off to the right. It was just about thumbnail size." This last remark was a startling revelation. If Miss Spencer had developed a picture of Kennedy's throat wound and it showed a wound about "thumbnail size," the picture had to have been taken before the official autopsy at Bethesda.

There were no known pictures of the president's body taken in Dallas and everyone I had spoken to from the Bethesda autopsy had told me the throat wound was a big open gash as in the Kennedy "stare of death" photograph. "Did it look like an entry wound; a smooth round wound in the throat?" I asked.

"It was just a round wound" [...]

[...]

“To develop the negatives, they had to dry them, then run some test prints, which took about an hour.”
[...]

[...]

“I processed the pictures, but nobody can find them, so I don't know. They could be a figment of my imagination,” Miss Spencer said to me with a joking laugh. Then, turning serious, she said, “I just wish they would surface. It would end a lot of speculation about things.”

William Law further covered his interactions with Spencer in his 2004 book *In The Eye Of History* ([Link](#)):

[...*Sandra K. Spencer*]

Law: Can you describe the wounds on the body?

Spencer: The two that I remember were at the back of his head and at his throat. The throat wound was small and slightly off to the right, about thumbnail size.

This was a startling revelation. If Spencer had developed a photograph showing a thumbnail-sized throat wound, the picture had to have been taken before the official autopsy at Bethesda. Those I had spoken to from the Bethesda autopsy had confirmed that the throat wound was an open gash as seen in the “stare-of-death” photograph (photo 1). There is no record of photographs of the corpse taken in Dallas

[...]

Law: Can you offer an opinion on the wound in the back of the head—was it an entrance wound or an exit?

Spencer: I don't know how it hit. There was no large wound on the face, so I think that it would have to be an exit wound. But that's just my opinion.

Law: I understand. Would you say the top and front of the head were intact.

Spencer: Yes. His face looked normal and relaxed. It didn't have the grimace that is on the other photos.

[...]

If she is not mistaken about what she saw in the photographs that she printed on November 23 or 24, 1963, then Sandra Spencer is a witness to a previously unknown part of the JFK assassination. “I processed the pictures, but nobody can find them, so I don't know. They could be a figment of my imagination,” she said, laughing. Turning serious, she added, “I just wish they would surface. It would end a lot of speculation about things.”

[...]

She did agree, however, to provide comments on some of the autopsy photographs. I sent an oversized set to provide space for comments and sketches. Three weeks later, they arrived back, along with a

hand-written note: "William Law, I hope this helps—it does not add much to what is already known, but maybe you can see something that I didn't—Sandy Spencer." Reading her ARRB testimony about the negatives that she had developed in her Anacostia laboratory was one thing, but seeing the Kennedy autopsy photos with her hand-written annotations and sketches had a power and an immediacy that were as startling as their potential significance is profound:

Photo 1c

[...]

- No cut was visible at the trachea, but slightly below that location was a circular "indent" of three-eighths to a half an inch in diameter.

[...]

Photo 2a

[...]

- Again, there was no neck cut and the mouth and eyes were closed.