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Scam - The Zapruder Copyright: How the Sixth Floor Museum Continues the Coverup

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During the time we were told the one and only original film was in Chicago, on the evenings of November 23 and 24, 1963, the CIA had possession of two different Zapruder films in top-secret operations at the National Photographic Interpretation Center ("NPIC") in Washington, D.C. Both of these films were thought to be the "original" Zapruder film.

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The logical conclusion is that the version of the film sent to Life magazine was either an already altered copy, or, as Douglas Horne and others argue, the original was intercepted, altered at the CIA/Kodak facility known as "Hawkeye Works," and replaced before Life's layout work began. That the CIA ran two top-secret NPIC operations using different films and analysts who each believed they had the original—and that the photographic products from only one session survive—demonstrates that the film was likely altered during this brief window. The existing film today is thus best understood not as the original film Abraham Zapruder handed over in Dallas, but as the final product of a covert alteration process.

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Technically, JFK's head does move forward very slightly just before the dramatic backward motion—but this forward movement is minuscule and not visible to the naked eye. Detecting it requires frame-by-frame analysis with precise measurements. So if early viewers—watching the film only once, on a screen, without benefit of pause or zoom—described a clear forward head snap, they could not have been referring to the subtle movement visible in today's version of the film.

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Another striking inconsistency involves the route of the presidential limousine. Multiple early witnesses, including those who viewed the Zapruder film, stated that the film showed the limousine turning onto Elm Street—the exact moment when the president’s car emerged from behind the Texas School Book Depository and headed toward the kill zone. But in the existing Zapruder film, this moment is absent. There is a gap in filming between frames 132 and 133 that must have lasted at least 30 seconds. Frame 132 shows a police motorcycle; frame 133 resumes with the limousine already well down Elm Street. That gap corresponds almost exactly with the turn. Zapruder had stopped filming—intentionally or not—and restarted the camera too late to capture the turn. Despite this, none of the early witnesses—not even Zapruder or Sitzman, who could not have missed it—mentioned that Zapruder stopped filming at any point. They describe seeing a continuous sequence that included the turn—suggesting either that they misremembered, or that they saw a different version of the film than the one we have today.

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Zapruder also gave the impression that he filmed the motorcade’s entire approach, including the turn onto Elm Street. But the 30-second gap in the film contradicts this. At no point in his public statements did Zapruder acknowledge that he stopped and restarted filming. That silence is striking, especially given the significance of the moment omitted from the record. Marilyn

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It would be impossible to cover all the anomalies in the Zapruder film in one book. However, the anomalies discussed here are so overwhelming that the existing Zapruder film cannot be considered to be an original. Each of these anomalies will be explored in detail in the following sections, with corresponding images and frame-by-frame analysis. Together, they paint a disturbing but necessary portrait: the most famous home movie in American history is not what it seems.

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Frame 154 stands out immediately—not because of what it captures, but because a thick black wavy line segments the top two thirds from the bottom third of the frame. To this day, no one has explained why. Time, Inc., which purchased the Zapruder film, only admitted years later to having damaged frames 207 and 212 and losing frames 208 through 211 entirely. That revelation came after years of criticism from early JFK researchers that the frames had been unaccounted for. In early 1967, Time issued a statement explaining what happened. Even then, though, the explanation was vague—it was nothing more than an acknowledgment that these frames had been mishandled by an unnamed technician prior to publication.

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Time's poor cover story raises an unavoidable question: how are we expected to believe that the most important home movie in American history—arguably the most scrutinized strip of film ever shot—was subjected to this level of careless handling without consequence or accountability? The idea that Time, a major national media company, could lose and damage frames of this magnitude within 24 hours of acquiring them, and then decades later still offer no coherent explanation, strains credulity.

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Alexandra Zapruder's blanket dismissal² of so-called "alterationists" as conspiracy theorists unworthy of serious consideration is deeply ironic when set against the undeniable physical evidence in the Zapruder film itself. In *Twenty-Six Seconds*, she characterizes this group as crossing a red line—beyond which rational inquiry turns into delusion. Yet anyone who takes even a cursory glance at frame 212, or frames 154, 157, and 207 for that matter, can plainly see that the film was altered. These aren't subtle theories—they're visible disruptions: splices, black lines, missing frames, and mismatched images that Time, Inc. has vaguely attributed to "damage" and "duplication errors" without ever producing a full accounting. To pretend these issues don't exist is to willfully ignore what is in front of our eyes. The hypocrisy lies in insisting that no serious person could believe the film was tampered with, while the evidence of tampering literally stares back from the frames. Alterationism isn't a fringe belief—it's a conclusion any honest observer reaches after looking closely. The real fringe position is denying what the film so clearly shows. Frame 212 is more than just a mangled piece of celluloid. It is emblematic of how lack of transparency deprived the American people of a clear view of a national trauma. And like the broken tree it depicts, it serves as a metaphor for something once whole, now irrevocably split.

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One of the most visually disturbing anomalies in the Zapruder film is the unmoving crowd along the north side of Elm Street. For more than three full seconds of film time—equating to approximately 30 seconds of real time when factoring in the missing footage—the spectators remain perfectly frozen, not a single person shifting, waving, turning, or reacting to the passing motorcade. The chance that twenty individuals could remain utterly motionless during one of the most dramatic moments in American history strains credibility beyond breaking. It is possible to see perhaps a single face turn and a single hand wave. But besides these isolated movements, in response to the sudden appearance of the President's limousine, the spectators inexplicably stand as if caught in amber, an eerie still-life against the backdrop of a national tragedy.

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Careful analysis reveals numerous anomalies that together leave only one conclusion: the Stemmons sign, as it appears in the extant film, was artificially inserted. The mistakes are not subtle. They are clear, measurable, and mechanically impossible if the film were a true, unaltered recording of the assassination scene.

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The Umbrella Man appears to be in front of the Stemmons sign in Zapruder and Bronson, but behind the sign in Willis. The Dark Completed Man appears in front of the Stemmons sign in Bronson, but behind it in Zapruder and Willis. At a single moment in time, the precise positions of three fixed reference points—(1) Umbrella Man, (2) Dark-Completed Man, and (3) the Stemmons Freeway Sign—should not meaningfully vary. The spatial compression noted in Zapruder Frame Z-230—where figures appear unnaturally close together—suggests an optical or post-processing anomaly. By triangulating all three images with fixed spatial references, you arrive at “an impossible image”—a composite of mutually exclusive spatial relationships. These images are claimed to be taken at approximately the same moment, likely within a fraction of a second, making these conflicting spatial relationships impossible. At least one (if not more) must be incorrect, altered, or misrepresented.

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The Museum, while claiming neutrality, operates with a hidden agenda—one that aligns closely with the conclusions of the Warren Commission. The Museum’s legal control over the Zapruder film was supposedly acquired through a controversial copyright transfer following a \$16 million government payout to the Zapruder family. Although the purpose of the JFK Records Act was to free JFK records, it has only given the Museum disproportionate power over access to key historical evidence. This is not how copyright was meant

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The Sixth Floor Museum in Dallas is not a neutral institution. It appears to operate with one or more underlying agendas that compromise its objectivity. With a vested interest in shaping how key facts about the JFK assassination are understood, the Museum cannot be considered an impartial source of information. One obvious agenda stems from the Museum's very physical location: its relevance is directly tied to the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone, firing from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. If that narrative were discredited, the Museum's foundational significance would be undermined. As a result, the Museum has a direct stake in promoting evidence that supports Oswald's sole guilt and downplaying or ignoring information that points to a broader conspiracy. More broadly, the Museum tends to highlight materials that uphold the Warren Commission's findings while suppressing or minimizing evidence critical of it.

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The transfers of enormous sums to the Zapruder family are not only convoluted—they're virtually unprecedented. After Abraham Zapruder sold the film to Time magazine for \$150,000 in 1963 (at least \$1.5 million in today's dollars), his heirs later bought it back for just \$1 in 1975. They went on to license it for several hundred thousand dollars before ultimately receiving a staggering \$16 million payout from the U.S. government in 1999. The bonanza did not stop there, as the Zapruders then received a tax deduction by "donating the copyright" to a non-profit, the Sixth Floor Museum.

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The first of many questions is: why would Time pay \$150,000 and then sell it back to Zapruders heirs 12 years later for \$1. That is not just a steep discount—that is a giveaway. Just a few years prior, Time referred to it as an "invaluable asset" when it refused to permit CBS News to show it on air. Such a transaction defies typical commercial logic, especially considering that by the mid-1970s, the film's historical and evidentiary value had only increased. No comparable intellectual property of such importance—particularly one already appraised and sold for a six-figure sum—has ever been re-transferred for a token amount without a compelling legal or financial explanation.

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Even after receiving such extraordinary compensation, the Zapruders insisted they still retained the copyright — a claim that many found astonishing. Why was it so important for the Zapruders to retain the copyright, when they didn't actually want to keep it, and they soon handed it over to the Museum anyway? This discrepancy has never been fully explained and seems to run directly contrary to the purposes of the JFK Act. Had the government secured the copyright along with the physical film, the Zapruder footage would today be freely available to the public, as was the purpose of the JFK Records Act.

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Notably, Henry Zapruder was a tax lawyer. Second, transferring the copyright to the Museum ensured that control over access to the Zapruder film remained in private hands, rather than placing it fully in the public domain.

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But Zapruder's trustworthiness—and the moral authority his image lent to the film's custodians—began to unravel once deeper truths emerged. It was later revealed that he had not been paid just \$25,000, but a total of \$150,000 in a staggered deal over four years with Life—a substantial sum at the time. The discrepancy between what he claimed versus what he actually received raised serious questions about his credibility. More troubling, Zapruder appears to have cooperated—either actively or through silence—with both Time Inc. and the Warren Commission. By endorsing a version of events that aligned with the official story—and by remaining silent as key frames were withheld or distorted—Zapruder helped legitimize a narrative that concealed more than it revealed. Geraldo

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When the Museum refuses to license the Zapruder film to critics of the official narrative—or when it uses copyright claims to block access to JFK records housed in public institutions—it is not simply being selective. It is violating federal law and undermining the purpose of one of the most important transparency statutes in American history.

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The Sixth Floor Museum's efforts to suppress the Zapruder film go beyond academic gatekeeping—they extend into active censorship of filmmakers and public researchers. In 2013, documentary filmmaker Shane O'Sullivan received a threatening cease-and-desist letter from Locke Lord LLP, acting on behalf of the Museum, after including a one-second clip of the Zapruder film in a trailer for his documentary Killing Oswald.¹ According to O'Sullivan, the letter demanded that he remove “any unlicensed use” of the film from both the trailer and the final work within five days or face a lawsuit seeking damages of up to \$150,000 per alleged willful infringement.

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Under legal threat, O'Sullivan removed the clip and was subsequently unable to include any Zapruder footage in Killing Oswald or The Zapruder Film Mystery. O'Sullivan added a frame at the beginning of The Zapruder Mystery to show that he was not able to use the film due to threats from the Museum.²