

Five decades after the death of President John F. Kennedy, many still don't agree with the official record that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman in his assassination. Here are some of the most talked about conspiracy theories surrounding his death: Use the following information to complete the chart History Mystery: Who Killed Kennedy. Then complete the post activity writing assignment.

1. Grassy Knoll-Two shooters

The idea that there could have been a second shooter has been discussed often in intellectual circles. Some believe the shooter was hiding on a grassy knoll behind a picket fence that was located to the right of JFK's vehicle. Oswald could have fired a first shot from his perch in the Bookstore Depository, and then a second shooter fired.

2. The Soviets

The Soviets seem like an obvious choice if you're looking for a dark hand behind Kennedy's assassination. Proponents of the theory point to two pieces of evidence. First, the U.S. and the Soviet Union were engaged in a bitter cold war. Conspiracy theorists allege that Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev was so embarrassed by having to back down following the Cuban Missile Crisis he ordered the hit on Kennedy. The other compelling piece of evidence is Lee Harvey Oswald's connection to the USSR. Though a former marine, Oswald had twice visited the Soviet Union with his Russian-born wife Marina. Both the Warren Commission and the House Committee on Assassinations found little evidence to support a Soviet-backed operation, but one former KGB agent came out years later to say the Russians played a role in the plot.

3. The Mafia

This much we know is true, the CIA had contacts with organized crime families to discuss assassinating the president. Only the president was Cuba's Fidel Castro, not Kennedy. The mob was heavily invested in casinos and other lucrative investments in Cuba before Castro's communist revolution, according to one iteration of the theory. Kennedy botched the Bay of Pigs invasion, ending any hopes of American organized crime returning to Cuba and enraging the mafia. Furthermore, the mob did not like Kennedy's crusading younger brother Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and hoped the younger brother would lose his influence if his brother was killed. One version of the theory has the CIA, who had already contacted the mob about killing Castro, asking the mafia to carry out the Kennedy hit. In another version the mob is paid to kill Kennedy by anti-Castro Cubans.

Many proponents of this conspiracy theory point to Jack Ruby, the Dallas nightclub owner with known mafia connections, who killed Lee Harvey Oswald two days after his arrest. The Warren Commission cleared the mafia from involvement in any such plot. The House Committee on Assassinations found that the mafia was not involved in a conspiracy, but did not rule out that individuals with mob ties were part of the plot.

4. The Cubans

Given that U.S. agents tried to assassinate Cuban President Fidel Castro numerous times, the theory goes, Castro decided he would repay the honor and try to assassinate Kennedy. Perhaps the most famous proponent of the Cuban theory was President Lyndon Johnson, the man who would succeed Kennedy following the assassination. "Kennedy was trying to get to Castro, but Castro got to him first," Johnson told ABC News in 1968. Both the Warren Commission and the House Committee on Assassinations cleared the Cubans of any involvement and when Castro was interviewed by Bill Moyers in 1977 he called the theory "absolute insanity."