

# THE GILDER LEHRMAN INSTITUTE *of* AMERICAN HISTORY

## *Inside the Vault: The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy*

November 4, 2021

*The session will start shortly. Please note:*

- Your video and audio will automatically turn off.
- You can participate through the Q&A function.
- If you have technical difficulties, please email [collectionprograms@gilderlehrman.org](mailto:collectionprograms@gilderlehrman.org) so we can assist you.

# *Our Team*

## Panelists

- Sandy Trenholm - Collection Director
- Dr. Barbara Perry - Gerald L. Baliles Professor and Director of Presidential Studies at the University of Virginia's Miller Center
- Jermain Corbin - History Educator at the Condon K-8 School in South Boston
- Shelby Miller - Curatorial Intern
- Allison Kraft - Assistant Curator

# *During the Session*



- If you would like to ask a question, you can **use the Q&A feature.**
- We will be answering audience questions throughout the session.

## **For Security and Privacy**

- Your microphone is automatically muted.
- Your camera is automatically turned off.

# Today's Documents

- The Ticker Tape from the Day John F. Kennedy was assassinated
- “We Are . . . the Watchmen on the Walls of Freedom”
- President Johnson’s Proclamation of a National Day of Mourning

NEW YORK N Y FRIDAY NOVEMBER 22 1963 9 A M  
GOOD MORNING  
DOW JONES NEWS SERVICE  
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/ ERHARD LOOKS TO ATLANTIC UNION

PARIS -AP- WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR ERHARD SAID TODAY HE CONSIDERS FRENCH-GERMAN COOPERATION AND EUROPEAN UNITY AS THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD A LARGER ATLANTIC UNION COVERING POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

AT THE END OF TWO DAYS OF TALKS WITH PRESIDENT DE GAULLE AND OTHER FRANK LEADERS, ERHARD SAID FRENCH-GERMAN COOPERATION WAS A LIVING POLICY OF HIS GOVERNMENT.

HE NOTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN DELAYS IN FORGING EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNITY BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES ABOUT THE APPROACH.

ERHARD SAID IN AN ADDRESS PREPARED FOR THE FRENCH DIPLOMATIC PRESS ASSOCIATION.

“THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WHICH COOPERATES CLOSELY WITH US HAS THE RIGHT TO CLAIM THE GREAT MERIT OF HAVING ENCOURAGED EUROPEAN UNION WITH ALL ITS FORCE A LONG TIME AGO.”

THIS COMMON AND RECIPROCAL ACTION OF EUROPE AND AMERICA OFFERS THE WORLD TODAY THE BEST ALLIANCE ITSELF AND THE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD FULFILLED.

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/ JAPANESE ELECTIONS

TOKYO -AP- DESPITE INROADS BY MODERATE LEFTISTS AND INDEPENDENTS, PREMIER IKEDA’S CONSERVATIVES MAINTAINED OVERWHELMING CONTROL OF THE JAPANESE PARLIAMENT IN FINAL UNOFFICIAL ELECTION RETURNS TODAY.

THE RETURNS GAVE THE LIBERAL-DEMOCRATS 283 SEATS IN THE 467-SEAT RULING LOWER HOUSE - THIS WAS 13 LESS THAN THE 296 WON IN 1960 AND THREE SHORT OF THE 286 THE CONSERVATIVES HELD AT DISSOLUTION THREE WEEKS AGO.

THE LEFT WITH PROPOSITION, THE SOCIALISTS

## “WE ARE . . . THE WATCHMEN ON THE WALLS OF FREEDOM”

The text of the speech President John Fitzgerald Kennedy was scheduled to deliver in the Trade Mart in Dallas, Texas, at noon on November 22, 1963.

IMMEDIATE RELEASE NOVEMBER 23, 1963  
Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
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By the President of the United States of America  
A PROCLAMATION

To the People of the United States:

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th President of the United States, has been taken from us by an act which outrages decent men everywhere.

He upheld the faith of our fathers, which is freedom for all men. He broadened the frontiers of that faith, and backed it with the energy and the courage which are the mark of the Nation he led.

A man of wisdom, strength, and peace, he moulded and moved the power of our Nation in the service of a world of growing liberty and order. All who love freedom will mourn his death.

As he did not shrink from his responsibilities, but welcomed them, so he would not have us shrink from carrying on his work beyond this hour of national tragedy.

He said it himself: “The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it -- and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.”

Now, therefore, I, Lyndon B. Johnson, President of the United States of America, do appoint Monday next, November 25, the day of the funeral service of President Kennedy, to be a national day of mourning throughout the United States. I earnestly recommend the people to assemble on that day in their respective places of divine worship, there to bow down in submission to the will of Almighty God, and to pay their homage of love and reverence to the memory of a great and good man. I invite the people of the world who share our grief to join us in this day of mourning and rededication.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this twenty-third day of November in the year of our Lord sixteen hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighty-eighth.

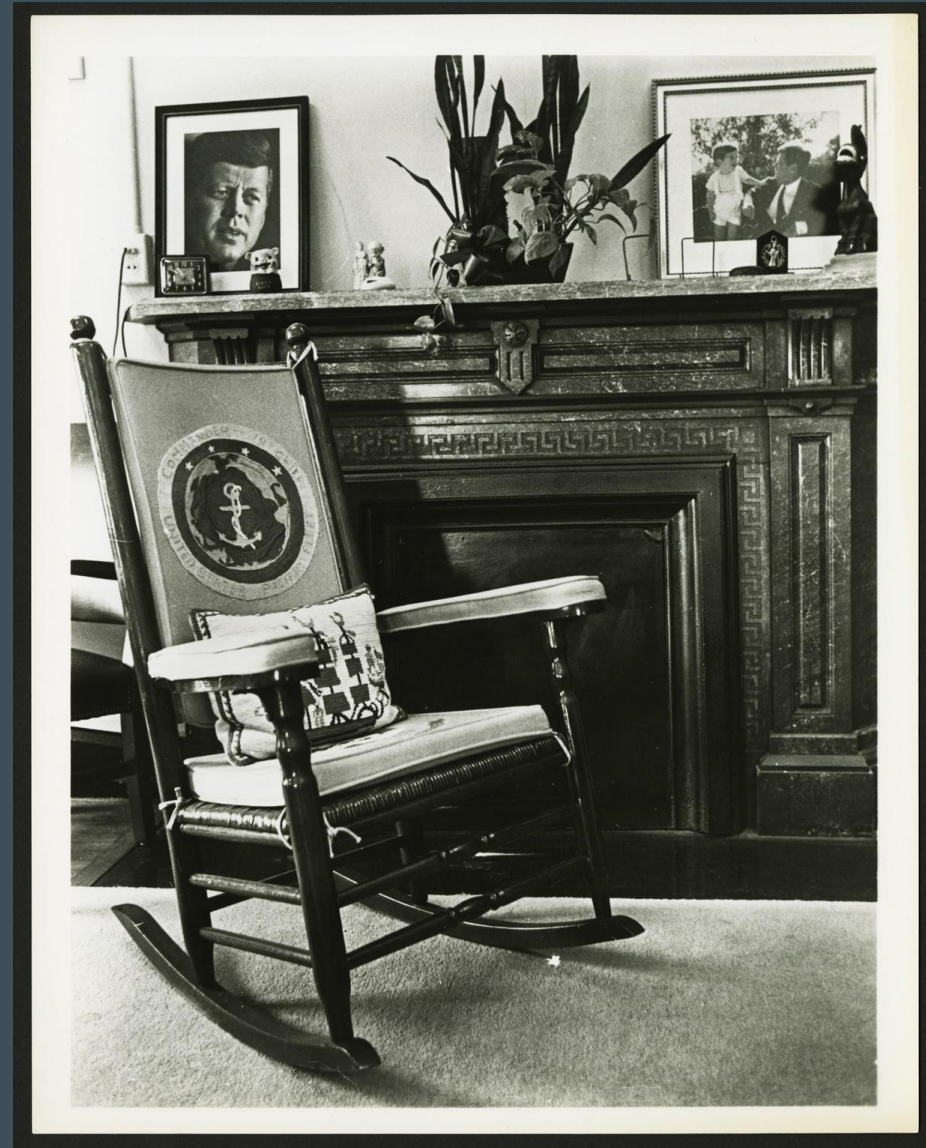
LYNDON B. JOHNSON

By the President:  
DEAN RUSK  
Secretary of State.

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# *Why was Kennedy in Dallas?*

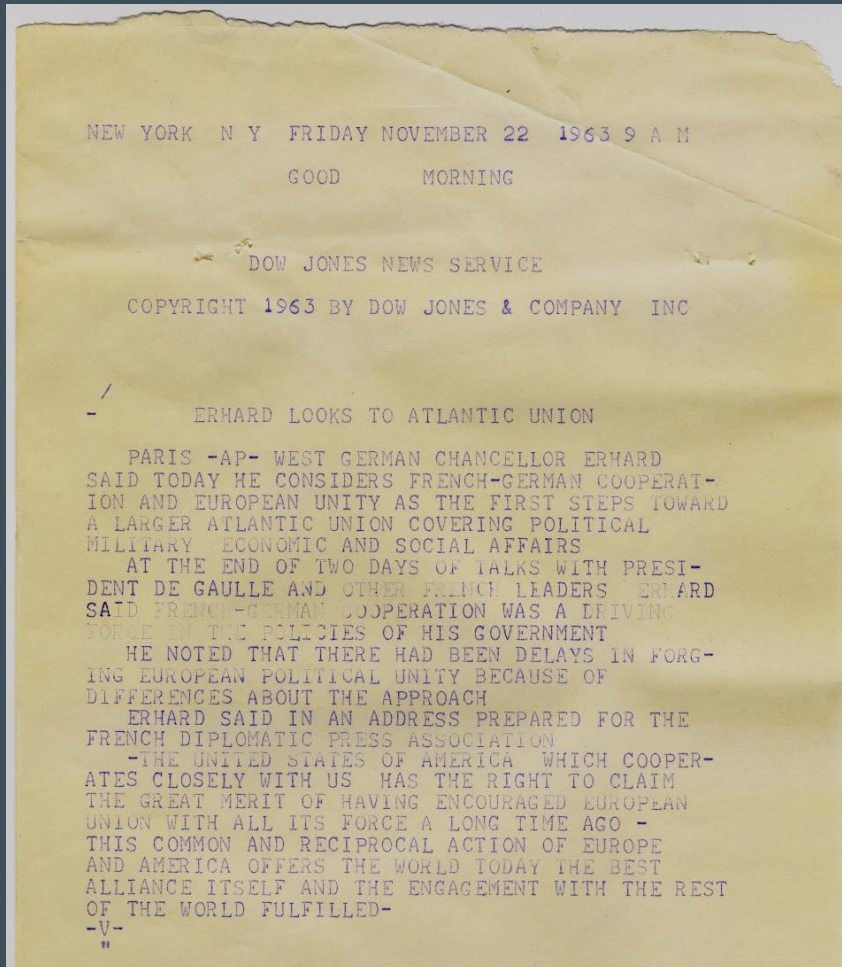
- Presidential Election
- Appealing to Southern Voters
- Civil Rights
- Stance on Communism



President Kennedy's Rocking Chair.  
Gilder Lehrman Collection



# *Ticker Tape of the Day Kennedy Was Killed*



- Dow Jones Ticker Tape from November 22, 1963
- 6.5 inches wide
- Consists of fifteen sheets - the longest sheet measures 57 inches
- Covers events from 9:00 a.m. through 4:59 p.m.
- Includes a variety of news from the day
  - Political news
  - Agriculture news
  - International news

# *President Kennedy Shot*

THE GILDER LEHRMAN  
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## PRESIDENT KENNEDY SHOT

DALLAS -AP- PRESIDENT KENNEDY WAS SHOT TODAY JUST AS HIS MOTORCADE LEFT DOWNTOWN DALLAS - MRS KENNEDY JUMPED UP AND GRABBED MR KENNEDY - SHE CRIED OH NO- THE MOTORCADE SPEDB ON

AP PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES W ALTGENS SAID HE SAW BLOOD ON THE PRESIDENT-S HEAD

ALTGENS SAID HE HEARD TWO SHOTS BUT THOUGHT SOMEONE WAS SHOOTING FIREWORKS UNTIL HE SAW THE BLOOD ON THE PRESIDENT

ALTGENS SAID HE SAW NO ONE WITH A GUN

AP REPORTER JACK BELL ASKED KENNETH O-DONNELL PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT IF KENNEDY WAS DEAD - O-DONNELL GAVE NO ANSWER

KENNEDY WAS REPORTED TAKEN TO PARLAND HOSPITAL NEAR THE DALLAS TRADE MART WHERE HE WAS TO HAVE MADE A SPEECH

BELL SAID KENNEDY WAS TRANSFERRED TO AN AMBULANCE



# *President Kennedy Shot*

THE GILDER LEHRMAN  
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

HE LAY ON A SEAT OF THE CAR  
BELL REPORTED THREE SHOTS WERE FIRED AS THE  
MOTORCADE ENTERED THE TRIPLE UNDERPASS WHICH  
LEADS TO THE STEMMONS FREEWAY ROUTE TO  
PARKLAND HOSPITAL  
PANDEMONIUM BROKE LOOSE AROUND THE SCENE  
THE SECRET SERVICE WAVED THE MOTORCADE ON  
AT TOP SPEED TO THE HOSPITAL  
EVEN AT HIGH SPEED IT TOOK NEARLY FIVE  
MINUTES TO GET THE CAR TO THE AMBULANCE ENTRANCE  
OF THE HOSPITAL

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GOV JOHN B CONNALLY OF TEXAS ALSO WAS CUT-  
DOWN BY BULLETS

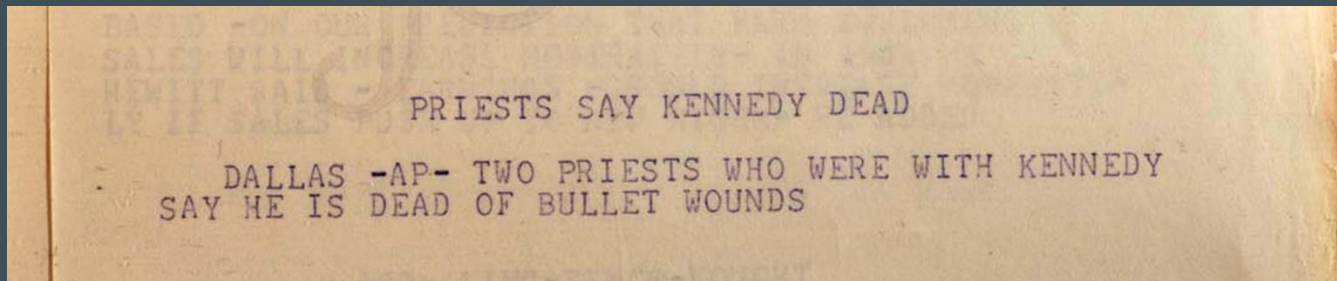
THE PRESIDENT WAS SLUMPED OVER IN THE  
BACKSEAT OF THE CAR FACE DOWN - CONNALLY LAY ON  
THE FLOOR OF THE REAR SEAT

IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL AT ONCE WHERE  
KENNEDY WAS HIT BUT BULLET WOUNDS IN  
CONNALLY-S CHEST WERE PLAINLY VISIBLE IN-R

DICATING TE

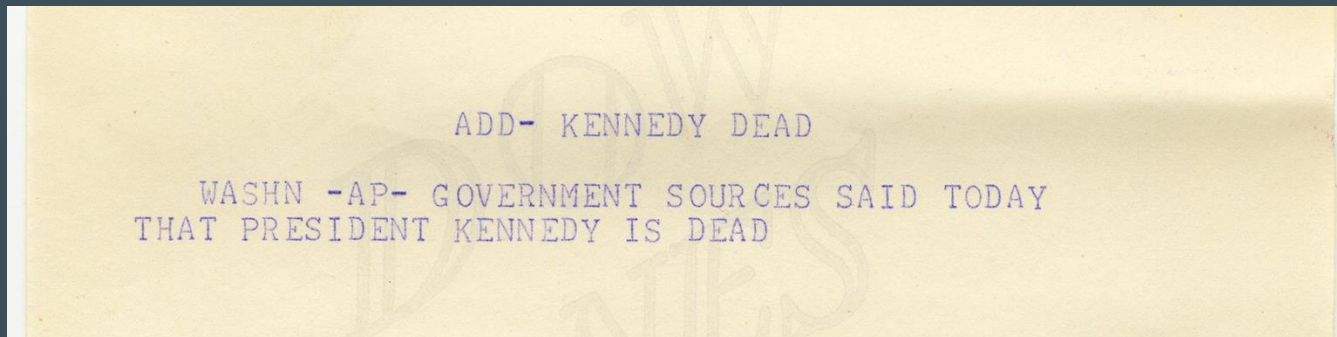


# *Announcement That Kennedy Had Died*



Priests say Kennedy dead

Dallas —AP— two priests who were with Kennedy say he is dead of bullet wounds



Add— Kennedy dead

—Washn —AP— government sources said today that President Kennedy is dead

# *Lee Harvey Oswald Captured*

/  
- POLICE HOLDING -PRIME SUSPECT-  
IN KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

DALLAS -UPI- POLICE TODAY SAID LEE H OSWALD  
IDENTIFIED AS CHAIRMAN OF A -FAIR PLAY FOR  
CUBA COMMITTEE- WAS THE PRIME SUSPECT IN THE  
ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

POLICE SAID OSWALD 24 WAS ACCUSED IN THE  
SLAYING OF A DALLAS POLICEMAN SHORTLY AFTER  
THE SHOOTING OF THE PRESIDENT

POLICE CAPT PAT GANNAWAY SAID THE SUSPECT  
WAS AN EMPLOYE IN THE BUILDING WHERE A RIFLE  
WAS FOUND

GANNAWAY SAID THE SUSPECT HAD VISITED RUSSIA  
AND WAS MARRIED TO A RUSSIAN - THIS WAS NOT  
IMMEDIATELY CONFIRMED

THE SUSPECT WAS THE MAN CORNERED AND SEIZED  
IN A MOVIE THEATER IN THE OAK CLIFF SECTION  
SOON AFTER THE ASSASSINATION - HE HAD KILLED  
A POLICE OFFICER BEFORE HE WAS SUBDUED

# *"We Are . . . the Watchmen on the Walls of Freedom"*

- This is the speech that was supposed to be given by Kennedy on November 22, 1963, in the Trade Mart in Dallas, Texas.
- It covered topics such as Communism, American strength, and nuclear war.

"WE ARE . . . THE WATCHMEN  
ON THE WALLS OF FREEDOM"

*The text of the speech President John Fitzgerald Kennedy  
was scheduled to deliver in the Trade Mart in Dallas, Texas,  
at noon on November 22, 1963.*



# *Watchmen Speech Highlight*

pensable in world affairs. Ignorance and misinformation can handicap the progress of a city or a company—but they can, if allowed to prevail in foreign policy, handicap this country's security. In a world of complex and continuing problems, in a world full of frustrations and irritations, America's leadership must be guided by the lights of learning and reason—or else those who confuse rhetoric with reality and the plausible with the possible will gain the popular ascendancy with their seemingly swift and simple solutions in every world problem.

There will always be dissident voices heard in the land, expressing opposition without alternatives, finding fault but never favor, perceiving gloom on every side and seeking influence without responsibility. Those voices are inevitable.

We cannot expect that everyone, to use the phrase of a decade ago, will "talk sense to the American people." But we can hope that fewer people will listen to nonsense. And the notion that this nation is headed for



## *Watchmen Speech Highlight*

Finally, it should be clear by now that a nation can be no stronger abroad than she is at home. Only an America which practices what it preaches about equal rights and social justice will be respected by those whose choice affects our future. Only an America which has fully educated its citizens is fully capable of tackling the complex problems and perceiving the hidden dangers of the world in which we live. And only an America which is growing and prospering economically can sustain the world-wide defenses of freedom, while demonstrating to all concerned the opportunities of our system and society.

# *Watchmen Speech Highlight*

We in this country, in this generation, are—by destiny rather than choice—the watchmen on the walls of world freedom. We ask, therefore, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility—that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint—and that we may achieve in our time and for all time the ancient vision of “peace on earth, good will toward men.” That must always be our goal—and the righteousness of our case must always underlie our strength. For as was written long ago: “Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 23, 1963

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

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LYNDON B. JOHNSON

By the President:

DEAN RUSK

Secretary of State.

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## *Johnson's Proclamation*

- November 23 - President Lyndon Johnson issued his first presidential proclamation.
- In a statement broadcast on television and radio, he declared November 25, 1963, the day of President Kennedy's funeral, a national day of mourning.



# *Johnson Eulogizes Kennedy*



Courtesy of Ron Cogswell. Grave of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Arlington National Cemetery, March 2013 (Flickr)

“He upheld the faith of our fathers, which is freedom for all men. He broadened the frontiers of that faith, and backed it with the energy and the courage which are the mark of the Nation he led.

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# *Giving Tuesday*

THE GILDER LEHRMAN  
INSTITUTE *of* AMERICAN HISTORY

Please support the Gilder Lehrman Institute on Giving Tuesday or as part of our year-end appeal. All donations, no matter the size, will help the Institute maintain its free programming and resources that benefit thousands of teachers, students, and history lovers like you. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

[gilderlehrman.org/support](https://gilderlehrman.org/support)

# *Upcoming Programs*

THE GILDER LEHRMAN  
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

- *Inside the Vault*, Thursday, December 2 at 7 p.m.  
ET (4 p.m. PT)
  - Dr. Victoria Phillips joins us to discuss anti-communist trading cards: *Fight the Red Menace: Children's Crusade Against Communism*.
- Learn more about upcoming programs such as *Book Breaks*, EduHam Online, and other free resources by visiting our website.