Lee Harvey Oswald was lone gunman, upcoming film argues

An upcoming documentary offers new evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. | AP Photo

By MACKENZIE WEINGER | 11/18/11 5:48 PM EST Updated: 11/19/11 10:53 AM EST

An upcoming documentary on President John F. Kennedy’s assassination reveals new evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman, the lead historian on the project told POLITICO.

As the 48th anniversary of JFK’s death approaches next week, the documentary’s re-mastered, high-definition home videos taken at Dealey Plaza on Nov. 22, 1963 strongly bolster the case

Holland said the documentary — “JFK: The Lost Bullet,” which premieres on Sunday at 9 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, “breaks the stranglehold of the Zapruder film.” The iconic home video — a critical part of the Warren Commission and other investigations — was not the only amateur footage taken that day, Holland noted, but its images have dominated the thinking around JFK’s assassination.

For the special, Holland’s team pieced together several 8mm home videos into one complete film of what happened that day — and in doing so, Holland said, prove that Oswald was the lone gunman.
Conspiracy theorists obsessed with the infamous “grassy knoll” will have their hopes dashed by the documentary, Holland said, thanks to the opportunity to study a sharpened, cleaned up video that focused on the hill inside the plaza.

“Inevitably people ask about the grassy knoll, and one of the films that’s been digitized and enhanced shows that there’s nothing there,” Holland told POLITICO.

Further proof, Holland said, is that his investigation also revealed that there was an 11-second window for Oswald to fire off the three shots, and not the six seconds commonly believed.

“Eleven seconds to fire three shots is akin to all the time in the world,” Holland said. “There’s no longer any question of how it was so difficult to do and how he pulled it off.”

In addition, the Warren Commission accounted for two of the three bullets fired, but the first shot — the one that missed — has long been the source of speculation, controversy and fodder for conspiracy theorists. Holland said the first bullet is documented in 13-year-old Tina Towner’s home video, which is shown in the documentary.

The Towner film, Holland noted, drives the 11-second window theory that he said offers more evidence that Oswald acted alone.

And why didn’t Oswald’s first bullet hit his intended target? Blame a traffic light.

“In the documentary, our explanation is that the first shot missed because it hit a mast arm of a traffic light,” Holland said. “It’s that that got in the way of Oswald’s first shot and why it missed the president and the car and everybody in the car.”

To prove their lost bullet theory, the crew brought in surveyors to Dealy Plaza and restaged the famous shooting.

“We measured angles and distances that were crucial for our evaluation and everything worked out as we had anticipated,” Holland said.

“The second and third shots were long settled, but the third was unsettled and we essentially nailed it,” he added.

Meanwhile, one of the digitally enhanced videos also offers history buffs the clearest look yet at a shadowy figure thought to be Oswald on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository building.

“I’d never seen it digitized, enhanced and on a very good screen, so when I myself saw it, I could see the shadow like I’d never seen it before with such clarity,” Holland said. “And you can’t identify Oswald per se, but it’s very suggestive of a profile of a man moving from hiding behind the edge of a window to moving to the center and getting ready to fire his first shot.”

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