 Glossary of terms – JFK case study

| Term | Definition |
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| Camelot | The earliest histories of the Kennedy Presidency, often produced by those personally close to the President and marked by a warm and sentimental perspective on his Presidency and legacy |
| Revisionist | The second wave (re-interpretation) of histories of the Kennedy Presidency, produced from the 1990s. These histories often sought to break down the classic Camelot story of his Presidency and legacy. |
| Neo-Camelot | The third wave of histories of the Kennedy Presidency, produced after the 1990s and driven by nostalgia for the Kennedy Presidency. These histories often acknowledge President Kennedy’s flaws but overwhelmingly celebrate his Presidency and legacy. |
| Civil rights | The rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality. In this context, it refers particularly to the political and social rights of African Americans. |
| Popular history | Histories that are produced by writers and journalists who do not necessarily have History training. Popular histories seek first to entertain by telling compelling, personality-driven narratives about the past for a wide audience. These histories are driven by audience interest. Non-academic history. |
| Academic history | Histories that are produced by trained historians who use scholarly methods, including peer review, to produce detailed, evidence-driven interpretations of the past. |
| Film history | Accounts and interpretations of the past communicated using the medium of film. This can incorporate documentaries, docu-dramas, historical re-enactments and history-based narrative films. |
| Official history | Histories that are produced or endorsed by a group or individual who features in that history. |
| Administration (Presidential) | The Executive branch of government under a specific President (e.g. the Kennedy administration between 1960-63) |
| Attorney General | The principal legal officer or head of the US Department of Justice, responsible for advising the government on legal matters. |
| Senator | A representative elected by the people to represent them in the Parliament. In the USA, each State elects two Senators every six years to represent them in Federal Parliament, where they pass laws and vote on new policies. |
| Capitalism | An economic system where private entities own the means of production. |
| Communism | An economic and social system where all property is centrally owned by the community and each person contributes and receives money and goods according to their ability and needs |
| Cold War | The nonviolent conflict between the USA and USSR between the years 1945/1947-1991. Key to the Cold War was the conflict between capitalist and communist systems. |
| Brinkmanship | The practice of trying to achieve something by pushing dangerous events to the very brink of active conflict. John Foster Dulles, US Secretary of State between 1953-1959, defined it as “the ability to get to the verge without getting into the war”. For example, the threat of nuclear conflict during the cold war. |
| Proxy war | A war instigated by a major power in which the major power is not actively involved. |
| Nostalgia | A sentimental yearning or wistful affection for a period of the past. |
| Hawk | Those who advocate for an aggressive foreign policy based on exerting military power. Favouring war over non-military conflict resolutions. |
| Dove | Those who advocate for a foreign policy approach based on solving international conflicts without reverting to military force. |
| Politburo | The principal policymaking body/ executive committee of a communist party. |
| United Nations | An international organisation formed in 1945 with the aim of increasing global cooperation and avoiding conflict between nations. |