

AUTHOR ALEXANDRA ZAPRUDER

Alexandra Zapruder will introduce her book "Twenty-Six Seconds: A Personal History of the Zapruder Film" at the festival. On Nov. 22, 1963, her grandfather Abraham had his camera in hand intending to film President John F. Kennedy's motorcade driving through Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas. The film was supposed to be a family memento, but instead it captured the president's assassination, one of the most horrific events in American history.

The government and almost every news organization wanted rights to "the Zapruder film." LIFE magazine purchased the rights for \$150,000 in 1963.

"The film was the lightning rod for a lot of controversy, and in some cases our family was misrepresented in the media," Zapruder says. "My parents made a very concerted effort to shelter us, because it was very painful for my family."

Zapruder was 10 months old when her grandfather passed away and grew up unaware of many details about the 26-second film. As she became curious, Zapruder asked her father, Henry, questions. He had taken a job at the Justice Department as a trial lawyer in the tax division three weeks before the assassination. He answered her questions, she says, but usually preferred to talk about personal



PHOTO BY LINDA FITTANTE

memories of his father.

"One of the things that I came to understand is that inside of my family, there was no intrinsic curiosity about the film," she says. "But outside of the family people were very curious."

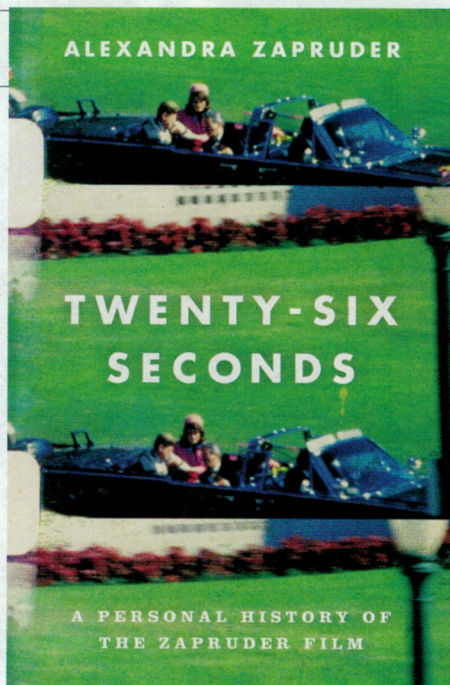
In her book, Zapruder intertwines historical events, her family's personal stories and interviews with various people, revealing the impact of the film.

"I didn't know how people would respond to me, but they wanted to talk about it," she says, adding that the entire process was rewarding.

"The whole book is what I learned," Zapruder says. "From a personal standpoint, I learned about the way that my grandfather and father were thrust into an unprecedented situation. At the time my grandfather made the film, this was unheard of. Today, this kind of film is so ubiquitous. Everyone with a cell phone has these videos."

Alexandra Zapruder appears at the book festival at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 9.

The Book Festival of the MJCCA, Nov. 4-19. Series passes offer all 36 events for one price. \$125, members; \$145 non-members. Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta, 5342 Tilly Mill Road, Dunwoody. 678-812-4000 or visit atlantajcc.org. ■



THE ZAPRUDER FILM, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

insider TIP

- Alexandra Zapruder's first book, "Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust," is a collection of diaries from young people who lived during the Holocaust.
- One of the ways that the authors are chosen is through the Jewish Book Council Network in New York. Each year, representatives of the Atlanta book festival attend and are introduced to more than 250 authors. This committee votes for the authors they would like to invite to the festival.