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TRUTH TEST: 'Dreams from My Real Father'

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Written by Matt Flener

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KUSA - A highly-charged political DVD has started showing up in mailboxes across Colorado. It's a film that makes claims about President Obama's family background called "Dreams from My Real Father."

The film's director claims 700,000 Colorado households have received this DVD in the mail. The exact number of copies distributed in Colorado cannot be independently confirmed.

Filmmaker Joel Gilbert sent them out to key swing states, including Colorado, Florida, and Ohio. Gilbert works for Highway 61 Entertainment and has produced mockumentary/spoof films about Paul McCartney and Elvis.

He appears in multiple clips on YouTube talking about his new film about President Obama.

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"Barack Obama, in fact, has a deeply disturbing family background which he intentionally hid to obscure a Marxist political foundation," Gilbert said in a speech at the National Press Club earlier this year.

In the YouTube clip of the speech, it is not clear to whom he addressed his remarks. In the film, Gilbert says President Obama's father is a Communist named Frank Marshall Davis.

Davis was an African American journalist who lived in Hawaii. Federal authorities investigated Davis in the 1940s and 1950s for any ties to the American Communist Party. The film also says Davis had a secret relationship with President Obama's mother and that President Obama is making up the story about his Kenyan father.

However, there is no proven familial relationship between Frank Marshall Davis and President Obama.

In Obama's 1995 memoir called *Dreams From My Father*, Obama mentions a man named Frank, but never describes him as Frank Marshall Davis.

According to Obama biographer and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Davis Maraniss, Obama and Frank Marshall Davis knew each other in Hawaii, but are not related.

"I talked to President Obama about Frank Marshall Davis," Maraniss told 9News in an email. "He was an acquaintance of Stanley Dunham, Obama's grandfather. He is also to some degree the Frank in *Dreams from My Father*, but I point out several reasons to be cautious about the characters in that memoir, noting that Obama at times enhanced the importance of black characters to make a racial point and completely elided certain white friends who were more important in his life. Frank Marshall Davis falls into the former category. He was one of the few older blacks in Honolulu who young Obama knew, and to that extent was interesting. But he was not a real mentor, and he was definitely not his father."

In addition, Atlanta-based Libertarian attorney Loren Collins has looked at the film and questioned many of Gilbert's claims. Collins has written extensively about Gilbert's film on his blog.

"The biological relationship claim is complete conspiratorial hogwash, backed up with evidence that's shoddy even by conspiracy theory standards," Collins said.

He went on to explain the relationship between Davis and President Obama.

"As far as I know, the handful of references in Obama's book are the only evidence of *any* relationship between Obama and Davis, and those references in the book consist of two incidents of meeting Frank (pp. 76-77 when he talks about his grandfather dropped by to drink, and pp. 89-91 when he stops at Frank's house after his grandma exhibits some racism), one reminiscence about what Davis said about the value of college (pp. 96-98), and then several times where his name just gets dropped, either as a reference to one of these three incidents or just as one name listed among other people's names," Collins said.

Gilbert would not agree to an interview regarding his film unless 9News agreed not to use clips from his film. 9News did not agree to those parameters for an interview.

There are a few other things you should know about this film.

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The entire film uses a narrator that sounds, somewhat, like President Obama. It is clearly not President Obama's real voice.

In the film, it is also clear the narrator is imagining what President Obama is thinking.

"By the time I was 18," the narrator says, "Frank Marshal Davis' worldview became mine. And my mission in life was to fulfill his dreams."

It is important to point out there is no evidence to support that President Obama has ever said this. There are dozens of other quotes that use this type of technique to inaccurately portray President Obama in the film.

Gilbert has also never said where he's getting the money to send more than four million copies to voters in swing states like Ohio, Florida, and Colorado.

"From there we are expanding across the United States until America understands the deadly Marxist dreams Obama has for us from his real father," he said in the National Press Club speech earlier this summer.

The bottom line:

There is no proven familial relationship between Frank Marshall Davis and President Obama. The narrator in this film is not President Obama's voice.

It is a voice using dozens of quotes there is no evidence President Obama has ever said.

Both Mitt Romney and President Obama's campaigns declined to comment on Gilbert's film.

Editor's note: The original story has been updated to clarify the relationship between President Obama and Frank Marshall Davis.

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