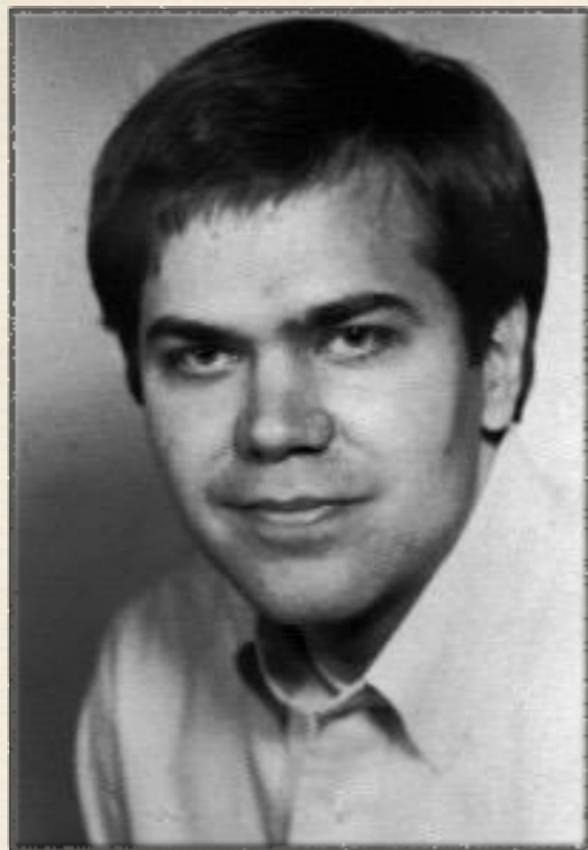


# John Hinckley Jr.



*His Life and Impact*

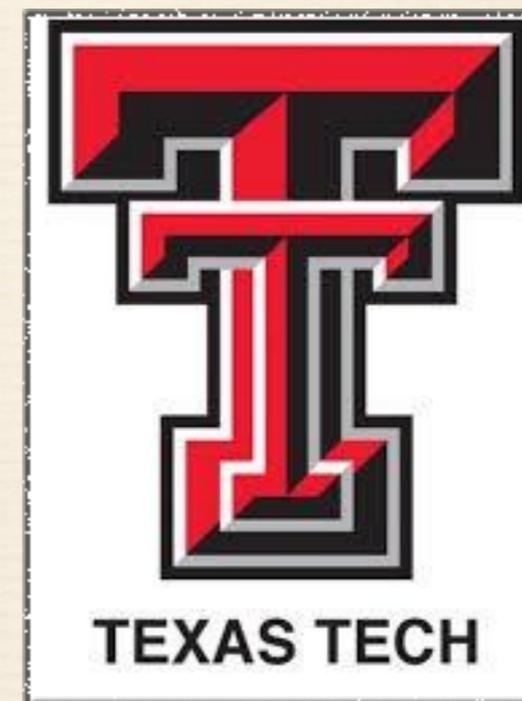
*by S.A.*



## His Life

John Warnock Hinckley was born on May 29th, 1955 in Ardmore, Oklahoma. John had two older siblings: a brother, Scott, and a sister, Diane. His father, John Hinkley Sr. was Chairman and President of the Vanderbilt Energy Corporation, thus the family was fairly well off and both of John's siblings went on to become college graduates and successful adults.

During his elementary school years, Hinckley had good grades, many friends, and played on numerous sports teams. But shortly after he entered high school, John became more reserved and spent much of his time in his room, alone. In 1973, Hinckley graduated from high school and the family moved to Evergreen, Colorado. However, John soon left due to his enrollment in Texas Tech.





Evergreen, CO

At the conclusion of his freshman year at the college, Hinckley moved to Dallas for the summer to live with his sister and her family. He continued at Texas Tech for another year before he decided to drop out and move to

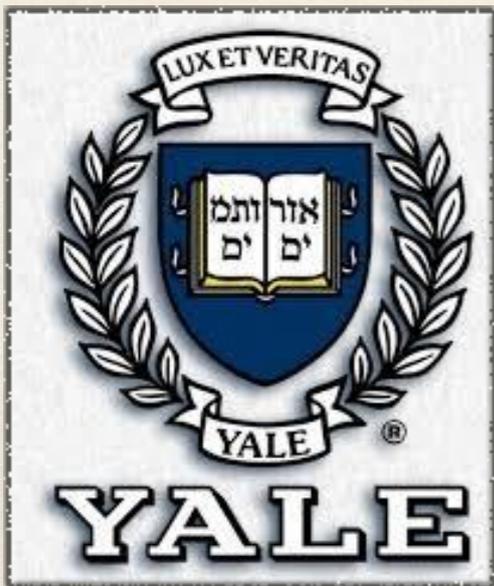
California to pursue a career in songwriting. It was during his stay in the Golden State that Hinckley first saw the movie "Taxi Driver"; a film about a psychopath attempting to murder a presidential candidate.

That summer, John saw that same movie fifteen total times and became completely obsessed with an actress in the film, Jodie Foster.

Sick of Hollywood, John moved back to Evergreen in 1976 and got a job as a busboy. But that didn't last either and Hinckley soon moved again; first back to CA and then once again to Texas Tech. He spent a total of seven years at the college without ever earning a degree.



In 1979, Hinckley took up an interest in guns and bought a pistol to begin target shooting. Over the next year, while adding to his collection of firearms, he had a number of health issues for which medicine was prescribed. When John discovered that Jodie Foster was enrolled at Yale, he signed up for a writing course at the university so that he could be near the actress. He made a number of different attempts at correspondence with her thinking that he was in love with her. Hinckley also began to stalk President Jimmy Carter and once, when attending a campaign stop in Nashville, Hinckley was arrested at the airport for having handguns in his suitcase. He was let go with nothing but a small fine and soon replaced the guns that had been confiscated by airport security.





Reagan - Moments before he was shot



The chaos following the shots



Timothy McCarthy



Thomas Delahanty

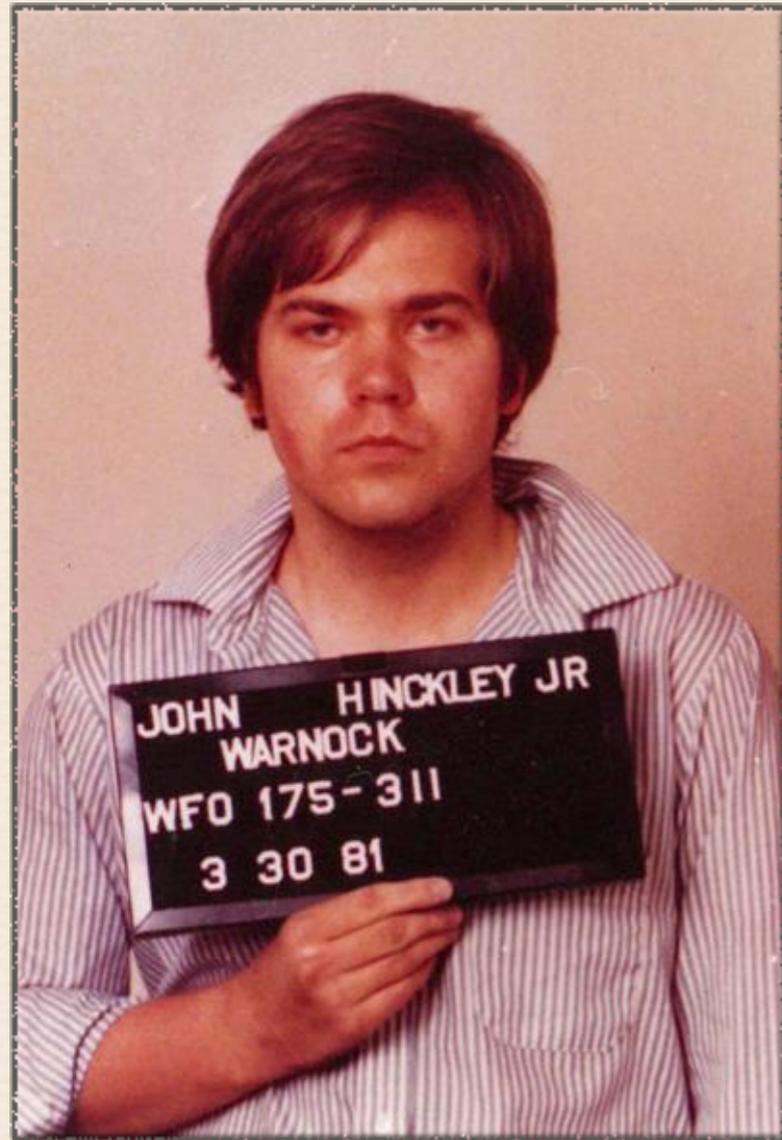
## The Almost Assassination

On Monday March 30th 1981, Hinckley wrote a letter to Jodie Foster explaining his plan to assassinate president Ronald Reagan, thinking she would be impressed. John then stood outside the Hilton Hotel with the press and waited for the president to emerge. When Reagan appeared, the would-be assassin fired six shots from his .22 caliber Rohm R6-14 handgun at nearly point blank range. Reagan was hit in his left lung, and three other men were injured. Press Secretary James Brady was shot in the head and partly paralyzed, Secret Service agent Timothy McCarthy and police officer Thomas Delahanty were also injured by the bullets meant for the President.



James Brady

# Trial and Imprisonment



Hinckley's mugshot



Almost immediately after Hinckley fired the last shot, he was handcuffed and taken into custody. Over a year later on May 4th, 1982 his trial was held. Hinckley pled “not guilty” by reason of insanity and he was found so after seven weeks of testimony and three days of deliberation by the jury. The twenty six year old was then committed to St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital in Washington D.C. where he still resides today.



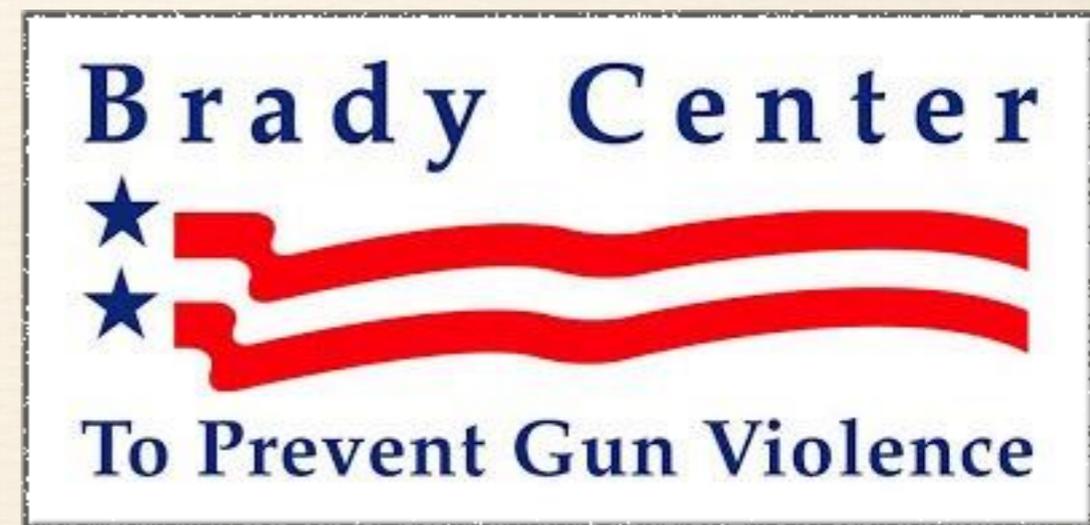
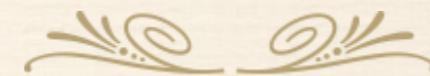
St. Elizabeth's

# His Impact

While the attempt on President Ronald Reagan's life certainly shocked the nation, Hinckley's actions had much more of an impact than simply surprise. All of those he had injured and their families, of course, experienced major repercussions, but James Brady's head wound spurred great action on his part and this action, in turn, affected the nation. Brady became a strong advocate of background checks and other gun control laws and regulations that have affected every US citizen. He worked extremely hard to convince people that much stricter gun laws, especially hand gun laws, were necessary for the safety of the nation up until his death on August 4th, 2014.



Because of his paralysis, Brady spent the rest of his life in a wheel chair



Brady and his family started an organization to advocate gun control

# Brady Campaign Posters

## IN ONE YEAR, GUNS MURDERED

17 PEOPLE IN FINLAND  
35 IN AUSTRALIA  
39 IN ENGLAND AND WALES  
60 IN SPAIN  
194 IN GERMANY  
200 IN CANADA

AND 9,484 IN THE UNITED STATES

## GOD BLESS AMERICA.



Want to make a difference? Join [www.bradycampaign.org](http://www.bradycampaign.org)



**40%** OF GUNS ARE PURCHASED EVERY YEAR WITH NO BACKGROUND CHECK  
**6 MILLION GUNS**

THAT'S WHY



**90%** OF AMERICANS AND A MAJORITY OF GUN OWNERS WHO SUPPORT EXPANDING BRADY BACKGROUND CHECKS

TELL CONGRESS TO

# FINISH *the* JOB

DEMAND BRADY BACKGROUND CHECKS ON ALL GUN SALES

Brady Campaign  
To Prevent Gun Violence



**ASSAULT CLIPS. THEY MAKE EVERYONE A TARGET.**

Call Congressman X and tell him it's time to renew the ban on high-capacity assault clips. **PAID FOR BY THE BRADY CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE.**



Prior to the work of the Brady foundation, gun control laws were fairly loose in the US. There was a registry of those who possessed firearms and people such as convicted felons, or individuals who were mentally ill were the only ones prohibited from buying a gun. Despite these regulations there was no process to find out if the buyer of a weapon did or did not fit into the prohibited category.

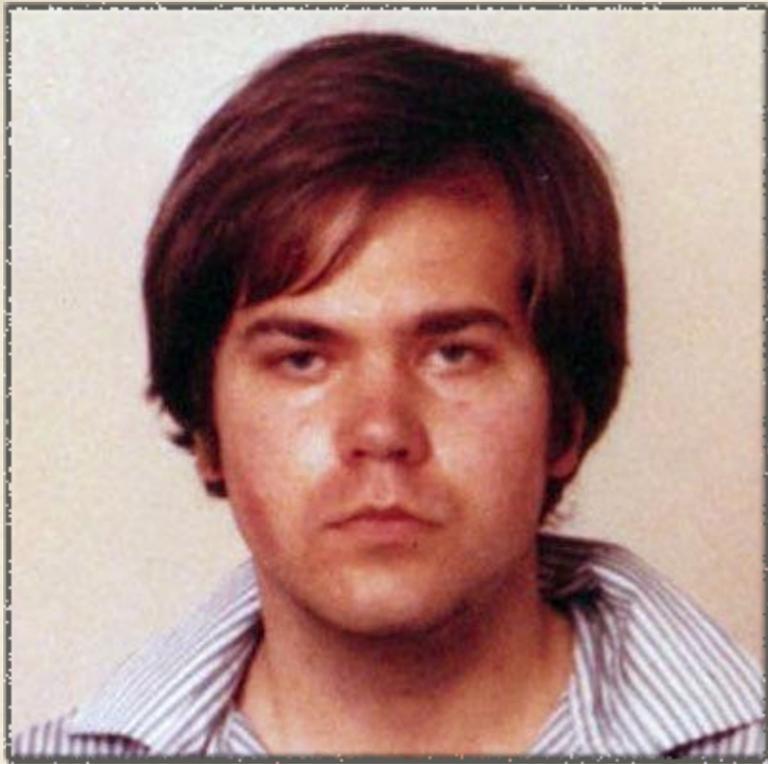


James and Sarah Brady -  
founders of the Brady  
Foundation



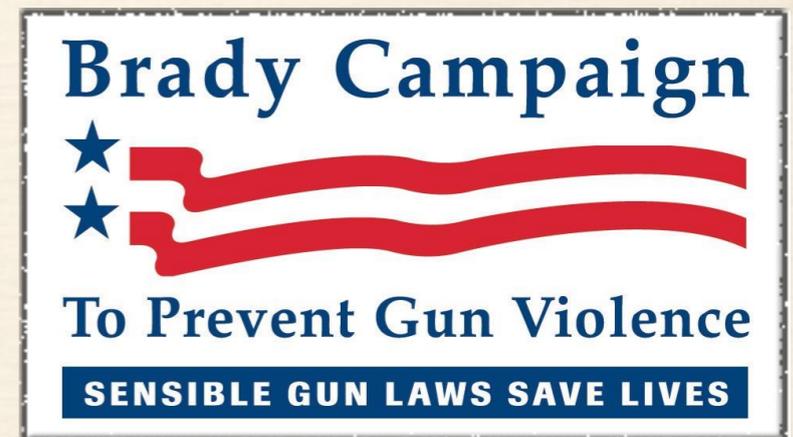
President Clinton signing  
the 1993 Brady Law

In 1993, a law that became known as the Brady law, was signed by President Bill Clinton. The law had serious regulations that came with it: licensed gun dealers were required to submit information about buyers to the FBI. Through this law, the sale of around 2 million guns has been stopped.



When John Hinckley Jr. fired those six shots, he thought only to kill the President but the repercussions of his decisions have reached far beyond President Reagan and even beyond the others who were hurt by those bullets. His actions, in essence, produced the Brady Foundation, which almost single-handedly made America's Gun Control Laws what they are today.

The Brady Campaign continues to have much influence on our legislators and therefore on our country. Some would say that all this change has been for the better, that we need these laws to protect our citizens. Still others would argue that these laws are only violating the second amendment and preventing law abiding citizens from being able to defend themselves. But regardless of whether you believe Hinckley had a negative or a positive impact, it is clear that his influence was major in the United States.



*the*  
*End*

# Sources

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