

### Critics and Ghouls

Like many other Americans, I have been confused and disturbed by the recent furor over the Warren report. After reading Charles Roberts' objective account, "Eyewitness in Dallas" (NATIONAL AFFAIRS, Dec. 5), I must agree with him and admit that the conspiracy theory cannot be taken very seriously.

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■ You get the feeling of gravedigging ghouls when you read the present furor over books critical of the findings of the Warren commission; the sole objective of the authors and their publishers was to make money. Nothing is served by raking over these dead ashes except sensationalism, and sensationalism brings in dollars.

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■ Roberts says that the autopsy report on President Kennedy was written by "the best-qualified team of forensic-medicine experts the U.S. Navy could muster." He is incorrect. Commanders Boswell and Humes of the Navy are not forensic pathologists; Colonel Finck of the Army is a qualified forensic pathologist, but he arrived when the autopsy examination was already in progress and at an unspecified stage.

It is the Warren report that is on trial, not Edward Jay Epstein's "Inquest" or any other critical work. And thus far, the case for the defense of the report—to cite but one example—is pitifully feeble, and often inaccurate as to basic facts.

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✓ Charles Roberts replies: If Sylvia Meagher narrowly interprets the phrase "forensic-medicine experts" to include only those pathologists who are certified in forensic pathology by the American Board of Pathology, then technically she is correct.

But if she implies that the three-man board was incompetent to conduct the autopsy and resolve questions of forensic (legal) medicine, then she is at variance with the professional opinion of Dr. Benwood Hunter, president-elect of the College of American Pathologists (and himself a certified forensic patholo-

gist), who described the Kennedy autopsy team to NEWSWEEK as "absolutely topflight ... extremely well-qualified in forensic pathology."

As for the second point, Lt. Col. Pierre Finck participated in the autopsy, concurred in all its findings and gave testimony filling seven pages in the Warren commission hearings.