

23 October 1969

Dear David,

After writing to you yesterday, I received the large envelope with your ABNP index, and the next day (today) the miscellaneous assortment of items you turned up in your house-cleaning. This letter is mainly to thank you, and to assure you that I will not share the ABNP index with anyone.

Even after an admittedly hasty look at the ABNP index, I can appreciate the very hard and grueling labor that went into it. At first glance, I find some of the "key" items and abbreviations or codes rather complicated and confusing, and some of the subject headings which are taken from Gemberling's tables of contents (and his fault, not yours) verging on the incomprehensible. Please don't think that I am carping or an ingrate, but I think it might be possible to devise a less complicated format for the ABNP index which would make it much more functional. I am not suggesting that you should do it (rather, re-do it), since you should not divert your time from your major and central work, after having invested so much excruciating effort on the ABNP, and since it is usable. But if I had the time, or someone else with the necessary background knowledge, it might well be possible to devise a standard form, xerox a large quantity, and then enter the information for each subject in such a way that the need to keep referring to the explanatory notes and comments would be obviated. If I find myself with time hanging on my hands (laughter, laughter), I may take a stab at designing a model.

But you have done a tremendous job in compiling this ABNP inventory, regardless of acknowledged rough spots, and I congratulate you and thank you again.

Turning to the second envelope, a few questions and comments. I have never been able to put my hands on "In the Shadow of Dallas," listed in a number of bibliographies. Is it worth a serious effort for me to get a copy and read it? If so, can you suggest where and how I might get one? As to the excerpts you sent me (pp. 22-23), I was quite interested to see the fate of one of my early and original "finds" in the 26 volumes--that is, Olsen's presence near the Tippit scene (AAF pp 263-264). In one of my long-distance conversations with Penn Jones shortly after I was first in touch with him, probably early 1966, I told Penn the whole business about Olsen being at the Tippit scene or near it, at the critical time-period. Penn was quite excited by the information and the next thing I knew he had printed it, in his MID/MIRROR and then in his FMG I, without attribution to his source of the information. And now I see that he is given credit for uncovering the Olsen affair (for whatever it may or may not be worth) by the author of "In the Shadow..." I am not really too upset about this --and I did not remonstrate with Penn at the time he first published the Olsen story, but maybe I should have been less intimidated by my own dislike of the various competing claims for credit, especially H.Weisberg's (who found EVERYTHING first, as we all know). I was silent also when Vince nicely made a gift of my thesis of the phoney Secret Service agents on the grassy knoll and behind the Depository to Gaeton Fonzi, who promptly used it as his own discovery in his Greater Philadelphia article. Of course, in those days I regarded Vince and even Penn as veritable brothers, but I am less philosophical now about such questionable ethics and near-pirating, now that I have a more clinical appreciation of the Vinces and Penns.

The notes on Volkland are not very legible but I get the general idea and note that Turner got almost all the credit for that, with only a mention of your part in it. No reply to this letter is really needed if you are pressed for the time, it is mainly a thank-you letter.