

There is only one New Orleans (fortunately). It has a culture of its own; standards and concepts that would be unwelcome elsewhere. What is there normal would elsewhere be startling.

Garrison has Tom Bethell charged with theft for taking office records. He is defended by Herbery Garon. Layton Martens is charged with perjury for swearing before the grand jury that he had nothing to do with the Houma heist. Martens is defended by Milton Brener, well respected as a skilled trial lawyer.

It turns out that Brener and Garon are partners. When the probability of Tom Bethell's connection with Brener's anti-Garrison book became unavoidable, I checked the attorneys' listings in the N.O. phone book. There is but the one, Brener's partner.

So we have the concept of defense of clients ~~xxxxxx~~ by this prominent law firm: Brener proclaims Martens' guilt in the book he has written, thus, no doubt, effecting acquittal if and when the case comes to trial. Bethell has pilfered other files than those on Clay Shaw, but has not been charged with it. To make the knowledge of it unavoidable, Brener has the content in his book. No doubt proving all over again that Bethell did steal is the New Orleans way to establish his innocence.

They neither enjoy nor exercise a monopoly on this exotic concept of law and justice. Garrison criss-crossed the land proclaiming the innocence of the man he personally accused, Oswald, ~~while~~ simultaneously having him charged as a conspirator in the assassination, and innocent of it, for which he expected a jury to convict co-conspirators. Shaw repeatedly committed perjury on the stand, therefore he was not then and there confronted with the proof. Instead, as soon as the case was lost, he was charged with perjury, the best counts being ignored in the charge and omitted during the long period when it was possible to amend the charge.

One suspects the closest New Orleans comes to sanity is during Mardi Gras.