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# 19

## "What Happened to the Truth?"

As the extent of Garrison's folly in New Orleans became known, the conspiracy press, which had gained tremendous public acceptance during 1966 and 1967, began to falter. Garrison's excesses reflected poorly on other theorists, especially since the leading critics were an integral part of his early efforts. Anthony Summers later wrote, "What angers investigators about . . . Jim Garrison is that his cockeyed caper in 1967 was more than an abuse of the justice system. It was an abuse of history, and—more than any other single factor—[responsible] in discrediting . . . genuine researchers for a full decade, a decade in which witnesses died, and evidence was further obscured."[1]

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, some buffs, including Penn Jones,[2] Harold Weisberg,[3] and even Garrison himself,[4] published books, but they had dismal sales. The most popular works on the assassination were now those that exposed the New Orleans fiasco, most notably James Kirkwood's *American Grotesque*[5] and *Counterplot*, by Edward Jay Epstein, who had turned on Garrison.[6]*

"Although a dedicated group of people kept researching the case, it wasn't until 1974 that several things took place that

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*Epstein has increasingly become a gadfly among the conspiracy critics, writing national magazine articles in 1992 and 1993 attacking both Garrison's failed efforts and Oliver Stone's excesses in *JFK*.