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lished work is a dangerous mixture of good information with a liberal dose of falsehoods. Sifting out the truth is increasingly difficult for those not well versed in the facts.

Even the few critics who approach the subject from an academic's viewpoint, such as University of Wisconsin professor Richard Wrone, decry the field's decline in quality fueled by the public acceptance of more sensational theories: "To my mind, this assassination syndrome, this terrible collapse of the critical people—witness Lane, and Lifton, and Garrison and the rest—it's a suggestion that we are really in trouble as a society. These theorists take us away, fly us away to this unknown land of Oz, wherever they take us. They divert our attention from the reality. Every book that asks the question 'Who shot John Kennedy?' or tries to answer the question 'Who shot John Kennedy?' has fallen short of the mark, and sometimes egregiously so. Now, as you know, there are a bunch of books that are just old-fashioned nut books, like the umbrella man. And then there are a number of books which appear deceptively within the pale."⁴⁷

There is an increasing emphasis by the critics on commercialization, disguised often as research. An annual convention in Dallas, dubbed an information symposium, is actually a three-day gathering where buffs pay \$150 per person to shop at tables of assassination memorabilia and also listen to published authors and other self-appointed experts speak on topics such as "Strange and Convenient Deaths," "Media Cover-up—Then and Now," "FBI/Hoover Cover-up." Dealey Plaza witnesses important to the conspiracy, such as Jean Hill and Ed Hoffman, are treated as celebrities, complete with autograph sessions. For only \$20 a per-

(Prouty, *JFK* [New York: Birch Lane Press, 1992], p. 306). The implication is that some intelligence agency, probably the CIA, released an early, prepackaged set of details about the assassin to the media. But there is nothing mysterious about the "extra" edition of the *Christchurch Star*. Because of the nineteen-hour time difference, it was 7:30 A.M. on November 23 in New Zealand when JFK was assassinated. Oswald was arrested when it was shortly after 9:00 A.M. in Christchurch. Culling information from press stories around the time of Oswald's defection, plus information released by the Dallas police, the *Star* managed to get a thin "extra" on the street within three hours, by noon (Prouty, *JFK*, p. 306).