

Oliver Stone is the most recent - and most honored - of the many who have sought to exploit and commercialize the great tragedy of the JFK assassination. He has the potential of reaching the largest number of Americans with a wild assortment of fictions based on former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's book, "On the Trail of the Assassins."

That is the one trail Garrison avoided during the months of his almost daily proclamations of new evidence that did not exist except in the murk of his mind and of solutions of his own invention or merely taken from others when he liked them.

Nothing was too unlikely, too impossible or too palpably impossible for Garrison and he achieved enormous international attention from the world's media.

Undeterred when the jury took only an hour to tell him how wrong he was, he wrote the book with which Oliver Stone fell in love in self-justification and self-glorification.

When Sheridan Square Press published, it did not make even a perfunctory effort to check Garrison out. Nor did Stone later.

Garrison's is an untruthful account of his own fiasco in which he not infrequently had to hide the truth because it made him look amateurish, so incompetent and, among other things, so wrong-headed.

On February 10, as soon as I learned that what was being touted as "The Oliver Stone Project for 1991" was to be based on Garrison's wretched fictionalization of his own failures, I wrote him in some detail, warning him that what Garrison wrote is not true. I used two of Garrison's most pathetic and dishonest untruths where he dared not tell the truth and attached proof to my letter.

That was two months before Stone started shooting in Dallas. He had plenty of time for a new script. But he did not have time to respond to me, or to ask me if there were other such flaws in the script from which, without excessive immodesty, he was telling the world he was recording history, to tell the people who killed their president and why.

So what difference does it make after 27 years?

It was not only that the illustrations I gave Stone were ludicrous, pathetic and outrageously false. It is because to me the assassination of any President has the effect of a coup d'etat, whatever the intent may have been, because no two men ever hold identical beliefs or policies, and because when JFK was assassinated, all the institutions of our society failed - then and to a large degree since.

To me the assassination of any president is the greatest subversion in a representative society.

Nothing can be done to undo an assassination. All that can be hoped for is that the assassins not become the beneficiaries of their terrible crime. That government make the most diligent and thorough efforts to capture and punish them, and that the sorrowing people be told the truth.

None of these needs were met when JFK was gunned down in broad daylight on the streets of a large American city. The government never investigated the crime itself - and never intended to.

Among the many proofs I obtained of this by a dozen difficult and costly lawsuits under the Freedom of Information Act are:

Katz memo

Memo to SAC

Bronson report

Those few of us who raised questions and to proof that the Warren Report did

not tell the people the truth were subject to campaigns of vilification by federal agencies, particularly the FBI. Why did it - would it?

For one thing because expecting perpetual secrecy the FBI recorded its own disagreement with that report.

Basic to the Commission's conclusions is that Lee Harvey Oswald alone have fired three shots in less than six seconds.

The best shots in the world - and Oswald was, according to the Marines, a "rather poor shot" - have not been able to duplicate the shooting attributed to Oswald, the FBI included.

To make it seem possible that Oswald was the lone assassin, the FBI merely ignored a shot that missed. A spray of concrete from that missed shot caused a minor injury to by-stander James T. Tague. This was observed and immediately reported by the police and a deputy sheriff and thus was automatically recorded on the police radio system.

The FBI itself transcribed those broadcasts for the Commission which published them. What is now available to the Oliver Stones who seek fame and wealth in their exploitation of this tragedy includes a great volume of previously withheld official information like this.

But as truth was below Garrison, so also is it inadequate for Stone.

Each pretends to a unique genius and an understanding denied mere mortals and each foists off on the people as the truth theories that range from previously unproven to the palpably false.

In this, in pretending to have solved the crime when they have not, they engage not only in what I regard as an additional subversion - they provide a basis, as I have seen often in the unpublished official records, for the errant agencies to pick and choose from their provable factual errors and then prepare and distribute internally and leak memos in which they portray these errors as typical of all criticism and as proof they did not err and fail.

And thus the Stones and the Garrisons of the world protect those they

pretend to expose. I have obtained about a quarter of a million pages of once withheld official records, mostly the FBI's but also including the Department of Justice and the CIA's. Because I believe that FOIA makes me surrogate for the people, I have always granted unsupervised access to anyone and permitted all to use our copier for making and taking copies of their own selection.

This was well known to those contracted by Stone as his "experts," people who never saw a theory they did not love, no matter how impossible it was, and who never let fact undermine belief.

Everyone doing any work on the subject

But like Garrison - who wrote that a statue should be erected to me for bringing all those records to light - Stone had no interest in fact.

It would only undermine preconceptions with which he began, and from which he might further enrich himself and earn more fame.

Instead, with a reported \$40,000,000 from Warner Brothers for the film and \$137,500 to Garrison for the paper back rights to his fictional self-glorification, he will persist in what he has known all along is an untruthful further rewriting of Garrison's rewriting of the most terrible event in our history in which each is designed to emerge heroic.

To fortify Garrison's myths, he has contracted other unscholarly books, particularly that collection of all the nutty theories titled "Cross-fire."

Nothing is too ridiculous for its compiler, Jim Marrs - not even fake books, one of which Garrison personally knows is a fake despite his earlier love of it. He even persuaded the French intelligence agent behind it to change its title from "America Burns" to "Farewell America."

If Oliver Stone's reputation suffers from the thus far incomplete exposure of what I regard as his vulgar and indecent exploitations and commercialization of Garrison's fairy tale and the assassination itself, that is because he alone is responsible.

And if Warner Brothers does not make a pot or take a loss from their \$40,000,000 (investment), that is because their greed, like Garrison's and

Stone's, was so overwhelming they did not do what responsibility and decent concern for what they were to tell the people is who killed their President and why did not require them to make a reasonable effort to learn whether it is truthful. They all deserve to suffer from the truth. They, too, failed the nation and they, too, didn;t give a damn about truth or fact or history when they could anticipate making money from a sham and a travesty.

As Garrison was ont to repeat, "Though the heavens fall, let justice be done."

He was also fond of referring to "Through the Looking-Glass" in "Alice in Wonderland" in which up is down.

It is his and Stone's tragedy that they practiced this literally.