

Mr. David Lifton  
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5 January 1968

Dear David,

I must thank you most sincerely for the generous comments on Accessories After The Fact in your letter of 1 January 1968. You may feel sure that I greatly appreciate the thoughtfulness of your remarks and the praiseworthiness which you found in the book.

As to your criticisms: In each of the three instances which you discuss in your letter, I have merely exercised my clear prerogatives as author to select the arguments which I considered necessary to a line of reasoning pursued in the book, and to decide whether or not to attribute credit in cases of secondary or marginal findings. No violation of the canons of attribution is involved in the points you cite but only the exercise of undeniable and wholly legitimate judgment, discretion, and prerogatives. Consequently, I am in no way obliged to furnish "alternate or reasonable explanations" or explanations of any kind. Nevertheless, I wish to point out that I commented on the article which you co-authored, "The Case for Three Assassins," both in a letter to the editor of Ramparts at the time the article was published and in Accessories, on page 461. It seems to me to be crystal-clear that I have maintained complete objectivity with respect to the critical work, regardless of personal sentiment toward the authors in question.

Your reference to the fact that you purchased your copy of my book has not escaped me, nor the implicit reproach. I must comment, on this score, that in your extremely abusive letter of 2 January 1967 you termed me "unbelievably vindictive," "malicious," a "screaming, shrieking woman," untrustworthy, etc. That letter has never been retracted, qualified, or superceded by a further communication from you reassessing my character or conduct. As I am not known for turning the other cheek, I felt no impulse toward a courtesy--in the form of an inscribed copy of the book--which would have smacked of hypocrisy or even of an attempt at self-ingratiation on behalf of the book.

That being said, I must thank you once more for your tribute to Accessories, for which I am very grateful.

Yours very sincerely,

