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Jackson Heights, N.Y.
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Mr. Daniel Schwarz
Sunday Editor
The New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, New York 10036

October 24, 1971

Dear Mr. Schwarz:

Several months ago I came upon a review which had appeared in the Times daily book review which had been rather severely edited between the first and second editions of The Times. When I inquired as to why this had occurred, I received a letter dated June 9, 1971 from George Palmer, Assistant to the Managing Editor. His letter said in part:

"Deleting that material...involved routine editing in line with a longstanding policy of our paper.

Our book reviewers are granted full freedom to write whatever they wish about the books and authors they are dealing with, but we do not permit personalized editorials in the book columns.

The same reviewer would be free to write the same thing for the editorial page, the op-ed page or the Sunday Magazine, but the book columns are not intended for that kind of editorializing."

I replied to Mr. Palmer by citing a review from the Sunday Book Review which, in my opinion, completely failed to address the contents of that particular book, and instead, limited itself to editorial comments about the author and the subject. I asked Mr. Palmer why editorializing should be allowed in one case and not another. His reply in part, read as follows:

"When I referred to 'the book columns' I was referring to the daily book reviews, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Managing Editor's office. These reviews are, as you know, written by staff reviewers.

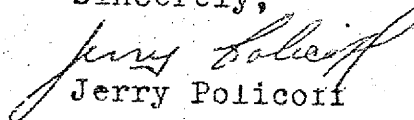
The Sunday Book Review...assigns books to all sorts of non-staff reviewers and is totally outside the office of the Managing Editor.

It is under the jurisdiction of the Sunday Editor, and I should have included it in my last paragraph when I listed the editorial page, the op-ed page, the Sunday Magazine, etc."

The clear implication of Mr. Palmer's letter is that reviewers for the Sunday Book Review are free to do all the editorializing they wish because they are not staff, while daily staff reviewers are subjected to editing. I wish you would clarify this "policy" for me.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,


Jerry Policoff