

Letters to the Editor,
The Nation
72 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 11011

In his mishmash (The Nation, 12/4/89), disgustingly headed "Of Gods and Men," A'Jamal-Rashad Byndon grossly misrepresents the criticism of Ralph Abernathy's several pages relating to an alleged sexual incident attributed to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the night before he was assassinated.

As Byndon acknowledges, many other books "delineate King's weakness for women."

Abernathy diminished himself, not King, in his totally unnecessary appeal to the prurient that he and his publisher knew would ignite a controversy and sell more books. Had this not been the intent, a single reference to what was already well-publicized would have been at least adequate.

I spent more than a decade suing the FBI, CIA and other agencies for their records relating to King and his assassination, both agencies were quite anxious to get the kind of information Abernathy misuses, they were adequately served by quite a few informers, and there is no hint of the incident Abernathy alleges in the more than 60,000 pages I got and examined. Yet King was covered so closely I got even copies of the contents of his pockets!

The greater weakness is Abernathy's.

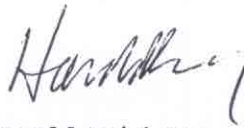
Byndon almost dismisses King in saying only that he "achieved an important place in history because he preached a message of nonviolence." So did thousands of others who today are unknown.

King's place in history is assured because he was a great American, a leader with courage, imagination and understanding and compassion;

because he saw what others did not; and led as others could not and did not. He inspires in death as he did in life and he will be remembered when the Abernathy exploitation and the Byndon and similar criticisms have long been forgotten.

He was a truly remarkable man who made no pretense of being God.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg
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P.S. Is this the best letter you got on the subject?
