

2/11/67

Mr. Herb Michelson, Public Affairs Director
WAKR, 853 Copley Road
Akron, Ohio 44320

Dear Mr. Michelson,

There is no unanimity among those you call critics, as there is also no agreement about what makes form interesting and informative programs. There are some who are happy with programs on which I've been that put my own relatives to sleep. This accomplishes little save for insomniacs. My opinion of the format is unchanged.

You have never told me who you've spoken to, hence it is not possible for me to make suggestions that might be helpful. However, if you have not written Mrs. Sylvia Magher, whose index was published by Saarecrow press and whose book has been contracted by Bobbs-Merrill, may I recommend that you do?

Again I can tell you only that in principle I am willing. I am working on two books and have all the other obligations of a publisher and researcher and... Much will depend on the date.

For the record, I entirely disagree with the unnamed critic who you quote as saying, "very constructive and intelligent...not simply another debate" (and we may not agree on what and who a critic is). What is needed now is a real dialogue, not pseudo-scholarly evasions. What the learned counsel shun is a real debate. Why do not you arrange one of those, extemporaneously? Between me and one of the lawyers. That'll require no preparation on my part, and certainly they are familiar with their own work.

Here we may face another problem, for there are those sometimes considered by those who do not know as critics but by "critics" as finks. There are some who are not really critics who so pose, and with these you will not get responsible "critics" to align themselves. We included.

You are the media man and I am not, but I have gone through this thing and you have not. I warn you again you are about to lay a scholarly egg, about to miss a real opportunity and perhaps another's foil. If I believe this is the case it will not interest me. Another factor is who will represent the other side. Some are hiding. I'd expect them there, not fronts.

You can assume that if the other arrangements are satisfactory to me and if I am compensated properly for preparation time I'll participate if I can. My writing at the moment means more to me and I do not do things just to sell books (my books do fairly well on their own - they have little choice). But if the preparation required is more than I feel justified I will not take the time, regardless of the money. I've just turned down an offer of a \$35,000 advance to do a book I want to do in a form I will not do it in.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg



Feb. 6, 1967.

Harold Weisberg
Coq d'Or Press
Hyattstown, Md.

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Again, thanks for your response--and your warnings. Thus far it appears we have a sufficient number of those invited who have accepted to proceed with financing plans and network arrangements.

You are not the only "critic" to beef about the disposition of "profits," if any. I feel it will be possible to reach an amicable agreement about the meting out of this money, perhaps on a percentage basis.

Also: with sufficient financing I'll do my best to compensate you for preparation time.

No one else, including your fellow "critics," has objected to the format. In fact, one author calls Mr. Griffin's proposal "very constructive and intelligent... not simply just another debate."

I hope you're wrong about this being dull. I frankly don't think it will be. All we can do is try.

Can I assume, then, that if you're compensated for preparation time you will agree to participate? We're pointing now for an early June production.

I appreciate your problems and your guidance.

Yours truly,

Herb Michelson
Public Affairs Director

HM:jrs



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