

From the Editor:

Slavic Review publishes letters to the editor with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be limited to one paragraph; comment on an article should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. The editor encourages writers to refrain from ad hominem discourse.

D.P.K.

To the Editor:

A basic misinterpretation provoked David Macey's distress over my *Mind and Labor on the Farm in Black-Earth Russia, 1861–1914* (*Slavic Review*, vol. 61, no. 3). Macey mistook two secondary aims of the book—assessment of Petr Stolypin's reforms and of the prospects for the peasant economy as of 1914—as its broader goals. He even contends that the book has no coherent argument. In fact, as the introduction (as well as the title) explains, the book is designed to critique the technological acumen and performance of the Russian peasantry as these evolved in the late imperial period. Contrary to Macey's account, it reaches bold, explicit conclusions on the constituent questions and their consequences. It builds to a five-sided explanation for Russian peasant exceptionalism (complete with comparative data on relative levels of technological underperformance, 184–87), and an appraisal of the emergence of differently minded peasants (187–90, 425–26). A mature concluding statement on the technological-economic aspects of Stolypin's reform appears on 371. Moreover, the concluding chapter delineates a three-layered progression of central black-earth Russia's agrarian problem: from technological to social to economic aspects. Namely, refinement of agricultural technique would accentuate conflicts between labor-poor and labor-rich farms. This would slow the formation of communal majorities able to enforce transitions to multifield systems. Next, the rural sector would require effective investment in processing industries for the most practicable multifield systems to thrive. Analysis of the 1920s buttresses the schema. In short, the book takes no shortcuts, and posits clear ideas on a variety of vital questions.

DAVID KERANS
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Professor Macey does not wish to reply.

To the Editor:

I was not surprised to read the petty and malicious criticisms of my book, *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*, in what nowadays can pass for a review by Donald Kenrick (*Slavic Review*, vol. 61, no. 3). It is a “bad” review not because it is not excessively laudatory but because it ignores the entire theoretical framework and the fundamental arguments, routinely takes points out of context, selects unrepresentative examples, makes demonstrably false statements, and is, by and large, intellectually dishonest. Again, I was not surprised that the book did not get a balanced review because I condemned Kenrick in it for, among other things, making up his data (108) and propagating preposterous charges of “ethnic cleansing” where none existed (246). I was also not surprised that Kenrick accepted the assignment to review a volume that personally attacked him even though he refrained from indicating this in his review since I have long been skeptical about academic ethics (in all fairness, I am not sure that Kenrick, of “London, England,” is an academic). I was somewhat surprised, that the editors of *Slavic Review*

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