

## Letters

### A Chance to Be Heard

To the Editor:

It is a pity people like Anthony J. Saldarini — a Jesuit-trained former-associate editor of The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, who reviewed my book "James the Brother of Jesus" (April 27) — are unwilling to face up to the anti-Semitism in their own religious documents. But it is just this anti-Semitism, and the fictionalized rewrites in early church documents that foster it, that "James the Brother of Jesus" helps illuminate and ameliorate.

Mr. Saldarini cries out for the Greek blood shed in Palestine while ignoring pogroms in cities like Caesarea, Alexandria, Damascus, Beit Shean, etc., and the hundreds of thousands of Jews butchered in this period, amply documented by Josephus. At Tiberias alone, a focus of his outrage — and mine — Josephus reports that "the whole Sea of Galilee ran red with blood" (6,700 being butchered) and catalogues 1,200 old and infirm people slaughtered, 6,000 able-bodied young sent to dig the Corinth Canal for Nero and 30,500 survivors sold into slavery.

Where "idiosyncrasy" is concerned, consider Mr. Saldarini's own interpretation of the single passage from Josephus he cites (from my dedication, no less!), which makes it clear that Monobazus and Kenedacos, royal converts to Judaism from northern Syria — and among the bravest warriors at the outbreak of the war against Rome — were martyred; and so they were, despite his attempts to deny this.

His purpose is to make it appear to an unschooled audience that I do not have my facts right, whereas it is his version that is incorrect. We have had two millenniums of this kind of history. Isn't it time the opposite side had a chance to be heard?

Regarding my proofs, which are extremely painstaking and detailed, Mr. Saldarini appears to resent people like me being given the opportunity to present their arguments fully. He would obviously prefer I go through another inquisition conducted by people like him first. His presentation of my arguments regarding the election to succeed Judas Iscariot in the Acts of the Apostles as a malevolent rewrite of the election of James to succeed his brother — one of a whole series of missing historical events, almost always rewritten with anti-Semitic material in Acts — is scandalous.

This is just the point of publishing a book like mine, rich in data and packed with proofs: so the public will have the wherewithal to decide for itself. It is not I who am ill serving the public; rather, The New York Times and its readers are ill served by prejudiced and inaccurate reviews like his.

ROBERT EISENMAN  
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### Mickey Mouse's Voice

To the Editor:

In his review of Stefan Kanfer's "Serious Business" (April 20), Bruce McCall wonders why Mickey Mouse "basks in mass-cult sainthood" despite not having made a picture in 50 years, and despite having a voice that "maybe one in a thousand Disneyland visitors could even recognize." I can't imagine where Mr. McCall gathered the data for this last point, but anybody who has recently spent a weekend or longer in any home populated by very small children is likely to be able to give earwitness testimony of Mickey's voice. Sure, his big-screen heyday is long past, but so is that of the Three Stooges, and kids have little difficulty identifying them. Thanks to Disney video cartoon compilations, Mickey will talk, walk and get into his animated scrapes in perpetuity. And like long-retired movie stars who keep in the public eye by means of commercial endorsements, Mickey continues to work for the Disney dollar in such newly minted vehicles as "Silly Songs for Kids," a heavy-rotation item in many a family station wagon tape deck.

Mickey Mouse's helium-tiny voice may not have weathered the years as durably as Donald Duck's larynx-scrambled squawk, but I'd rather listen to Mickey reading "The Waste Land" in its entirety than sit through 10 minutes of the televised caperings of a certain magenta reptile.

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