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Iannone, Carol: Letters Opposing Nomination of (1991): Correspondence 55

Joel Conarroe

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126 West 11th Street
New York, New York 10011

13 May, 1991

Lynne V. Cheney
Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Lynne,

My office phone rang all Friday morning with calls from Post readers, and thus it was that I learned of your response to my 9 April letter. You reply to outrage with outrage, no less astounded by my comments on Carol Iannone's Commentary essay than I am by the essay itself. Neither of us, it is clear, is likely to win over the other, but I hope we can at least agree to disagree.

On the subject of outrage, have you seen, in the May 20 Insight, Peter Shaw's defense of Ms. Iannone's condescending comments on minority novelists? "These writers," he says, "have pretty much gotten a free ride and they get all the literary prizes." One doesn't have to be politically correct to find disturbing this invocation of literary welfare. It puzzles me, too, that individuals like Mr. Shaw and Ms. Iannone, who have never served on major literary juries, are able to speak with such certainty about the motives of those who do so.

I'm sorry to have missed seeing you at the New York Public Library. A family emergency kept me from hearing Gertrude Himmelfarb's lecture.

I will send copies of this letter to interested parties.

I send best personal wishes.

Most cordially yours,

Joel Conarroe

cc: Phyllis Franklin
Stanley Katz
John Hammer
Senator Edward Kennedy
Senator Claiborne Pell ✓