

*To the Editor:*

I read the review of *The Tender Friendship and the Charm of Perfect Accord: Nabokov and His Father* by Gerard de Vries with dismay. Constructive, intelligent criticism is always welcome; unfortunately, his is neither. The following two examples will suffice.

1. De Vries claims that Nabokov had an “indomitable aversion to politics.” Even if it were true (cf., however, Nabokov’s telegram to President Lyndon B. Johnson; Boyd, *VNAY*, 503), it should not be misconstrued as a lack of political views on the writer’s part. It appears that de Vries did not peruse my book but rather skimmed over it. Otherwise, he would have discerned the discussion of Nabokov’s political beliefs and of their great affinity to those of his father, particularly in the section “Political Precepts” (58–70).
2. De Vries refers to my taking Dana Dragunoiu to task for her assertion that V. D. Nabokov’s “‘covert anti-Semitism’ was an open secret among his acquaintances.” He maintains that my book “does not reflect on some of V. D. Nabokov’s less fortunate expressions that Dragunoiu quotes.” Actually, it does (83–87). Despite Dragunoiu’s allegations, de Vries declares the entire debate “a polemic without an issue.” His rationale: simply because Dragunoiu later characterizes the senior Nabokov as “one of Russia’s most beloved and revered political figures.”

It is regrettable that the reviewer did not take the trouble to read the book more attentively.

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