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JAMES DAVIDSON  
 Co-Editor  
 Strategic Investment

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 real problem on their hands.

CARL P. LIMBACHER

Oyster Bay, N.Y.

## Persistent Devotion To Ungrateful Husband

Your review (Leisure & Arts, Oct. 4) of my "Edward Hopper: An Intimate Biography" (Knopf) not only truncates the title to simply "Edward Hopper," but suggests an alternative: "Edward and Josephine: Portrait of a Marriage." Clearly, your reviewer was struck by the revelation of the tormented private life of the painter. So struck in fact that he accuses me of bias toward Mrs. Hopper as a result of interviews that I purportedly held with her, which supposedly led me to overpraise her painting.

In fact, I never met Edward or Jo Hopper; I was still in college when they died. Nor do I claim that Jo "would have risen in the art world had she not been obliged to tend to Edward." Before their marriage her career was going well enough that she was able to help launch his. His later ingratitude heightened the tension between them. Her persistent devotion was of her own choice. Also symptomatic of your reviewer's bias is the way in which he plays down Jo's background. It was, in fact, at the same time and place as her future husband that she too studied with the famous Robert Henri.

Surprisingly, too, your reviewer accuses Jo of seeking to rival her husband, although my book documents her true attitude: "Of course, if there can be room for only one of us, it must undoubtedly be he. I can be glad & grateful for that—But why couldn't he ever at all want to throw me a crumb?" Also twisted by your reviewer is an instance when Edward pooh-poohed an expression of interest in her work by a sympathetic male artist, Edwin Dickinson.

Not content to diminish the wife, your reviewer accuses me of lacking sympathy for the husband, although I have devoted nearly 20 years of my life to the study and interpretation of his art. Your readers will judge for themselves whether I have succeeded in giving a fair account of this extraordinary personal and artistic symbiosis. At the very least, I have shown more scruple about fact than your reviewer was able to muster.

GAIL LEVIN

Professor of Art History  
 Baruch College and the Graduate School