ALEXANDER HAMILTON, THEN AND NOW
NOEMIE EMERY

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THE NEW EUROPE

MENACE OR FARCE?

Jeffrey Gedmin: Menace
David Brooks: Farce

the weekly Standard

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Books & Arts

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

Internet Al, Down on the Farm

You probably thought you knew Al Gore's life story by now. As told in the *New Yorker* a few years back, the outlines are these: "Gore was a son of politics, a child of Washington, where his father served for thirty-two years as a congressman and a senator. The family residence was an apartment in the elegant Fairfax Hotel, which was owned by a Gore cousin; young Al walked across the street every morning to the Cosmos Club, where a bus picked him up for the ride to Washington's most elite prep school, St. Albans, on the grounds of the Washington Cathedral."

Well, the vice president's life has been vastly more interesting than you thought. It turns out that, before being elected to Congress and inventing the Internet, Al Gore was also the son of a sharecropper in Tennessee. Or at least that's how it sounded in Gore's March 16 interview with the *Des Moines Register*: "I'll tell you something else [my father] taught me," said Gore. "He taught me how to clean out hog waste with a shovel and a hose. He taught me how to clear land with a double-bladed ax. He taught me how to plow a steep hillside with a team of mules. He taught me how to take up hay all day long in the hot sun."

How preposterous. Even when he tries to slum, Gore betrays his blue-blood upbringing. Real farmers, even poor ones, have been hiring bulldozers to clear land since before Al Gore was born, or at least using chainsaws. Only a hobbyist would use an ax. Not to mention, no responsible farmer since the Dust Bowl days of the 1930s has plowed a steep hillside; you don't want your topsoil to get washed away. As for the mules, it occurs to The Scrapbook that maybe one of them kicked young Al in the head.

Republican National Committee chairman Jim Nicholson has, needless to say, been making hay out of all this. One of Nicholson's many Gore-related press releases last week managed to combine just about every Gore affectation of the last decade into one magnificent soundbite: "I suppose the vice president's hog-raising career came after his tobacco-growing ventures and some time before he went into high-tech," said Nicholson. "It was later still that he and Tipper inspired the romance novel and movie *Love Story.* You'd think a guy who could raise tobacco, slop hogs, invent the Internet and inspire a best-selling novel and movie—all by the time he was 28—could afford to give more than $353 a year to charity."

Well said.

The Slope *Is* Slippery

When Oregon made "assisted suicide" legal, opponents predicted the law would one day be declared discriminatory against disabled people, because it required self-administration of lethal drugs. This would then open the door to state-sanctioned killing. Well, that day is just about here. When Patrick Matheny, dying of Lou Gehrig's disease, decided to take the lethal drugs he had received under Oregon law, he could barely swallow. So his brother-in-law, Joe Hayes, had to "help" Matheny die, as he recently told the press. The precise details, Hayes said, were "too personal."

That led to a brief investigation by the Coos County district attorney, Paul Burgett, who declared that Matheny's death conformed to Oregon law, and who further opined that it would be "unlawful" if terminally ill disabled people such as Matheny were unable to "accomplish their objectives." That got the attention of state senator Neil Bryant, who asked deputy attorney general David Schuman for his opinion. Yes, Schuman wrote to Bryant in a letter dated March 15, 1999, a court could indeed find that Oregon's Death With Dignity Act discriminated against disabled persons, either under the state constitution or, ironically, the Americans with Disabilities Act. Bryant further mused that a court could order the state to provide "reasonable accommodation that would enable the disabled to avail themselves of the Act's provisions."

What might that accommodation be? Schuman doesn't say. But if someone has a legal right to be dead and can't do the job himself, what other option is there? A state obligation to kill disabled citizens who ask may be just a lawsuit away in Oregon.

Democratic Defectors

Whatever clout the Clinton administration once had with congressional Democrats seems to have vanished. This was made abundantly clear during last week's Senate debate and near-unanimous vote to finally deploy a national defense against ballistic missiles. The Democratic posture had been that missile defenses are costly and unnecessary. Indeed, Joseph Biden recently told *Newsday*, "I don't think there is a real rogue-state

Scrapbook

threat." In fact, when senators Thad Cochran and Daniel Inouye tried to get a vote on their bill last year, they couldn't even get it scheduled because they lacked 60 votes.

The administration continued to oppose the Cochran-Inouye bill this year, and Tom Daschle, the Senate minority leader, obediently told his fellow Democrats a few weeks ago that the party position would once again be to keep the bill from even being debated on the Senate floor. But at a recent Democratic caucus meeting, the bottom dropped out. An array of senators, ranging from Bob Kerrey and Dianne Feinstein to freshmen Evan Bayh and Blanche Lincoln, said they weren't going to toe the administration's line any longer.

According to Senate sources, the Democrats' mutiny stemmed from a belief that carrying the administration's water was risky—and that, in any case, it was likely the president would change course sometime next year in order to benefit Al Gore's presidential campaign. This produced an amusing spectacle on the Senate floor last week. First, Democrats proposed two meaningless amendments to the Cochran-Inouye bill related to funding and a pledge to seek continued reductions in Russia's nuclear forces. The goal? To provide an excuse for dropping their opposition to the bill. Yet some Democrats were so paralyzed with fear over having to vote on the bill—it is strongly opposed by liberal arms-controllers—that Biden offered to withdraw the amendments if Republicans would allow the bill to be approved by voice vote. Republicans refused. Then, when Democratic senator Richard Durbin continued to speak out against the bill during floor debate, he was needled by fellow Democrat Charles Schumer as "Neville Durbin." In the end, Durbin was one of just three die-hard liberals to oppose a missile defense. Even Ted Kennedy voted for the bill. Congressional Republicans are suddenly more optimistic about the next two years.

What Goes Around

Seven years ago, when President George Bush tried to make political hay out of the release of national education statistics, a *Washington Post* story carried this snippy lead:

"Maybe President Bush doesn't read enough. In the fine print of an education report Bush released this week lies this instruction: 'Public reporting and release of [the education report] shall be apolitical.' But Wednesday, on a trip that included a $2,500-a-plate fund-raiser, the president released . . ."

Lately, though, the *Post* doesn't seem nearly as vigilant. In fact, it hasn't even noticed that Al Gore is now doing the same thing. In February, the commissioner of education statistics was all set to announce the latest national reading scores at a long-planned press conference, when Gore hijacked the event, packing the auditorium with education lobbyists and bureaucrats, inviting a first-grade teacher from Fairfax, Va., to make some remarks, and urging Congress to "enact the Clinton-Gore education agenda." Gore left without taking questions from the press.

Although the *Post* was mute, the *New York Times* did note, deep in its story, that the event was "more political than usual." The chairman of the board that oversees the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Mark D. Musick, noted this, too, and has lodged a complaint with the commissioner of education statistics. As he wrote in his letter of Feb. 18, unless NAEP results are insulated from politics, "people won't believe them."

On the national level, NAEP is one of the few education success stories. Too bad the Clinton administration seems determined to sully it along with everything else.

Casual

Hymn and Her

My in-laws came up from Rio this year: grandparents and cousins and sisters and friends; Brazilians think it's hardly worth leaving home unless they've gathered a pack of twelve and plan to stay for two months.

That's all right, you understand. Lorena and I have quartered ourselves on them often enough to ban any complaint. But this time they decided they would bring CDs for our almost 2-year-old daughter Faith. And so, every day from breakfast to dinner, we were treated to Brazilian children's music. We got *Cantigas de Roda*, a recording of what sounds like a weary samba band forced to back up the neighborhood children's choir. We got a Portuguese musical adaptation of "The Musicians of Bremen"—a Grimm fairy tale, you'll remember, that features a singing donkey, cat, dog, and rooster, all rendered with excruciating accuracy.

And then we got *Canção dos Direitos da Criança*, a multi-artist celebration of the U.N.'s 1990 Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child. In honor of Universal Right Number Four, for example, it offered "De Umbigo a Umbiguinho"—"From Big Navel to Little Navel"—an upbeat ditty about prenatal feeding:

Muito antes de nascer,
Na barriga da mamãe,
Já comia pra viver.
"Cheese" salada, bala, ou bacalhau:
Vinha tudo pronto e mastigado
No cordão umbilical.

Or, in English:

Much before being born,
In the belly of mama,
Already I ate to live.
"Cheese" salad, candy, or cod:
All came ready and chewed
Through the umbilical cord.

We'd had children's recordings before, of course. There was the soundtrack to Disney's *Pocahontas*; I think it came free with a Big Mac and large fries at McDonald's. And then there was a CD of piano solos—"carefully selected for children and other gentle souls"—so relentlessly calm that one wanted to break something with a sledgehammer the entire time it was on.

But you never realize just how inane children's music is until you hear it in a foreign language. I do want my daughter to be bilingual, and my wife assures me Portuguese is at its best in weepy folk ballads about chivalrous highwaymen and strangely syncopated modern numbers about girls in skimpy bikinis strolling the beaches of Copacabana. But if the price of bilingualism is *Canção dos Direitos da Criança*—and I tremble for humanity when I remember those chirpy voices rhyming *umbilical* with *bacalhau*, the Portuguese word for "cod"—then Faith is going to grow up a monolinguist.

Fortunately, she was never much taken with the Brazilian CDs, and lately she's found a new attachment. In 1988, in celebration of the 250th anniversary of John Wesley's founding of Methodism, the BBC commissioned folksingers Maddy Prior and the Carnival Band to record some English chapel hymns in more or less their original 18th-century gallery arrangements. Filled with the lyrics of John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, and other classic Protestant hymnists, the collection was released on CD a few years later as *Sing Lustily & With Good Courage*, and it's fantastic. You should get a copy.

In fact, you should come get my copy, for if I hear it again, I'll scream. Do all parents go through this? Do all children become immeasurably attached to one book, one video, one recording? Last week I tried to put on the Beatles, and my daughter crawled up in my lap, whispering "No, no" over and over again with all the sorrow of the ages in her troubled eyes. I have a friend in New York, Jim Nuechterlein, who defines his conservatism as "Change is bad," but he's a raging revolutionary next to Faith.

The other day I watched her marching up and down her room, crooning along while Maddy Prior sang for the thousandth time in her bell-like voice John Bunyan's "Who Would True Valour See":

Hobgoblin nor foul Fiend
Can daunt his Spirit;
He knows he at the End
Shall Life inherit.
Then Fancies flee away:
He'll fear not what Men say,
He'll labour Night and Day
To be a Pilgrim.

I suppose it should worry me that this was the abolitionist John Brown's favorite hymn; according to one version of the legend, he was singing it as they hanged him for the botched raid on Harpers Ferry. "Faith Bottum" already has a Puritan ring we didn't quite intend when we named her; as my mother points out, it sounds like a minor character in a Hawthorne story, the demure younger sister who one day kicks off her shoes because the streets of Salem are holy ground and begins to declaim the fieriest verses from the Book of Revelation.

But if the alternative is normal children's music—*Pocahontas* or *Canção dos Direitos da Criança* or songs "for children and other gentle souls"—I'll just have to live with my stern little pilgrim. She's already learned to fear not what men say.

J. Bottum

The Wright Stuff

The Editors suggest a congressional investigation of Juanita Broaddrick's rape allegation against President Bill Clinton ("Juanita Broaddrick and Us," March 15). While this might be helpful, they fail to mention another venue for such an investigation that has rarely been discussed.

Judge Susan Webber Wright, who presided over the Paula Jones case, is deciding whether she should initiate contempt proceedings against President Clinton because of his alleged perjury at his deposition in that case, which was conducted in Judge Wright's presence. If Clinton raped Broaddrick, then he committed perjury in that deposition when he said that "in my lifetime I've never sexually harassed a woman."

Judge Wright has the power and authority to fully investigate Broaddrick's charge by compelling testimony and the production of other evidence. The integrity of her own courtroom, as well as that of the nation, depends upon her doing so.

Allan J. Favish
Arlington, VA

Pillaging Values

Noemie Emery trenchantly demonstrates that feminists, having promised equality and progress, have delivered nothing more than imperious rhetoric and dissimulation nonpareil ("Just Rape," March 15).

Critics who still believe in the probity of the feminist movement should just wait until the predictable hatchet job is done on a cabinet or Supreme Court nominee of the next Republican president.

Eric Mayforth
Houston, TX

Noemie Emery misses the point in her evaluation of the Juanita Broaddrick allegations. She accurately points out the hypocrisy of the president's defenders in the press and politics, but she assumes that these same people might in the future refrain from blaming someone else for the beastly behavior in which the president has apparently engaged. In reality, the next time a Republican politician is the butt of an accusation without any foundation or even so much as tells an off-color joke, these same defenders will again be howling for blood. This is because they do not view these things as rock-solid principles to be upheld, but rather as weapons in the war against their political enemies. The ultimate goal is not justice or consistency, but power, and the Democratic party has become an institution whose sole purpose is to seize and control the powers of government at any price. That means that if they have to break campaign-finance laws while decrying their inadequacy, or defend a man who attacks women while pretending to be the party that

protects women's rights, they are more than willing, secure in the knowledge that their friends in the media will not make them pay a price for being morally bankrupt.

Michael Russo
Commack, NY

Winners Don't Whine

Thanks to Juanita Broaddrick and all the other Clinton scandals, the fraudulent feminists have been revealed, as Charles Krauthammer points out ("Defining Feminism Down," March 15). But why did anyone ever take feminism seriously? What ever made so many people fall for the idea that a credible movement could be rooted in victimization? I can't imagine that Cleopatra, Marie Curie, Coco Chanel, or Agatha Christie spent much time whining about how men were thwarting her ambitions. Persecuting from the victim's position is a powerful tool, as the National Organization for Women has demonstrated, and it usually comes with a hidden agenda. In this case it was leftist politics. We can thank Bill Clinton for unscrupulous feminism's exposure and demise.

Manon McKinnon
Falls Church, VA

Rogan's Heroes

Matthew Rees's article on James Rogan was appreciated, because had Rogan and company allowed Feinstein and her censure gang to prevail, she would have used her "tough" measure as cover in the next campaign ("Rogan's Run," March 15). This way, Rogan can use her "soft" vote against her! California voters are liberal, but they prefer consistency from their senators. Dianne Feinstein has demonstrated she will not deliver on that count.

Chuck Morales
Santa Margarita, CA

Better than Ezra

Christopher Caldwell has it exactly right: Ezra Pound's apologists have the disquieting habit of separating the man's art from his ideology, a position they are less inclined to take with contemporary conservative writers ("The Poet as Con Artist," March 15). My thesis adviser, a brash young genius with a pedigree from Johns Hopkins University, used to praise Pound's poetics while glibly passing over the anti-Semitic venom in his works. Indeed, this fellow, who once dismissed my defense of Christianity by sniffing, "Wasn't Joseph Stalin a Christian?" was enamored of a number of Pound's associates, including Wyndham Lewis. Lewis published *Blast*, the voice of vorticism, the obscure artistic movement that assembled such artists and writers as Pound, Ford Maddox Hueffer (later to call himself Ford Maddox Ford), Rebecca West, and Gaudier Brzeska. In *Blast 1*, published in 1914, Lewis

Correspondence

included a poem by Pound titled "Salutation the Third." It contained the lines: "Come, let us on with the new deal, / Let us be done with Jews and Jobbery, / Let us SPIT upon those who fawn on the JEWS for their money, / Let us out to the pastures." (These lines, in somewhat modified form, later found their way into the *Cantos*.)

It has always been a source of amazement to me how faculty members—especially those on the Left like my old literature professor—can be very deft at making the kind of distinction Caldwell identifies as long as they are defending "art for art's sake." It just proves what Norman Podhoretz says in *Ex-Friends*: In the world of ideas, it is not impossible for some intellectuals to maintain friendships with those who ought to be their enemies "provided the things they disagree about are not all that important to them."

JOHN A. PUMMELL
ALEXANDRIA, VA

I found Christopher Caldwell's article on Ezra Pound illuminating because while getting a B.A. in English Literature, I got more than my fill of Pound, Eliot, and other "intellectual" poets. Aside from a single mention, "Oh yeah. He was a Nazi," there wasn't much said about Pound's politics, which did not matter because of his "brilliance." The talk was always about his aesthetics, which escaped my appreciation.

Pound supposedly elevated poetry by making it more complex and adding foreign elements. For me, the reading experience was another matter. I was annoyed that this over-read jerk was talking over my head. Also, not being a reader of French, Greek, or Italian, I was constantly referring to the footnotes, which usually filled half the page.

Writing is a means of communication. One wonders whether the literati forgot that or, perhaps, deliberately wanted us to forget.

BART D. LEAHY
ORLANDO, FL

We're All Orphans Now

Tevi Troy writes that Max Lerner lacked ideological mooring "largely because his move from left to right left him an ideological orphan" ("From Left to Right," March 8). So why isn't Norman Podhoretz an ideological orphan, he who also moved from left to right? Or Sidney Hook, Theodore Draper, James Burnham, Irving Kristol—need I go on? Does Troy suggest that anyone who moves from left to right inevitably moves into an ideological orphanage? Really!

ARNOLD BEICHMAN
STANFORD, CA

Boom and Bust

Lee Harriss Roberts's article on the 401(k) boom was about as wrongheaded as it gets, because it ignored the risks inherent in those plans ("The 401(k) Boom," March 1). If 401(k) plans replace the defined-benefit alternative, our nation will experience a retirement-income debacle sometime in the future.

The problem is that a defined-contribution plan is exactly that: The contribution is defined, but the outcome is not. Unless we have rescinded the business cycle and the stock market's ups and downs, we can be sure there will come a time when bad markets lead to poor investment outcomes. What will retirees do then? They will demand that the government provide redress. That is what is happening in England now where three million people have lost their retirement nest eggs and are demanding that the government replace them. The cost estimate so far: $18 billion. This is the result of having replaced defined-benefit pensions with defined-contribution plans ten years ago.

Where has Roberts been during the last ten years while the stock market of the second largest economy in the world has declined by 65 percent? The Japanese market is down to 14,000 from about 40,000. In Japan a defined benefit would look pretty good to most people, compared to what they can purchase with whatever might be left of their investments.

An even bigger problem with 401(k) plans is the fact that according to a study by the New York Federal Reserve Bank, 72 percent of participants who change employers do not roll over their plans. They take the money out and spend it. This essentially guarantees that retirement-income security, the 30 to 40 years of compounding necessary for most to build a requisite pool of funds, will materialize.

Finally, defined-contribution plans are typically two or three times more expensive to operate than defined-benefit plans. These costs reduce net returns and should not be ignored. Mutual fund fees are typically far higher than fees charged by managers of defined-benefit assets.

Defined-contribution plans have a place in retirement planning, but that place is as a supplement to the defined-benefit base, or as an alternative vehicle where a defined-benefit opportunity does not exist.

ROBERT GARVY
PALM BEACH GARDENS, FL

No Rest for the Fatigued

In his "Doctored Letters," Tucker Carlson refers to a textbook on abnormal psychology which includes an entry on Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (Casual, March 15). This incident must have occurred quite some time ago, because the hypothesis that CFS is merely a manifestation of an underlying mental disorder has been disproved by a multitude of peer-reviewed medical research studies.

According to a recent article published in the *Annual Review of Medicine*, CFS "is an illness characterized by activation of the immune system, various abnormalities of several hypothalmic-pituitary axes, and reactivation of certain infectious agents" including a variety of viruses. CFS is an equal opportunity physical illness which strikes both liberals and conservatives alike.

TRISHA MELROSE
LOUISVILLE, CO

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the weekly Standard

An Outrage? You Bet

A con-game conspiracy stalks the land, using a fantasy of instant riches to bilk financially vulnerable Americans out of their hard-earned nest eggs. Fortunately, however, a bipartisan group of the nation's elected officials is on full alert. In the Senate, Republican Susan Collins of Maine has held highly publicized hearings and introduced legislation that would restrict this scam. And public servants like Indiana's Democratic attorney general Jeff Modisett, who has led a similar consumer-protection crusade at the state level, are bravely identifying the principal evildoers by name. "Frankly," he says, "Ed McMahon and Dick Clark ought to be ashamed of themselves."

Ed McMahon and Dick Clark? Yes. Last year, Modisett filed suit against McMahon, Clark, and the magazine sweepstakes they pitch for, American Family Publishers of New Jersey. He did so on behalf of roughly twenty Indiana residents who had complained about the company's eight-figure grand prize. For some reason, each had fully expected to win that money. None of them did. And so all of them were now out the cost of *Sports Illustrated* or some other such journal—subscriptions they did not really want or need. Scandal! Outrage! One wonders how McMahon and Clark can sleep at night.

Of course, in fairness to these two gentlemen, we should point out here that most people, including residents of Indiana, understand that they almost certainly haven't "already won" the sweepstakes periodically announced in their mailboxes—and toss those envelopes directly in the trash. Most people who do enter such contests make no purchase of any kind. And most people who do buy a magazine from Ed McMahon have previously entered his sweepstakes—for free—and failed to receive a prize; even they know the score. This is not exactly a secret: You don't have to buy a magazine to win, you're extremely unlikely to win one way or the other, and if you believe any different, then . . . well, you're kind of foolish.

Still, we hold no brief for Ed McMahon, who does not market The Weekly Standard, and we think profiting from the foolishness of others isn't a very nice thing to do. So we suppose we can see how Indiana's attorney general might be concerned over come-ons promising that "You could win the top prize of one MILLION dollars in cash, all at once, EVERY DAY of the week!"

But oddly enough, so far as we can tell, Jeff Modisett has made nary a peep about this particular come-on, which recently appeared in newspapers throughout Indiana. It was an ad for the "Hoosier Lottery," his state's own, government-run rip-off, an enterprise that makes Ed McMahon and company look like a bunch of Trappist monks. In stark contrast to the typical magazine sweepstakes, you do have to spend money to play the Hoosier Lottery. You don't get *Sports Illustrated* when you lose. And, despite the grotesquely dishonest hype ("Hoosier Millionaire!" "Daily Millions!" "Cash for Life!"), here, too, you have almost zero chance of winning big. The odds on the Hoosier Lottery's largest jackpot—in the multi-state "Powerball" drawing—are 80 million to one.

We look forward to Jeff Modisett's lawsuit against Indiana governor Frank O'Bannon.

In the meantime, the Hoosier Lottery—together with comparable numbers rackets operated by the governments of 36 other states and the District of Columbia—will continue suckering millions of Americans to the tune of $36 billion a year. And our political system's addiction to this revenue, more than any other single factor, will shortly make possible a shocking new low in the nation's near-psychotic embrace of gambling. Though hardly anyone seems aware of it yet, sometime soon, maybe as early as this summer, our living rooms will likely be saturated with prime-time television commercials promoting the blackjack and roulette tables at privately owned casinos. Bet on it.

Nominally, at least, federal law continues to prohibit broadcast-media gambling ads, as it has since 1934. Section 1304 of the U.S. criminal code's Title

18 bars radio and television promotion of "any lottery, gift enterprise, or similar scheme, offering prizes dependent in whole or part upon lot or chance."

But since 1975, first and most significantly to accommodate the hunger of state treasuries for lottery proceeds, Congress has carved gaping exemptions into this gambling-commercial "ban," such that only casinos—and only those casinos not operated by Indian tribes—are covered by it any longer. Nowadays, the Hoosier Lottery may spend millions of dollars to market its "games" of chance on the airwaves. But the Las Vegas Hilton may not spend a dime.

Which inconsistency places what remains of Section 1304 in considerable tension with the Supreme Court's recent First Amendment jurisprudence. The High Court says that "commercial speech" about lawful business enterprises may only be regulated so as directly and narrowly to advance a "substantial government interest." And at this point, what "substantial government interest" can Section 1304 still plausibly support? After Congress has allowed, and the various states have eagerly administered, an unprecedented explosion in betting activity nationwide, can anyone say with a straight face that government maintains a "substantial interest" in restricting the spread of gambling? Sadly, the answer is no.

Twice in the past thirteen months, the Supreme Court has declined to review lower-court rulings that Section 1304 is unconstitutional. Instead, the High Court has scheduled oral arguments a few weeks from now in *Greater New Orleans Broadcasting* v. *United States*, a lonely Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision upholding the casino-advertising ban. There isn't a serious Supreme Court-watcher in the country who thinks the justices intend to do anything but strike down the ban for good. Section 1304 is doomed.

And when it dies, probably in June, will the big casino conglomerates start buying national television time like it's going out of style? Ashton Hardy, the Louisiana media-law expert who persuaded the Supreme Court to hear *Greater New Orleans*, says yes: "I have no doubt of it."

By then, of course, Jeff Modisett and Susan Collins may well have Ed McMahon in leg irons. But honestly, now: Fat lot of good that'll do anybody. America's *real* sweepstakes problem, the giant industry of private and state-sponsored gambling, continues to metastasize. And no more than a handful of our politicians seem to care.

—David Tell, for the Editors

Hillary Clinton, D–NY?

by Christopher Caldwell

Last week in New York, Democratic State Committee chairwoman Judith Hope dropped a broad hint. She told a Manhattan television station she expected Hillary Rodham Clinton to make a decision within months on whether to run for Pat Moynihan's open Senate seat in 2000. That means Hillary's decision will likely be yes.

It's not just that Hope is among a handful of New York Democrats Hillary has been huddling with lately. The news that HRC is working on a decision also dovetailed nicely with this fact: Hillary has asked Hope for permission to address the state committee when it convenes in New York in late April.

If Hillary ran, she'd be tough to beat. Most polls show her 4 to 9 points up on her likely rival, New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani. And her Senate explorations have been thorough. Three weeks ago she met with top labor leaders Dennis Rivera, of the city's powerful hospital workers' union, and Randi Weingarten, local head of the United Federation of Teachers. Two weeks ago, she invited party leaders to Washington for consultations, including Hope, State Assembly speaker Sheldon Silver, and Bill Lynch, who was David Dinkins's campaign manager and deputy mayor. That was the clincher for one Manhattan party activist. "There's a way of play-acting this and a way of doing it for real," he said. "No one spends two hours at lunch with Bill Lynch unless they have to."

Last week Mrs. Clinton spread her organization even further, beginning consultations at the county level. She had hour-long chats with Westchester County chair David Alpert and Onondaga County (Syracuse) chair Steve Paquette. She also asked Democratic statisticians to retrieve election returns from far-suburban and upstate counties—Dutchess, Rockland, Erie—that will be the battlegrounds in any close statewide election, as they were in last fall's Schumer-D'Amato Senate race. She has not yet started polling, but those close to her campaign think she'll take at least one poll within weeks.

Hillary's Whitewater baggage may be a liability in the local media, but her keenest supporters think that's secondary. Her ability to dent New York politics

is going to rest on whether she can master a variety of local issues. Most pressing now are the demonstrations that have rocked New York in the wake of the police shooting of the unarmed African Amadou Diallo. Congressman Charles Rangel and former mayor David Dinkins have both been arrested while participating, and ex-mayor Ed Koch says he'll soon join several city councilmen in the protests, which have sent Mayor Giuliani's numbers plunging.

This isn't all good news for Hillary. In a perverse way, it may spur law-and-order support for Giuliani upstate. And the controversy could force Hillary into unbreakable alliances with black radicals like Rev. Al Sharpton, who has styled himself the Diallo family's protector. Sharpton is the only major figure on the New York left she has not sought out.

The politics of black and white work out strangely where New York and Washington overlap. Some Democrats claim that Charles Rangel, who would be the chief organizer in any black get-out-the-vote effort, is interested in using Hillary to protect his seniority on the House Ways and Means Committee. Most New York Democrats fully expect the party to take back the Congress in 2000, and expect just as fully that a Speaker Gephardt would pass over Rangel for the chairmanship to which protocol entitles him. A desire to draw the Clintons into his congressional battle could explain why Rangel has linked himself so intimately to both Sharpton's anti-Giuliani agitation and the Hillary boomlet, at a time when certain black New Yorkers—most flamboyantly Peter Noel in the *Village Voice*—have begun to fault Hillary for keeping her counsel.

Kevin Chadwick

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Backers differ on whether Hillary has to meet with Sharpton. "Sharpton's a more responsible guy than he was years ago when *I* arrested him," says former mayor Ed Koch. "She has to meet all the well-known leaders, and he's a definite black leader. If he acts irresponsibly, she can blame him then." Koch's support for a Hillary candidacy has been as full-throated as his condemnation of her husband's ethical standards. Hillary supporters point to Koch as evidence that the movement is a phenomenon of the party's center as well as the city's fringe.

That a high-profile newcomer can win a New York Senate seat was proved by Robert F. Kennedy, who ran in 1964, just weeks after taking up residence in the state. And a Hillary candidacy has advantages that have not yet come into play. She has a husband whose job-approval rating in New York is 75 percent, and who is in a position to shower the state with pork. (In his most recent radio address to the nation, he seemed to be using the Diallo case to do just that, suggesting tens of millions in training and police-education money for New York.) What's more, Hillary doesn't have to contend with a party riven between "regular" and "reform" wings, as Kennedy did. There is no serious force in the Democratic party opposing the Hillary movement—not even the circle surrounding Westchester's member of Congress, Nita Lowey, who is generally held unlikely to prevail against Giuliani. Hillary's could-be candidacy has made early-front-runner Lowey the designated placeholder for the nomination. If Hillary dithers and drops out, she will have handed Lowey an undreamed-of gift—a senatorial nomination without a bloody primary fight.

Right now, former White House deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes is serving as a one-man inner circle, showing Mrs. Clinton the ropes of New York politics. While other Washington and New York activists—among them Hillary's close friend Susan Thomases, Clinton media consultant Mandy Grunwald, and Dinkins aide Victor Kovner—are helping Hillary, the outer ring to this circle of advisers hasn't yet gelled. "Ickes is 'it,'" says one New York Democratic activist. A Washington consultant close to Hillary says no one should be surprised, though, if she has assembled an all-star kitchen cabinet by the time she officially declares her candidacy. "She can have whomever she wants," says the consultant. "Because this Senate idea is worth it if she decides she wants to be president—and not worth it if she doesn't. The presidency as the endgame is the only way this makes any sense."

Christopher Caldwell is senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Elizabeth Dole's Success Rap

by Matt Labash

Elizabeth Dole defies categorization. She is admirable (one of the "10 Most Admired Women" according to *Good Housekeeping*). She is fascinating (one of the "10 Most Fascinating" according to Barbara Walters). She is inspiring (the "Most Inspiring Political Figure of 1996" according to MSNBC). She is woman ("Woman of the Year," said *Glamour*).

Beyond that, Elizabeth Dole—"E.D." to her husband—is mystery wrapped in enigma. Since she resigned as Red Cross director in January to run for president, Dole has gone on a national evasion tour. When Katie Couric solicited her opinion on impeachment, Dole demurred until "an appropriate time." When Wolf Blitzer asked where she stood on abortion, an issue she's "wrestled" with for two decades, Dole said, "At this point, I really don't want to get into political issues." At a campaign stop in Arizona, her aides bullied and body-blocked reporters to keep them from creating an embarrassing situation—like asking the candidate what she thinks.

But there's one issue Dole *is* willing to talk about: her success. She has always been something of an achievement fetishist. Her *Who's Who* listing is twice as long as her husband's. And Dole can recite every plaudit she's ever earned, from her third-grade Bird Club presidency to the silver loving cup she won in a fire-prevention essay contest. Indeed, since she announced the formation of her exploratory committee two weeks ago, Dole has talked about little else, making appearances at three Peter Lowe's Success seminars.

Based in Tampa, Peter Lowe is one of the nation's foremost motivational speakers. As a 22-year-old calculator salesman in 1981, Lowe decided instead to sell positive thinking and the prosperity gospel pioneered by Norman Vincent Peale and Napoleon Hill. Orange-haired and goggle-eyed, Lowe has suspect taste in suits, a bottomless quiver of clichés, and a willowy voice spiked with bionic peppiness that makes him sound like Doug Henning on a St. John's wort bender. But what Lowe lacks in palatability, he compensates for with healthy five-figure checks dispensed to an impressive roster of speakers—the likes of Colin Powell, Bill Cosby, and Muhammad Ali. And it works. The middle-income masses, on leave from their dreary cubicles, pack arenas to hear the imparted wisdom of Lowe's celebrity lineup. At a success seminar, attendees "itemize goals," "implement new strategies," and pay small fortunes for easy-to-use formulas that will help them lose weight, attain financial security, and make hungry love to their dimpled wives.

Elizabeth Dole has been a staple at these events for years (though she won't disclose her fee, it has been reported at $20,000 per speech). At last week's Lowe seminar in Washington, D.C.'s MCI Center, she was joined by the usual cavalcade of pep-talkers. Crystal Cathedral minister Robert Schuller shared his "Ten Commandments for Successful Living," while motivational speaker Brian Tracy explained that to be successful, "you can't be with people who talk failure. . . . You want to get around other people who are happy and positive and optimistic." (This may explain why Dole left her husband at home.)

In the concourse, Zig Ziglar, the dean of motivational speakers, was signing autographs for fans. As one woman enthused about his book *Steps to the Top*, he told her, "The most important advice I'll give you today" is to pick up his new title *Over the Top*, a theme aptly illustrated by his cufflinks: two diamond-caked, northward-pointing arrows. John Walsh, host of *America's Most Wanted*, explained his path to success (his son was murdered, he got a television show). And those really thirsting for insight paid an extra $100 or so to have lunch with retired quarterback Joe Montana. As he gave explicit descriptions of how an opponent once crunched his metacarpal bone, we choked down turkey cold cuts.

Lowe himself gave us the soft sell, saying that buying his tapes was like "eating food." He shared his "Five Levels of Success," then showed video of himself bungee jumping, which was important in helping him move "out of my comfort zone." We were all moved out of our comfort zones as Peter's wife, Tamara, took the stage in her snug pantsuit and headset microphone. Her mission: to warm us up for Dole. After commanding us to "cut loose," "dust off your rude things," and get the "pent-up party" out of our systems, she conducted an arena-wide dance contest where portly middle managers engaged in the Monkey, the Twist, and the Swim in hopes of winning a Disney World vacation. Francis, a grown man in a Daffy Duck tie, won by doing a jig best described as the Epileptic.

Satisfied that we had "rocked the house," Tamara introduced Elizabeth Dole. She emerged to the theme from *Star Wars*, while two stage-side cannons belched red, white, and blue ticker tape explosions, making us wonder if we hadn't tripped into a Paul Revere and the Raiders reunion concert. Suited up in her customary rig (red dress, understated pearls, windup key in her

back), Dole earned praise from the Mary Kay consultant sitting next to me: "She's kind of an autumn," said Rina, "so red's a good power color."

Though reporters continuously moon over Dole's ability to leave the rostrum and walk into the crowd without notes (here, she tried to move around, but diving off the five-foot stage would've been hell on her pumps), she has a well-earned reputation for being over-rehearsed. During her Red Cross resignation announcement, a piece of tape on the floor marked where Dole would stand to take a "spontaneous" question before her exit. And even in front of a crowd that could be characterized as glee club in golf knits, Dole proved once again that she is about as natural as her hair color.

She led with a "joke," a blow-by-blow account of a three-year-old *Tonight Show* segment in which she appeared on a motorcycle with Jay Leno. She had no discernible punchline, other than her own delighted "Oh my!"—which came out sounding as if she'd just spilled her tea at a Daughters of the Confederacy reception. Dole's campaign aides, well aware that she needs to overcome her Stepford-wife image if she's to overtake Bush, call her opening vignette "impromptu campaign humor" (never mind that she's been telling the same story for years). When she turns serious, things actually get more amusing. In an Iowa speech two weeks ago, she established that her "passion doesn't come from polling," although the passion doesn't show, and nothing she says is controversial enough to warrant polling. Her campaign Web site, which *does* poll visitors, asks them to rank in order of importance such hot-poker issues as "stopping drug abuse" and "promoting integrity in government."

Which is not to say that reporters cannot safely infer what she's about. Apparently, she is a woman (she spends two pages of a seven page speech on womanhood), who is enthused about how far women have come (they can now get into the Metropolitan Club), though they have not come far enough. Still, change is gonna come, because, and here's a novel idea, "in today's fast-paced world, the only constant is change."

Elizabeth Dole is not a Pollyanna, though. She is troubled that not enough good people are entering government service. Until a paragraph or so later, when she is troubled that the government is "too big, too bloated, too complex." She is a woman of conviction, invoking the courage of the Founding Fathers, who were willing to endure poverty and even death for their principles. On the other hand, Dole prefers "consensus over confrontation." But still, there are some things worth fighting for. Dole went on record that she is for responsibility and altruism. She is against violence and drugs. She is for courage and discipline. She is against illegitimacy and incivility. She is for teaching children math. She is against—and she hasn't even poll-tested this one—illiteracy. She is for "parents, principals, and pastors." She is against "molesters, stalkers, and abusers."

Kent Lemon

Elizabeth Dole

When Dole finished to an obligatory standing ovation, one expected to find enthusiasts galore in the concourse. This was, after all, a Peter Lowe's Success seminar, a place where skepticism is usually suspended (consider what attendees spend buying products from a guy named "Zig"). Instead, Dave, a home improvement salesman says "I'm kind of disappointed. . . . Help the kids, stop the drugs, all the bulls—. It's generic." Justin, a computer sales rep, falls into flat-out mockery: "I'm for education and feeding our kids and making our streets safe," he mimics in Dole's Piedmont drawl. "No, I'm against that." Even her fans seem dispassionate, like Ken Wagner, who says, "I thought she was doing very well, until unconsciousness overtook me."

For an arena full of pie-eyed self-helpsters, it sure was a tough crowd. Dole might want to take a cue from her friend Peter Lowe. "That's what winners do, they know how to take a risk," he said. "You think Elizabeth Dole has had to step up out of her comfort zone and take a risk?" Luckily for her, the question was rhetorical.

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A Pro-Choice GOP?

by Fred Barnes

Is the Republican party, despite its pro-life platform and rhetoric, becoming operationally pro-choice on abortion? Let's look at some recent evidence.

In Washington, pro-life forces are dispirited, all but certain that any legislative progress they make against abortion on Capitol Hill will be negated by President Clinton. Republican congressional leaders are thus less and less inclined to press the issue. Among GOP presidential candidates, opposition to abortion is universal, but few relish discussing the issue. Texas governor George W. Bush, the frontrunner, noted disapprovingly the number of questions he'd been asked about abortion at a recent press conference. Former vice president Dan Quayle assured potential campaign donors in New York that he wouldn't lead a crusade against abortion. And Bush and Quayle are two of the stronger pro-lifers in the presidential field, both favoring, at least nominally, a constitutional amendment banning abortion.

So for now, the answer to the question is, yes, Republicans are operationally pro-choice. They aren't willing to wage a serious fight against legal abortion. This might change if the party wins the White House in 2000, but even then it might not. Pro-life forces gain only when the issue is raised and debated noisily in public. That's the lesson of the struggle to outlaw partial-birth abortions. Clinton's vetoes have kept a ban from becoming law, yet at the same time there has been a small but measurable shift in public opinion polls against abortion on demand. In a national survey in January by the pro-abortion Center for Gender Equality, 53 percent of American women said abortion should be illegal except in cases of rape or incest, or to save the mother's life. And in UCLA's annual poll of college freshmen, support for legal abortion has dropped from 65 percent in 1990 to 51 percent now.

"There's a paradox," insists Jeffrey Bell, the chief strategist for Gary Bauer's presidential campaign. "The voting base of the Republican party has never been more pro-life. Never have more elected officials been pro-life, and you don't have a pro-abortion wing in the party. On the other hand, there's this feeling among people at the top level of the party that [opposition to abortion] should be just a formality." Bell, of course, has a vested interest in the abortion issue. His candidate, Bauer, wants to make abortion a high priority.

Against this is an army of Republican political consultants who are always eager to have abortion downplayed. Many agree with the late Lee Atwater, the Republican national chairman who died in 1991, that any discussion of abortion is harmful to the GOP candidate. Nearly every consultant I've talked to in the past several years believes that Republicans should only pay lip service to the pro-life position, and even that as vaguely as possible. Nothing more. "There isn't a consultant who wants to deal with this issue, because they haven't found the silver bullet Republican response that works," says Rick Santorum, the Pennsylvania Republican who's become the Senate's leading pro-lifer. "There isn't one."

The leeriness of the political pros prompted a sharp disagreement last fall between Mark Neumann, the GOP candidate for the Senate in Wisconsin, and the National Republican Senatorial Committee. Neumann insisted on airing a statewide TV ad that attacked his Democratic foe, Sen. Russ Feingold, for backing partial-birth abortion. Committee strategists argued this would alarm pro-choice voters who might otherwise stay home, and that Neumann could arouse pro-life voters more discreetly by direct mail or Christian radio. Neumann lost narrowly, but he claimed vindication on the abortion ad. "Did it help us?" said Neumann. "It helped us immeasurably." Actually, the abortion tilt was measurable. An exit poll found that of the roughly 20 percent of voters whose top issue was abortion, four out of five favored Neumann. But the NRSC strategists claim Neumann won only pro-life votes he'd have gotten anyway, while igniting a huge turnout in liberal Madison that hurt his candidacy.

> REPORTERS ARE MONOLITHICALLY PRO-CHOICE. THEY SHOULD GIVE DEMOCRATS' VIEWS THE SAME SCRUTINY THEY LAVISH ON REPUBLICAN SPATS.

How would most Republican consultants have their candidates handle abortion? The way Jim Gilmore did in 1997 in his winning campaign for governor of Virginia. Gilmore sought to satisfy pro-lifers without provoking pro-choice voters. His view was that abortion should be legal in the first 8 to 12 weeks. "I won't support late term abortion," he said, but added: "No one's going to ban abortions." He didn't say whether he wanted a complete ban on abortions after 12 weeks or to the overturning of the *Roe* v. *Wade* ruling that legalized abortion overturned. Gilmore's position seemed to anesthetize the abortion issue, and

he was able to focus on cutting the state tax on cars, a Republican issue.

Now, most of the GOP presidential candidates would like to follow Gilmore's path. When he announced, Bush endorsed keeping a "pro-life tenor" in the Republican party. Then, when criticized, he renewed his support for a constitutional ban—but not now, because the country isn't ready for that. Elizabeth Dole calls herself pro-life, but *Newsweek* reported she won't back a constitutional amendment. Lamar Alexander said on the Fox News Channel that he wants "to move state by state to change the laws and the culture so there will be fewer abortions." But he declined to call for reversing *Roe* v. *Wade*, which would allow states to ban abortion. Sen. John McCain of Arizona says he's opposed to abortion, but he hardly stresses the issue. Rep. John Kasich also says he's pro-life, but urges Republicans to lower their voice when talking about it.

Oddly enough, the National Right to Life Committee put out a statement last week defending Bush and agreeing that the country isn't ready for an outright ban. "This is true because it takes two-thirds of both the House and Senate to pass a constitutional amendment and three-fourths of the state legislatures to ratify it," the NRL said. "There is nowhere near that level of support in Congress at this time."

A legislative effort like the one Bush proposes "to save the lives we can in the meantime, such as banning partial birth abortions and required parental notification before abortions are performed on minors, is entirely appropriate," said NRL's Carol Long Tobias. Pro-lifers who've criticized Bush—Bauer is one—should stop and prod the media to "give Al Gore's and the Democratic party's position and record on abortion the same attention . . . it does Republican pro-life candidates like George W. Bush," the NRL statement said.

Not much chance of that. Reporters, monolithically pro-choice, are obsessed with covering Republican spats on abortion. And since Democratic pro-lifers rarely speak up, there's no visible dissent for reporters to cover there. Republican political operatives would love the press to find no abortion story in their party either. The way to achieve that, they think, is for all the Republican candidates to shut up on the issue. Given the prominence in the race of Bauer, Forbes, and Buchanan, don't bet on it.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

To Be Blunt

by Matthew Rees

Roy Blunt, a second-term congressman from Missouri, may be the most influential Republican no one's ever heard of. GOP presidential favorite George W. Bush just made him his liaison to House Republicans. And Tom DeLay, the House GOP whip, recently tapped him to be his top deputy, the post Dennis Hastert left to become speaker. But mention "Roy Blunt" in political circles and you're almost guaranteed a "Who's that?" So low is Blunt's profile his name appeared just once last year in *Congressional Quarterly*, the weekly bible of Capitol Hill.

His first term, however, is a model for climbing the House GOP leadership ladder. Blunt started campaigning on behalf of other GOP challengers even before being elected in his heavily Republican district. That helped him win a seat on the coveted Steering Committee, which determines House GOP committee assignments. In turn, he gained exposure to GOP leaders, who were impressed with his prolific fund-raising—$250,000 on behalf of other Republicans—and his willingness to take on scut work. "You'd never see Roy's name in the headlines," recalls Bill Paxon, the former New York congressman, "but you'd see the impact of his work in the headlines every day."


Roy Blunt

Kevin Chadwick

Last year's debate over campaign-finance reform illustrates Blunt's work ethic. By late spring it had become painfully obvious that a regulation-heavy bill sponsored by Republican Chris Shays and Democrat Martin Meehan would pass the House. Tom DeLay had to find people for the thankless and laborious task of slowing the bill's passage. Blunt quickly signed up, which meant spending late nights on the House floor introducing and debating amendments to a bill destined to win a House majority.

Blunt not only delayed the bill's passage until late summer—helping to kill its prospects in the Senate—but his tenacity helped persuade DeLay to make him his deputy when Hastert became speaker. "He really believed in what we were doing," says DeLay. There were intense lobbying campaigns by several of the other Republicans hoping to replace Hastert, but Blunt once again distinguished himself, this time by barely lifting a finger. "I certainly didn't anticipate being selected," he told me.

Longtime friends, like Missouri senator John Ashcroft, are not surprised by Blunt's speedy rise through the House ranks. He is willing to let others take credit for his initiatives, they say, and has considerable political experience. He was elected county clerk at the tender age of 23 and 12 years later became secretary of state. (Mike Castle of Delaware is the only other member of the House also to have held statewide office.) After losing the 1992 Republican primary for governor, Blunt took his talents to Southwest Baptist University, his alma mater. Negotiating with campus constituencies led him to joke that he would leave politics to run for Congress. Which he did in 1996, winning a closely contested GOP primary and then breezing to victory in the general election.

Yet Blunt doesn't fit the stereotype of the glad-handing pol. People who saw him at a recent GOP dinner in Washington noted that while other House Republicans schmoozed with lobbyists, Blunt was diligently canvassing his colleagues on an array of minor matters. Even his legislative proposals reflect a low-profile, workhorse mentality. While some junior Republicans have proposed terminating the tax code, Blunt has sponsored a bill that would revoke the driving privileges of teens caught with tobacco, and another that would bar the Occupational Safety and Health Administration from issuing new workplace regulations until the National Academy of Sciences completes a $1 million ergonomics study.

Such modest proposals begin to explain how the conservative Blunt maintains good relations with the small but vocal band of House GOP moderates. Tom Davis calls Blunt "a pro" who's "very mature in his judgment." Connie Morella says she and Blunt "have a great relationship" and that she has "great respect" for him. Even Chris Shays, whose campaign-reform legislation Blunt tried to undermine, praises him as "a straightforward and sensible person" who has "made a nice impression on all" House Republicans.

No less surprising than the selection of Blunt to be

chief deputy whip was Bush's asking him to be the House liaison to his presidential effort. The two know each other only from Bush's occasional visits to Missouri for political events during his dad's presidency. But Blunt was recommended for the job by some of Bush's other House supporters, who liked Blunt's clout, his relations with moderates, and his workaholic tendencies (Bush's Senate liaison, Paul Coverdell, shares all of these qualities). Blunt jokes that winning the governor more support from House Republicans—almost half the caucus has already endorsed Bush—is "the easiest job I've ever been asked to do."

Blunt's political future is bright. Blessed with a safe district, he has every reason to expect he'll stay in the House and continue his meteoric ascent through the GOP hierarchy. A Bush presidency would only boost his standing and enhance his chances of winning one of the House's eight elected leadership positions. Indeed, while chief deputy whip was once considered a dead-end job, Dennis Hastert used it as a launching pad to become speaker. A few years from now, Roy Blunt just might follow in his footsteps.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION

by Craig D. Turk

A FEW WEEKS AGO, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit took the dramatic step of declaring *Miranda* no longer the law of the land. Then on March 5, the Fourth Circuit stepped even more boldly into the constitutional breach: It struck down a central provision of the Violence Against Women Act, on grounds that make Supreme Court review all but inevitable, implying as they do a significant curtailment of Congress's legislative powers. Though the ruling brought political criticism from the left and some jurisprudential misgivings on the right, the Fourth Circuit was absolutely correct.

The facts of the case—*Brzonkala* v. *Virginia Polytechnic Institute*—are admittedly grim. Christy Brzonkala, a freshman at VPI in the fall of 1994, alleged that she was raped in her dormitory by two members of the college football team. Following VPI's administrative acquittal of one of the accused and the deferred suspension of the other, Brzonkala sued both men, charging that she had been raped because of "gender animus" in violation of the Violence Against Women Act.

The purpose of this law, according to the Congress that passed it shortly before the incident at VPI, is "to protect the civil rights of victims of gender-motivated violence and to promote public safety, health, and activities affecting interstate commerce." The law affords protection, in part, by permitting victims of gender-motivated violence to seek compensatory and punitive damages in federal court. The law was a popular response to a serious problem, and its application in a case like Brzonkala's, where other means of redress had failed, has obvious appeal. There is only one drawback: Congress had no authority to pass the civil-rights provision of the act.

> THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT WAS A POPULAR RESPONSE TO A SERIOUS PROBLEM, WITH ONE DRAWBACK: IT'S NOT CONSTITUTIONAL.

Social activists and liberal constitutional scholars deny this en masse. Under the Constitution, however, Congress cannot simply make whatever laws it chooses; its authority is limited to the areas enumerated in Article I. A broad grant to legislate on behalf of public health and safety is not among its enumerated powers, no matter how great the perceived need for such a power may be.

Nevertheless, in the past half century, the Supreme Court has enabled Congress to act outside the explicit constitutional limitations by broadly interpreting the legislature's power to regulate interstate commerce. In theory, virtually any activity can be construed to have some effect on interstate commerce. Thus, the Supreme Court has upheld legislation regulating racially discriminatory seating in a rural Alabama restaurant and a farmer's production of wheat for his own family's use, arguing that those activities in the aggregate influence patterns of travel and commerce between states. With such rationalizations, the Supreme Court has allowed Congress to address moral and economic issues that seemed to demand national solutions, sweeping aside Congress's lack of authority to do so.

Relying on this well-established end run around

the Constitution, the drafters of the Violence Against Women Act deliberately contrived an interstate-commerce justification for their bill and larded the legislative history with findings purportedly detailing the social "costs" of gender-motivated violence. Their maneuver, however, was mistimed. Just a year after the bill was passed, the Supreme Court did a sharp about-face in its commerce-clause jurisprudence. In a case called *United States* v. *Lopez*, the Court for the first time in over fifty years struck down an exercise of congressional power based on the commerce clause. Holding unconstitutional a federal law banning possession of handguns within 1,000 feet of a school, the Court declared that however desirable such a ban might be, Congress had no authority to enact it. The Court complained that the government's arguments about the effects of guns near schools on interstate commerce required "the piling of inference upon inference." The decision rejected the idea that evidence of such an attenuated impact on national productivity justified congressional regulation. The legal basis for the Violence Against Women Act was thus cast into doubt.

Supporters of the statute contend that *Lopez* is a judicial orphan, a fact-specific decision rather than a signal from the Supreme Court that its policy of congressional indulgence is over. The true import of *Lopez* has yet to be determined: Since this decision in 1995, the Court has refused to elaborate on *Lopez*. However, *Brzonkala* offers the Court a prime opportunity to clarify its intentions. The case has a high political profile, and Judge J. Michael Luttig's 125-page majority opinion tees up for Supreme Court consideration virtually every legal argument relevant to commerce-clause interpretation.

Whether or not the Supreme Court uses *Brzonkala* as a vehicle to further restrict congressional lawmaking under the commerce clause, the Violence Against Women Act is probably doomed. The only other potential justification for the statute, Congress's power to guarantee citizens equal protection of the laws, is powerfully refuted in the majority opinion. According to the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress may legislate to prevent states from infringing on equal protection; but purely private action, like that in *Brzonkala*, is beyond Congress's reach.

It is to be hoped, then, that the Supreme Court will take up *Brzonkala*, affirm the Fourth Circuit, and use the occasion to articulate more clearly the outer boundaries of Congress's commerce-clause authority. Certainly the time is right. Despite the political support that the Violence Against Women Act enjoys—and the likelihood, acknowledged by the majority in *Brzonkala,* of a backlash if it is overturned—this law epitomizes a federalizing impulse in the American approach to social problems that is coming under increased scrutiny. Not only has the Supreme Court shown heightened sensitivity to issues of federalism in the past decade, but the American Bar Association recently urged a reevaluation of Congress's tendency to transform state-level offenses into federal crimes. Even the *Washington Post* has editorialized in favor of congressional restraint in this area.

Traditionally liberal institutions, then, are acknowledging the danger to our constitutional balance inherent in the federalization of certain social policies. Interestingly, though, the emerging judicial response to this threat has caused discomfort among some conservatives. In the very first words of one of the two concurring opinions in *Brzonkala*, Chief Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson notes that "it is a grave judicial act to nullify a product of the democratic process." By striking down the Violence Against Women Act, the Fourth Circuit has exposed itself to the charge of replacing the results-oriented liberal judicial activism of years past with a new results-oriented conservative agenda, instead of with a policy of judicial restraint.

THE FOURTH CIRCUIT WAS SEEKING TO CONFINE THE LEGISLATIVE POWER WITHIN CONSTITUTIONAL BOUNDS.

This complaint should not be dismissed out of hand—it should be refuted. For the majority opinion in *Brzonkala* is not predicated on a political objection to the Violence Against Women Act—a judgment, say, that violence against women is a minor problem. Nor does the decision reflect a court's search for a legal justification for striking down a law it doesn't like. Instead, what the Fourth Circuit was looking for in *Brzonkala* is a principle for keeping legislative power within constitutional bounds.

Brzonkala is, in this sense, a brave opinion. Every American of conscience opposes violence against women, so the invalidation of this particular statute satisfies no constituency. On the other hand, the availability of its remedies pleases many constituencies, and it is tempting to sacrifice the abstract principles of federalism for so popular a policy. As the *Washington Post* has lamented, "The problem is that federalism is almost nobody's paramount policy concern—including ours." Constitutional balance should, however, be the paramount concern of the courts.

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The New Europe—Menace

United by Anti-Americanism

By Jeffrey Gedmin

There was high-flown talk of dreams becoming reality. The finance ministers were "visibly moved," said press reports. The Italian was "proud" to be able to call himself "a European citizen." The Portuguese called it a page "that can never be turned back," while others beamed about the "new political start." There was a time when "empires were created through the sound of marching armies," but today, waxed French finance minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn, "tens and tens of millions give themselves a currency . . . to unite their destinies." It was January 1, 1999, in Brussels and the euro was being launched.

To read the American press, you'd think that European monetary union was simply about economics—interest rates and global capital markets, trading volumes and transaction costs. "It's the most audacious gamble in the history of currency," says the *New York Times*. Everyone wonders whether the euro could challenge the dollar as the world's leading reserve currency and whether it will make life easier—and cheaper—for tourists. But there's more to the story.

> FROM THE OUTSET, EUROPE'S CAMPAIGN FOR A SINGLE CURRENCY HAS BEEN ABOUT POLITICS, NOT ECONOMICS.

The economic rationale for the euro, in fact, has always been weak. When 11 of the European Union's 15 members joined in monetary union at the beginning of the year, they embarked on what probably constitutes the greatest voluntary transfer of sovereignty in history. They did so despite the fact that no one was particularly dissatisfied with the existence of national currencies. No one believed that Europe's single market *required* a common currency. And no one agrees today on precisely what the new single currency will accomplish economically. The divergence of views is striking. British prime minister Tony Blair says the euro will make Europe "more efficient and less subsidized, more open and less heavily regulated." Across the Channel, though, Strauss-Kahn calls the euro a "tool in the service of a better society, of a social model, that is to say the European model . . . based on greater solidarity" than in the United States—code words for shielding inefficiencies and protecting against "unfair" competition and what Strauss-Kahn calls "the free-market illusion." There's little question why 10 Downing Street sticks to a wait-and-see approach on joining Euroland.

But from the outset, Europe's campaign for a single currency has been first and foremost about politics. There were the low politics: The French sought a price for acquiescing to German unification in 1990. The Germans would give up their beloved D-mark, and the French would delude themselves into thinking they would run the new Europe. French blackmail, German guilt. And not for the first time. But then there were high politics, too.

Ideas for the single currency predate Germany's unification and the Maastricht Treaty of 1991. The EU has pursued monetary union since 1969. The first architect of a detailed plan was Luxembourger Pierre Werner, who saw his vision undermined by the oil shocks of the early 1970s. But European integration, it was said, was like riding a bicycle. You keep pedaling or you fall off. Had not the European Community (EC) fostered extraordinary multilateral cooperation after the Second World War? Was not, and against all odds, the historic Franco-German enmity being replaced with new amity? Even in the 1960s and 1970s, it was primarily political objectives that drove considerations about a single currency. Monetary union, Germany's minister of economics Karl Schiller would say, was merely a "prelude" to political union.

It was German chancellor Helmut Kohl, however, who would translate this grand scheme into reality. After Germany's unification, Kohl believed, the creation of a single currency would lead to a political unity that would once and for all lock in European

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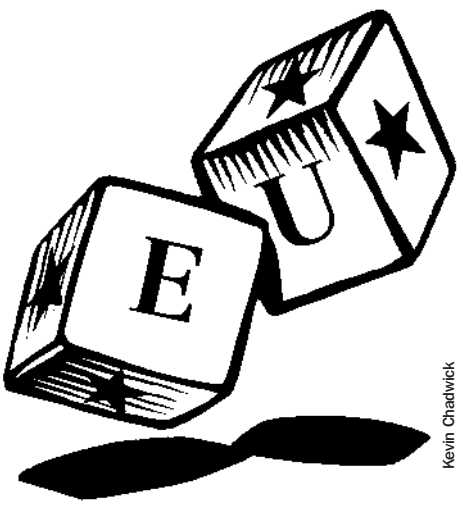
cooperation and lock out the demons of malign nationalism, blood rivalry, and lethal fragmentation. "The courageous march toward political union," wrote Nobel Prize winner and MIT economist Franco Modigliani this winter, "may end forever the deleterious nationalism that has ravaged the continent for centuries."

But under the new conditions in post-Cold War Europe, the traditional arguments driving the process seemed strange and contradictory. After all, the EC, now the EU, was in no danger of coming apart. On the contrary. Strong, liberal, democratic nation-states existed throughout Western Europe. And, without having ceded inordinate amounts of sovereignty and democratic control to supranational institutions, they were doing just fine. At the same time, the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe clearly needed a hand. But these transitional economies, where the future was indeed uncertain, were left outside the EU's door.



Kevin Chadwick

There was always "Europe" as an answer to the German Question. But who really thought that the German Question had not been solved? Heinrich Heine had once famously written: "*Denk ich an Deutschland in der Nacht, dann bin ich um den Schlaf gebracht!*" (When I think of Germany in the night, I'm robbed of my sleep.) When Helmut Kohl gets up in the night, mused the *Economist* a couple of years ago, the only thing he thinks about invading is the fridge. As for his successor as German leader, Gerhard Schröder, he probably devours opinion polls and focus-group summaries when nocturnal wanderlust strikes. Germans themselves argued convincingly at the time of unification that the roots of democracy were deep and secure. Today's boring Germans, as Josef Joffe puts it, are interested in exports, not expansion.

Still, if in Kohl's view an economically and politically united Europe was the antidote to Europe's darker inclinations, others have been developing a thoroughly different, modern perspective. The European Community, its original objectives having been achieved, is searching for its own modernized raison-d'être.

Unity is no longer necessary primarily as a means to stabilize Europe internally. Now, Western European officialdom is looking primarily abroad and views the euro—and a politically unified EU—as the best vehicle to advance *Europe's* interests in the world. Fair enough. But what are those interests? And are they compatible with American objectives?

Countering U.S. Hegemony

For clues, start with the French, who lament America as the "hyperpower" and explicitly promote a united Europe as a global counterweight to U.S. influence. Says prime minister Lionel Jospin: "The United States often behaves in a unilateral way and has difficulties in taking on the role to which it aspires, that of organizer of the international community." President Jacques Chirac speaks of a new "collective sovereignty" to check American power and sees the EU and the United Nations as playing crucial roles. If you can't beat 'em, outflank 'em, goes the logic. French foreign minister Hubert Védrine advocates accommodationist policies toward Iraq, noting that the French position is that "of all Europeans, . . . the Arab world, the position of the Russians, the Chinese." Iraq, Kosovo, Iran, Russia, Cyprus—wherever you look, the French are happy to play spoiler. France's interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, puts the matter succinctly: "We have our interests and the Americans have theirs."

French mischief—and outright anti-Americanism—are nothing new, to be sure. What is new, though, are the conditions of the post-Cold War world. Absent the Soviet threat, our allies across Western Europe are feeling less dependent on the United States. Generational change is underway. And Western Europeans have been busy enthusiastically developing their European institutions—with minimal American participation or consultation. What's also new is that it's not only the French who are gnashing their teeth about American hegemony these days.

Former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt has boasted that the arrival of the euro means "the United States can no longer call all the shots" in the

world. Prominent German commentators applaud the fact that, as they see it, Europe will no longer be "seconding U.S. global policies." In fact, "unilateral [read: U.S.] definitions of global behavior will not be acceptable anymore," declares Karsten Voigt, a senior foreign policy expert from Germany's Social Democratic party. The left-of-center coloration of 13 of the 15 current EU governments adds accent to the discourse. But the new oppositional posture has a distinctly nonpartisan flavor. "When America calls for solidarity in the name of 'Western interests,'" says a former adviser to Kohl, "we increasingly ask whether these are simply U.S. interests cloaked in Alliance rhetoric." German and French leaders alike these days insist that the United Nations assume greater power and influence and hold alone the "indisputable legal basis" for the use of force in international affairs. Support for the idea in Western Europe grows, and the intent is to check America's room for maneuver.

It's understandable that, after decades of Cold War dependency, Western Europeans of all political stripes have tired of being the junior partner. It's also clear that the Clinton administration's mishandling of Alliance issues has not helped matters. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's schizophrenic dance between overly deferential multilateralism and unilateral bullying, without clarity about our priorities or intentions, has destroyed precious capital and credibility. But even when the Clinton team is gone, Western Europeans will be telling us more often, and more directly, that they want to feel like grownups. And apart from asserting their new feelings of independence, there's an agenda behind the posturing. What do the allies want?

European vs. Anglo-Saxon Economics

Within Europe, the agenda is to defend the culture of the welfare state. That's why free-mar-

ket spirits like Margaret Thatcher and Vaclav Klaus are *persona non grata* on the continent. That's why in Germany Gerhard Schröder, to the lament of industry and entrepreneurs, says "yes" to modernization, but "no" to an end of his country's consensual, minimalist, and lowest-common-denominator approach to economic reform. It's important not to forget that Schröder inherited this approach from Kohl's Christian Democrats, who virtually count as the country's second Social Democratic party. Don't expect the departure of Germany's leftist finance minister Oskar Lafontaine to change things radically. The Free Democrats, Germany's only true pro-market party, poll in the single digits and have little influence. In fact, from the time the Maastricht Treaty was negotiated, some Germans have talked about monetary union as a defense against Anglo-Saxon economics.

It's curious that British prime minister Tony Blair thinks the euro will be a key to liberalization. This, while EU officials push for "harmonization" of taxes as one more way to eliminate an important competitive advantage the United Kingdom has enjoyed in the past in attracting jobs and capital. The EU's direction is clear. "Most EU governments," as Irwin Stelzer observes, "given a choice of America's labor market system (flexible labor costs and relatively full employment) or the alternative (relatively high labor costs and relatively high unemployment), quite consciously choose the latter." Like it or not, Prime Minister Blair's United Kingdom will be forced off the fence if it decides to adopt the euro.

So be it. Europeans are entitled to their choices. But the choices have implications for the United States. First, the single currency will mean more, not less, protectionism against American goods and services if Western Europeans continue to resist painful reforms. Second, it will mean more, not less, discrimination against the Central and Eastern Europeans, who continue to languish outside the EU's door. Finally, the euro will make it easier to advance EU regulatory positions on the global stage. At the Davos World Economic Forum this year, Washington found itself isolated because our allies had so effectively orchestrated their calls for expanding regulations at the international level. There's more of this to come.

European vs. Atlantic Security

If the divergent views on economic policy are already becoming apparent, the foreign policy differences between the United States and our allies are likely to be even more far-reaching. Beyond the single currency, Western Europeans want a "common foreign and security policy." Americans laugh. But Americans laughed once about the euro, too. And while the euro is bound to entail a great deal of muddling through, it is also certain to be pronounced by its champions a success. The campaign for political union will proceed. And Western Europeans will look for additional ways to assert themselves.

At the summit between French and British leaders in the French port of St. Malo in December, there was talk of Europeans' working "within or outside NATO" in the future. The tone and level of interest our British allies took in the so-called European defense and security identity was striking and unprecedented, even with all the predictable footnotes about how greater European independence will not undermine the transatlantic link. It's appropriate, then, for Americans to ask whether the special relationship with Britain is to fade as the United Kingdom seeks amalgamation with a European federal state. And when the British and French issue a communiqué affirming that "the European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage," Americans should ask what exactly Europeans envisage this role to be—and how it will relate to NATO.

There have been those on the left and the right who cheer the direction and argue for a neat division of labor in the Alliance. The formula is simple, according to senator Kay Bailey Hutchison: "Europe leads with the United States as backup on the European continent; the United States leads with European and other allies as back up in the rest of the world." This idea, however, is deeply flawed.

Take the current crisis in Kosovo, where the Clinton administration "invited" the Europeans to take the lead. Of course, were the Europeans actually willing to lead, considerable bloodshed and upheaval might be averted in Kosovo—just as they might have been averted in Bosnia had the Europeans been willing to lead there. It's important for Americans, especially those who advocate European "leadership," to understand that such leadership may often be paralyzed by intra-European petty rivalries; and that it may hamper transatlantic cooperation, as common European positions are defined in opposition to U.S. policies and preferences. One dynamic operating at the Kosovo peace negotiations has been "the Europeans getting back at Dick [Holbrooke] for Dayton," says a senior U.S. official—a reference to the U.S. envoy's grandstanding and control of the show when the peace plan for Bosnia was hammered out in 1995.

We indulge in pleasant reminiscing over our common cause during the Cold War. But remember that

the Europeans opposed American efforts to resupply Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War and to forge a unified Western response to the oil cartel's embargo and price hikes. Remember that after U.S. embassy staffers were taken hostage in Tehran in November 1979, the United States appealed to EC allies for support in applying sanctions, to no avail. When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the Europeans mustered condemnation and little more. When martial law was declared in Poland in December 1981, the EC offered a temporizing response—and massive resistance to U.S.-sponsored sanctions. When the United States battled Marxist insurgencies in Central America in the 1980s, the Europeans equivocated; when an EC commissioner warned, for instance, of the danger of "external intervention feared by all," he was understood to be referring as much to the United States as the Soviet Union.

Even today, our policy of containing Iran, for example, has faltered in large part because our allies are unwilling to go along. And now, despite contradictory signals from Tehran over the past year, Gerhard Schröder calmly tells a German interviewer that "the time is ripe for an improvement in the traditionally good" relations between Germany and Iran. So much for consultation among allies. And so much for a common Western analysis and response.

The fact is, it was never easy. But the value of the transatlantic relationship endures—for both sides. American isolationists, global unilateralists, and limp multilateralists will revel in the Europeans' increasing assertiveness, and the possibility for U.S. disengagement from Europe will grow. But it would be a bad thing. America the lone superpower still needs allies, just as Europe, its own superpower pretensions notwithstanding, still needs the United States. Issues like Bosnia and Kosovo cannot be solved without American military power and leadership. NATO's enlargement—and the expansion of freedom and prosperity into Central and Eastern Europe—cannot happen without active American participation. And terrorism, proliferation, rogue states, and other new threats are effectively combatted only when America and the alliance of democracies band together. With all our spats and differences, that's how the Cold War was won. Winning the peace will be no different. ♦

The New Europe—Farce

Brussels Sprouts a Scandal

By David Brooks

The press secretaries were inundated. Reporters were beginning to ask questions about corruption at the European Commission, the bureaucratic and regulatory nerve center of the European Union in Brussels. So Jimmy Jamar, commissioner Edith Cresson's spokesman, sat down and wrote a confidential memo to his communications colleagues on how to respond to the sudden demand for news. "A dose of cynicism—and sometimes hypocrisy—is sometimes necessary in diffusing information," Jamar wrote. "An excess of information can lead to disinformation. And so it is necessary to learn how to conceal information of which one is not altogether sure or which might give rise to the wrong interpretation." After all, Jamar counseled, when it comes to being open, there is no need to be "more Catholic than the pope."

Unfortunately, an assistant left Jamar's secret memo on the photocopying machine, and copies of it were accidentally stapled to the back of a mass release from the European Court of Justice. The burgeoning European corruption scandal—which culminated last week with the resignation of all 20 EU commissioners—had grown a new limb.

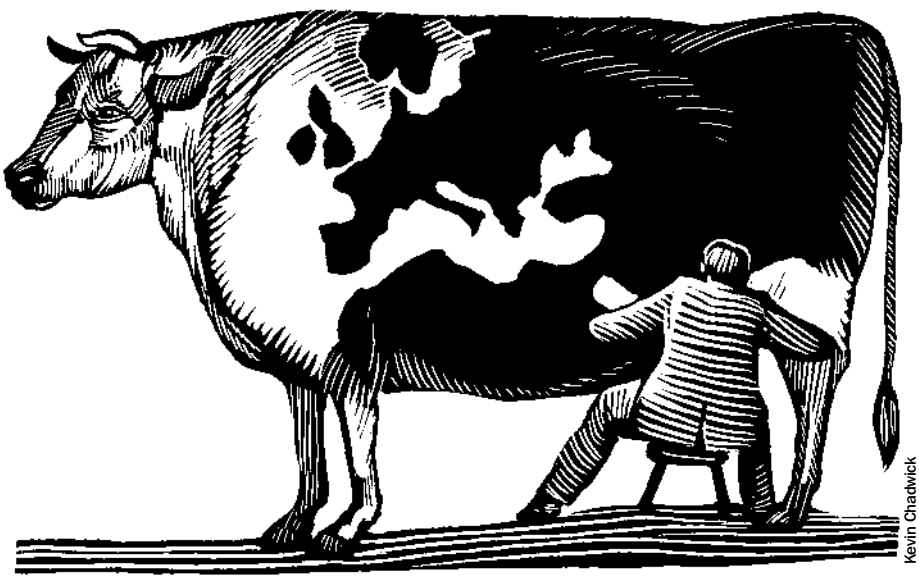
But the amazing thing about Jamar's memo, which leaked out at the end of January, is not what it says, but that it needed to be written at all. As anyone who has worked as a reporter in Brussels can attest, there is no denser concentration of lapdogs on earth than in the media center of the European superstate. Many of the reporters there are full-bore Eurorgasmics, who would sooner cut off their hand than publicize any bit of

David Brooks, a senior editor of The Weekly Standard, *covered European affairs from Brussels for the* Wall Street Journal.

information that might harm the great dream of European union. Others tremble at the thought of being labeled anti-European or "British," and thus losing access and friendships. Then there are the reporters who don't believe in digging. A Dutch journalist once screamed at me that investigative journalism is an "Anglo-American obsession." A survey this year in France revealed that three-quarters of the public believe investigative journalism is "unethical."

So the remarkable thing is that the reporters were asking questions in the first place. After all, they had known for years that corruption was rife in the European Commission. For the past four years the Court of Auditors had refused to approve the EU's $93 billion budget because it was such a tangle of "irregularities." Auditors have long estimated that 5 percent to 10 percent of the budget is lost to waste and fraud—subsidies for imaginary fishing boats, nonexistent cows, nepotistic consultancies, and no-show employees. Nobody ever made a fuss about it.

But that has changed. Light is now shining into the dark crevices of the European Commission. Heads are rolling and everybody is pretending to be upset.



Kevin Chadwick

The whole imbroglio started at an unlikely place, the European Parliament, which has traditionally been the continent's political refuse pile. There, amidst the retired SS officers, ex-porn stars, far-out ranters, and no-hope hacks who couldn't get jobs in their home countries, a few Euro-MPs have stood up and demanded a public accounting of the EU budget. The anti-corruption crusaders tend to be British Tories or European Greens—people on the European fringes. But in the last few years, their numbers have been buttressed by Scandinavian legislators. As more Nordic countries have joined the EU, they have brought their squeaky-clean political culture to Brussels, upsetting the lax southern ethos the Spanish, French, Italians, and Greeks had established there. Last year, the parliament actually threatened to reject the budget.

The parliamentary fuss mobilized a middle-aged Dutch accountant named Paul van Buitenen, who had been laboring anonymously in the EU's financial control unit in Brussels. He'd been keeping track of EU corruption, and like many internal auditors, he had seen his investigations quashed. But, inspired by the parliamentary crusaders, he leaked a 38-page dossier to the Green party. He subsequently delivered a carload of 40 box files to the European Court of Auditors. The most enjoyable of his allegations were against Edith Cresson, once prime minister of France under President François Mitterrand ("my little soldier," he called her). Mme. Cresson, the commissioner for research policy, had reportedly filled various jobs with close friends, including her biographer, her former bodyguard, and a professor who was paid for advice at the rate of about $2,700 a day. Cresson also hired her dentist to coordinate the EU's AIDS research. He earned close to $200,000, and the product of his work was a vague 24-page report. He did manage to take 17 business trips at EU expense over that period, 13 of them to the French town where Cresson had been mayor. This even sparked a little Euro-humor. When Cresson's receptionist answers the phone, the Brussels wags joked, she says, "I'm sorry, Mme. Cresson is busy. May I transfer you to her dentist?" I guess you have to be Belgian.

Van Buitenen made other allegations. The $600 million Leonardo da Vinci youth training program (European programs tend to have names like that), which Mme. Cresson managed, was rife with corruption. The Humanitarian Aid project had roughly $600

million in undocumented outlays between 1993 and 1995; and auditors in that department had received specific instructions from their superiors to limit their queries. Officials in the tourism bureau were receiving kickbacks, van Buitenen alleged. The commission's internal security force had become a bizarre paramilitary outfit, purchasing high-powered rifles with night scopes and silencers, and issuing rigged contracts to dubious outside firms.

Needless to say, van Buitenen's allegations had a dramatic effect, at least on van Buitenen's career. The commission president Jacques Santer publicly denounced him. The commission suspended him, cut his pay in half, cut off his computer privileges, and threatened his pension. Rumors went around that he was a religious zealot. "I admit that part of my motivation is that I am a Christian," he told the *Guardian* newspaper. "They are now saying I am a fanatic because I go to church sometimes on a Sunday. . . . Then they say I am an extreme right-winger. I am not. I am a member of the Green party. I am being stigmatized."

Edith Cresson responded that the charges were part of a far-right anti-Semitic plot, which was ingenious since she is not Jewish (though a few of her aides are). Going off on a different tack, Cresson also called the furor "a German inspired bid to damage France." She sued the Parisian daily *Libération* for libel for printing the story about her dentist, while at the same time not contesting the truth of the basic charges. (The commissioner for humanitarian affairs, the Italian Emma Bonino, also threatened to sue the *Financial Times*, and the commission as a whole did sue the magazine *Index on Censorship* over a story it was working on. Trying to censor stories meant for the *Index on Censorship* earns an automatic bid for the Chutzpah Hall of Fame.)

The commission's arrogant response only inflamed the European Parliament, which began mobilizing against waste and abuse. It's all a bit ironic, since the parliament itself is perhaps the world's most unabashed gravy train. This is a body with two headquarters, a new billion dollar building in Brussels, and a new $500 million one in Strasbourg. Its members and staff commute back and forth between these two restaurant-rich cities, leaving a trail of credit card receipts knee-deep as they go. The Euro-MPs are allowed up to roughly $300,000 a year in travel expenses for which they do not have to provide invoices. Nonetheless, the Euro-MPs summoned Mme. Cresson and others to explain themselves.

When she was prime minister of France, Cresson—known as "Edith-la-Flamboyante"—became famous for her theory that 25 percent of British males are homosexual. She was equally bold with the parliamentarians, declaring that she had done nothing wrong. "I spend all my time defending myself," she complained, "We have to fight against these mediocrities." When asked about contracts with her cronies, she defiantly rolled out her Cartesian logic: "Are we supposed to work only with people we do not know?"

Meanwhile, the members of parliament were finding greater cause for anger. Santer argued that the commission was *too* open to public scrutiny. "We are victims of our own transparency," he boasted. Santer also promised an "independent" investigation of the fraud charges, but it turned out the independent investigation fell under commission control. And there were reasons to believe that members of the commission were launching a counter-offensive against their parliamentary tormentors. A document surfaced alleging that Euro-MP James Elles of Oxfordshire—one of Edith Cresson's most vocal opponents—was himself corrupt. The document said Elles was an executive of a training center that had received about $550,000 in EU grants. It turned out that the French-speaking author of this charge had misunderstood an English word: Elles was a "patron" of the training center, a mere supporter with no financial interest. But in French, "*patron*" means boss.

In January, members of the European Parliament geared up to censure Cresson and President Santer. But the Socialists in the parliament moved to save their ideological soul sister. Their strategy was to up the ante with a "back us or sack us" ploy: The Socialists offered a resolution calling for the ouster of the entire commission, knowing such an earth-shattering option would fail and thus, they hoped, put an end to the whole controversy.

The day before the vote in parliament, Santer sat sprawled in the lobby of the Strasbourg Hilton with some of his commissioners and Pauline Green, the leader of the Socialist bloc which had sponsored the ouster resolution. He drank whiskey and celebrated their impending victory. One of the commissioners held up a report on the allegations against them. "They want to sack us over these?" he chortled, unaware that a German TV crew was recording their conversation.

Nonetheless, the Socialists won the vote the next day. But their triumph was unimpressive: 232 MPs voted for censure, while only 293 sided with the commission. Green put on a happy face. "It's always bad to see bad losers," she smirked after the vote. The entire

British Labour party contingent voted with Cresson.

The press reports of the January vote mentioned only in passing the one concession Santer made, but it proved to be a doozy. He said he would appoint another investigative unit, made up of Wise Men, to have another look at the corruption charges. Normally, Wise Men commissions come back with a few pages of pap that make everybody furrow his brow and feel virtuous. But on Monday, March 15, the Wise Men issued a scathing 140-page report, which declared, "It is becoming difficult to find anyone who has even the slightest sense of responsibility." Cresson, the document announced, "failed to act in response to known, serious and continuing irregularities over several years." Many of these irregularities were detailed. My favorite is a short-term 10 month research contract that went to a Cresson crony. He called in sick for nine of the ten months but still got paid.

The Wise Men buttressed van Buitenen's charge that under the direction of President Santer and his predecessor Jacques Delors, the security apparatus had become "a state within a state." The Wise Men found that the security people had even arranged for drunk-driving charges to be dropped for well-connected bureaucrats. They charged several commissioners, including Santer, with stonewalling or deceiving investigators. They confirmed the massive waste in the humanitarian programs, kickbacks in the tourism department, and the collapse of internal controls in Cresson's Leonardo training program. Among other things, the head of administration for Leonardo was said to have begun writing checks to herself in amounts ranging from $1,300 to $3,000.

The Wise Men report hit Europe with roughly the power of the Starr report. But initially the commissioners remained defiant. Santer said he was the victim of an "Anglo-Saxon political crusade." He lashed out at one reporter for asking "a truly British question." He pronounced himself "whiter than white" (thus violating all known PC codes). Cresson declared, in true Edith Piaf fashion, "*Je ne regrette rien*." "I regret nothing." Finally, though, she did concede, "Maybe I was a little careless."

In the wake of the report, cries went up for resignations, notably Santer's and Cresson's. But they refused to go. The French government remained steadfastly neutral. Although Cresson is not popular among the French elite, the Paris administration didn't want to see a compatriot made a sacrificial lamb. But the pressure kept building, notably from the European Parliament, which threatened another no-confidence vote. So to cover the disgrace of the truly guilty, it was suggested that all 20 commissioners should resign en masse, the innocent as well as the corrupt. Some complained about being tarred by the actions of the bad apples, especially since Cresson is not exactly beloved by her colleagues. ("Her integration within the college [of commissioners] is perhaps not an unqualified success," *Le Monde* once noted delicately.) But in the end, the commissioners all agreed to resign.

Or at least pretend to resign. The commissioners are back at work today. They have announced they will serve until successors are named. In many cases they will succeed themselves, as their host countries reappoint them. Santer minimized the resignations as "a political act," though he is unlikely to return. Cresson, also, will probably not be reappointed. She will have to make do with the roughly $450,000 in benefits she'll have coming to her. Meanwhile, it's not clear what is going to happen to van Buitenen. Fêted as a hero by some, he is still isolated in Brussels. "I have been lonely," he told the *Independent* last week. "And I'm still not certain about what is going to happen to me."

The big remaining question is how the whole scandal will affect the course of European integration. In one sense, the structure of the EU guarantees this sort of scandal. The EU is designed to be technocratic and secretive. The architects didn't want another century as bloody as the last, so they endeavored to take power out of the hands of the volatile masses and entrust it to an aloof bureaucratic elite. Furthermore, the EU is multinational. Each commissioner feels pressured to bring home as much of the gravy for his home country as possible, knowing that ultimately some other country, presumably Germany, will pick up the tab.

So one lesson to be drawn from the scandal is that the whole EU enterprise needs fundamental rethinking. This, of course, is not the lesson the Eurofederalists are drawing. They declare that the scandal is the best thing that ever happened to the European Union. This heroic action by the parliament is Europe's "coming of age," they say. It shows that the community can police itself. Credibility has been established, they declare. Boris Johnson of the London *Daily Telegraph* described the scene in the EU press room as the commissioners confirmed their resignations. The Eurofanatic reporters watching on TV were jubilant. Faster unification would be the result. One reporter exulted, "*Ici nous allons, ici nous allons, ici nous allons!*" "Here we go, here we go, here we go!" ♦

Steve Forbes Gets a Life

Can a Flat-Taxer Find Success As a Moralist?

By Tucker Carlson

If you didn't know better you might think Steve Forbes and Christine Todd Whitman were friends. The two have known each other since their years together at Far Hills Country Day School in the 1950s. In 1993, Forbes did more than almost any other person to help Whitman become governor of New Jersey, first by drafting her winning tax plan, then by promoting her in his magazine and weekly newspapers. Christie Whitman, Forbes wrote at the time, is an emerging "American Margaret Thatcher" with a "truly breathtaking" economic program. After the election, Forbes became a charter member of the new governor's transition team. In 1997, he raised money to help her win a second term.

To the naked eye, Forbes and Whitman look pretty chummy. Not so, say those who run the Forbes 2000 presidential campaign. "She *hates* us," says one Forbes aide. "They never talk." Not only are Forbes and Whitman no longer friends, the aide confides, they did not, as has been widely reported, grow up next door to each other. "Their houses were about a mile apart," he says.

> THE IMPLICATION IS CLEAR: STEVE FORBES MAY BE A RICH, PRO-BUSINESS REPUBLICAN FROM NEW JERSEY, BUT HE'S NO CHRISTIE WHITMAN.

And so, the implication is, are their politics. Steve Forbes may be a rich, pro-business Republican from New Jersey horse country, those around him frequently explain, but he's no Christie Whitman. In other words, Forbes is not pro-choice. Never has been. Not even a little bit.

The Forbes campaign makes this point so often, so relentlessly, that it almost seems true. The Forbes record is a bit more complicated. Forbes did his best not to talk about social issues during his 1996 campaign, answering virtually every question with reference to his beloved flat tax. When pressed, he took what appeared to be a moderate pro-choice position: against a pro-life amendment to the Constitution, apparently accepting legal abortion in the early stages of pregnancy. Various pro-life groups pushed Forbes to clarify his beliefs—what did he mean, for instance, when he claimed to oppose *mandatory* federal funding of abortion?—but he refused. On the subject of abortion, the coordinator of his Iowa campaign told the *Boston Globe*, Forbes "is not going to capitulate to the right wing."

Many pro-choice Republicans thought they had found an ally. "His position followed *Roe* a lot," says Ann Stone, a former Forbes supporter who runs Republicans for Choice. The Forbes campaign used Stone's membership list for fund-raising in 1996. According to Stone, many of her members were infuriated when, after the election, Forbes began giving speeches denouncing abortion. "A lot of them have called me to say they've written Forbes and told him where to stick it for changing his position."

But has Forbes changed his position on abortion? The question assumes that Forbes once had a coherent position on the subject. One prominent Washington conservative recalls trying to discuss abortion with Forbes at a cocktail party in 1996. "With no segue, he starts talking about the IMF. He headed straight back to the comfort zone." Brent Bozell, head of the conservative Media Research Center, also talked to Forbes about abortion around this time. While Bozell had better luck—Forbes didn't mention the World Bank—it was clear Forbes had spent very little time thinking about the issue. "We talked about everything from partial birth to parental notification," Bozell says. "At the end he paused for a second and said, 'I guess I'm pro-life.'"

These days, the candidate seems much more certain of where he stands. In virtually every public

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Tucker Carlson is a staff writer for The Weekly Standard.

appearance, Forbes condemns abortion and euthanasia and otherwise makes strongly pro-life noises. When Christie Whitman vetoed New Jersey's ban on partial-birth abortion, Forbes ran ads in the state attacking her decision. Forbes still argues that abortion law should be dismantled bit by bit—before abortion can be abolished entirely, he says, pro-lifers must convince the public that abortion is wrong—but this time around, he sounds convincing. "A lot of people make that argument because they're cowards," says Bozell. "Forbes means it."

Winning the support of people like Brent Bozell is vital to the Forbes 2000 campaign. Three years ago, under fire from religious conservatives, Forbes lost his temper and said that, in his opinion, the Christian Coalition doesn't represent all Christians. Later, a Coalition official pulled Forbes aside and gave him a much-needed lesson in Republican primary politics. "I said, 'That may be right,'" recalls the official, "'but we represent an awful lot who vote in the Iowa caucuses.'" Forbes got the message. As of last week, the Forbes campaign had hired former Christian Coalition leaders in at least five states to help organize the vote.

Forbes has also spent a good part of the last three years honing other aspects of his moral message. In 1996, Forbes made the case that a better tax system could solve just about all of America's problems, including moral decay. "There is no real difference between values and economics," he told one Iowa audience (to what, one imagines, was limited applause). A year later, in an article written for *Policy Review* and widely disseminated by his non-profit organization, Forbes had decided that "capitalism and democracy alone are not enough to sustain a healthy, vibrant society." What can bring America back from the abyss? This time, Forbes pointed not to the flat tax, but to the temperance movement of the nineteenth century—a model, he wrote, of what can happen when citizens undergo "spiritual renewal and religious dedication."

With rhetoric like this, it's not surprising that Forbes has become popular with social conservatives, or that so many of his staff—from communications director Greg Mueller to his traveling press secretary, K.B. Forbes (no relation)—once worked for Pat Buchanan. Nor is it a shock that Rich Tafel, head of the pro-gay Log Cabin Republicans, recently described Forbes as "the most dangerous" of the Republican candidates. Rival campaigns dismiss this support as bought and paid for. Forbes is rumored to be offering $1,000 a month to Republican leaders in every county in Iowa. Advance staff on the Forbes campaign are reputed to be making $100,000 a year. One political strategist in South Carolina, it is whispered in Washington, was offered $45,000 a month to organize for Forbes.

As it turns out, none of these rumors seems to be true (as future FEC disclosure forms will likely demonstrate). Forbes does pay his staff well, but not extravagantly. Unlike Ross Perot—a tightwad who bragged about being a high roller—Forbes clearly hates the idea of being perceived as profligate. He often boasts of his thrifty Scottish roots, and even claims to make some of his own fund-raising calls. In the end, though, it's clear that most of the $45 million or so Forbes plans to spend in the primaries will come from Forbes himself.

WHAT CAN BRING AMERICA BACK FROM THE ABYSS? FORBES ONCE POINTED TO THE FLAT TAX. NOW HIS MODEL IS THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT.

Where will that money go? Up to $2 million will likely be spent rounding up support for Forbes in the Ames straw poll in Iowa next August. (Forbes has been in Iowa at least once a month, every month for the past two years.) Some will go to grass-roots organizing in other states. Most will be spent on advertising. Many Republicans in Washington are still bitter at Forbes for the anti-Dole ads he ran in the 1996 primary. The Forbes campaign—while heatedly denying its advertising had anything to do with Dole's loss—is unapologetic about the spots. For one thing, they worked. At this point four years ago, the Forbes campaign points out, Bob Dole had over 50 percent of the Republican vote in all the primary states and was leading Clinton by double digits nationally. Dole's support, it turned out, had a hollow core. The Forbes campaign is hoping the same will be true of George W. Bush. Which is where the ads come in. If other Republicans "think the primary is going to be polite," says one Forbes strategist, "they are sadly mistaken."

But what about Forbes himself? How will his support hold up? Everyone agrees that as a self-financed candidate, Forbes can stay in the race as long as anyone, certainly until March. And money isn't all he has going for him. Forbes has a well-organized ground operation. He has a solid economic plan, a new values platform, and—his staff seems particular-

ly enthusiastic about this improvement—a state of the art, slightly less dorky haircut. He even has new glasses. Unfortunately, Forbes still lacks charisma.

Rusty Paul, a Forbes backer and the outgoing chairman of the Georgia Republican party, puts it this way: "The one challenge that Steve has in this campaign is lighting some enthusiasm among some people out there. A lot of people say to me, 'I love Steve, but I wish he was more energetic.'" It's a sensitive point, and Paul searches for a way to explain it. "In politics," he says finally, "you need to have some political theater. Steve has the right ideas, but we need to get some passion behind him. If he can get some passion we've got a shot. If he can't, I'm concerned."

Steve Forbes

Kent Lemon

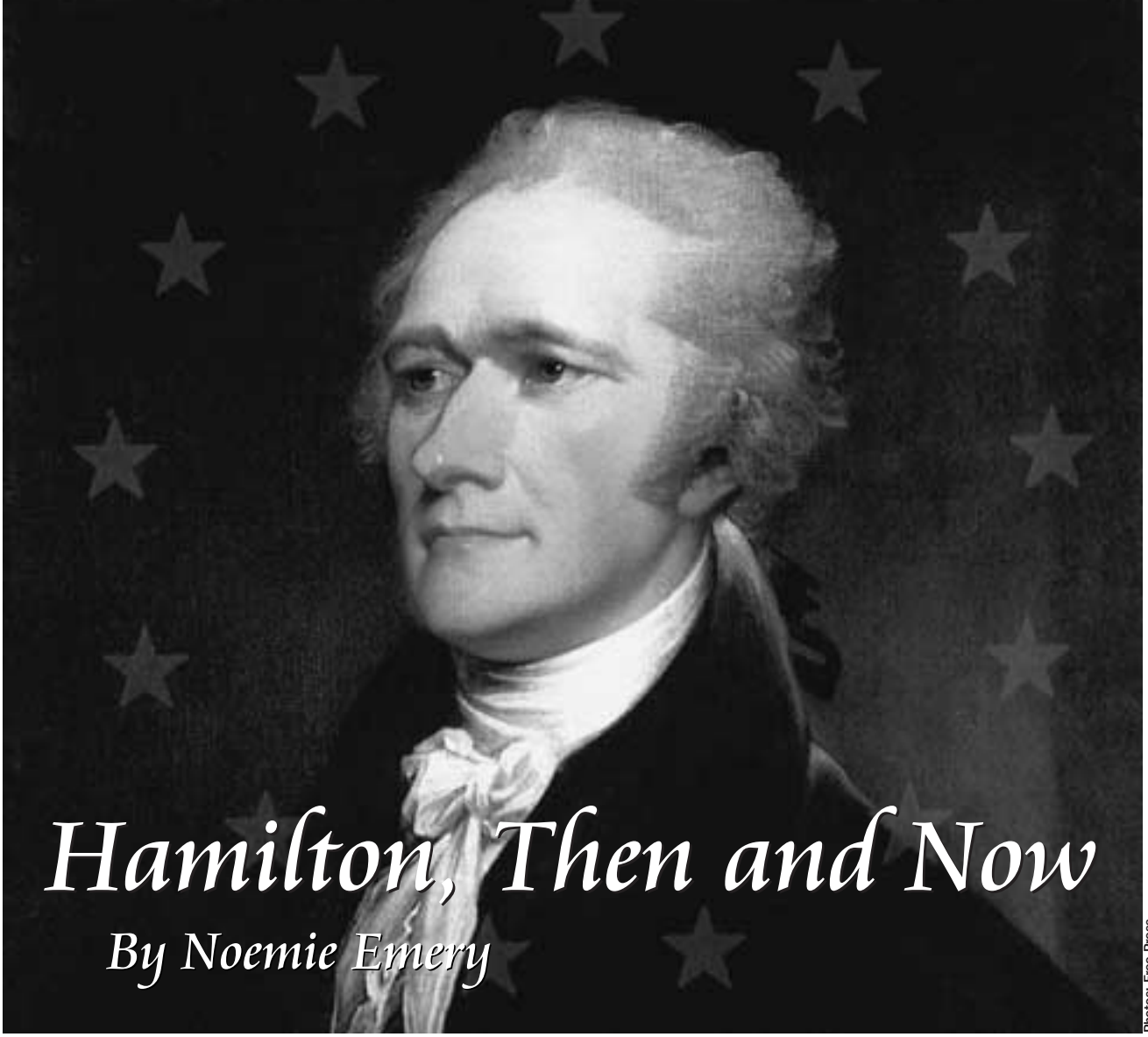
There is cause for concern. In person, Forbes is far more animated than his robotic caricature. He blinks. He modulates the pitch and volume of his voice. (His staff concedes that Forbes finally took Michael Deaver's advice and spent some time with a speech coach.) He even chuckles from time to time. The problem is that except when he talks about baseball statistics or mystery novels, Forbes never seems very excited. After a while you might come to the conclusion that he's more excited about baseball statistics and mystery novels than he is about politics. Accurate or not, this is not an impression an aspiring presidential candidate wants to leave with audiences in Iowa or New Hampshire.

Forbes may never be an inspiring speaker or thrilling flesh-presser, but his campaign staff is betting he won't have to be. Forbes plans to take his message outside the shopping malls and Rotary Clubs of the primary states and onto the Internet. *Forbes2000.com*, the campaign's official Web site, is huge, sophisticated, and packed with better-than-real-life photos of Steve Forbes. Campaign strategists immodestly predict that the Web site will become "the Amazon.com of the presidential race," that it will bring together "the largest grass-roots organization in the history of representative democracy." Plus, boasts one of the technicians who designed it, the site has "way cool interfaces."

Way cool or not, *Forbes2000.com* does have some interesting features. Visitors to the site are asked to become "on-line volunteers," and are then hit up for the e-mail addresses of their friends—each of whom in turn receives a pitch letter from the Forbes campaign. Volunteers who sign up numerous friends receive recognition as cyber ward-heelers for voting blocs ranging in size from e--precincts to e-cities and e-regions. Those who recruit with particular vigor win prizes and become members of the "e-National Committee." The firm that designed the *Forbes2000.com* site, Hensley Segal Rentschler of Cincinnati, has promised the campaign at least 500,000 on-line volunteers by the end of the primary season.

It's hard to know how many volunteers the site will produce, though it will certainly provide entertainment for bored white-collar workers. The campaign plans to add games to the site, each with a trademark twist: A flat-tax game, for instance. Or a Sisyphean Beltway Establishment game, where the more players win, the less they are allowed to keep.

The best feature of all, though, is certain to be the "news" coverage. The Forbes campaign plans to hire a full-time reporter and photographer to cover the candidate's activities on the campaign trail. Dispatches will be posted regularly to the Web site, along with photos of Forbes in action—kissing babies, talking taxes with farmers, displaying his knowledge of retail food prices at supermarkets. "We plan to build our own propriety news agency on-line," says one Forbes staffer excitedly. "Like CNN and MSNBC." Except much, much more amusing. ♦



Hamilton, Then and Now

By Noemie Emery

Photos: Free Press

Alexander Hamilton has had a very good year. Not only has he been frequently cited as the leading authority on impeachable offenses, but his conduct in explaining his relations with Maria Reynolds and her blackmailing husband has been justly hailed as befitting a gentleman caught out in a tawdry affair: forthright, unflinching, and painfully honest.

Richard Brookhiser could not have known this would happen when he set out to write his new profile of our most striking Founding Father, but no one needs a topical reason to explore again the life, mind, and character of this perplexing and beguiling man.

All the Founders are intriguing, but no other had a life, and death, like Hamilton's. No other was born a bastard on a remote Caribbean island to a wastrel father and a mother who was called a whore; no other had so sharp a rise through the social classes of his adopted country; no other had an adultery so widely publicized; no other had so dramatic a death: Nearly the youngest of the Founders, a perpetual youth among the graybeards, he was nearly the first to die.

RICHARD BROOKHISER
Alexander Hamilton American
Free Press, 256 pp., $25

Suspected of harboring European sympathies and aristocratic leanings, Hamilton was in fact an example of the New World's opportunities for social mobility. Figures like Thomas Jefferson and James Madison were bred to their powerful places. But Hamilton, like Washington, rose by grit, luck, brains, and ferocious ambition.

Washington came from a marginal family; Hamilton from a disgraced one. Washington had an embarrassing mother; Hamilton had an unmarried one. Washington had lost one parent by the age of eleven; Hamilton had effectively lost both. (His mother died, and his ne'er-do-well father deserted the family.) Washington's lifeline was his half-brother, Lawrence, who married into the upper-class Fairfax clan and pulled George along with him. Hamilton's lifeline was Nicholas Cruger, the Caribbean businessman to whom he was apprenticed at nine, who noticed the boy's talents and arranged to send him to school in New York. The glory Washington found in the French and Indian Wars, Hamilton found in the Revolutionary War, and both men

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capped their martial glory by marrying well. The fortune of Martha Dandridge Custis made Washington one of the major figures in Virginia society. Philip Schuyler, the father of Hamilton's wife Betsey, was one of the three most powerful figures in New York.

Both Washington and Hamilton reached power with advanced degrees in social climbing: Their patrons always proved more than willing to help them, and their rich wives thought themselves the fortunate ones in their marriages. This fact alone speaks volumes about their capacity to influence and lead.

But Hamilton remains more of a paradox than Washington, for the younger man was both a roaring success and a staggering failure. The greatest statesman of his age at innovation and prophesy, he was also its most hapless at everyday politics. Jefferson was born with the skills of a wardheeler, able to plot, wheedle, and spin with the masters. Madison, as Brookhiser observes, had a "fingertip feel for politics—how points are carried, how deals are made, . . . how alliances hang together and disintegrate. . . . At his best, he could push a cause with patience, tact, and cunning. If he was beaten he would keep coming back until he prevailed."

Alexander Hamilton had none of these talents. He was rash, blunt, unguarded, tactless, impatient, forthright, and cursed with a tin ear for politics. When he attempted intrigue, the effect was invariably pathetic. He could not play to the voters or butter them up: "He had information on all points," wrote the Duc de Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, "but he often wondered why others did not think and act as he did, the righteous necessities of the case seemingly being so apparent."

The result was that Hamilton could wield power only when allowed to by others—particularly by Washington, who trusted him and made him what was, in effect, first minister. When Hamilton left the cabinet in 1795, he continued to send instructions to his friends in government, an arrangement Washington approved of. But John Adams—who, unwisely for himself, kept Washington's cabinet in place when he became president—did not know it for years, and when he found out, he flew into a tantrum. With this, and the 1800 election of Jefferson, Hamilton's political power vanished. And he had not a clue how to get it back.

A great deal of Hamilton's political travails may derive from the fact that he was a man out of his time. The America he inhabited—a small, confederate, coastal, agrarian, partly slave-holding country—was not the America he had

Betsey Schuyler Hamilton

in mind: a continental superpower, a diverse economy sprouting new businesses, and a cohesive nation in which the states were merely regional units and slavery was merely a painful memory. Many of Hamilton's friends, like George Washington and Gouverneur Morris, were also ardent nationalists, but none of them could begin to imagine his plans for the nation.

Hamilton looked forward to seeing a "race of Americans," not a confederacy of Virginians, Carolinians, and New Yorkers. He looked forward to a country made wholly of freemen. (Save for his good friend Morris, no other Founder spoke with such passion against slavery.) Brookhiser notes his recurring word choices: "Busy, rouse, exert, energy, effort, enterprise, strongest, active, activity, vigor—these are all Hamiltonian touchstones." He longed to live in a world power, in a country that was key to a series of great international compacts made in the service of freedom. He loved power, responsibility, great chores, and great challenges.

Thomas Jefferson and George Washington lived on their farms, so entwined with their rural homes that they seem to have roots there. Hamilton lived in his mind and in the future. Of all the Founders, he would be the only one at home in the world of 1999, at ease with the computer and the Internet, the giant international conglomerate and the small entrepreneur. He believed in big and small business, and in an active state entity; in individual enterprise and community spirit. He was a big-government liberal who believed in big business and a pro-business conservative who believed that government should think of useful things to do and then do them.

Echoes of Hamilton sound in Ronald Reagan and Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his biographer Theodore Roosevelt, and in John F. Kennedy, with his space probes and Peace Corps. Hamilton would have adored Abraham Lincoln and admired Andrew Jackson for their strong displays of executive power (though he would have detested some of their purposes, such as Jackson's breaking of the national bank he had helped found). He would have disliked Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, George McGovern, and Jimmy Carter as having been too small for the national britches. For the Clinton-Gore administration, he would have had utter contempt.

Hamilton is typically posed as the money-man in the Founders' debates, forever arguing about budgets and balance sheets while Jefferson strode the moral heights, contemplating the eternal "pursuit of happiness." It is Brookhiser's insight that Hamilton's concern for financial programs—his

hope and belief in diversified enterprise—was his method of expanding freedom and opening new ways that happiness might actually be pursued. "A diverse economy, he argued, develops society," Brookhiser writes. But,

> equally important, a diverse economy develops individuals. "Minds of the strongest and most powers," Hamilton said, "fall below mediocrity and labor without effect is confined to uncongenial pursuits, . . . when all the different kinds of industry obtain in a community, each individual can find his proper element, and can call into an activity the whole vigor of his nature."

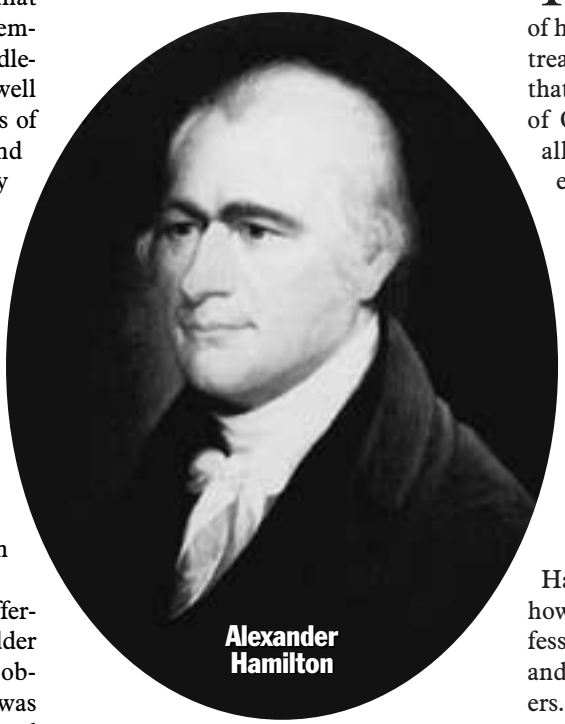
Madison and Jefferson knew that men needed to work to sustain themselves and to banish the demons of idleness. But what Hamilton knew as well is that men forced into wrong kinds of labor, forced out of their own bent and into another, could be neither happy nor free.

Work for Hamilton was a moral necessity. It was his talents at work that caused his first employer to send him to school in America. It was his talents at work that caused Washington to give him a place on his staff and then in his government. For Hamilton, work meant both private fulfillment and the opportunity for the natural aristocracy of talents to emerge in an open society.

Born at the top, Madison and Jefferson had no need to use work as a ladder to anything, and, as Brookhiser observes, their concept of labor was "notably static." Jefferson detested great cities, with their commerce and commotion and industry. Hamilton saw them as seedbeds of enterprise and eventual human liberation. Supposedly the most hardheaded of the Founding Fathers, the most involved with the country's material structure, Hamilton was also the most romantic about the people and in some ways the most aggressively populist.

Always precocious, Hamilton arrived early at failure and death. His last years were filled with shattering ruin in almost every area of life. In the late 1790s, he lost his political influence. At the end of 1799, he lost George Washington, his protector and substitute father. In 1801, he lost his oldest son, Philip, who at age nineteen was killed in a duel. He also "lost" his oldest daughter, Angelica, who went mad with shock. And then, in 1804, he was called out to a duel by Aaron Burr, a longtime political and personal rival. He accepted, withheld his first fire, and died.

No one will ever know why Hamilton would toss off life in this fashion, and Brookhiser does not really try to find out. It is possible that Hamilton thought his death would end Burr's political career and destroy public support for Burr's secessionist fantasies (as it did). It is possible that his will to live had been fatally sapped by the fates of his son and daughter. It is also possible that this man, who had lived in crisis amid great events from his late adolescence onward, found the prospect of a slow life not worth clinging to.


Alexander Hamilton

In his last note to his wife (who lived fifty more years), he said he would rather "die innocent" than "live guilty" of taking another man's life. He might also have said he preferred to exit life in a dramatic burst and live on in history. He did.

Hamilton is the only Founder one can imagine fighting such a duel; the only one with such sensitivities and so little common sense. But if his death looks back to the romantic past, his policies sprint ahead to the future—and his private failings place him squarely in the present.

The very fact that it was while he was compiling his masterful *Report on Manufactures* that he carried on his ill-starred dalliance with Maria Reynolds tells us that public giants can in fact have private lapses and that judgment is not always uniform in every area of life.

The affair might have escaped notice, but it was the sudden flow of hush money from the secretary of the treasury to Maria Reynolds's husband that drew the attention from members of Congress, among them Jefferson's ally, James Monroe. Hamilton explained to the congressmen privately that the funds came from him, not the Treasury, and that his sin had been lust, not bribery. But five years later, he was exposed by James Callender (the Larry Flynt of his era), and the familiar story unfolded. Mrs. Hamilton blamed Monroe (and the equivalent of a vast, left-wing conspiracy), while others bemoaned the decline in public morality.

The critical difference between Hamilton's scandal and Clinton's, however, is in the accused. In his confession, Hamilton did not equivocate, and he blamed himself instead of others. He took responsibility for his private behavior and defended his public probity. He told the truth and didn't split hairs or resort to bizarre definitions. He did not claim that a long friendship had turned into sex. Instead, he said that one day in 1792, he had been approached by a distraught young woman who claimed that her husband had deserted her and left her penniless. Hamilton took her address and promised to help her. Bearing money, he went to her rooms, where "further conversation ensued, in which it quickly became apparent that other than pecuniary compensation would be acceptable."

If nothing else, it reads so much better than the Starr Report. ♦

A & E Network

That Demmed Elusive Pimpernel

TV Reinvents Baroness Orczy's Hero

By S.T. Karnick

This hasn't been a good century for heroes. After the First World War, serious American fiction turned instead to figures like Jay Gatsby, Willy Loman, Dreiser's helpless victims, Faulkner's exemplars of decline, and Hemingway's scarred personalities. Unable to believe in the possibility of rising above circumstance and mastering fate, our national authors came to see the human condition as a matter of being buffeted by social and historical forces far beyond an individual's control.

Of course, in the nineteenth century, such serious novelists as Scott and Dickens—and even such confirmed cynics as Thackeray and Twain—had frequently created heroic characters. And when, in the twentieth century, high culture abandoned the hero, popular culture kept him alive in innumerable pulp novels, magazine stories, movies, comic strips, radio shows, and plays.

Or rather, popular culture kept the hero alive *for a while*. High-brow intellectual trends always end up changing low-brow entertainment, if only at a distance (which is why high culture is worth fighting for). And the literary history of the twentieth century shows how quickly popular culture begins adapting to the intellectual forces working their way into the general public.

This process was already discernible in 1905, for instance, when the Baroness Emmuska Orczy, an English immigrant from Hungary, wrote a novel that looked back more than a hundred years to redefine heroism in a revealing way. Set in 1792, in England and France during the early years of France's post-revolutionary Reign of Terror, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* presented a new kind of hero, well fitted for the twentieth century.

Orczy's Sir Percy Blakeney is simultaneously valiant and self-effacing, splendid and ludicrous, gallant and apparently cowardly—a perfect hero for a century that would see much heroism but was unable to proclaim its existence in art. Sir Percy is, Orczy tells us, a vain and useless fop: "Everyone knew that he was hopelessly stupid." He "was rich, his wife was accomplished, the Prince of Wales took a very great liking to them both," but Blakeney is a coward and a fool. When we first meet him, he is cravenly side-stepping a fight with a young Frenchman, for which his beautiful wife dubs him a "turkey." Percy is just under thirty and "undeniably handsome—always excepting the lazy, bored look which was habitual to him," and he is "always irreproachably dressed, . . . with the perfect good taste innate in an English gentleman." He is, in short, smug, superficial, and useless.

But under cover of his silly persona, Sir Percy Blakeney is in fact "that accursed Englishman . . . the Scarlet Pimpernel, . . . the best and bravest man in all the world," the leader of a band of English adventurers who arrange the escape of French aristocrats sentenced to the guillotine during the French Revolution. Far from being a useless ninny, Sir Percy is a hero whose well-justified fame is so widespread that men and women throughout England proudly wear ornaments with that "humble English wayside flower," the scarlet pimpernel.

Orczy's solution to the problem of how to present heroes to a modern audience made her book immensely popular, spawning ten sequels, a collection of stories, several movies, and countless imitations: Zorro, Batman, "mild-mannered" Clark Kent, the Saint, the Green Hornet, the Avenger, Doc Savage, the Black Bat, Operator 5, Sir Denis Nayland Smith (implacable adversary of Dr. Fu Manchu), the Rocketeer, the Grey Seal, Secret Agent X, etc.

Like Orczy's Blakeney, these characters hide their heroic endeavors behind a mask of foppish indifference or excessive humility, their heroic risk-taking behind a mask of wealthy indulgence. Some, like Sir Percy, profess to do their heroic deeds simply for the sport of it, but they are all actually motivated by anger at injustice: They are crusaders, devoted to a code of honor far more rigorous than what is practiced by the rest of society.

Like *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, these narratives were often pure melodrama, with ludicrously ghastly dangers and extrava-

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gant villains. But by mid-century, the high culture's rejection of the heroic had thoroughly infected the popular culture. Crude but wholesome pulp gave way to the lurid paperbacks of the 1950s, with the rise of Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer and dozens of even less scrupulous imitators.

By the 1960s and early 1970s, the movies, too, were full of antiheroes: Bonnie and Clyde, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, the hippie bikers of *Easy Rider*, "Cool Hand" Luke, and countless others. Batman became the subject of a camp television series, Richard Lester nimbly presented *The Three Musketeers* as farce, and Roger Moore took over the role of James Bond from Sean Connery. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, even the movies that were still structured as heroic stories typically presented their heroes as tortured souls, injured both physically and psychically by their efforts to do good in an evil world: Dirty Harry, Mad Max, Rocky Balboa, Rambo, John McClane (in the *Die Hard* series), Paul Kersey (in the *Death Wish* series), and Ellen Ripley (in the *Alien* series). Such films invariably went to great lengths to show the hero's faults and even his similarity to his foe.

But this anti-heroism may have begun to change in the late 1990s—and once again, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* is leading the trend, this time in a new series of films co-produced by the Arts & Entertainment cable-television network and the BBC. The first installment, called simply *The Scarlet Pimpernel*—which aired on March 7 and is to be followed by two sequels—presents a Sir Percy Blakeney very different from Orczy's original and from earlier movie versions starring Leslie Howard, David Niven, and Anthony Andrews respectively.

Orczy opened her book with Sir Percy in disguise, first as a captain of the French guards and then as a wizened French hag driving a cart full of plague victims. But the new A&E version—directed by Patrick Lau and written by Richard Carpenter—presents him instead as a conventional action hero. In the opening scene, the Scarlet Pimpernel (played by Richard E. Grant) simply walks into a prison, overcomes the guards, takes the aristocratic prisoner out, and escapes by coach: no disguises, no subterfuges, just a bold, aggressive blow against the Terror. "All of us wear masks from time to time," says Sir Percy to his wife, Marguerite (Elizabeth McGovern), but that in fact is something we never see him doing. Marguerite proves the masked one, pretending to be a seamstress in an unsuccessful attempt to sneak into France. The disguises and trickery for which the original Scarlet Pimpernel is famous give way to gun, sword, and fists. The only guileful character in the film is Sir Percy's nemesis, Chauvelin, the head of the French secret police, excellently portrayed by Martin Shaw as calmly relentless, fanatical, and seething with anger beneath a barely civil surface.

Sir Percy is much more straightforward. He dives through a window to escape capture, rubs elbows with forgers and prostitutes, demonstrates perfect aplomb when he is captured, overcomes prison guards during his successful escape, and exchanges witty mots with Marguerite at every opportunity. In a climactic swordfight, Sir Percy disables Chauvelin but refrains from killing him. He is, in short, a very old-fashioned hero: direct, self-confident, bold, clever, and honorable; everything the hero used to be—back in the days *before* Orczy wrote the original version of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*.

He needs to be so, for his task is formidable. The film shows Paris during the Terror as chaotic, cruel, poor, and hungry for blood. And like Orczy's novel, the film is careful to remind us that the British government, under Pitt, has decided to "Let 'em murder," judging that Britain was not "fit to embark on another arduous and costly war." The film spends much time in grimy prison cells, taverns, brothels, and slimy cobblestone streets, and shows a mob storming the squalid prison where Percy and Marguerite are being held, hacking prisoners to death with homemade weapons in an appalling, bloody frenzy.

The film continually smoothes out what moral complexity the original story possessed. In the book, Marguerite inadvertently betrays a man to the secret police before her marriage to Percy, and Percy disdains her for concealing it from him, because in doing so she has betrayed him, too. In this new version, however, the man she betrayed was a wicked aristocrat who had wantonly killed her parents: Percy can hardly fault her for turning him in, and forgiveness comes much more easily. The good characters in the film are unambiguously good, the evil characters are unequivocally wicked, and it's all great fun to watch.

We seem, if this new version of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* is any harbinger, to be coming full circle. The character through which the providers of popular entertainment learned to sneak heroes into a society losing faith in heroism no longer has to hide behind masks, deceptions, and trickery. This 1990s trend was first visible among books and video games, the lowest-status popular forms. It soon graduated to syndicated television, with such series as *Hercules*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *The Adventures of Sinbad*, and *The New Adventures of Robin Hood*. On the major television networks we now find *Martial Law*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

Many of these heroes are more than a little offbeat, but they are certainly not antiheroes. They are, in fact, anti-antiheroes, and together they show the reversal of a century-long trend.

Popular movies have started to display this reversal, as well. Last summer, for example, in six of the top eleven box-office films, at least one major character explicitly offers up his life for another person's sake. And on Broadway, one of the most popular and well-reviewed shows of today is a musical version of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*.

There is no assurance that this reversal will continue, much less that it portends a significant cultural renewal. But at least our fictional heroes no longer have to hide behind secret identities, and some writers and filmmakers now feel comfortable showing real heroism without embarrassment. The restoration of the culture still requires heroic effort, of course—but that's why it's good to see heroes coming back into style. ♦

B&A

Black and White TV

Truths and Myths of Narrowcasting

By Jonathan V. Last

Conservatives who like to believe that whites and blacks are fully integrated in the culture should consider this: Not one of the ten most-watched television programs in white America is in the top ten for blacks. In fact, in recent years, television networks have been able to capture nearly the entire black audience without attracting any white viewers at all, and "narrowcasting" has emerged as a dominant programming philosophy among television executives. Now Kristal Brent Zook has written a book exploring this practice and the cultural divide to which it is responding. *Color By Fox* tells the story of the rise of the Fox television network (part of News Corporation, the parent of The Weekly Standard). Zook is absolutely right that the topic is fascinating, and she's absolutely wrong about why.

KRISTAL BRENT ZOOK
Color By Fox
The Fox Network and the Revolution in Black Television
Oxford Univ. Press, 148 pp., $14.95

One of the popular parlor games among TV people of the 1970s and early 1980s was imagining what it would take to launch a fourth broadcast network to compete with NBC, CBS, and ABC. Like starting a new major movie studio, it was fun to talk about, but looked economically insane. When the Fox television network was launched in 1986, cobbled together from a few seldom-watched UHF stations in major cities, the TV establishment chuckled dismissively and assumed that it would quickly fold in the face of overwhelming competition from the majors. But Fox wisely chose not to compete at all with the Big Three, but to aim at an underserved audience: black America.

This gambit of network-wide counter-programming proved an unexpected success: By 1995, blacks, who are only 12 percent of the U.S. audience, were 25 percent of Fox's audience. However, blacks—whom one producer referred to as the "Nike and Doritos audience"—are, financially speaking, a low-yield audience who don't attract big-money advertisers. So even while Fox guaranteed its viability in the short-term by finding a foothold in the marketplace, the network seemed to weaken its viability for the long-term by closely linking its brand to a relatively undesirable demographic group.

In the early 1990s, however, Fox embarked on a not-so-subtle quest to change its identity and capture a wider and more commercially attractive audience. Many of its black shows were sacrificed to make space for such programs as *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Party of Five*, and *Melrose Place*. Fox once again defied the odds by smoothly trading its old core audience for a new, more profitable one. This TV stepchild is now recognized as the fourth major network.

Fox's success established a blueprint that has since been followed by two new start-up networks, the failing Paramount (UPN) and the thriving Warner Brothers' (the WB). Zook begins her slim volume promisingly with a discussion of the practice of narrowcasting for black audiences and a glimpse into the world of the infant Fox during the late 1980s. She opens with the well-documented fact that black audiences overwhelmingly prefer shows starring black actors.

But she then moves to trying to differentiate what black audiences do not in fact seem to differentiate: black-produced shows (such as *Living Single*) from merely black-cast shows (such as *Family Matters*). She has a pet thesis, which is that black audiences respond to four distinctive elements of black-produced programs: autobiography, improvisation, "black aesthetics," and drama. And she presents the thesis over and over again, in the apparent hope that endless and numbing repetition will overcome the fact that she's wrong.

The largest part of *Color By Fox* is a misguided textual analysis of such shows as *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, *Roc*, and *New York Undercover*, in such prose

Fox Broadcasting

Damon Wayans and Keenen Ivory Wayans in Fox's In Living Color, *c. 1990.*

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as: "What these aesthetics accomplish is an ideological reframing of the debate itself, recontextualizing 'unwanted compliments' as part of an ongoing legacy of womanist resistance." By the end of her book, Zook has degenerated into inarticulate moral outrage at Fox's abandoning of its original black shows—when what would have been fascinating is moral analysis of why the network was wrong, or right, to do so. Did Fox first raise and then destroy the expectations of black audiences? Was Fox's turn to shows like *Beverly Hills 90210* a silencing of the black creative voice?

As heroes, she offers cultural activists like Ralph Farquhar, a black TV executive involved with the show *South Central*, who has a plaque on his desk that says "Life is more important than show business"; and Natalie Chaidez, who, with Reggie Bythewood, worked on *New York Undercover*, proclaims,

> My mother is an activist. . . . My grandmother worked in unions. My aunt is a Chicano studies professor at East LA College, chair of the department. . . . My other aunt is also an activist. . . . I was raised by these women. So that was my agenda coming in. Reggie and I both had high aspirations from the beginning. We felt a responsibility to do issue-oriented shows.

But a season of a television show costs more than $11 million for twenty-two episodes (the top-rated show, *ER*, reportedly costs $13 million *per episode*), making the production of entertainment a high-stakes endeavor. What Zook and her friends don't or can't understand is that this is not show *politics* but show *business*.

In the world of television, a show like the WB's *Felicity* is one of the most valuable franchises around. Even though its viewership is small (it ranks ninety-ninth among all viewers), it has the most coveted niche: *Felicity* has the highest concentration of eighteen- to thirty-four-year-old viewers in households with incomes over $75,000. This is the type of viewer, with reams of disposable income, who makes advertisers salivate.

Zook misses this entirely. She is so in love with her four pillars of black-television success that she never gets around to talking about what will become of the concept of narrowcasting. With cable television increasing in popularity and Fox inspiring imitators, it's no wonder many people in the industry think that narrowcasting is the future for all television. Jamie Kellner, the chief executive of the WB, says that even network television has become a battle for niche: "It's going to be a fragmented marketplace, [so you have to] make sure the one you're hanging onto is the most valuable one in terms of audience."

This atomization of the industry is the legacy of Fox's courting of the black audience, and surely there is a fascinating book to be written about it. Just not by Kristal Brent Zook or any other of the political malcontents, both conservative and liberal, who are furious that popular entertainment is a financial enterprise with no loyalty to their agenda. ♦

BOOKS & ARTS

Imperial Misadventure

What Went Wrong In Somalia

By Max Boot

America seems fated to play in the twenty-first century the role Britain played in the nineteenth: Globocop—the country that protects the weak from the strong (the Ottoman Empire from Russia, Kuwait from Iraq), safeguards international trade while stamping out contraband (slaves, nukes), and generally bosses around petty despots in the name of Western ideals (Christianity, human rights). But there's a price to be paid for taking up what Kipling called "the white man's burden": You have to be prepared to fight "the savage wars of peace."

MARK BOWDEN
Black Hawk Down
A Story of Modern War
Grove/Atlantic, 320 pp., $25

BOB SHACOCHIS
The Immaculate Invasion
Viking, 432 pp., $27.95

DANIEL P. BOLGER
Death Ground
Today's American Infantry in Battle
Presidio, 384 pp., $29.95

There wasn't a year of Victoria's reign that her army wasn't fighting somebody somewhere, from Afghanistan to Zululand. And in the wake of the Cold War, American troops have been deployed to Panama, Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, Bosnia—and those are only the major missions. Next, it seems, is Kosovo.

These wars are a constant source of frustration for U.S. soldiers and civilians alike. Americans like clean, antiseptic violence, death from a distance. But there's a limit to what cruise missiles can accomplish, as we've discovered in our forays against Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. Unfortunately the alternative—sending men, not just machines—risks violating the prime imperative of post-Vietnam U.S. foreign policy: *No casualties*. Several new books illuminate the difficulties of acting like a superpower without being willing to pay any price in blood.

Black Hawk Down by Mark Bowden concerns the second-worst-case scenario of American intervention (the worst case being Vietnam-level blundering): what happened in Somalia on October 3-4, 1993. Bowden, a *Philadelphia Inquirer* reporter who wrote a series on the battle for his newspaper, tells the story through the eyes of the fighters, mostly Americans but also some Somalis.

The story is easily summarized: A Delta Force team, supported by Army Rangers, ventured into the heart of Mogadishu to snatch two of warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid's lieutenants. The

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plan went dramatically awry when two of the MH-60K Black Hawk helicopters supporting the ground team were brought down by rocket-propelled grenades. A ground convoy sent to rescue Task Force Ranger was turned back by swarms of Somalis. Ninety-nine Americans were trapped all night, surrounded by thousands of "Sammies" firing rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47s. Salvation came when the 10th Mountain Division was able to break through by borrowing tanks and armored personnel carriers from the Pakistani and Malaysian United Nations contingents. The Americans didn't have armor of their own because Defense secretary Les Aspin had refused to send any—a mistake which he paid for with his job.

By the time the Battle of Mogadishu was over, eighteen Americans were dead and seventy-three injured. The public was horrified to see TV pictures of a dead American soldier being dragged through the dirt by jubilant Somalis. Although the battle was a public-relations disaster, as military missions go, it was a success. The objective—snatching two clan leaders—was accomplished. (*What* was accomplished by snatching them is another matter; they were freed a few months later.) And the outnumbered U.S. force inflicted disproportionate casualties on the enemy: An estimated five hundred Somalis were killed and five hundred injured.

Faced with a harrowing ordeal, our highly trained soldiers reacted with cool professionalism and dedication. And bravery: After the second Black Hawk crashed amid a sea of hostiles, two Delta Force snipers volunteered to rappel down from their own helicopter to try to save the injured crew members—even though they knew it was a suicide mission. These "D-boys"—Master Sergeant Gary Gordon and Sergeant First Class Randy Shughart—were awarded posthumous Medals of Honor. Their gallantry, and that of their buddies, recalls the heroism of the outnumbered British garrison at Rorke's Drift, which won a record eleven Victoria Crosses for holding off thousands of Zulu warriors on January 22-23, 1879.

The truly dismaying part of the Battle of Mogadishu was not the casualties—such things happen, alas, in the fog of war—but what occurred afterward. Any self-respecting imperial power would have exacted a terrible vengeance for the death of its soldiers, as the British did after the massacre at Isandhlwana (which preceded the defense of Rorke's Drift). Indeed Special Forces troopers who fought in "Mog" were eager to return for another round. As the Rangers would put it: "Hoo-ah! Let's rock 'n' roll." But the Clinton administration, true to its "no-casualties" mantra, decided to cut and run.

The United States paid for its fickleness almost at once in lost respect around the world. Bob Shacochis relates in *The Immaculate Invasion* that the Somali disaster emboldened Haiti's military regime to resist U.S. demands to yield to elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The thugs taunted Americans with cries of "Somalia! Dead American soldiers." The United States lost still more face eight days after the Battle of Mogadishu when the USS *Harlan County*, loaded with Special Forces and Canadian soldiers, was turned back from Port-au-Prince by a hostile mob. Eventually President Clinton ordered a full-scale invasion, but before it began the Haitian army finally acceded to U.S. occupation. It didn't take long to seize the country but, as Shacochis writes, "the central operational question that remained unanswered was, *Now what*?"

Shacochis spends most of the book describing the months he spent with a Special Forces team—six sergeants and a captain—in the northern town of Limbé. These Green Berets quickly became the only authority around, their captain "the contemporary version of a Roman procurator, the sole authority over the lives of three hundred thousand people living under primitive conditions."

But these latter-day Romans were severely circumscribed in exercising their authority. They were told by their commanders—who were told by Washington—that they were only supposed to restore Aristide and his Lavalas gang. They could protect themselves against

Photos: Atlantic Monthly Press

Two views of Mogadishu from U.S. military helicopters.

threats but had limited power to arrest members of the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH), paramilitary thugs who terrorized the populace. And they were supposed to restore civilian authority as soon as possible, even if that authority was venal and incompetent (as it usually was).

The Green Berets adapted as well as possible to this nebulous mission. Night patrols, for instance, took advantage of voodoo superstitions by wearing inverted night-vision goggles whose "twin cones of ghoulish light" made them look like the living dead. But the Green Berets were frustrated that, as one sergeant put it, they couldn't "take care of the bad guys, like we were supposed to be doing."

Operation Uphold Democracy was, in the narrow sense, also a success: Aristide was restored and the military government of Raoul Cédras was deposed. Above all U.S. forces suffered few casualties. This seemed to be the highest priority of American commanders. Shacochis brilliantly summarizes their paradoxical attitude: "U.S. soldiers had invaded Haiti for the primary purpose of protecting themselves."

These twin American fixations—restoring "democracy" and avoiding casualties—made for a hollow victory in Haiti. The United States left a country that was still a cesspool of corruption, incompetence, and violence—but at least it had plenty of ballot boxes to stuff. (Somalia didn't even have that consolation.) Kipling foresaw it all long ago:

Fill full the mouth of Famine
And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly,
Bring all your hope to nought.

Shacochis regrets that the United States didn't engage in more "nation building." There's ample precedent for this. Between 1915 and 1934, U.S. Marines ran Haiti, creating a stable and sane, if unpopular, government. The Marines even stamped out the *cacos* bandits, predecessors of FRAPH. There's another name for this type of "nation building." It's called imperialism. It's a defensible strategy on its merits but Shacochis, a good "progressive" writer, never seems to face the implications of his policy preferences. Does he really want Americans to run Haiti for the next decade or two?

A Black Hawk helicopter crew in Somalia.

While both *Black Hawk Down* and *The Immaculate Invasion* are impressive pieces of reporting, neither is particularly reflective. Mark Bowden delivers a gripping minute-by-minute battle account, sort of like a nonfiction Tom Clancy without the character development. Bob Shacochis, a novelist by trade, is a better stylist but he occasionally puts flashy writing over narrative coherence. Army colonel Daniel P. Bolger, a history Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, delivers a less graceful but more clear-headed analysis of Haiti, Somalia, and other recent "operations other than war" in *Death Ground*.

Bolger opines that these expeditions show the limits of the "firepower-intensive American way of war." There are some conflicts—Vietnam was one—where "to do the job, you need fine infantry—good men willing to close in and fight. Ammunition by the ton cannot do it all." The regular Army, to say nothing of the Navy and Air Force, hates these wars. They like playing Schwarzkopf, not Schweitzer. "The Gulf War matched their preferred style, Panama less so, Somalia and Liberia not at all."

Luckily, America does deploy some infantrymen who are trained for these small wars—principally Special Forces and Marines, "America's '911' force." These soldiers embrace the challenge of operations that Bob Shacochis evocatively describes as "an empty space in an army's traditional reality, where there are no friends and no enemies, no front or rear, no victories and, likewise, no defeats, and no true endings." Marines in particular have a long history, stretching back to the Tripolitan War of 1801-1805, of fighting these low-intensity conflicts. For a regular Army officer, Bolger shows a surprising appreciation for these warriors who are often derided by Pentagon technocrats as testosterone-addled anachronisms.

Now that we have this elite infantry force—this thin green line—the question is what are we going to do with it? Many Pentagon brass and politicians want to husband our resources, avoid risking even a single life, and prepare endlessly for the Big One that may never come. So while the fire department awaits a ten-alarm blaze, a series of smaller fires ravage the neighborhood.

Oddly enough, we're far more sparing with the lives of professional soldiers—men who have eagerly volunteered for combat and its attendant risks—than we ever were with draftees. Mark Bowden writes that "It speaks well of America that our threshold for death and injury to our soldiers has been so significantly lowered." I wonder if it doesn't instead betray the moral myopia of a self-satisfied nation that risks forgetting that certain things are worth fighting and dying for. ♦

Presidential Hopeful a Myth
Should Not Harm Candidacy

By Ralph Z. Hallow
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

After nearly a year of archival and archaeological research, a group of 37 scientists and academics have determined that New Hampshire senator Robert Smith does not exist and, indeed, never existed. True, it is claimed that Sen. Smith is an announced candidate for the Republican nomination for the presidency. But Republican primary voters have long noted that they possess no direct evidence of Sen. Smith. No one has been found who will testify to having been in a room with him. And several Smith-signed op-ed pieces on character and presidential leadership turn out to have been ghost-written.

The findings did not disturb the political consultants at Smith 2000: Time for A Change. "We're the only campaign with a genuine exploratory committee," said one staffer. "We have teams fanning out across the country looking for Sen. Smith, or anyone who would like to be him."

Meanwhile, Larry Sabato, the man with the phone at the University of Virginia, suspects that Sen. Smith's campaign may not be hurt by the non-existence of the candidate. "While it is true that George W. Bush does clearly exist," said Sabato, "his candidacy has been boosted by the fact that his campaign did not exist. Having the candidate not exist takes this strategy to the next level."

Indeed, Sen. Smith's support does seem to have been helped by the news. Early polls had shown Sen. Smith winning -4 percent of the vote among registered Republican voters, with a plus or minus 4 percentage-point margin of error. But when respondents were told that the man they had never heard of doesn't exist, Smith's support shot up, as voters warmed to the notion of having a nobody as president.

The Robert Smith Seminar, as the academic research team is known, will now address the issue of who really uttered the many bon mots that have been attributed to Smith. Moreover, the final proof of Smith's non-reality may have been produced by Michael Barone, editor of The Almanac of American Politics. "There were 37 Robert Smiths who came over from Cornwall in 1837," Barone said in an interview, "but their descendants tend to be congregated in the Ohio 16th congressional district and the Missouri 6th; none seems to have moved to New Hampshire. Therefore,

see **MYTH**, *page A22*