the weekly Standard

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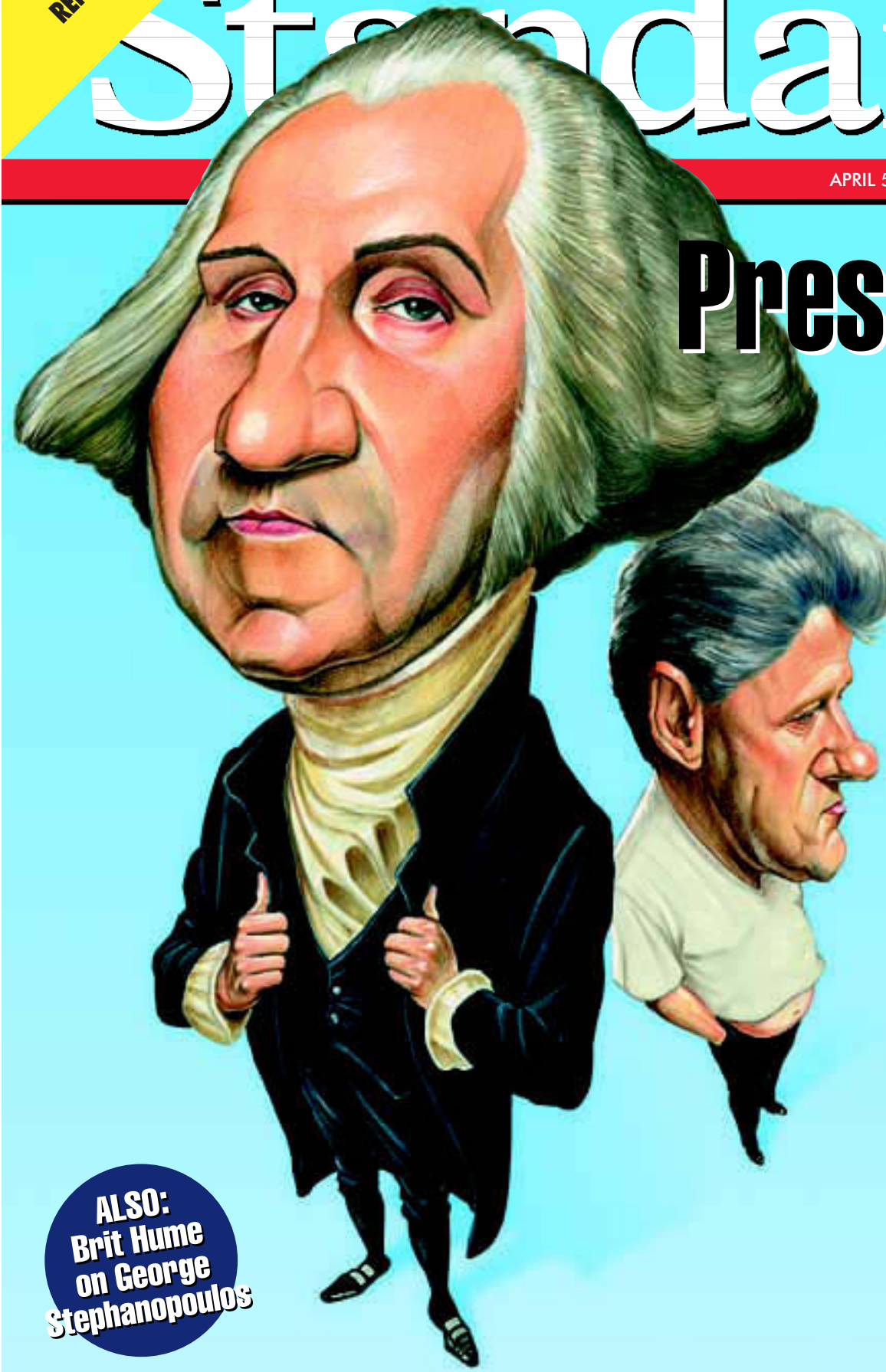
KOSOVO AND THE REPUBLICAN FUTURE
THE EDITORS

Presidents Great and Small



ANDREW FERGUSON
Updating George Washington

DAVID TELL
Uncovering Bill Clinton

ALSO:
Brit Hume on George Stephanopoulos

This is a combined issue. The next issue of **The Weekly Standard** *will appear in two weeks.*

the weekly Standard

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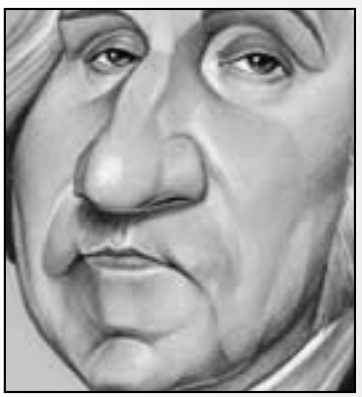

Cover by Ismael Roldan

Books & Arts

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

Larry Flynt Shoots Blanks

Ever since offering a million-dollar bounty last October for dirt on Republican officials, *Hustler* publisher Larry Flynt has vowed to defend Bill Clinton against the politics of personal destruction—even if he had to destroy people's personal lives to do it. But his highly anticipated *Flynt Report*—a compendium of politicians' indiscretions provided by fee-seeking snitches—seemed perennially delayed. Depending on when you caught Flynt or his deputies, they flip-flopped on every detail from the report's release date to the nature of the scandals it would reveal. The only certainty, it seemed, was, as Flynt's chief investigator Dan Moldea said in January, "This is going to get dark, and it's going to get mean. We are not messing around anymore."

Yes, they are. The *Flynt Report* finally landed in The Scrapbook's mailbox last week in a brown paper bag. Half the 84-page "report" consists of self-congratulation. There is a 16-page discussion of Flynt's media treatment. There are eight pages of testimonials from fans, including a mash note from Geraldo Rivera. As for scoops, besides bombshells such as the revelation that Richard Scaife funds right-wing interests, Flynt has stitched together sloppy clip jobs lifted from previously published scandals (J.C. Watts has illegitimate children, Republican backbencher Ken Calvert once got caught with a hooker) and a handful of uncorroborated charges (one Republican is rumored to have been photographed in the embrace of a Mexican prostitute, "an elusive photo, if it exists"). Flynt purportedly spent $4 million on his "investigation." He could have subscribed to Nexis and saved a lot of money.

In January, The Weekly Standard's Matt Labash speculated that Flynt was bluffing. In the spirit of the self-aggrandizing pornographer, The Scrapbook is pleased to report that we were right. The tipoff: Flynt's media-hoax track record. In 1983, he claimed to have an audiotape that proved government agents had threatened John DeLorean's life if DeLorean didn't buy cocaine in their sting operation. Flynt later admitted his tape was as "fake as a $3 bill." That same year, he came up empty after claiming he possessed sex tapes involving members of Congress and President Reagan (not with each other).

George magazine has christened Flynt one of the "20 Most Fascinating Men in Politics," so Flynt will likely keep playing his games. In his report, he promises a book detailing further "revelations." A more appropriate response would be the one he gave reporters after the DeLorean scam: "Yes, this is a publicity gimmick, and I thank God you all fell for it."

Naming Names

During the weeks before the Academy Awards, Army Archerd raged a ruthless campaign against Elia Kazan in his column in *Daily Variety*. Archerd implored the Hollywood glitterati to stand up to the supposed evil of Kazan by sitting down and folding their arms when Robert De Niro and Martin Scorsese presented the eminent director with an Oscar for lifetime achievement. Happily, it turned out that the crowd was less than sympathetic to the cause of Stalinist secrecy (Kazan had dutifully and patriotically "named names" to House investigators when they questioned him under oath about Communists in the movie business). More than half the crowd rose to applaud Kazan.

As a public service to those who tuned out the tedious Oscars before Kazan's moment, The Scrapbook took careful notes—a list!—of every attendee it could identify who sat. And now we will name names: Ed Harris (nominated for Best Supporting Actor for *The Truman Show*), Amy Madigan (from *Field of Dreams*, and Harris's wife), Nick Nolte (nominated for Best Actor for *Affliction*), Vicki Lewis (from *NewsRadio*, and Nolte's girlfriend), Paula Coburn (wife of James Coburn, winner of Best Supporting Actor for *Affliction*), and Sophia Loren. The Scrapbook is prepared to believe that Loren was just being demure.

Wanniski Update

It's hard to remember while perusing Jude Wanniski's Web site these days that the man was, until recent years, an intimate and trusted adviser of serious Republican presidential candidates like Jack Kemp and Steve Forbes. Then the New Jersey-based publicist for supply-side economics started falling for political thugs like Louis Farrakhan, Saddam Hussein, and, now, Slobodan Milosevic.

The Scrapbook extends its sympathies to Republican senator Tim Hutchinson of Arkansas, who through no particular fault of his own managed to become the recipient of the latest Wanniski-gram, a March 25 memo posted on his Web site on "the essence of democracy," titled "Abe

Scrapbook

Lincoln and Slobodan Milosevic."

"Yes," writes Wanniski to Hutchinson, "it will sound outrageous at first, but I want to compare Yugoslavia's leader, Slobodan Milosevic, to Abe Lincoln. I chose you for this exercise because I saw you on CNN's *Crossfire* last night and realized you had a mind that was comfortable with political philosophy." (Political philosophy on *Crossfire*? Please.) And trust us: The Honest Abe Milosevic stuff doesn't sound outrageous just at first. It's outrageous all the way to the end.

But Enough About Me

Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana is widely admired as one of the more modest fellows on Capitol Hill—which is, as they say, a little like being one of the tallest buildings in Cedar Rock, Nebraska. But even Sen. Lugar's modesty knows it limits. Last week, his office helpfully faxed out his schedule to reporters, with an interesting "FYI" item attached to the bottom. "Sen. Lugar made his 27th appearance on *Meet the Press* Sunday March 14," said the press release. To which the only appropriate response is, "Oh."

But the press release went on: "Following are the people with the most all time appearances on *Meet the Press*." The list proves—as if proof were necessary!—that with this latest appearance, Senator Lugar has now moved into sixth place, past Vice President Hubert Humphrey, who is presumably without hope of ever catching up with the gentleman from Indiana. But no doubt Pat Moynihan and George Mitchell are feeling his hot Hoosier breath on the backs of their necks, for they are tied for fourth place, at 28 appearances each. A few more Kosovos, and Sen. Lugar may even overtake number two, Dick Gephardt (31 appearances). The hands-down all-time leader, however, is Bob Dole, who appeared on the show 58 times. No word on whether those 58 appearances include "public service" ads for E.D.

Command Error

At last we know what *New York Times* editors *really* think about George W. Bush. In a Richard L. Berke story a couple of weeks ago on the large number of policy experts going to Austin, Texas, to advise Bush for his run at the GOP presidential nomination, there was this catty line about all the expert advice Bush was getting: "There may never have been a 'serious' candidate who needed it more."

The explanation for this astonishing editorial comment came a week later in an Editor's Note: "As published, the article included an opinionated sentence casting doubt on [Bush's] mastery of the issues. The sentence was sent as a message between the editors after the article was written, and the reporters were never aware of it. The comment was typed in a nonprinting computer script, but converted into print through a command error."

It would be a service to readers if the *Times* made public more of the editorial opinions that shape its news stories.

Help Wanted

Casual

A Bad Case of Mono

My pity goes out to the monolingual, those poor devils trapped in the prison of a single language, their linguistic horizons occluded by knowing only the language of their own country. My pity, I had better quickly insert, is self-pity, for I am such a prisoner—a lifer, it is beginning to become clear.

I have dabbled in other languages, but with nothing approaching success. I speak just enough Yiddish to fool the Gentiles but not enough to speak to real Jews. My spoken French—I can read the language with the help of dictionaries—still falls short of being despicable.

Once, on a trip to Italy, I believed I was getting the hang of that nation's glorious, sonorous language. Yet it turned out that I'd learned it just well enough to board the wrong train from Florence to Milan, causing me to miss my bus and have to pay a cab driver the equivalent of $80 to get me to the airport, during which we spoke to each other about Frank Sinatra in execrable French.

Many years ago, I tried to teach myself Russian. I carried a little Russian-English grammar about with me, which finally didn't help me learn the language but caused one of my co-workers to start the rumor that I was a Communist. On another occasion, I enrolled in a course in Ancient Greek, and found myself spending something like four hours a day (including classroom time) on it, and had to drop out.

Only the other day I saw, in a bin of 50-cent sale books at my local library, a handsome German edition of the plays of Gerhart Hauptmann, and wondered if I oughtn't to buy it. I would acquire a German grammar, flash cards, the rest of the language-learning apparatus. I had some free time—why not fill it up by failing to learn yet another new language?

The one language I am extremely glad not to have to attempt to learn is English, which provides, or so it seems to me, almost no help whatsoever by way of clear rules about syntax and a vocabulary full of homonyms, nonsensical idioms, and other words and constructions that have no connection that I can see with logic. Foreigners who seem easily to master it impress me greatly.

Every so often I get a German exchange student in one of my classes and am astonished at how adept he or she is in writing and, often, speaking English. One such student, whose written was much better than her spoken English, early caught on to the phrase "No problem"—the American all-purpose equivalent of the Italian "*Prego*"—and was beating it into the ground with overuse. Listening to her answer "No problem" to nearly everything I had said to her one day in my office, I thought that any immigrant to America today can probably survive with mastery of only three idioms: (1) No problem, (2) Go screw yourself, and (3) Have a nice day.

To be in a land where you do not speak the language can be an unnerving, even a harrowing feeling. I have felt it, in a modified form, when I was a tourist in Turkey and in the cities of the Dalmatian coast. Without a common language, one feels almost of another species, rather as if one didn't have prehensile thumbs. As a writer, I often wonder how I would have fared if I had been born in a country whose politics forced me into exile and, with it, into another language. Not very well, I suspect.

My aged father recently returned from the hospital, requiring someone to watch him full time. I hired a woman from Ukraine, in (I should guess) her late forties, with a most intelligent face, a refined manner, and either not enough English to say "no problem" or too much sense not to recognize that the English language is for her a momentous problem. Her last name is a bit of barbed wire, chiefly comprising the letters l, y, and u, which I have not attempted to pronounce even to myself. I call her by her first name, Erica; she does not call me by any name at all, and she calls my father "Mister." Her business card has after her name the initials M.D. and Ph.D., which she is, in Ukraine. Here, with no English, she is reduced to tending to the needs of my father, and she does it with a kindliness that has touched both him and me.

They spend days together with perhaps two hundred words of English between them. While he naps, she sits in his kitchen, listening to classical music and working on an English-Russian grammar book, at which she seems not to be making much progress. He is aware of her devotion, and returns it with affection. He calls her, in a sturdy old American cliché, "a diamond in the rough." Neither ever tells the other to "have a nice day," but they seem to get through the weeks without language quite nicely anyhow.

Joseph Epstein

Correspondence

A Jury by Any Other Name

The Scrapbook repeats what the media had misreported in calling a court-martial panel a "jury" ("Italian Justice," March 22). A court-martial has no jurors. Traditionally, a court-martial is a panel or board of officers who decide the guilt or innocence of a military accused. These officers are not randomly selected peers. A commander personally selects officers who are senior in rank to the accused. Over the years, Congress has added a trial counsel (prosecutor), trial defense counsel, and military judge to the membership of the court-martial. The vote to convict need not be unanimous, and so it is possible that a majority voted to convict Capt. Ashby, but not the necessary two-thirds.

Nevertheless, the point is well-taken. Today's American court-martial is as fair as any civilian trial, and even more so in many instances. In the Ashby case, the evidence which was reported in the press seemed to suggest that the acquittal was reasonable, and that the cable car tragedy might have been an accident. The murder of Leon Klinghoffer has no rational explanation, and Italy's failure to bring his killer to justice deprives that country's leaders of the right to complain.

Arthur C. Zeidman
Raleigh, NC

Pound Foolish

Christopher Caldwell's article on Ezra Pound expresses some amazement at the fact that a fascist sympathizer has gained so much support from modernist critics ("The Poet as Con Artist," March 15). This strange combination happens to be routine. An interesting piece by Brooke Allen in the February 1997 issue of the *New Criterion* commented on the now politically correct characterization of Joseph Conrad as a racist. If true, Allen pointed out, this charge would make no difference, for none among the modernist icons was any better.

Perhaps one should revere a person's literary excellence in spite of his abhorrent politics, but what does it say of today's liberal-modernist critics that these detestable views characterize virtually every one of their heroes?

William Petersen
Carmel, CA

Commerce Claims

Craig D. Turk does an admirable job of describing the expansive, and sometimes unconstitutional, use of the commerce clause to implement social policy ("Violence Against the Constitution," March 29). However, the commerce clause and other popular constitutional sources of authority, such as section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment, are not simply the tools of "social activists" and "liberal constitutional scholars," as Turk suggests.

For example, the first subsection of the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act of 1997 states: "Any physician who, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, knowingly performs a partial birth abortion . . . shall be fined . . . or imprisoned not more than two years, or both." I wonder how many people understand that the commerce clause is the source of the authority for the partial-birth abortion plan? I wonder, also, how many supporters of the ban realize that, even if it is held constitutional, it will not ban all partial-birth abortions, but only those performed "in" interstate or foreign commerce or which "affect" such commerce.

Turk also observes that the Fourth Circuit's opinion in *Brzonkala* rejected the Fourteenth Amendment as a source of power to enact the Violence Against Women Act, on the grounds that the Amendment requires state action, and the Act punishes solely private action. But, again, consider Senate Bill 41, the Civil Rights of Infants Act, introduced by Sen. Helms. The bill is designed to make it "a violation of the right secured by the Constitution and laws of the United States to perform an abortion with the knowledge that the abortion is being performed solely because of the gender of the fetus." The source of power to pass this act is clearly section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment. However, private physicians performing abortions for private parties would not seem to involve state action of any sort.

Conservatives rightly criticize excessive use of federal legislation, often constitutionally suspect, to promote the politically correct causes of the moment. We should exercise equal scrutiny over Congress's power when promoting our own causes. It may be hard to effectuate change through the processes of constitutional amendment and appointment of judges, but those are the right ways to alter constitutional doctrine.

Ralph U. Whitten
Omaha, NE

Correction

George W. Bush's March 6 address was delivered at Houston's Second Baptist Church, not the First Baptist Church ("The Gospel According to George W. Bush," March 22).

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the weekly Standard

Kosovo and the Republican Future

Republicans say they want to make foreign policy and national security a big issue in the 2000 campaign. But when Republican senators voted 38–16 against NATO airstrikes in Yugoslavia last week, they gravely damaged their ability to do so. As a result of that vote, and of the neo-isolationist arguments that leading Republicans made to support their position, Republican foreign policy is now mired in pathetic incoherence. Is this the party of Reagan or the party of Buchanan? Right now, it's hard to tell.

This is too bad, because Republicans are right to think that foreign policy offers them a big opportunity in 2000. Clinton's record is dismal; the world on his watch has become a much more dangerous place; and polls suggest the American people are figuring this out.

The list of Clinton foreign policy failures is surprisingly long. His policy of engagement toward China is, finally, widely understood to be little better than a policy of appeasement and venality. Covering up Chinese espionage; allowing sales of advanced military technology at the behest of big corporate donors; undermining Taiwan's security; frightening Japan; overlooking Chinese proliferation of nuclear weapons technology to Pakistan, Iran, and North Korea; ignoring Beijing's crackdowns on democracy activists; and now, apparently, agreeing to Chinese entry into the World Trade Organization ahead of Taiwan and on concessionary terms—all these failures of China policy amount to a grand albatross around the Clinton-Gore administration's neck.

No one has been paying much attention to Iraq lately. But that unfolding Clinton administration disaster is certain to rear its head again over the next year. Right now Saddam Hussein is busy building his weapons of mass destruction, unencumbered by international inspectors, unchallenged by a domestic opposition that the Clinton administration, despite paying lip service to the Iraq Liberation Act, refuses to support, and unharmed by the sporadic attacks which the United States has been carrying out in the no-fly zones. The sanctions regime is tottering. International support for the "containment" of Saddam is evaporating. And the Clinton administration does not even pretend to have an answer.

In North Korea, things go from bad to worse. The Clinton administration has been reduced to paying huge bribes to Pyongyang for the privilege of visiting sites where the North Koreans once were building nuclear weapons but which they have long since cleaned out. One bribe will be followed by more—and with no prospect of actually stopping the North Koreans from building their weapons. Here again, the word that best describes Clinton administration policy is appeasement.

Meanwhile, the defense budget continues to decline in real dollars—despite Clinton administration efforts to use smoke and mirrors to claim that it is boosting spending. And anyone who believes the Clinton administration is actually committed to building a missile defense system—now more urgently needed than ever—must have been living on another planet for the past six years.

All these failures and more make a ripe target for a Republican party that is willing and able to offer a coherent alternative. But there's the rub. In theory, the outline of a Republican foreign policy platform for 2000 practically writes itself: The Clinton-Gore administration has appeased dictators from Baghdad to Beijing to Belgrade; it has elevated money over morality, and traded away national security for corporate interests and campaign contributions; it has weakened America's defenses, demoralized America's military, and undermined America's standing in the world through inconstant and incompetent leadership. A Republican president should restore American strength, reinvigorate American global leadership, and return American foreign policy to the strong moral and strategic foundations of the Reagan era.

This would be a powerful case for putting a Republican in the White House in 2001—but only if Republicans can plausibly make it. They won't be able to unless a few party leaders—and in particular key presidential candidates—repudiate much of the Republican

talk we've heard over the past couple of weeks. Do Republicans really want to present themselves as the party of callous indifference to human suffering, the party that defends the "sovereign" right of brutal thugs like Slobodan Milosevic to slaughter innocent women and children, the party that won't lift a finger against aggressive dictators, the party that doesn't give a fig about what happens in Europe and is willing to abandon U.S. leadership in NATO? Republicans have almost managed to make the feckless Clinton look like a champion of American moral leadership. That's quite an accomplishment.

The damage can, however, still be repaired. And the good news is that a few prominent Republicans have stepped forward to uphold the Reagan mantle. Bob Dole and Jeane Kirkpatrick have been arguing on both moral and strategic grounds that the United States must do what it takes to defeat Milosevic and defend the Kosovar Albanians. Republicans have every right to be critical of President Clinton—Steve Forbes, for example, is absolutely correct to say that "the bombing should have taken place six months ago, a year ago, two years ago." But Sen. John McCain struck the right note when he insisted on the Senate floor that Republicans "must not compound the administration's mistakes by committing our own."

Kent Lemon

Slobodan Milosevic

As McCain argued, "That the president has so frequently and so utterly failed to preserve one of our most important strategic assets—our credibility—is not a reason to deny him his authority to lead NATO in this action. On the contrary, it is a reason for Congress to do what it can to restore our credibility. It is a reason for us to help convince Milosevic that the United States, the greatest force for good in history, will no longer stand by while he makes a mockery of the values for which so many Americans have willingly given their lives."

Instead of warning hysterically about the possibilities of failure in the current mission, Republicans should be supporting the military action, warning that the Clinton administration is likely to do too little, not too much, and pressing for additional policies that will lead to victory. For example, Senators Jesse Helms, Richard Lugar, and others have introduced legislation to make the goal of American policy the removal of Milosevic from power and to provide some of the means necessary to accomplish that objective. Combined with a continuing air campaign, these efforts to undermine Milosevic stand a real chance of success. And, as Sen. Helms put it last week, Milosevic's ouster is the only real "exit strategy" in the Balkans.

Republicans should also push the administration to abandon its faith in any further "peace" agreements with Milosevic and to arm the Kosovars. Senators Mitch McConnell and Joseph Lieberman have introduced a bill that would provide $25 million to arm the Kosovars. A policy that combines a vigorous air campaign with an arms supply to the Kosovars could replicate the successful strategy that brought peace to Bosnia. If one consequence of such a strategy is the independence of Kosovo, so be it. Whatever problems that may cause pale in comparison with letting Milosevic win.

The fundamental point is this: Once the United States and NATO are engaged, there is no acceptable alternative to success. We suspect the air campaign may be more successful than panicky critics are now forecasting; but if it doesn't do the job, it is irresponsible to rule out the possibility of ground troops. In any case, now is the time for Republicans to show some courage. Behaving like McGovern Democrats is not just bad politics, damaging to Republican hopes in 2000. It reflects a fundamental failure to understand what is good for the country. Instead of voting against a U.S. peacekeeping force in Kosovo if one is eventually needed, as about 80 percent of House Republicans did recently, and instead of opposing the bombing campaign, as about 70 percent of Senate Republicans did last week, the GOP should be the party of American leadership and American victory.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan, for the Editors

George W.'s Brain

by Fred Barnes

LAST FALL, while Texas governor George W. Bush was pretending he might not run for president, Karl Rove was on the phone with Haley Barbour, the former Republican national chairman, and a horde of others. Rove was recruiting. He wanted well-known Republicans, mostly in their 40s and 50s, who weren't closely identified with George W.'s father, President Bush. The idea was that, organized as a Bush presidential exploratory committee, they'd represent the next generation of Republican leaders. Barbour, for one, wasn't ready to make the commitment more than a year before the first caucus or primary. But Rove persisted. In February, Barbour succumbed, agreeing to join what Rove and Bush envisioned as a star-studded committee. The deal was closed when Barbour chatted one-on-one with Bush at the national governors conference in Washington. Three weeks later, the full committee was announced.

Bush says Rove, 48, will be "the main strategist, should I go forward" and run for president. But Rove has acted for a year or more as if a full-dress campaign is certain and his job is to organize it. This has involved the tedious work, largely out of public view, of signing up a national campaign team, state by state. And it has meant generating, through choreographed public events, a clamor for Bush's candidacy. Rove has been especially successful at creating the impression that Republicans all over the country are desperate for Bush to run in 2000. (Of course, he's aided by the fact that many Republicans *are* pro-Bush.) As coordinated by Rove, this support has been expressed in visits by state delegations, mostly of GOP legislators, to the governor's mansion in Austin, followed by press conferences at which Bush is urged to run.

What's amazing to Rove's associates is that he hasn't been fingered publicly, except in the Texas press. "He's been orchestrating all this," says one Bush adviser. "He's done a marvelous job, yet practically no one's accused him of manipulating it." Rove himself allows only that Republican pilgrimages to Austin have been "mildly encouraged." But an associate describes his role this way: "Bush is a hot candidate, so a lot of calls come in [to Austin] from Republicans. Rove says, 'You want to help? You know a lot of these legislators. Why don't you organize them?'" The visits to Austin have continued even after the Bush exploratory committee was unveiled on March 7.

So, given Rove's skillful work for Bush, is he the next celebrity political consultant after Lee Atwater, James Carville, and Dick Morris? If Bush wins the Republican nomination and the White House in 2000, the answer is probably yes. In the meantime, Rove has hurdles to jump. One is preserving his position as chief political adviser to Bush by warding off boarding parties from Washington. Aides from the Reagan and

Bush (the father) administrations, GOP consultants and lobbyists, elected officials—there's a stampede of Republicans eager for a role in George W.'s campaign. Recently, Bush has considered naming someone over Rove to run the campaign. But the first candidate, former Iowa congressman Tom Tauke, fell by the wayside. This was a relief not only to Rove but also to Bush's top aides in the governor's office, chief of staff Joe Allbaugh and press secretary Karen Hughes. As it stands now, these three constitute Bush's inner circle.

Another Rove priority is keeping on Bush's good side. He angered Bush in February by telling the *New York Times* of Bush's plan for an exploratory committee. Bush felt this violated his promise to Texas reporters that he would do nothing toward a formal presidential bid without informing them first. Rove's increasing visibility has also been an irritant. After a press conference with a visiting delegation, reporters huddled around Rove. Bush, ready to leave, snapped, "If the Rove press conference is over, we can leave now."

Kevin Chadwick

Karl Rove

And Rove has enemies, especially among hard-core conservatives in Texas like former state Republican chairman Tom Pauken. They regard Rove as a moderate or even liberal influence on Republican candidates. Rove insists he's a solid conservative and admirer of Ronald Reagan. In Reagan's two contested races for the Republican presidential nomination, however, Rove opposed him, backing Gerald Ford in 1976 and the elder Bush in 1980. In Texas, Rove has run campaigns for both pro-life and pro-choice Republicans. One of his candidates, state senator David Sibley, says Rove is "not a true believer" but a hired gun.

An owlish-looking Episcopalian with a receding hairline, Rove is neither as fevered as Atwater and Carville nor as scheming as Morris. But he's hyperactive, relentless, and sometimes emotional. In 1991, Rove worked for the ill-fated Senate campaign in Pennsylvania of Richard Thornburgh. Afterwards, he angrily filed suit in federal court, forcing Thornburgh to pay his bill. In 1992, he dug up a video of an address by Lena Guerrero, a Democratic railroad commissioner seeking reelection. She talked about her college commencement, though she'd never graduated, and Rove used the sound-bite to full effect, zinging her as a liar. In 1993, he got into shouting matches with Kay Bailey Hutchison, always making up eventually.

As a teenager, Rove was already active in Republican campaigns. While a student, first at the University of Utah, then at George Mason University, he was elected president of the College Republicans. His campaign manager was Lee Atwater, later the mastermind of the senior Bush's winning presidential bid in 1988. As a young GOP operative, Rove was accused of questionable tactics, such as faking a thousand invitations to a Democratic headquarters shindig that promised "free beer, free food, girls and a good time for nothing." Rove says this was a prank. Anyway, he met George W. in Washington in the early 1970s, having been assigned to greet him at the airport and hand over car keys.

In 1978, Rove moved to Texas, his wife's home state. This turned out to be a significant event in the local rise of the Republican party. By the early 1990s, Republicans had reached parity with Democrats, and Rove had emerged as the dominant GOP consultant in Texas, respected as a strategist, fundraiser, and direct-mail specialist.

He advised Bush, then directing the Texas Rangers baseball team, to reject pleas to run for governor in 1990. Three years later, he guided Hutchison to victory in a special Senate election. In the primary, polls showed her losing, but Rove husbanded her money for a late TV blitz that proved wildly successful.

In 1993, he joined Bush's embryonic campaign for governor as top strategist. Though he'd run sharply negative campaigns, Rove agreed with Bush's strategy of staying positive against incumbent Ann Richards in 1994. Atwater's slash-and-burn tactics, Bush told Rove, "are not my style." In 1998, seven of the eight statewide Republican candidates (excluding judges) were current or past Rove clients. All won. "It's hard to find" a successful Republican in Texas who "hasn't been touched by Karl," says Sibley.

The 1998 governor's race foreshadowed Bush's current unannounced campaign for the GOP presi-

dential nomination. Beginning in late 1997, endorsements of his reelection *by Democrats*, including Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock, were announced every few weeks. "It was like a Chinese water torture" for Democratic candidate Garry Mauro, says a Bush adviser. "Here we are now doing it again—drip, drip, drip." This time, the endorsements are by Republicans from outside Texas. In 1998, the result was that Bush had locked up the race well before Election Day. That's Bush's aim for the Republican nomination in 2000. And for Rove, who has sold his consulting business to concentrate solely on Bush's future, it's a total obsession.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD *and co-host of* **The Beltway Boys** *on the Fox News Channel.*

WAG THE KIDS

by Robert Goldberg

BEFORE AL GORE became the father of the Internet, he invented a toll-free number for enrolling children in government-provided health insurance. Last month, at a press conference with the first lady, the vice president unveiled the number, which parents can call to get information on Medicaid and Kidcare, the child health-insurance entitlement that began in 1997. But Gore shouldn't wait for the phone to ring. Despite his warning in 1996 that a child health care crisis of historic proportions was threatening our children's very lives, the response to Kidcare has been underwhelming.

Back when the program was first proposed, the administration and the Children's Defense Fund claimed that 10 million children in America had no health insurance. The situation was dire, justifying an expenditure of $40 billion over five years. Children with serious illnesses were going untreated because their parents couldn't afford coverage. To drive the point home, the administration released a state-by-state breakdown of the number of kids who needed health care, and the White House vowed to sign up 5 million of them by 2000.

The 5 million target was supposed to give Gore an accomplishment to tout in his presidential run. The problem is, since Kidcare was enacted, fewer than 500,000 children have enrolled. Now the administration, desperate to reach a higher figure, has launched a $1 billion "outreach" effort to sign up more kids—whence the toll-free-number gimmick.

Chances are it won't even come close. Nancy-Ann Min DeParle, the director of the Health Care Financ-

ing Administration, which releases federal funds to states once their Kidcare plans are approved in Washington, testified recently that the program was well on its way to the 5 million goal. But Min DeParle wasn't convincing. She failed to provide Congress the total number of children enrolled to date, offering instead "unreviewed" estimates of enrollment upon full implementation of the program. And even that figure—about 2.5 million—was padded with children already enrolled in state health-insurance plans newly brought under the Kidcare umbrella.

Advocates claim it's too early to tell how well the program will work. But experience in New York, Pennsylvania, and Florida, where pre-existing state health-insurance programs for kids are now receiving Kidcare funding, is not encouraging. According to the New York *Daily News*, New York state's program has grown by barely 20,000 children since Kidcare funding kicked in, though advocates had claimed there was a large unmet need.

No wonder the administration wants to count new Medicaid enrollees toward its 5 million target. But here, too, it fudges the numbers for political purposes. Two years ago, the White House said 3 million eligible children were not signed up for Medicaid. The Health Care Financing Administration now puts the figure at 4.7 million. The Medicaid population did not increase by more than 50 percent in two years. Rather, the administration reclassified a portion of those without insurance as eligible for Medicaid.

The hope is that it will be faster and easier to enroll kids in Medicaid than to get new Kidcare programs up and running. (Medicaid also offers a richer benefits package.) Indeed from the outset, both the Children's Defense Fund and the White House have pushed states to expand Medicaid eligibility rather than create new stand-alone programs providing private coverage. Of the 40 state plans approved so far, only 11 are entirely new, 20 are Medicaid expansions, and 9 combine new programs with Medicaid.

The current outreach effort is supposed to crank up enrollment, but that is wishful thinking. State Medicaid programs, whose funding rises with enrollment, already actively recruit participants. They use private organizations like foundations, children's advocacy groups, health care providers, and businesses to educate parents and enroll children. And their experience is chastening. Even intensive door-to-door campaigns have failed to turn up more children. Pamphlets, phone calls, and home visits by nurses have succeeded about as well as doing nothing in persuading parents to avail themselves of free well-child screenings.

The fact is, Kidcare enrollment is going nowhere. The kids this initiative seeks to help simply do not exist. The administration and its allies overstated the number of children who were uninsured and at risk. Less than 4 percent of children under 18 (about 1.2 million) lack coverage for more than a year. The rest are covered by health insurance most of the time. Data from the National Health Interview Survey conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services show that even among families with incomes of $10,000 a year or less, 97 percent of children get all the care they need. Less than 2 percent cite lack of money or insurance as a reason for not getting care.

To some people, it is incomprehensible that anyone would pass up an entitlement. But parents may be passing up Kidcare because their children are generally healthy and they don't believe government-provided health insurance will make much difference.

TO SOME, IT IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE THAT ANYONE WOULD PASS UP AN ENTITLEMENT. BUT PARENTS MAY HAVE GOOD REASON NOT TO GET KIDCARE.

What's more, those parents may be right. Strangely enough, there is no evidence that either Medicaid or private insurance makes kids healthier. A recent study by the National Bureau of Economic Research actually found that uninsured kids tended to be healthier than kids covered by Medicaid regardless of income or race. Notably, low-income black and Hispanic children had more illness after they started using Medicaid than before.

This is not a brief for cutting off Medicaid or Kidcare. Rather, it means that most kids are healthy to begin with and that their parents often prefer to obtain what care they need outside entitlement programs—at public-health clinics, for example, or from providers paid for out of pocket. Instead of trying to drag parents into Medicaid and Kidcare, why not simply give them the money to make their own choices? Why not make a credit or voucher available to those who need it to buy insurance, pay bills, or add children to their own coverage? Why not just cut taxes?

The answer has nothing to do with children's health and everything to do with the fact that Al Gore and the Children's Defense Fund need Kidcare more than kids do. There never was a real children's health crisis, just a political benefit from talking about one.

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Flex Those Ed Muscles

by Chester E. Finn Jr. and Nina Shokraii Rees

CONGRESS HAS BEEN ATWITTER over a minor measure it just passed known as "ed-flex," which snips red tape in some federal education programs. Since 1994, a dozen states have been permitted to modify these regulations; ed-flex would allow all the states to do so.

Now any easing of Washington's hammerlock on U.S. schools is welcome, and ed-flex is fine as far as it goes, but its impact will be tiny—if indeed the White House doesn't veto it. It leaves most federal regulations intact. It denies states the right to move federal dollars from one educational activity to another. And it doesn't even touch the most troublesome and rule-crazy programs, such as bilingual education and special-ed.

Nonetheless, ed-flex has triggered a noisy ruckus on Capitol Hill. That's because, by nudging power away from Washington, it hints at more important fights ahead. Over the next 18 months, all the major building blocks of the federal role in K-12 education are up for reauthorization—notably the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the controversial Goals 2000 program. At issue is whether Washington is going to regulate the nation's schools more tightly—with new programs, rules, and conditions attached to its dollars—or whether the federal grip can be relaxed, to give states, schools, and parents more control.

The most promising set of ideas for reforming the mammoth Elementary and Secondary Education Act is known as "Super Ed-Flex." Think of Super Ed-Flex as a way for the states to become like giant charter schools, with a sweeping exemption granted from federal rules and red tape, so long as educational results improve. Participating states would effectively enter into a contract allowing them to spend their federal education funds as they like for five years, while requiring them to produce tangible academic gains during that time.

Or think of Super Ed-Flex as a block grant with teeth. The main complaint against previous block-grant proposals is that, while they would liberate states from federal control, they would not ensure that children learn more. After all, there is no reason necessarily to trust state education bureaucrats more than their federal counterparts. Super Ed-Flex would reward (with continued freedom, and perhaps a funding bonus) those states that boost student achievement. It would hold laggards accountable by casting them back into the regulatory briar patch and perhaps cutting their appropriations. And it would be voluntary. States that prefer the federal briar patch could stay there.

A state that opts for Super Ed-Flex could consolidate its federal dollars from as many different federal programs as it wishes, including the big Title I aid-for-disadvantaged-children program. It could spend the money as it sees fit—on better teachers, more choice, higher standards, different tests, programs for disabled children, smaller classes, you name it. With one big condition: The state would have to boost pupil achievement statewide, demonstrating those gains on a test of its choosing agreed upon ahead of time. Two smaller conditions: If a state included Title I dollars in its Super Ed-Flex money pool, it would have to show academic gains by its disadvantaged youngsters. Likewise, if federal funds for bilingual education were part of the package, the state would need to show gains by the students who are acquiring English proficiency.

Under Super Ed-Flex, Washington would assume the role of shareholder, not CEO, of the nation's educational enterprise. Rather than micromanaging the day-to-day uses of federal money, it would let states manage the schools as they see fit in return for an agreed-on return on the federal investment. This idea may sound Republican, but it could prove bipartisan. Some Democrats have hinted that they would welcome such an approach. California's new Democratic governor Gray Davis recently said he would like a deal in which Washington says to the states, "We'll hold you accountable. You just improve student performance, and we'll give you the money." Super Ed-Flex would create this opportunity. California, for example, could spend more of its (billion-plus) federal education dollars on Davis's reading initiative and his efforts to boost teacher quality, so long as the performance of California students improved.

Note that Super Ed-Flex would not abolish any federal programs. In fact, most states would probably continue receiving their dollars from Washington the old way. But Super Ed-Flex does set the stage for some states to experiment and show what can be achieved by doing things differently. As in the early days of welfare reform, it offers change-minded governors the freedom to innovate, and insists on results. It could thus pave the way for a change in federal education policy as dramatic as the 1996 federal welfare reform.

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Updating George Washington

By Andrew Ferguson

The regent of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association is a woman named Mrs. Robert E. Lee IV—which I think is the most satisfying piece of information anyone could ever hope to come across. Notwithstanding her title, however, and the name of her organization, and indeed the powerful resonance of her own married name, Mrs. Lee is a thoroughly modern woman who favors elegant jacket-and-pants ensembles and brightly colored turtlenecks and outsized eyeglasses that are, curiously, shaded violet.

I met her not long ago, in a tastefully appointed pastel sitting room in the association's administrative building. The offices are hidden from public view behind a towering hedgerow several hundred yards beyond George Washington's mansion, which sits in turn on a bluff on the Virginia side of the Potomac River, sixteen miles south of the nation's capital.

This has been a busy year for Mrs. Lee and the Ladies, who are chartered under the Commonwealth of Virginia as proprietors of our first president's estate. It is the 200th anniversary of Washington's death, and to mark the occasion the Ladies have embarked on a flurry of activities far surpassing anything they have ever undertaken before. They have launched no fewer than three touring exhibits, renovated the estate's museum and restored Washington's tomb, installed a "multi-media mood theater" that dramatizes the moment of Washington's death, and added new thematic tours of the grounds. For the first time professional "re-enactors" have been hired, to roam the estate in period costume and give little lectures about everyday 18th-century plantation life to inquisitive tourists. More than one hundred Washington artifacts have been borrowed from collections across the country and placed in the house itself, so that, as the press release says, "the estate will resemble as never before the beloved private retreat that Washington knew at his death two hundred years ago."

So now seemed as good a time as any to ask Mrs. Lee about the teeth.

Or dentures, rather—George Washington's dentures, which are the centerpiece of one of the traveling

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exhibits, "Treasures from Mount Vernon: George Washington Revealed," now at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, and soon to travel to Atlanta, Richmond, and Chicago. The Ladies acquired the dentures from a descendant of Martha Washington in 1949. For fifty years, however, they have declined to put them on display, for a reason that explains a lot about the Ladies.

"It just seemed so personal, so—I don't know—so private," said Mrs. Lee, when I brought up the subject. She fingered her gold necklace. "Washington was a very dignified man, you see. Very proper, very reserved. I can tell you he would not have approved of having his dentures on display."

So why now?

"It was something we thought long and hard about, I can assure you. And there was some resistance, and it was something we had to agree on as a group. But"—and here Mrs. Lee leaned forward from her wingback chair, suddenly animated—"we are in a crisis! The man is fading from the history books! People come here and know so very little about him—very nice people, hard-working people who bring their children here, trying to teach them about history. But there is a huge lack of knowledge about what an incredible man he was.

"You should see the children flock around the dentures. 'Wow,' they say. It lets them see Washington as a man. It makes it relevant and fun for them, and then maybe they'll want to know more, do you see? George Washington has always been the example for all citizens to emulate, the man who embodied our Founding Principles, and maybe this will help us get that across."

Mrs. Lee has resigned herself to doing whatever it takes to make George Washington fun. She went on: "And now sometimes I think, 'Well, maybe he wouldn't mind the dentures.' I think, I really do, that he would approve of us doing what we needed to do so that we can make this the country we should be proud of—a country that needs him."

Mrs. Lee looked aside for a moment. "There's so much to do, to make people realize the essence of the man," she said. "And no one else is going to do that. It's our responsibility. If we don't do it, who else will?"

Washington has not, as Mrs. Lee claims, faded from the history books, not entirely anyway, but he has receded over the past generations—a remote figure who grows ever more distant. "We impute coldness to him," Richard Brookhiser, a recent biographer, wrote, "and we respond to him coldly." The Ladies now endeavor to correct the misapprehension. The association is 146 years old. In many respects it remains an artifact more of the 19th century than the 20th, much less the 21st, and there's something bittersweet in the Ladies' attempt "to meet people where they are," to use the cant phrase of the day. For where people are now is a long way from where the Ladies have been, by tradition and resolve. Their effort to revive Washington, two hundred years after his death, tells us something about them, and something about him, and even more about ourselves.

Even before he died his home was a place of pilgrimage. Washington was, of course, the most famous man in America, certainly the most revered, and the richest, too. He had inherited Mount Vernon from the widow of his half-brother Lawrence and had steadily expanded both the house and the grounds, until the property stretched across 8,000 acres, down the Potomac river and back deep into the Virginia woodlands and then up again to the southern tip of Alexandria. At his death it comprised five separate, self-sufficient farms, numberless outbuildings, housing for three hundred slaves, and a twenty-two-room house designed by Washington himself, resting on a promontory above a bend in the river.

He was never without visitors—a steady stream of fellow politicians, foreign dignitaries, old friends, and unknown well-wishers who felt compelled to see the great man in the flesh and whom the great man, in his hospitality, felt obliged to entertain. When Washington died, followed by his wife two years later, the stream of visitors swelled to a flood. The bulk of the property—without the slaves, who had been freed in Washington's will—passed to a series of nephews with little interest or skill in farming. By the 1850s, the crowds of travelers and pilgrims had brought the estate's owner, John Augustine Washington, to the edge of bankruptcy. The farm was a shambles and the house close to ruins. He cast about for a buyer, with an asking price of $200,000, but was turned down by both the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia. In a desperate moment, he considered an offer of $300,000 from an entrepreneur who proposed to turn the estate into a roadside attraction. He couldn't bring himself to say yes.

The Ladies rescued Mount Vernon. At first, though, there was only one lady—an invalid from South Carolina called Ann Pamela Cunningham. Alarmed by a letter from her mother, who on a trip north in 1852 had stopped at Mount Vernon and noted the waist-high weeds and the peeling paint, the fallen shutters and the collapsing portico, Miss Cunningham resolved that Mount Vernon would be saved, by pri-

Photos courtesy of the Mt. Vernon Ladies Association

The master bedroom at Mount Vernon

vate subscription if necessary. She composed a series of open letters "To The Ladies of the South" and posted them to newspapers from Richmond to Savannah. The thought of personal publicity horrified her, so she signed her first letters "A Southern Matron." But her ardor for the cause was unmistakable, and infectious. If the men of America would not do their duty, she wrote, then their wives and daughters would do it, for the sake of posterity:

> While it would save American honor from a blot in the eyes of a gazing world, it would furnish a shrine where at least the mothers of the land and their innocent children might make their offering to the cause of the greatness, goodness, and prosperity of their country! [Exclamation, of course, in the original; one of many.]

Miss Cunningham was indefatigable despite her infirmity. Over the next several years her campaign spread northward, and the coffers swelled. Shortly before the Civil War, she was able to present John Augustine with a substantial down payment on the $200,000 purchase price, the balance to be paid off in three years. He moved out on Washington's birthday, February 22, 1860, emptying the decaying house of all its furnishings except for the famous Houdon bust of Washington, a terrestrial globe the president had used in his New York office, and the key to the Bastille, presented to George Washington by Lafayette. The estate he ceded to the Ladies had dwindled to 500 acres, including the mansion where Washington had lived and died.

Originally there were twenty-two ladies, or vice regents as they are called, one from each of the twenty-two states. Today there are thirty-three, a number limited by the lodging space available on the Mount Vernon grounds, where the Ladies gather several times a year for four-day meetings to do the association's business. The association is self-perpetuating, which is to say that when one Lady retires the other Ladies choose her successor. Early on Miss Cunningham stipulated that a vice regent "should be of a family whose social position would command the confidence of the State, and enable her to enlist the aid of persons of widest influence." The tradition holds—particularly with regard to "influence." For a vice regent's duties include preeminently the raising of funds. The association's literature boasts that it has never taken a dime in government money; it has relied instead on the kindness of the very best strangers. When the Ladies decided to wire the house for electricity, for example, Thomas Edison did the job. When they thought it was time to get a fire engine, Henry Ford had one built and offered it free of charge.

Any such modernizing steps, however, have always been undertaken only after the most careful consideration. When Miss Cunningham retired as regent, in 1874, the weeds had been cut and the gardens restored, the house had been painted and partly, but painstakingly, refurnished, and the crowds continued to pass through the gates. And yet she worried for the future. Her farewell message is still read aloud when the Ladies meet for their annual Grand Council.

> Ladies, the home of Washington is in your charge—see to it that you keep it the home of Washington! Let no irreverent hand change it; let no vandal hands desecrate it with the fingers of 'progress'! Those who go to the home in which he lived and died wish to see in what he lived and died. Let one spot, in this grand country of ours, be saved from change!

This was the Ladies' sacred charge—they refer to it as a sacred charge—and it impressed itself on every aspect of their work for a century and more. With the

help of the developing sciences of forensics and archaeology, the restoration of the gardens and the house proceeded as accurately as possible. When verisimilitude conflicted with comfort and questions of taste, however, the Ladies favored delicacy. There were no chamber pots in the bedrooms, no slag heaps outside the kitchen, no pig dung littering the service roads, as there would have been, of course, at the estate "where Washington lived and died." The Ladies created an idealized, pristine version of Washington's home, for their intent was not so much to instruct as to uplift. Mount Vernon was a shrine, a place of pilgrimage. The task was appropriate to the times and to the visitors who made the trip; their familiarity with, their reverence for, the Father of their country was simply assumed. His virtues—of self-denial, sacrifice, patriotism, disinterestedness—were the virtues that every American was thought to aspire to. To know the story and character of Washington was part of what it was to be an American.

Even before he died, the popular view of Washington was elevated far beyond anything we can imagine today. He was shrouded in religious imagery. Comparisons to Moses and Jonah were common. The custom only intensified in the century that followed. In the 1800s his biographers routinely capitalized the personal pronoun "Him" in referring to their subject. The chapel at Valley Forge, built at the end of the 19th century, dedicated one wall to stained glass tableaux from the life of Jesus, the wall opposite to the life of Washington. In time the religious elements fell away, but the veneration continued undiminished. The more secular fables of Parson Weems—inventor of the cherry tree—passed into the *McGuffey Readers* and then into the imagination of every schoolchild. "The name of Washington," wrote Walt Whitman, "is constantly on our lips. His portrait hangs on every wall and he is almost canonized in the affections of our people."

Well into our own century, Washington's memory was kept alive by countless commemorations. His birthday was celebrated as a national holiday, marked by parades and fêtes and speeches and balls, and his portrait hung, if not, as Whitman observed, on every wall, at least in every classroom, staring down from above the chalkboard like a stern and unsleeping principal. His Farewell Address was read annually in special sessions to both houses of Congress. Mount Vernon was the place where this spirit of veneration could be imbibed most directly, and by the mid-1960s attendance had reached 1.3 million a year. Miss Cunningham's plan seemed to work. She had insisted that Mount Vernon never change, and it didn't. But the times did.

James Rees well remembers the moment when he knew he had a problem. Rees is the resident director of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, the highest ranking non-Lady on the premises. Rees came to Mount Vernon in the mid-1980s. By then annual attendance had begun, for the first time in memory, to dip below one million. On this day a few years ago, he recalls, two dozen or so fourth graders had gathered on the estate grounds for a tree-planting ceremony.

"And I started making jokes," he told me recently, "you know, playing off some of the Washington myths. I said, 'Well, it's a good thing this isn't a cherry tree, or it might be in danger—you never know who might come chop it down.' And there was no reaction. Nothing. So I said, 'But I guess we could always use the wood to make some teeth.' Nothing. Blank stares.

"Now, I knew these kids' teacher—a very bright woman. In fact, she's a descendant of George Washington. And these were not dumb kids. These were kids from a privileged background. But it suddenly occurred to me: These kids don't even know the myths. We're past the debunking stage. You can't debunk misconceptions when they've got no information at all. I thought: We're all the way back at ground zero."

And so we are. Every so often the federal government's National Assessment of Educational Progress releases a report on the ignorance of American schoolchildren, provoking near-universal tut-tutting among educators and in the popular press. In 1996 NAEP found that only 17 percent of fourth graders were "proficient" in American history. The older they got, the dumber they got. Fourteen percent of eighth graders were proficient, 11 percent of twelfth graders.

But of course we knew that. What's interesting is the particular form this ignorance takes. Among fourth graders, for example, 87 percent could identify Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech; fewer than half could identify the Bill of Rights. And fewer than one in three knew that New York was one of the original thirteen colonies, while seven out of ten listed California, Texas, or Illinois. In the eighth grade, 80 percent identified the song "O Freedom" with the civil rights movement; only 41 percent associated the dropping of the atomic bomb with the end of World War II.

People like to complain that we live in an iconoclastic age. We don't. In fact, we're so overrun with icons that the word itself has become a cliché. But we've substituted a new set of icons for the old, and the strange imbalance in the historical knowledge of American students reflects the substitution. Given the multicultural enthusiasms of their teachers, it should be no surprise that children know more about, say,

Harriet Tubman than Tom Paine. Black History Month—a sound idea pursued with unusual zeal in the public schools—has pretty much swallowed up the social studies curriculum for the month of February (social studies being the rubric under which "American history" is taught, when it is taught at all). Meanwhile, Washington's birthday, once universally observed in the schools and used as an excuse to dwell on the Founding Fathers, has been bundled with Lincoln's in the portmanteau "Presidents' Day." Falling within a month devoted to a celebration of African-American history, President's Day is more often than not merely an occasion to teach the young scholars that Washington owned slaves and Lincoln freed them.

Textbooks aren't much help. "I still have the history textbook I used in the fourth grade," James Rees says, "and it has ten times more pages devoted to Washington than the textbook used in the same class at the same school today." In current textbooks Washington has not been traduced so much as passed over—not ignored, exactly, but placed off to one side, like an old piece of cumbersome statuary that one can't quite bear to part with, out of some dimly felt obligation. The recent high school textbook *United States History: In the Course of Human Events*, published by West Publishing, is a case in point.

As the historian Walter McDougall noted in a recent review, the authors of *United States History* choose to divide their subject into eleven units. Three of these recount the three hundred years from the settling of America through the colonial period and the constitutional convention to the end of the 18th century; four units cover the fifty years from the end of World War II to the present. And Washington is there, sure enough, with his very own page—as one of the book's more than 120 "People Who Made a Difference." Unlike the wholly sympathetic treatment given the other PWMD—such as Frederick Douglass, of course, and "Mother Jones," and the Japanese-American activist Gordon Hirabayashi—the view of Washington is mixed. He was a man of "ordinary talents," the students learn, "not completely successful as a military man nor as a president."

"When the Revolution succeeded," the authors write,

> [Americans] felt justified in their choice of a leader.

Praise for Washington was partly a kind of self-congratulation for their own brilliance in choosing a president who would lead them to success. In fact, it might be said that the idea of George Washington, not always the man himself, was what counted.

Unlike other Founders, Washington has never been subjected to a successful debunking. He is undebunkable. But he is dismissible, as the work of academic historians over the past eighty years makes plain. They have sought to understand the Founding in ways that make no room for Washington's particular greatness. In *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* (1913), the most influential work of American history in the first half of this century, Charles Beard undertook the first mass debunking, casting the Framers as reactionary capitalists intent on insulating their riches from the grasping proles. Washington is scarcely mentioned in Beard's book. "George Washington's part in the proceedings of the convention," Beard wrote, "was almost negligible"—an odd statement about the man who was, after all, the convention's presiding officer, and without whom there might not have been any convention at all.

But Beard goes on, revealingly: "It does not appear that in public document or private letter he ever set forth any coherent theory of government. When he had occasion to dwell upon the nature of the new system he had indulged in the general language of the bench rather than that of the penetrating observer."

Richard Hofstadter's *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* was to the second half of the century what Beard's book had been to the first—the work that set the course for two subsequent generations of historians. Like Beard, Hofstadter passes over Washington in his account of the Founding. Hofstadter was a historian of ideas. And Washington was not, as Beard noted, a man of ideas, certainly not a thinker of the sort that historians nowadays favor. He lacked the incendiary brilliance of Jefferson, the sophistication of Madison and Hamilton, the rhetorical imagination of Thomas Paine. For modern historians, these qualities have proved much more attractive, and worthy of study, than the stolid, tenacious statesmanship of Washington.

The historian Paul Longmore put it well: "His gift was not the formulation of ideas, but their incarnation." Washington was indispensable to the country's Founding—became, indeed, the rock on which the country was built—because of his ability to unite his bickering countrymen, to still their passions by his very presence and resolve their disputes with utter disinterest, to embody their highest aspiration; in short, because of his character. How are intellectuals to grapple with such a man? Viewed a certain way, he seems almost uninteresting. Incorruptible, fearless, impatient with abstraction, sometimes prosaic, he falls outside the categories that professional historians have lately used to account for our past. And so he recedes, taking his place as one among the many "people who made a difference," filling the ranks somewhere between Mother Jones and Gordon Hirabayashi.

Sitting in his sunny office at Mount Vernon on a recent late-winter morning, I asked James Rees about this steady diminishment of Washington. How does he explain it?

"I suppose it has to do with lots of things," he said. "The rise of social history—filling up history with all kinds of people who'd been ignored before means there's less room for old heroes. And I suppose it has to do with the end of the great man theory of history, too. Lots of things.

"But there's something else that worries me. The qualities Washington possessed just aren't as appreciated as they were. Honesty. Good judgment. Modesty—my God, who in late-20th-century America gets credit for being modest anymore? And believe me, this is not good.

"There's this idea that leadership is changeable—that every generation redefines for itself what leadership means. Well, that's not the way we thought of it for most of our history. The qualities that made a great leader then were good for all time. But we don't think that way anymore. It's just this"—he sighed—"this whole 20th-century mindset." And with a wave of his hand he tried to dismiss the depredations of the span of a hundred years.

But he is not always so fatalistic. Rees and the Ladies understand that, as we move into the 21st century, it's the least they can do to reconcile themselves to the 20th. Earlier generations didn't demand that their heroes be "humanized." Ours, however, demands intimacy and craves familiarity. The Ladies may not be happy with the vulgarity that this sometimes requires, but they are resolute, as I say, in their determination to make Washington "fun" and "relevant."

They have added a team of media and marketing specialists to their skeletal staff. Among their innovations are two new Web sites, in which you can take a "Pioneer Farmer Quiz" and "Meet the Mount Vernon Animals." They've issued a CD/ROM about Mount Vernon with the unpleasant title "Dig Into George." A special program this spring will demonstrate that Washington was a proto-environmentalist. The man-

sion rooms have been refashioned to make a more "immediate experience"; in the bedroom where Washington died, the tools doctors used to bleed him rest on the bed, bloody towels are wadded on the floor, and a pan filled with theater blood sits on the nightstand. When they pass through Mount Vernon's small museum, visitors have their attention directed to a pair of Washington's oddly shaped violet sunglasses. "It's like he was a punk rocker!" a docent told me excitedly. The "multi-media mood theater" mentioned earlier, designed by a British firm responsible for the "Vikingland" amusement park in Norway, is dazzling in its high-tech simulation of Washington's death. When I saw it the other day, with a class of fourth graders, it was a big hit. "Spooook-eeee!" one of the young historians shouted in the dark. Almost as good as *Armageddon*.

It is all intended to create at Mount Vernon an "all

George Washington's sunglasses

new Mansion experience," as the PR materials say, and it can easily be made to sound much worse than it is. The *New York Times*, for example, wrote in a front page story in February: "The directors of Mount Vernon . . . have inaugurated a $3 million public relations campaign to reposition [Washington] as a national figure with what the spinmeisters call 'heat.' Think Leonardo DiCaprio, Diana and Elvis Presley." The upshot was that Mount Vernon had at last got down with the slammin' nineties: another info-entertainment option among the dozens on offer in the Capital region—a little bit Williamsburg, a little bit Busch Gardens.

The over-hyped *Times* story was greeted with chagrin at Mount Vernon, and staffers, understandably defensive, hasten to correct its misimpressions. "We are always very conscious of going too far," Mrs. Lee told me.

But still, I said, with all the re-enactors walking around, and the special multi-media programs, don't you worry about getting trapped in the show biz?

She fixed me with a stare that could have come straight from Miss Cunningham. "We don't want to do that," she said. "We will never do that. But you have to understand, Mount Vernon can no longer be just a shrine. I don't even like that word, shrine. We have to get the children interested before they can learn about George Washington. And this is the most important thing: They must learn about this man. They need to know why he was great. If they don't—what will happen? *We need him*."

After I left Mrs. Lee, I wandered out to the piazza, the great porch with its surpassingly beautiful view of the Potomac, where Washington had entertained Jefferson and Adams and Lafayette. I sat on a Windsor chair beneath Washington's bedroom window—the bedroom where he died, two hundred years ago—and leafed through a packet the PR lady had given me. Thousands of the packets have been sent to fifth-grade teachers around the country; the Ladies have worked hard to assemble a mailing list of social studies departments, in hopes of pushing them to teach their kids about the father of their country. As you'd expect, it is loaded with gimmicks—an envelope of wheat seeds, so students can grow a crop just as "George" did; a sheet of stickers with the legend "Ask Me About George Washington!"; scratch-off quiz cards like the kind you get from McDonald's or the Lotto dealer; and an encouragement to the kids to "write a letter to George Washington and get a reply from Mount Vernon." And there's a poster, too, colorful and splashy, to replace the portrait that not so long ago hung in every classroom. To my inexpert eyes, the lesson plan looked professional, well-organized, and, for some reason, a little sad.

And I suddenly realized why. Washington has been privatized! He has been detached from the national patrimony—if we can be said to have a national patrimony any longer. And the Ladies have become a special-interest group, pleading a pet cause, just as NOW agitated for a Susan B. Anthony dollar and Indian rights groups lobbied to put Sacagawea on a postage stamp. It would take someone with more nerve than I to challenge the Ladies as they struggle, however clumsily, to return Washington to his rightful place, at the center of our historical memory. And if they are forced to use the tools of a time that finds them and their passions anachronistic, well then, they will. The Ladies do what they do because they have asked themselves an unsettling question, and because they know the answer. "If we don't do it," Mrs. Lee had said, "who will?" ♦

The War on Rudy Giuliani

More Is at Stake Than the Mayor's Career

By John Podhoretz

New York

Rudolph Giuliani's favorite movie is *The Godfather*, and you need only summon up some of its best-known lines to understand his extraordinary style of governance. When Giuliani finds himself embroiled in a political squabble with another elected official, he and his team "go to the mattresses"—they hunker down, refuse to negotiate, and begin a war. This is true of *any* political squabble, major or minor—whether it's a fight over welfare reform with legislators in Albany or a ridiculous row with New York governor George Pataki over which highway in the city should be named after Joe DiMaggio. To the mattresses they go.

Giuliani's insistence on lockstep loyalty from his staff calls to mind Michael Corleone's admonition to his older brother Fredo that he is never to take sides against the family again—ever. And his loyalty to those who are loyal to him is like the Godfather's promise to the undertaker who seeks his help in avenging his daughter's honor: Your enemies will become my enemies—and then they will fear you.

Indeed, in the course of his five-plus years as the mayor of New York City, Giuliani has been the entire Corleone family wrapped up in one person—which is ironic, since in his years as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, he was one of the masterminds behind the slow, deliberate destruction of the Mafia. At once, Giuliani is cool and calculating like Michael, charismatic and clever like Vito, and prone to sudden rages and instant passions like Sonny.

For eight weeks now, ever since four policemen fired 41 bullets at an unarmed African immigrant named Amadou Diallo, hitting him 19 times and killing him, Giuliani has been quiet, subdued, controlled—like the Corleone family consigliere. But as the Diallo killing has mutated into the worst crisis of his mayoralty, the question is whether the most effective and transformative municipal chief executive of the past 50 years has himself mutated into the hapless and feckless Fredo, the incompetent Corleone. Which would be his worst fear.

John Podhoretz, associate editor of the New York Post*, is a contributing editor to* The Weekly Standard.

At first blush, the Diallo killing would not have seemed the most appropriate rallying point for a war on Rudy Giuliani. The four cops were searching for a serial rapist on the night of February 4 and followed Diallo into the vestibule of a tenement apartment building in the Soundview section of the Bronx. What happened afterwards isn't clear; the police officers have not spoken about the case, and nobody actually saw the shooting, though nine witnesses claim to have heard shouting and gunfire. But it does seem to be the case that the officers believed Diallo had a gun and was about to open fire. Their response was a hailstorm of 41 bullets. Two of the officers fired off every one of the 16 bullets in their Glock 9 mm pistols—which meant they each had to squeeze the trigger 16 times in three to five seconds. That would seem to suggest the officers were in a heightened, adrenalized state brought on by fear, panic, whatever. What it does *not* suggest is a deliberate murder of an unarmed man, who turned out to have had no history of trouble with police in the two years he had been living in the United States.

The killing was so grotesque that it immediately captured the attention of the city. The mayor and police commissioner Howard Safir expressed their profound sorrow, offered to pay for the funeral and for the travel expenses of Diallo's parents (his mother lives in his native Guinea, his father in Vietnam). And then they could say little else. Because the four officers who shot Diallo—under investigation by a grand jury that has just indicted them for second-degree murder—clammed up in accordance with their Fifth Amendment rights and have remained mute ever since.

What the mayor and police chief did do, as they do reflexively whenever there are charges of police misconduct in New York, was defend the NYPD. The actions of four cops, they have said in a hundred different ways since the Diallo shooting, should not tarnish the reputations or the hard work of the other 38,000 NYPD officers, who put their lives on the line on some very mean streets every day.

This is not just pious talk on Giuliani's part. When he took office at the beginning of 1994, the NYPD was reeling from the four years it spent under the domin-

AP / Wide World Photos

Diallo demonstrators Kweisi Mfume of the NAACP, city councilwoman Christine Quinn, and Al Sharpton

ion of David Dinkins. The two incidents that probably cost Dinkins his job both involved the NYPD, and in both cases Dinkins seemed to accept the idea that police officers were part of the problem, not part of the solution.

First, Dinkins ordered the police not to intervene in 1991 while African-Americans in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Crown Heights went on a three-day rampage against Hasidic Jews after a station wagon driven by a Hasid ran over a 7-year-old boy. Eighty-one Jews were injured and one killed as the cops stood around and did nothing. The next year, Dinkins chose to believe accounts by residents in Washington Heights that an NYPD officer named Michael O'Keefe had executed a drug runner named Jose "Kiko" Garcia in cold blood. O'Keefe said he had been fighting for his life in hand-to-hand combat. An extensive forensic investigation revealed that the cop was telling the truth, and the story had been ginned up by drug bosses in the neighborhood who were concerned about increased police scrutiny of their nefarious doings.

Under Dinkins, the city's police officers felt they were working for a mayor who didn't really trust or respect them—and this at the height of the crack epidemic, when crazed rock-heads and gangbangers fighting over turf went on a killing and crime spree the likes of which this city had never seen.

Giuliani's primary challenge upon taking office was raising the morale and effectiveness of the NYPD. In part he has done so by refusing to kowtow to the rhetoric and tactics of those who allege that the city's police routinely brutalize minorities. And he has treated with barely disguised contempt those, like the influential Harlem minister Calvin Butts, who issue forth the preposterous claim that the crime drop in the city since Giuliani took office is due to feel-good "Stop the Violence" rallies in minority neighborhoods—or even more ridiculously, give the credit to David Dinkins, who signed into law the 1990 bill that expanded the police department.

The turnaround in the city's crime statistics since 1994 is an oft-told story, but every time you look at the numbers, they still have the power to make your jaw drop. Overall, the city's crime rate has plunged 50 percent in the past five years. And nowhere is the crime

drop more pronounced and wondrous than in minority neighborhoods.

Just a few of these numbers: On Manhattan's Lower East Side, the murder rate dropped 81 percent in five years, rape 60 percent, burglary 72 percent. In East New York, one of Brooklyn's worst neighborhoods, the murder drop is 67 percent; nearby, in Brownsville, murders decreased by 65 percent, burglaries by 56 percent. In Washington Heights, murders declined by 82 percent, rapes by 61 percent, burglaries by 72 percent.

Some of this is attributable to tougher prison sentences and national trends for which Giuliani cannot take credit (though New York's crime drop is itself a big contributor to that trend). Still, the New York City success story has much to do with the approach to policing introduced under Giuliani.

The governing idea of the Giuliani NYPD is that the police can extirpate crime at its source rather than simply responding to criminal activity after it happens. Twice weekly, on the eighth floor of police headquarters, the top brass have a three hour meeting called Compstat. Using matching databases, they look at crime activity in the previous few days throughout the city and deploy resources to challenge crime where it's spiking. For example, say there's a rash of burglaries in a given housing project. Police will cross-check that database with a database of parolees, and then look to see whether any of the parolees are new to the area. If so, they'll go and check it out—and more often than not, nab their man. Sounds logical, but it hadn't been done before.

Giuliani is proud of the NYPD; together with the billions of dollars thrown off by the Wall Street boom of the 1990s, it is responsible for turning New York into a safe and prosperous city. (The municipal budget surplus this year will hover somewhere around $2 billion.) But that is not the only fact he has on his side in defense of his NYPD.

The police department has grown by 3,000 officers since 1991, and arrests have skyrocketed from 309,000 in 1995 to 403,000 in 1998. Even so, police shootings of all kinds have steeply declined. In 1995, there were 344 police shootings; in 1998, the number was 249. In 1996, 30 of those shootings were fatal; in 1998, 19 were. The rate of fatal police shootings (.48 per 1,000 cops in 1998) in New York is lower than in Chicago, Dallas, Miami, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

Alas, numbers aren't very material when bad things happen—and when bad things happen in New York, they happen in outsize (41 bullets) ways. Two years ago, police officers in Queens arrested and then brutalized a Haitian man named Abner Louima in the station house in unspeakable ways. That incident brought a blast of anger from the mayor, who appointed a commission to look into the conduct of the NYPD as a result.

But when the commission issued a report—which said, in essence, that it should become a permanent quasi-governmental body investigating the conduct of the NYPD—Giuliani responded with another blast of anger, this time at the commission. He wanted the group to give the great majority of New York cops a clean bill of health, which would have been a rational finding given all the evidence.

The mayor was furious with the commission because he believed it was doing the dirty work of those who make a living by defaming the police—people like Al Sharpton. Sharpton became one of the "advisers" to Abner Louima, and it was certainly one of Louima's advisers who told him to tell the press and investigators that when the cops were torturing him, they said, "It's Giuliani time." It was the crusading anti-cop journalist Peter Noel of the *Village Voice* who discovered (to Noel's regret) that Louima had lied; the cops had said no such thing.

It hasn't been a good year for Sharpton. The revelation of the Louima lie came around the same time that a jury finally found Sharpton liable for the disgustingly false 1987 accusation that an assistant district attorney had raped the fake victim Tawana Brawley. Nonetheless, within a day of the Diallo shooting, Sharpton had become the Diallo family "spokesman." Like his friend Don King, who is always in the vicinity when a boxing match looks like it is fixed, Sharpton has an amazing talent for getting himself involved in racially charged incidents in New York City—and charging them up still further, to the point that people actually get killed. (In 1995, Sharpton helped organize protests in Harlem against a discount store called Freddy's Fashion Mart, which was white-owned. Matters got so ugly that somebody torched the place. Seven people died in the blaze.)

In the days immediately following the Diallo shooting, Giuliani and police commissioner Howard Safir were quiet, sober, and restrained. The mayor in particular expressed his sorrow and surprise, but still urged the city not to turn on its cops. And Giuliani, a man not accustomed to suffering slights easily, spent the week after Diallo's death being slighted again and again. The family would not meet with him, clearly on Sharpton's orders, unless he agreed to suspend the cops—which would have been a clear violation of their rights in the absence of an indictment or other admission of guilt. He was heckled and screamed at when he

arrived at the city's main mosque for a memorial service at which he did not speak.

For nearly two months, the mayor has been accused by all and sundry of gross insensitivity. The Diallo killing has become the rallying cry for those who want to argue that the NYPD systematically targets black people. *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert puts it this way: "Police misconduct [is] so widespread and at times so insanely violent that it has brought a new kind of terror to the streets of New York."

This is absurd—it's so much safer on the streets of New York these days, especially in minority neighborhoods, that Herbert really deserves to be sent to a rhetoric-sensitivity seminar. Still, Herbert's view is what has motivated a ludicrous moral pageant in front of police headquarters orchestrated by Sharpton—in which more than 1,000 people have been arrested in the past two weeks in an entirely cost-free display of civil disobedience. (The arrestees are brought to a precinct, issued a bench warrant and freed; and the charges are certain to be dismissed.) The protesters wanted to express their disgust with the police department that has made New York City livable again.

Sean Delonas

But that's not quite it. What the protesters really want to do is delegitimize the mayoralty of Rudolph Giuliani. And here's where the story gets especially interesting, because the forces arrayed against Giuliani have problems with him that have nothing whatever to do with policing and everything to do with his ideas about governance.

Giuliani, who is fearless and combative in a most unusual way, has systematically taken on the prevailing ideological power structure in the city of New York over the past five years. Ever since the 1960s, New York has been governed by a weird and immensely powerful public-private partnership. The outrageously corrupt public-sector unions worked in lockstep with city agencies and the city council to expand benefits while simultaneously diminishing union responsibility. Activists have colluded with judges to force city agencies into consent decrees that require the agencies to give taxpayer money to the activists—who then live parasitically off the agencies they are supposed to monitor.

Giuliani will have none of this. He has gone to the mattresses—trying to sell off city hospitals, laying off thousands of city workers in the teeth of concerted opposition, refusing to sign new consent decrees and fighting old ones in court, and insisting on accountability throughout the city bureaucracy. This all ties into his central message, which is that New York City can again be a paragon of civic order. His most concerted enemy in the city is the head of the New York Civil Liberties Union, Norman Siegel, who dislikes every single thing the mayor does—from trying to close down shops that distribute pornography in family neighborhoods to arresting vagrants on quality-of-life offenses.

Libertarians revile Giuliani, who sees his primary task not as defending the rights of individuals to do anything and everything they want to do on the streets of New York but as reestablishing the principle that the first freedom is the freedom from the Hobbesian state of nature into which New York had fallen.

If Giuliani finds his political career damaged beyond his ability to repair it by the Diallo matter, that will be genuinely unfortunate. He has been an extraordinary public official by any reckoning, with a rare grasp of the interplay between politics and ideas and an ever rarer grasp of how to translate ideas into policy.

But there is much more at stake in the Diallo crisis than Giuliani's own career. What is happening in New York City right now is an effort to discredit the ideas and policies of the Giuliani administration—to discredit a specific kind of conservative governance whose success is a dagger pointed at the heart of American liberalism. Giuliani obviously didn't handle the Diallo incident perfectly—to do so would probably have required someone other than a Corleone. But if conservatives don't defend him and his achievement, what public official who follows will be brave enough to take on the demagogues who thrive, like Al Sharpton, on disorder and chaos? ♦

AP / Wide World Photos

ISIKOFF'S CLINTON

By David Tell

On February 11, 1994, during a zoo-like Washington press conference organized by some of the president's least cautious ideological opponents, a woefully inarticulate woman named Paula Jones suggested that Bill Clinton had once done something horrible to her at a "Quality Management Conference" in Little Rock's Excelsior Hotel. Jones appeared easy to dismiss: Her complaint was vague and confusing, and her own lawyer expressed some reluctance about it. Initial West Wing reaction was casually contemptuous. The few news organizations that bothered to ask for comments from the president's aides were reminded to "consider the source." Clinton "didn't know" this woman. Her charges were "not true." And—since it seemed a matter of "he said, she said," and who can ever tell?—there it might have died.

MICHAEL ISIKOFF
Uncovering Clinton
A Reporter's Story
Crown, 402 pp., $25

But before that first day was done, reporter Michael Isikoff, then of the *Washington Post*, rang up Jones's mother and one of her sisters—both of whom attested that in May 1991 Paula had come to them distraught after what she said was a crude sexual advance by Clinton. Next, for three hours the following morning, Isikoff quizzed Jones herself. He found her description of the alleged incident surprisingly credible. And so he managed to persuade executive editor Len Downie, over the objections of several other senior *Post* decision-makers, to give the green light to a further investigation.

At which point George Stephanopoulos made a large and momentous blunder. Tipped off that Paula Jones remained a live, behind-the-scenes issue at the nation's most important political newspaper, Stephanopoulos decided he would try to spin their reporter away from the story. *All Too Human*, Stephanopoulos's new memoir *(reviewed on page 34 of this issue of THE WEEKLY STANDARD by Brit Hume)*, contains one version of the resulting conversation:

> Before I called [Isikoff], Bruce Lindsey and I compiled all of the facts—even reviewing Clinton's May 8, 1991, gubernatorial schedule to see if we could prove that Clinton could not have met with Paula when she said. It appeared that Clinton had left the Excelsior Hotel by the time of the claimed encounter, but the people accompanying Clinton that day said he made an unscheduled afternoon return. We didn't have our silver bullet. But even if we couldn't convincingly disprove her claim, it still came down to a "he said, she said." "Doesn't the president of the United States deserve the benefit of the doubt?" I asked. Isikoff didn't think so, and we squared off over the validity of various contemporaneous accounts. But it was a dialogue of the deaf: I believed Clinton; he believed Jones.

The trouble is, despite what Stephanopoulos now artfully implies, he did not actually fess up to Isikoff about "the people accompanying Clinton that day" and the "unscheduled afternoon return" they remembered. Instead, as Isikoff reports in his own spectacular new book, *Uncovering Clinton*, Stephanopoulos attempted to steer him in completely the opposite direction:

> He couldn't believe I was still pursuing this Jones story, he said. But in any case, he had somebody for me to talk to: Phil Price, a former member of Clinton's staff who now worked for Clinton's successor as governor, Jim Guy Tucker. He was with Clinton at the Quality Management Conference that day and would tell me this was all bulls—t.

David Tell is opinion editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

In the Aftermath of the Kathleen Willey Story

from Michael Isikoff's *Uncovering Clinton*, pp. 161-163

Later that week, I was sitting at my desk when the phone rang. A woman was on the line. You know that story you had in the magazine this week about the woman Clinton made sexual overtures to in the hideaway office? she asked.

"Yes," I said. "What about it?"

"That's exactly the same thing that happened to me," she said. She paused. "It was pretty awful."

We spoke for the next half hour. The caller was articulate and well-educated, a professional woman probably in her mid- to late-thirties, married and involved in politics. She wouldn't give me her name. She couldn't, she said. Her husband was a player in the Democratic Party. But she wanted me to know something. "There are a lot of us out there who are not bimbos," she said.

Newsweek

Michael Isikoff

The story she told was chilling. She had met Clinton over the years at political events and would get invited to come see him at the White House when she was in Washington on business. Clinton's attention was "pretty flattering. . . . He's very charming." One day, about a year and a half before, she had gone by to see him and he had taken her into the hideaway office—the same one described in my article. They chatted. Clinton started getting physical, trying to kiss her, touching her breasts. The woman said she was stunned. She had no idea how to respond. "I've never had a man take advantage of me like that," she said. "I haven't felt that way since high school."

As Clinton pressed himself on her, she said, she resisted—and finally pushed him away. What happened after that? I asked. Clinton turned away, she said. She hesitated, and she said softly and with apparent discomfort, "I think he finished the job himself." The image lingered. The woman left the White House, humiliated and repulsed. Clinton acted as if nothing had happened. The woman told no one except her sister. Then Clinton started calling her at work. There would be a flurry of calls at strategic times—usually when there were developments in the Jones case. He called many times in January, around the time of his inauguration—just as the Jones case was being argued in the Supreme Court. The calls were embarrassing; she worried that her colleagues would start to wonder about them. There didn't seem to be any point to Clinton's calls. He just wanted to chat, to see how she was doing.

I pointed out that the timing was the key; he must have been worried about what she might say. Look, I told her, it's really important that we get together and talk about this. There are so many people who have been attacked by the White House, so many people who are worried about being slimed for daring to tell the truth about this guy. You owe it to yourself, you owe it to all the others.

No, she couldn't do that, she said. "If my husband knew I was talking to you, he'd kill me," she said. She mentioned an administration official she knew who had told her about Clinton slipping his hands up her leg. She too would never say anything. It was just so awful. I pleaded for her name. I begged her to meet me. She would think about it, she said. She would be in Washington soon to meet with a "client," and maybe she would consider giving me a call.

After she hung up, I was shaken. That woman sounded to me as credible as any of them, more so, really, and her story was in some ways the most horrifying of all. Who was this guy Clinton? What demons possessed him? And how many more of them were out there—women too terrified and too smart to open their mouths? A few minutes later, I wandered back to [*Newsweek* Washington bureau chief Ann] McDaniel's office.

"In case you had any doubts about the Willey story," I told her, "let me tell you about the phone call I just got."

McDaniel listened. She shook her head sadly. "I didn't have any doubts," she said.

The woman never called back. ♦

Little, Brown

George Stephanopoulos sits with the president before the 1994 State of the Union address.

Sure enough, that's what this Phil Price character did soon tell Isikoff: Clinton had been nowhere near the Excelsior Hotel at the hour in question. But it would take Isikoff almost no time to establish that this alibi was wholly false and highly suspicious (Clinton and Price had been on the phone together within moments of Jones's 1994 press conference). In short, the White House had misled him. The Paula Jones controversy was not yet one week old and still quite murky. But already, Isikoff writes, he was "incensed."

Over the next four and a half years, most of it while working in *Newsweek* magazine's Washington bureau, Isikoff would almost invariably be the first—and do the most—to advance the story: from Paula Jones to Kathleen Willey to Linda Tripp to Monica Lewinsky to the independent counsel investigation that finally commanded the nation's attention. At every stage, the pattern held. Isikoff would discover evidence of compulsive and sometimes abusive sexual behavior by the president. And the president's staffers, lawyers, and other minions would swarm to suppress that evidence with public lies and private threats or inducements. "A culture of concealment had sprung up around Bill Clinton," Isikoff argues, and "it had infected his entire presidency."

Uncovering Clinton is the most exhaustive, reliable, and clearest general explication of the road to Clinton's impeachment that any writer has yet produced. But the book is also, as the subtitle suggests, a "reporter's story," an attempt to explain how and why Isikoff handled his beat the way he did—what choices he was forced to make along the way and what assumptions governed his search for the facts. To achieve this purpose, *Uncovering Clinton* winds up discussing a great lot of stuff that Isikoff hasn't before reported, information that he possessed at the time but that for one reason or another he and his *Post* and *Newsweek* colleagues withheld from publication. A certain kind of super-punctilious press ethicist may well complain about this technique—on the principle that what is once not printed must remain unprinted forever. But for everyone else, I suspect, the fresh material in *Uncovering Clinton*—by its sheer volume, detail, and consistency—will tend to corroborate itself.

A few random and representative highlights:

- Following a 1984 Democratic party fundraiser in Mississippi, Clinton boldly propositioned a shocked young woman named Karen Hinton. Later in her career, between 1989 and 1991, Hinton worked at the Democratic National Committee in Washington, where her past experience with Clinton became widely known. One of the people who knew about it was the DNC's then-press secretary, Mike McCurry.

- In August 1997, just after his scoop about Kathleen Willey was published in *Newsweek*, Isikoff received an anonymous call from a woman who claimed to have had a similar—though still more horrifying—encounter with Clinton in the Oval Office. *(Isikoff's account of this conversation is reprinted in the accompanying sidebar on the previous page.)*

- During the Paula Jones litigation, Clinton attorney Robert Bennett repeatedly claimed to reporters, off the record, that he could prove Jones had once performed sex acts on five men in the back of a pickup truck. Bennett could prove nothing of the kind; the charge was a baseless smear.

- On September 1, 1996, Susan McDougal telephoned Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz seeking advice, worried that if she agreed to cooperate with the Whitewater grand jury she would be unable to avoid acknowledging a past sexual relationship with Bill Clinton. Dershowitz told her such fears were well founded. Dershowitz then called the White House counsel's office to alert them to this development. Several days later, McDougal refused to testify, for reasons she has never convincingly explained.

- "Privately, Clinton's lawyers have conceded that Clinton may have had consensual sex with Broaddrick but insist that he would never have forced himself upon an unwilling participant."

To be sure, in *Uncovering Clinton* Isikoff does not at all restrict his criticism to the White House. Everyone involved in the scandal takes his lumps: the conservative lawyer "elves" who secretly assisted the Jones litigation; Ken Starr's prosecutors, for the periodic heedlessness and overkill with which they pursued the president; Linda Tripp, not least, whose reputation for manipulative nastiness Isikoff implicitly endorses. With masochistic candor, for that matter, Isikoff several times rebukes himself—for errors of judgment, for minor reportorial omissions, and for the unfortunate but unavoidable centrality of sex in the history he has written.

But the book's true subject remains, of course, the president—a character from whom any open-minded reader will recoil.

I should disclose that I know Mike Isikoff personally. It will no doubt embarrass him to receive plaudits from a friend—and all the more so from me, since, in the many years I've known him, we have only rarely agreed about any issue of public consequence. "Right-wing praise I do not need," he ruefully warned me several weeks ago. I cannot help that. His book is the most compelling and important first-person "big story" narrative any reporter has written since *All the President's Men*—a devastating portrait of the very bad man who now inhabits our White House. Sorry, Mike. ♦

Curious George

The Political Education of George Stephanopoulos

By Brit Hume

You can say this for George Stephanopoulos: He's emerged from his brush with Bill and Hillary Clinton in much better shape than have a lot of others. He's gainfully employed, unindicted, able to pay his legal bills, with full-time work, and now has a *New York Times* bestseller to his credit. Not bad for a young man who served the most dangerously seductive of politicians in the most dangerously seductive of places, the White House.

His book, *All Too Human*, is subtitled "A Political Education," and that's an apt description. Stephanopoulos is not the only top Clinton aide who managed to escape without irreparable harm. Leon Panetta did too. So did Mike McCurry, who stayed later and in a more public role. But they were both veterans of the Washington wars who had seen politicians and presidents rise and fall, and they knew the dangers. Stephanopoulos was a very smart former Capitol Hill aide who suffered acutely the master-of-the-universe illusions that naturally afflict people who have just helped elect a president. He had a lot to learn.

Little, Brown

Looking back now at such first-year fiascoes as the president's misbegotten nomination of Zoe Baird to be attorney general, Stephanopoulos concedes, "We may have been snakebit, but we were also suffering from our own ineptitude and arrogance. We had won a campaign, but we didn't yet know how to govern—and we didn't know that we didn't know." At the time, Leon Panetta, Mike McCurry, and David Gergen were not in the White House. The jobs they would later hold were then in the hands of Mack McLarty, Dee Dee Myers, and Stephanopoulos.

Baird's nomination was followed by a similar mishap with Kimba Wood, another possibility for attorney general whose problem was the illegal immigrant her children had for a nanny. Then there were the travel-office firings, in which Stephanopoulos got the FBI to help draft a statement to explain the sudden dismissals. Peppered with questions in a White House daily briefing, Stephanopoulos conceded that yes, an FBI official had taken part in a meeting to draft a White House statement on the subject.

How, I thought to myself at the time, could anyone be so foolish as to involve the FBI in White House spin after the experience of Watergate? The answer should have been obvious: George Stephanopoulos was twelve years old when Nixon was president.

This was not Stephanopoulos's only difficult day as Clinton's communications director and daily press briefer, and in May 1993, he was relieved of the duty, failing upward into a job at the president's immediate right hand, with a tiny office just outside the Oval Office. "When it comes to White House offices," Stephanopoulos notes,

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Brit Hume, now Washington managing editor of Fox News, was chief White House correspondent for ABC News from 1989 to 1997.

Little, Brown

> it's not the size that counts. Location, location, location. Proximity, like celebrity, is a source and sign of power. The closer you are to the president, the more people believe he listens to you. The more people believe he listens to you, the more information flows your way. The more information flows your way, the more the president listens to you. The more the president listens to you, the more power you have.

And so it was for George Stephanopoulos, who entered upon a golden period of closeness to the president and participation in his power. It would last barely a year, ending in large part as a result of his seduction by another dangerous Washington figure: the *Washington Post*'s Bob Woodward, who was writing a book about the development of the Clinton economic plan. It was a ripe subject, given that Clinton ran for president on an economic program and then spent much of the time after his election trying to think one up. Over dinner at Woodward's house in Georgetown, Stephanopoulos succumbed. "I was arrogant enough to believe I could beat him at his own game, that my spin would win." It didn't, of course, and Stephanopoulos's role in Woodward's book *The Agenda* became known in the White House—most dangerously, to the first lady, who said at one point,

> The whole problem with this administration is the Woodward book. . . . There are people who go out there with no loyalty to the President, no loyalty to the work we have to do for the country, just seeking to aggrandize themselves. And I hope they're satisfied!

Mrs. Clinton's view was nutty, of course, but it was shared by the president and typical of the paranoia that is present in varying degrees at the center of nearly every White House. Things would never be the same for George Stephanopoulos. He was no longer trusted by the first family.

Indeed, following the failure of the first lady's health-care initiative and the loss of Congress in the 1994 election, very little would be the same in the Clinton White House. For one thing, Dick Morris was recalled from the president's past to become the de facto White House chief of staff through the middle of the 1996 campaign (when Morris's own sense of omnipotence led him into the sexual indiscretions that forced him into exile).

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS
All Too Human
A Political Education
Little, Brown, 456 pp., $27.95

Stephanopoulos's fall from grace was not his first encounter with the first lady's paranoid tendencies. Her secretiveness proved disastrous in the development of the health-care plan. More important, as it turned out, was what happened in late 1993. The *Washington Post* was seeking answers to questions about the Whitewater real-estate deal, its interest spurred by the suicide of Vince Foster. Stephanopoulos and Gergen, believing the Clintons had done no wrong, wanted them to answer the questions and turn over the requested documents. Mrs. Clinton and the lawyers wanted to stonewall, and it was they who won. Denied the material, the *Post*, joined by the *New York Times*, was soon in full cry on Whitewater. The scent of coverup brought the rest of the media into the hunt, and soon the Republicans in Congress were calling for an independent counsel. The issue seized the front pages, and over the first lady's fierce and sometimes tearful objections, the president ultimately agreed to ask for a special prosecutor. That led to the naming of Robert Fiske, who gave way to Kenneth Starr.

"If a genie offered me a chance to turn back time and undo a single decision from my White House tenure," Stephanopoulos writes, "I'd head straight to the Oval Office dining room on Saturday morning December 11, 1993," when the decision was made not to cooperate on Whitewater and the course of events that would lead to Clinton's impeachment was set in motion.

By the time of that impeachment, George Stephanopoulos had been out of the White House for two years, having decided in late 1995 to leave. By then, he was fighting depression and insomnia, seeing a psychiatrist, and had grown a beard to cover the stress-induced hives that periodically broke out on his face. Still, he hung on through the campaign, fought to diminish the damage the "triangulation" Dick Morris urged on the president would do liberal causes, and left with Hillary Clinton saying, "I love you, George Stephanopoulos."

He now teaches at Columbia University and holds forth on ABC News. The depression is gone and with it, the hives and the sleeplessness. At the end of *All Too Human*, he writes, "If only this good president could have been a better man." He recently told Diane Sawyer he now thinks Bill Clinton should not have been elected. The political education of George Stephanopoulos has brought him a long way. ♦

Shlaes's Rebellion

Amity Shlaes Makes the Case for Tax Reform

By Jonathan R. Cohen

Just in time for filing your taxes—due, in case you've forgotten, on April 15—Amity Shlaes has produced *The Greedy Hand*. An analysis of our failed tax system, together with suggestions about how it might be reformed, the book has already leapt to the top of the bestseller list on Amazon.com—proving that there's nothing like the task of preparing tax returns to convince people that something, somewhere, has gone wrong.

Random House

AMITY SHLAES
The Greedy Hand
How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It
Random House, 255 pp., $22.95

The "greedy hand" to which Shlaes refers is, of course, the government's. The phrase was coined by Tom Paine in his 1791 *The Rights of Man* to describe a state "thrusting itself into every corner and crevice of industry." Shlaes explains how the greedy hand has exploited in the United States the good will of the citizenry to create over the last hundred years our present tax code—bent on confusing, frustrating, and intimidating us.

A member of the editorial board of the *Wall Street Journal* and the author of a book about postwar Germany, Shlaes is well positioned to examine the onerous and counterproductive taxes levied on Americans in every walk of life.

Each of her chapters shows how some aspect of our current tax policy destroys jobs, punishes marriage, and interferes with education, savings, retirement, and even dying. And in her brisk conclusion, she offers an eight-point manifesto for comprehensive reform.

But perhaps the most important contribution in *The Greedy Hand* is the revelation of how the bloated tax-collecting apparatus is kept hidden from public view. The evil genius of the tax code lies in the withholding tax, the method of taking an ever-expanding chunk of money from our paychecks before we even can see it, let alone decide how it should be spent.

This wouldn't be necessarily a bad thing, Shlaes argues, if the money were put to good use—like fighting World War II, the reason for launching the withholding tax in the first place. But taxes are used for social engineering as well. "Our tax code," she warns, "doesn't stop at merely taking its share. It also wants to tell people how to live."

Sometimes the result is intended, as in the 1998 tax legislation that sought to punish smokers and reward married couples. And sometimes the result is unintended, as in the tax rebate of the 1975 earned-income credit that ended up acting as a disincentive for low-income workers to strive for greater career success. But in every case, it is an intrusion of the greedy hand's taxing power into ever and ever larger segments of American life.

Shlaes traces the history of the withholding tax to a man named Beardsley Ruml, a pipe-smoking member of the Federal Reserve Board in 1942, who—back when he had been treasurer of Macy's department store—had noticed that shoppers preferred paying their bills in small portions. So, too, he argued, would they prefer paying taxes on the installment plan.

As those installments grow ever larger, the greedy hand sometimes overreaches, prompting taxpayers to pay attention to what's being taken from them. Sometimes they even rebel, as Californians did in 1978 when they unleashed Proposition 13 on unwary bureaucrats and politicians.

Shlaes approves of this tendency, of course, and would like to see more of it. But as she points out, tax reforms in America—whether derived from a grass-roots revolt or from such major federal tax cuts as those during the Reagan administration—are invariably undermined by new generations of politicians.

In fact, the government's addiction to taxes has proved unshakable by either Democrats or Republicans. It is on the latter that Shlaes pours special scorn, arguing that the Republicans "led the way in replacing the welfare state with the tax code as government's principal social engineering tool." The tax-slashing party of President Reagan, once it obtained control of Congress in 1994, found itself promoting merely "tiny, symbolic projects" (such as the family child credit proposed in the Contract With America) instead of wholesale tax reform.

Shlaes is obviously right that Republicans have helped maintain the burdensome and inequitable tax code. But we need to remember that for every fiscal sin of the Republicans, there are a thousand sins of the Democrats.

The Democratic party, especially its congressional wing, still keeps unswerving faith in the virtues of the Nanny State and in the efficacy of the tax system as a device for making us behave better.

It is in her analysis of the sins of the Nanny State that Shlaes really shines,

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especially when she turns her attention to such schemes as the attempt to equalize school funding.

Like most utopian projects that rely on big government to abolish social ills, equalization of school funding—and its promise to rescue poor school districts—begins as an attractive idea. But, put into practice through the tax code, the result is invariably disastrous.

In Vermont, for example, the recent attempt to equalize school funding created a system in which the portion of each town's property taxes assessed for education is collected by the state and then paid back to the towns in grants amounting to $5,000 per pupil. Wealthier school districts may not spend more than $5,000 per pupil without incurring tax penalties.

As Shlaes chronicles, the net effect has been to degrade, not improve, the quality of Vermont's public education—for both the wealthy and the poor. Equalization punishes the wealthier schools by taking funds away from their enrichment programs, while at the same time raising expectations that can't be met for improving the curriculum of poorer ones.

The only achievement of the tax changes in Vermont has been the institutionalization of a low-grade but pernicious war between rich and poor, conducted by students, parents, and politicians.

There is a difficulty, as Shlaes notes, in getting Americans to focus on the tax code during an era of great prosperity. Indeed, Vermont's problems must seem very distant to many people, as the stock market flirts with the ten-thousand mark.

One could, of course, make the argument that our prosperity would be even greater if taxes were not holding us back from even higher rates of growth. But voters don't seem particularly exercised by that argument at the moment.

And yet, even though, in the prosperity of 1999, Americans seem more or less resigned to the *amount* they pay in taxes, they would be in loud revolt if they understood the damage done by *how* their taxes are collected. In *The Greedy Hand*, Amity Shlaes has performed the service of discussing in concise and digestible bites the high cost of our tax system, how it got that way, and why we must do something about it. Her work may even be enough to get voters to think about the subject not just in April, as they sweat over their tax returns, but also in November, as they head to the voting booth. ♦

Renaissance Man

Robert J. Lurtsema: Radio Host, Poet, and Plagiarist

By Jonathan V. Last

November 8, 1996, was, by special order of Mayor Tom Menino, "Robert J. Lurtsema Day" in Boston. And since he isn't Larry Bird or Roger Clemens, it must have pleased Lurtsema immensely that his widely broadcast public radio show, *Morning Pro Musica*, had finally garnered for him the kind of tribute that cities normally reserve for local sports stars and visiting astronauts.

But Boston was merely recognizing what listeners have known for twenty-five years: Lurtsema—or Robert J., as his fans call him—seems the perfect embodiment of a very New-Englandy type: the man who can turn his hand to almost anything. The sixty-some-year-old broadcaster (he refuses to reveal his exact age, saying that he "doesn't like to create any barriers" between himself and his listeners) can charm a radio audience with his wide-ranging comments. He can write a little music (Lurtsema helped compose the theme for Julia Child's television cooking show). He can even produce poetry.

Indeed, he wrote in his *A Pocketful of Verse* (1991, from Parnassus Imprints) that "the term 'modern Renaissance man' used to bother me when I'd see it in print applied to me." But it only *used* to, and he's come at last to accept the nomination: Lurtsema is a polymath, a Boston institution, and—*A Pocketful of Verse* also reveals—an out-and-out plagiarist. Every age gets the Renaissance man it deserves, and we get Robert J. Lurtsema.

It was back in October 1971 that Lurtsema began hosting *Morning Pro Musica*, a program of classical music and talk on WGBH, the National Public Radio affiliate in Boston. He quickly became a local sensation by beginning each morning with the chirping of birds and his own slow, broken cadences. *Morning Pro Musica* went into syndication from the late 1970s to the early 1990s, and Lurtsema became a national NPR figure as well.

He delighted in making the program function at his own deliberate pace. He planned installments months in advance, dedicating whole mornings to obscure composers and sometimes acting conspicuously daffy. (One Earth Day program played nothing but animal noises and crashing waves.) Even his newscasts were the News According to Lurtsema: He edited and summarized the wire reports, broadcasting only what he felt relevant. Some mornings there was no news.

It's hard to keep track of all that Lurtsema relates that he's done. He explains that he's been, at various times, an advertising executive, actor, painter, publisher, photographer, sculptor, writer, composer, broadcast journalist, trapeze artist, diving instructor, and construction worker. And that's not to mention the "unofficial ambassador abroad for American media" and a poet.

Jonathan V. Last is a reporter for The Weekly Standard.

"Renaissance man" hardly seems sufficient to describe it all. In *A Pocketful of Verse* he presents a hodgepodge compendium of his talents. It contains small bits of childhood reminiscence ("I was a natural explorer"). It reproduces his art works, mostly notebook doodles. And then, of course, it prints his poetry.

The poems are clearly important to Lurtsema, for he spends page after page ruminating about their inspiration and meaning. As a child, he guilelessly relates, he "would spend entire days talking in rhyme." The childishness is what remains. "It *may* help to know a little bit about meter," he observes, but "one of the delights of writing poetry or, for that matter, working in any art form, is that you get to make up the rules as you go along."

Some of his poems are low-rent A.A. Milne, without Milne's skill and joy in meter:

> *Words*
> *Words are toys,*
> *things to play with,*
> *play with, play on.*
> *Played out?*
> *Play on!*

Some are progressive paeans, such as "A Rainbow in Auckland," a rhythmically awkward poem in praise of environmental sabotage. But at least his "Ode to A.A.," about Alcoholics Anonymous, shows flashes of genuine talent, relating how the drunkard's foot still reaches for the railing on a bar even while he's on the wagon:

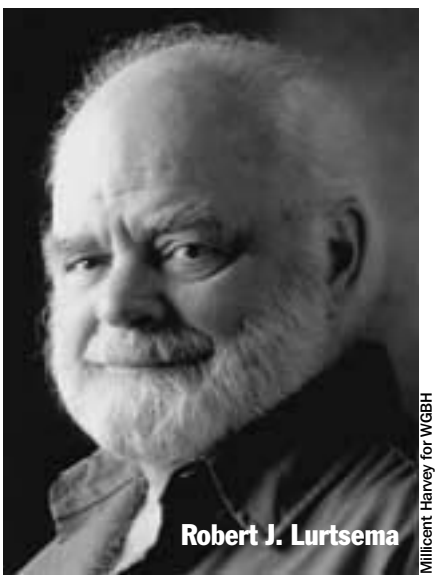
> *My heart is all resigned and calm*
> *So, likewise, is my soul,*
> *But my habituated foot*
> *Is quite beyond control.*

If this isn't quite enough for Lurtsema to quit his day job, it's still pretty good light verse. Good enough, in fact, to have been published before. In the *New York Sun*. Around 1920. Under the byline Don Marquis and the title "The Old Brass Railing."

Lurtsema introduces "Ode to A.A." with a description of how his poetic skills helped him in the Navy: "My knack for rhyme came in handy in many ways, not the least of which was entertaining the troops with lusty limericks, ribald rhymes, or epic ballads on trivial topics."

But William Porth, a lawyer in Charleston, West Virginia, recently noticed the striking similarity of Lurtsema's "Ode to A.A." to a poem reprinted in Marquis's 1921 collection *The Old Soak and Hail and Farewell*. The similarity is more than striking; it's nearly exact. Of Lurtsema's nineteen stanzas, eleven are precise replicas of Marquis's, and the eight others very close.

It would be nice if Lurtsema's plagiarism helped restore interest in Don Marquis. There was a time—back when Ogden Nash was the most prolific poet for the *New Yorker*—that light verse was enormously popular in America. But those days have mostly gone, and only a little of Marquis survives. He created his best-known characters, Archy and Mehitabel, in his 1920s newspaper column, "The Sun Dial." Archy was a cockroach who lived in the city and wrote free verse by hurling himself headfirst against the keys of a typewriter, and Mehitabel was an old cat, jaded by the changing times in New York. Marquis's column would run as though written by Archy (with no capital letters because the diminutive insect couldn't use the shift key). But Archy wasn't just a cockroach, he was a poet whose precocious first words were "expression is the need of my soul."


Robert J. Lurtsema

Millicent Harvey for WGBH

Marquis wrote nearly three dozen books, but he died just short of sixty years old, and his last fourteen years were filled with tragedy. He was always a hard drinker; E.B. White relates the story of Marquis, at the end of a month as a teetotaler, walking up to the bar and declaring, "I've conquered that god-damn will power of mine. Gimme a double scotch." He lost his only son at age five, and then his wife. He remarried, only to lose his only daughter at thirteen, and then his second wife. In the end, all he had was his work.

Once, while ostensibly describing Archy, Marquis revealed the cost of his own small craftsmanship: "After about an hour of this frightfully difficult literary labor he fell to the floor exhausted, and we saw him creep feebly into a nest of the poems which are always there in profusion."

The life of our modern Renaissance man, Robert J. Lurtsema, has been considerably more charmed than Marquis's. Knowing where his inspiration derives, the reader may laugh when Lurtsema solemnly invokes the Muse in *A Pocketful of Verse* and explains that talk of her "can lead to all kinds of philosophical discussions on just where the material comes from in the first place."

But his material has served him very, very well, as he sits in the study of his house by a pond in Wellesley, working in watercolors during the evenings and recording a national radio program in the mornings. He's fond of telling a story of the satisfactions of his fame. When he injured himself skiing in Colorado, the local doctor decided he needed twenty-six stitches. And when "I said I hoped he was a good tailor," the doctor recognized Lurtsema's dulcet voice, and "turning around wide-eyed, the doctor shouted, 'Robert J.? Is that you?' And I assured him it was."

It is finally the pretentiousness that is unbearable. There are, of course, genuine Renaissance men who *do* things in many different fields. And then there are the sham Renaissance men who want to be *perceived* to have done things in many different fields. Robert J. Lurtsema's pretension may be forgivable. It's certainly human. But plagiarism is wrong. ♦

Gore Recalls His Years in NBA

By PETER VECSEY

Nashua, N.H.—Speaking at a fund-raising dinner in New Hampshire, Vice President Albert Gore Jr. revealed that as a young man he played 13 seasons in the National Basketball Association. "I was a power forward for those great Los Angeles Clippers teams in the 1970s, before finishing my career with the Bucks," Gore told a startled audience in Nashau.

"But my greatest accomplishment was not all the championship rings, or all the illegitimate children I sired, but my efforts to help integrate the league. I recruited the NBA's first Jewish player, Moses Malone."

Gore continued, "There were a lot of racial epithets hurled at us. Moses, or Moishe as I called him, had to endure a lot. But in 1974 I invented dribbling, which cut down on the number of traveling violations, not only for myself but across the league."

Gore told the audience that even as a rookie he inspired a bestselling book about basketball, which ended up being titled *Sports Hero: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar*. Gore recalled, "That book, and the all-nude musical based on it, described my life almost exactly, from my childhood as a dirt-poor Tennessee farmer all the way up to my public role as an internationally renowned poseur.

See **GORE** *on Page 102*

Parody

Photos: AP / Wide World Photos