the weekly standard

JUNE 14, 1999 • $3.50

The Anointed One

FRED BARNES
on George W. Bush's
campaign strategy

• • •

TOD LINDBERG
on how the Democrats
will attack him

• • •

OWEN ULLMANN
on what compassionate
conservatism means

the weekly Standard

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 37 • JUNE 14, 1999

Cover by Daniel Adel

Books & Arts

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the second week in April, the second week in July, the last week in August, and the first week in January) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-303-776-3605 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.50. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Weekly Standard Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Ian Slatter 1-202-496-3354.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

Three Strikes for the Friars

When Florida State finished its 14-3 drubbing of Providence College in the second round of the NCAA regional baseball tournament on Memorial Day, it wasn't just the end of the season for the Friars. It was the death of the team.

Last October Rev. Philip A. Smith, Providence's president, declared that the men's baseball, tennis, and golf programs would be discontinued at the end of this school year in the name of gender equity and compliance with the federal law known as Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination at schools that get federal funds (i.e., practically all of them). So after 78 years of Providence baseball and a 49-16 season that saw the team ranked as high as 26th in the nation, the Friars have hung up their cleats for good.

The story is by now familiar: Women constitute 59 percent of the student body at Providence but only 43 percent of the athletes. There is no evidence that Providence has denied athletic opportunities to its female students; rather, they have declined to participate at the same high rates as the male students. But unequal participation is tantamount to discrimination under the Clinton Education department's Title IX enforcement guidelines, not to mention the egalitarian theories of feminist litigants. So, like such bastions of putative sexism as Brown University, Providence is rolling back men's sports. Michelle Hackmer, a varsity swimmer for Providence, told the *New York Times*, "Sure, we want women athletes to be treated fairly, but at this expense? I don't think this is what Title IX was supposed to be about." Maybe not, but it's exactly what Title IX now is about.

Spike's Navy

When director Spike Lee, everybody's favorite bug-eyed militant, successfully bid to produce five recruiting ads for the United States Navy, it signaled a sea change in the Navy's hipness quotient the likes of which haven't been seen since it nearly appropriated the Village People's "In the Navy" as a late seventies recruiting song. (That was before the Department of Defense realized the song was a gay anthem.) Surprisingly, the race-baiting director, who celebrated nymphomania in *She's Gotta Have It* and phone-sex operators in *Girl 6*, has delivered rather milquetoast goods.

Like all recruiting ads through the ages, Lee's steer away from the realities of front-line military life: bad pay, bad food, bad hours. He also avoids the kill-people-and-break-things side of the job (except in one ad where Navy Seals stand heroically with their guns drawn in the surf, obviously not there to boogie board). Instead, his stylish, *vérité* spots feature sailors seeking tuition assistance and Internet training, performing in a band on-board their ship, and even landing plum jobs as telecommunications supervisors after their brief hitch in the service. It is the standard warfare-to-workfare approach the military has favored since killing one's enemy fell out of fashion some decades ago.

But Spike has a little fight in him still. At the Cannes Film Festival, just days before the ads were launched, Lee was asked how to prevent school violence. His suggestion: shoot NRA pitchman Charlton Heston "with a .44-caliber Bulldog." He was only joking he said later. But it's still an instructive lesson for our warfighters: By all means, don't shoot Moses.

The Stark Difference

At a May 27 subcommittee hearing, California Democrat Pete Stark became visibly agitated during an upbeat presentation on welfare reform. The representative of San Francisco's East Bay communities never met a welfare program he didn't like. He's also notoriously rude. Both these traits made for a poisonous combination: Invoking Eloise Anderson, the esteemed former director of California's welfare agency and a pioneer of recent welfare reforms, Stark said she would "kill children if she had her way."

Hateful rhetoric is nothing new for Stark. He once referred to Rep. Nancy Johnson, the very model of a moderate Republican, as a "whore for the insurance industry" because she dared to oppose his plan for a government takeover of the health-care system. In 1991 he singled out for condemnation his "Jewish colleagues" who had voted to support the Gulf War; didn't they realize that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was just like Israel's treatment of West Bank Palestinians?

And in 1990 Stark referred to Louis Sullivan, the

Scrapbook

Bush administration's (black) secretary of Health and Human Services, as "a disgrace to his race" because of his support for Republican health-care policies.

In this era of the Third Way and the New Democrat, Stark is a throwback, an embodiment of that old party symbol, the jackass.

What To Do About the Cox Report?

When Congress reconvenes, right near the top of Trent Lott's and Denny Hastert's "to do" lists will be figuring out how to respond to the Cox committee's report on Chinese espionage and the transfer of sensitive technologies by U.S. companies. One idea under review is to create a joint House-Senate bipartisan committee and dump the whole thing in its lap. Some version of this is strongly favored by Republican senators Arlen Specter and Bob Smith, but committee chairmen in the House and Senate are resisting it, fearing it would cut them out of the debate. Lott is said to be concerned that the committee would be slow and might opt for closed hearings; he wants the Senate to move quickly and to do so in open session.

However the debate proceeds, it will likely get rocky when America's trade policy with China comes up. A resolution seeking to deny China most-favored-nation status will be introduced in the House—probably by Dana Rohrabacher—but it's unlikely to win a majority (the resolution may not even be considered in the Senate). Indeed, neither Lott nor Hastert is inclined to curtail America's trade with China. If the administration strikes a deal with Beijing on accession to the World Trade Organization, Congress might take a more hawkish line. But minority leader Richard Gephardt, who has regularly voted against renewing China's privileged trading status with the United States, gave a speech last week in which he said a WTO deal "shouldn't be held hostage to the desire by many Republicans in Congress to embarrass the president."

Most interesting is the question of whether high-level Clinton administration heads will roll. Tensions between the two parties are sure to escalate as more and more Republicans declare that Sandy Berger, the national security adviser, is not up to the job. A letter is currently circulating in the Senate calling on Berger to resign, while over 80 House Republicans have said he should step aside. Berger didn't help himself with Lott by hiring Ken Pollack, a former RAND Corporation analyst who co-authored an article in the January/February issue of *Foreign Affairs* that was highly critical of the Lott-sponsored Iraq Liberation Act.

Vendetta Postscript

We published a letter last week from Joseph Cerrell, a longtime Democratic operative who's also the president of the National Italian American Foundation. Cerrell's main complaint was that The Weekly Standard had targeted Andrew Cuomo, the secretary of Housing and Urban Development, for special abuse in a recent article because of Cuomo's Italian roots. (To which The Scrapbook says, *Basta!* Cuomo was actually the *last* member of the Clinton cabinet to get grilled in these pages.) Shortly after the letter was published, we learned something interesting: Andrew Cuomo's mother, Matilda, sits on the board of the National Italian American Foundation. The foundation bills itself as "entirely non-partisan." Does Mr. Cerrell's letter fall into that category?

Casual

And B.J. Makes Six

These days there are six members of my family: me and my wife, our three kids, and Baltimore Orioles left fielder B.J. Surhoff. I suppose we should count Mr. Surhoff as a member in absentia since he doesn't actually know we exist. But for the past three seasons, our older son, who is 8, has adopted B.J. as his favorite player, and over that time so much of our family conversation has revolved around the outfielder's batting and fielding accomplishments I now count him part of the brood.

AP/Wide World Photos

Naomi, 5, is ready to see her brother move on to another topic of conversation, so weary is she of recitations of Surhoff's .404 lifetime batting average with the bases loaded. But for myself, I don't think Joshua could have picked a better hero (allowing for the fact that Surhoff is not a member of the New York Mets—but the Mets-Orioles rift that divides our family is another and much sadder tale).

My son didn't pick the obvious Oriole heroes, like the legendary Cal Ripken and the charismatic Brady Anderson. Instead, he followed the first rule of hero-picking: Choose someone who needs your spiritual support. Surhoff is a talented player, but he is not such an extraordinarily talented player that a little upper deck well-wishing becomes superfluous. I've never understood people who pick a Ken Griffey or a Mark McGwire as their hero. It seems so unsolipsistic. With such superstars, you know that whatever sports prayers you send into the ether are unnecessary. But with Surhoff—or with my pet projects, San Diego's Dave Magadan and Seattle's Butch Huskey—you feel your support can somehow alter the cosmic correlation of forces slightly in their favor.

Surhoff came up through the Milwaukee Brewers organization as a catcher, and he has a strong arm. In fact, there are no glaring flaws in his game. He is a fine defensive player. He has average to slightly above-average speed, but in bursts of passion he can accelerate, so that when he hits into what should be a double play, he often manages to beat out the relay throw to first. His hitting has always been solid but not spectacular. His first year with the Brewers he hit .299 with 7 homers and 68 RBIs, and after a few spotty seasons he has developed into a reliable .290 hitter, with his power increasing as he ages. This year he is off to an outstanding start. He was leading the league in hits for a while, and his average is up around .330. I attribute no more than a third of his recent batting average surge to the supernatural effects of my son's fervent support.

But the real reason B.J. needs Joshua is his attitude. Surhoff's manner at the plate is that of one who is desperately trying to squeeze the most out of his abilities. In between pitches, his face is a medley of concentration, anxiety, frustration, concern, misery, and despair. He spends much of the time up there lecturing himself like some cruel law professor hectoring a hapless One L. If he fouls off a hittable pitch, he grimaces in self-reproach. If he swings and misses, he turns to the umpire and asks if the pitch was over the plate, and you pray that the umpire will answer affirmatively because you don't want to know what sort of self-lacerating talk Surhoff will give himself if he catches himself expanding the strike zone.

Then there is his relationship with his bat. B.J. talks to his bat. He stares at it often between pitches, but not with the accusing eye tennis players sometimes cast at their racquets after missed shots. Surhoff stares at it contemplatively, the way Hamlet stared at that skull, as if he were considering his own demise or at least a weak pop-up.

When Surhoff does manage a double, which is often these days, he stands on second expressionless. This blankness seems to signal relief, or at best, contentment. It is rare to see him smile. Last month a friend let us use his company's season tickets, and we were able to sit just behind the Orioles dugout. So close was my son to his idol that his positive energy had an extra-strong effect (Joshua was wearing his Surhoff shirt, as he does to all games). B.J. hit two home runs in an Orioles victory. But even then I don't recall a big grin from the left fielder.

Joshua was in raptures, of course. As the second home run cleared the fence, his expression was of unexpected joy, the same expression I saw on his face when Shamu splashed him at Sea World and when, at a recent little league game, he slid into home and discovered that he too can hit home runs.

David Brooks

Correspondence

Including That Wobbly Bit

In William Kristol and Robert Kagan's editorial, they write that "Margaret Thatcher's famous injunction—'George, this is no time to go wobbly'—helped give President George Bush the moral courage to take Americans to war against Saddam Hussein" ("Mr. Wobbly," May 31).

The original quoter was George Bush himself, fondly used on the day he presented the then-former prime minister with the Medal of Freedom. As recorded in the official documents of his presidency, Bush said: "In the early days of the Gulf Crisis I called her to say that though we fully intended to interdict Iraqi shipping, we were going to let a single vessel heading for Oman [to] enter port down at Yemen . . . without being stopped. And she listened to my explanation, agreed with the decision, but then added these words of caution—words that guided me through the Gulf Crisis, words I'll never forget as long as I'm alive. 'Remember, George,' she said, 'this is no time to go wobbly.' Those who work with me in the White House know we use that expression often and have used it during some troubling days. And never, ever will it be said that Margaret Thatcher went wobbly."

Thatcher then thanked Bush "for the wonderful things you have said, including that wobbly bit."

In her memoir *The Downing Street Years*, Lady Thatcher headed a chapter "No Time to Go Wobbly" but said nothing about using the phrase to give Bush moral courage. If she had had such a thought, she probably would have put it on paper, because both volumes of her memoirs are full of remembered advice to male colleagues, foreign and domestic, on the theory and practice of statecraft. On the contrary, she wrote that, "At the press conference in Aspen [right after Iraq invaded Kuwait], the President was asked if he ruled out the use of force. He replied that he did not—a statement the press took to be a strengthening of his position against Saddam Hussein. But I never found any weakness in it from the first."

President Bush's quotation of the "wobbly bit" that day in the East Room, and its frequent use in the Situation Room and Oval Office during the crisis, was the sort of thing done by someone who is confident his audience—and his guest of honor—know he didn't really need the advice.

Chase Untermeyer
Houston, TX

I am usually in agreement with William Kristol and Robert Kagan on stands of national policy, or can understand when I am not; however I cannot understand their point of view regarding our military involvement in Kosovo. They seem to feel it is more important to save face by having total victory in Kosovo than it is to save American servicemen's lives.

We have no business bombing in Yugoslavia. No matter what we do, we will have our forces involved in the Balkans for an undetermined time. We are burning up our arsenal of weapons, and the effect is of little consequence. The bombs and missiles we use in Yugoslavia are more valuable than the buildings they are destroying. We want to fight a war without casualties. Our military strategy is non-existent. We let the Serbs know what buildings we are going to bomb so that they will be empty, but we bomb a Chinese embassy without any warnings. We appear to have a bunch of clowns trying to run a war.

I am glad we have Republicans in Congress who have the guts to say we are wrong—have the guts to try and stop this insanity and get our military personnel back home. Kristol and Kagan think Sen. McCain is right, but he is not. You would think he, having been a POW in Vietnam, would be more sensitive to the exposure of our military forces. We did not raise our children to fight in some foreign land and die.

Arnold Krabbenhoft
Sparks, NV

the weekly Standard

VICTORY

Slobodan Milosevic's capitulation to U.S. and NATO demands represents a triumph for American power and principle, for the U.S.-led alliance, for President Clinton, and for the small but stalwart group of Republicans, led by John McCain, who supported the war from beginning to end. Assuming that Serbia complies with the terms of the agreement, which appears likely, this victory may prove to be the most important U.S. foreign policy achievement since the Gulf War. At the very least, it will have demonstrated, once again, that American power, even when less than artfully applied, is a potent force for international peace, stability, and human decency. The victory demonstrates as well the vitality and cohesiveness of the NATO alliance in the post-Cold War era. Perhaps most important, the victory should send a message to would-be aggressors that, even under the leadership of a relatively timid and inattentive president, the United States and its allies can summon the will and the force to do them grievous harm.

> IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. THE CREDIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES HAS BEEN RESTORED.

It is easy enough to criticize the errors committed in conducting the military campaign. We leveled many of those criticisms ourselves in the course of the war. It is also important to remember that numerous horrors of the past few months, and indeed the past few years, could have been avoided had President Clinton or his predecessor taken decisive action against Milosevic before he brought the Balkans to catastrophe. But it is important that we not lose sight of what has been accomplished. The credibility of the United States and its allies, once in jeopardy, has been restored. Contrary to predictions, the NATO alliance was strengthened, not weakened, by the war. Contrary to predictions, the U.S.-Russian relationship was not destroyed by NATO's actions. It has, in fact, been improved: One casualty of the war was the anti-American Yevgeny Primakov as prime minister of Russia. And finally, although many problems remain in the former Yugoslavia, and perhaps always will remain, those who claimed that the United States could do nothing to improve the situation have been proved wrong.

Why did Milosevic surrender? Clearly, the bombing campaign, for all its flaws, took a heavy toll. It also appears that the renewed activity of the Kosovo Liberation Army, even in its weakened state, helped shift the strategic dynamic in Kosovo. When Serb forces concentrated to beat back the KLA, they left themselves vulnerable to U.S. air attack and were severely damaged. The experience must have been sobering for Milosevic and his military commanders. There can be little doubt, as well, that Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott's success in bringing the Russians around to endorse almost all of NATO's demands was critical. The Russians ultimately abandoned Milosevic in the interest of maintaining good ties with the United States and the West. This left Milosevic in a state of complete diplomatic isolation. His indictment by the International War Crimes Tribunal probably helped, too, since Milosevic had reason to fear that if NATO decided to launch a ground attack, he might well find himself in the dock at the Hague.

Finally, the threat of a ground invasion must have had a decisive impact on Milosevic. While he may have believed he could weather the air attack indefinitely, increasing talk of a ground war helped him understand that there was no light at the end of his tunnel. It is no coincidence that Milosevic caved in to NATO just as the president was meeting his top military advisers to discuss ground options. This is why it was a serious mistake when Clinton early in the war ruled out the use of ground troops. And this is why much of the credit for the eventual victory must go to Tony Blair and to McCain, both of whom played key roles in keeping the threat of a ground war alive. Over two months ago, when this war began, we acknowledged that the "air campaign may be more successful than panicky critics are now fore-

casting," and we expressed the hope it would be. But we also insisted that "it is irresponsible to rule out the possibility of ground troops," and so it was. Bringing the possibility of ground troops back onto the table in the last few weeks was key to victory.

Now that the war appears to be won, it is important not to lose the peace. We have argued from the beginning that the final goal of our policy in the Balkans should be the removal of Milosevic from power. Now that goal is within reach. The Clinton administration and our NATO allies must insist that Serbia not receive reconstruction aid so long as Milosevic remains in office. We should encourage the Serbs to remove their brutal leaders, who have cost them so much misery, and we should seek to bring Milosevic before the war crimes tribunal. If this happens, we can offer a democratic Serbia the chance for full reintegration into the West, with all the economic and political benefits that brings. The overthrow of Milosevic would represent an even greater triumph than was achieved last week. It would offer the surest guarantee of a real solution to the Balkan crisis, and would rid Europe of the last vestige of this century's tyranny and brutality. This would be the full and complete victory that the peoples of the area, NATO, and the United States deserve.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan, for the Editors

America's Most Successful Conservative

by David Frum

In the final frenetic days of campaigning before his June 3 reelection victory, Ontario premier Mike Harris unveiled a shockingly un-Canadian stunt: He produced at his speeches a life-size fiberglass replica of a pair of blue jeans. His aides poured thousands of Canadian one-dollar coins into them—representing the money that an average wage-earner will have saved each year in taxes by 2003, thanks to Harris. And then he roared his slogan: "More money in your jeans!"

Conservative electoral victories have become rare events in the age of Clinton, Blair, and Schröder—so rare that when somebody manages to pull one off, especially in an inhospitable environment like Canada, it's worth paying attention. The lessons may travel.

Ontario is the biggest and richest province in the highly decentralized Canadian confederation, home to 11.5 million of the country's 30 million people, making its premier arguably the single most powerful politician in the country. For most of the postwar period, Ontario was governed by a succession of middle-of-the-road Conservatives, who presided over a slow, steady growth of the province's welfare state. It was Ontario Conservatives who agreed to join Canada's state health-care monopoly back in the 1960s, Conservatives who imposed rent controls in 1975, Conservatives who introduced racial quotas in public-sector hiring in 1985. In 1985, the strategy of stay-one-step-ahead-of-the-left finally sputtered out. The Conservatives lost power. They lost again in 1987 and once more in 1990.

Under the liberal and socialist governments of 1985 to 1995, Ontario taxes soared to levels never before seen in North America, not even during World War II. The top marginal rate exceeded 53 percent on incomes as low as $50,000 ($80,000 Canadian)—on top of which Ontarians paid 15 percent combined federal and provincial sales taxes, plus onerous property taxes, and crushing taxes on gasoline, cigarettes, and booze. In 1990, the country plunged into the most severe and prolonged economic slump since the 1930s.

That slump gave the loser of the 1990 election, Mike Harris, his second chance. For the 1995 election, Harris forsook half a century of party tradition, and committed himself to a bold, ideologically conservative program. At its heart was a 30 percent cut in the province's income tax rates, the abolition of the most obnoxious of the province's payroll taxes, and reform of labor laws. Ontario's battered voters were not much impressed by the Harris platform; internal Tory polling apparently found that a majority of those who voted for Harris did not believe he would keep his promise to lower taxes. But they were desperate and willing to try anything. Guess what? Harris kept his promises. And then some.

In each of the 20 years before 1995, Ontario's welfare population had grown. There were more people on welfare in the prosperous year 1978 than the recession year 1975, more at the peak of the 1980s boom than at the trough of the 1981-82 bust. Harris cut welfare payments by 22 percent, and 300,000 people moved off the rolls. He abolished

rent control and private-sector racial quotas. He instituted province-wide standardized testing of all students at three-year intervals—and then published school-by-school results, so parents could judge not only their own child's progress but also the quality of the school. Harris's reforms to the curriculum and education financing provoked two province-wide teachers' strikes. He held firm both times.

The four years since 1995 have seen some of the nastiest strikes and ugliest protests in Ontario's modern history. Polls consistently predicted a Harris defeat; pundits condemned him as an un-Canadian zealot. But all the while the Ontario economy was perking up, and—despite a series of federal tax increases—Harris's tax cuts were indeed putting more money into people's jeans.


Kevin Chadwick

Mike Harris

Standard political logic would have dictated a "stay the course" campaign in 1999. Harris is not immune to that sort of reasoning: He crammed a boatload of pre-election money into Ontario's decrepit public-sector health monopoly and promised even more if returned to office. But more significant, and barely a month before the election, Harris unveiled another big tax cut, 20 percent across-the-board in income-tax rates and a similar cut in property taxes. He promised a stiffer curriculum for the schools, school uniforms if a majority of parents voted in favor, and testing of teachers. He promised drug testing for welfare recipients and parolees, a crackdown on the squeegeemen and the dangerously mental ill, who have been making once-tidy Toronto look like David Dinkins's New York. The result: A solid electoral win, 59 seats out of 103, 44 percent of the popular vote, and the first back-to-back parliamentary majority won by an Ontario politician since 1967.

Harris's triumph offers four lessons for defeat-weary conservatives in the United States and Britain.

(1) Tax cuts work politically *if* the public is convinced that the offer is sincere and will be carried out. Both Bob Dole and John Major tried to run as tax-cutters, notwithstanding their personal histories as tax-raisers. Understandably, the voters rejected them. Harris, on the other hand, is perceived by friends and foes alike as credible: Harris was rated more trustworthy than his main rival *even by Ontarians who said they intended to vote against him*.

(2) Conservative ideas travel most safely in convoy. It must have been awfully tempting to Harris to say—"right: since we're cutting taxes, let's avoid issues like rent control, union power, school testing, and affirmative action so as to avoid inflaming our opponents any more than necessary." Instead, he calculated that those opponents couldn't yell any louder than they already were. The very ambition of his program protected it: In the end, his opponents chose not to attempt to capitalize on those other issues because they were too busy denouncing his fiscal program.

(3) The way to run against "third way" politicians (Harris's main opponent even lifted the Clinton phrase "Putting People First" for his platform) is not to try to meet them in the mushy middle but to seize the initiative from them with popular conservative policies they cannot copy. With the public-sector unions funding their campaigns, Harris's rivals could not endorse competency testing for teachers, and it hurt. The Liberals, the more moderate of the two anti-Harris parties, had grudgingly decided to accept Harris's first tax cut. They were completely flummoxed by the second.

(4) There is, finally, one paramount lesson to be learned from the Harris experience. Harris is a fine politician—he's a comfortable, pleasant man cheerfully willing to stay off television and leave the explaining of controversial policies to expendable underlings—but he's no magician. Harrises are made, not born. They are made by conviction, by a refusal to rest on past successes, and by an alert sense of where in one's own particular locality the shoe of government is squeezing the public foot too tightly. Oh and one more thing: by guts.

David Frum is a contributing editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

The $10 Million Man

by Christopher Caldwell

When the press came knocking to ask William Eisner how his Milwaukee-based ad company planned to get Steve Forbes elected president, Eisner gave them a lecture on Mrs. Paul's Fish Sticks. Eisner specializes in rebranding products that have drifted off to the penumbra of public attention. And after stunning the Republican establishment by running strong in the early 1996 primaries, Steve Forbes is such a product. Faced with the George Bush juggernaut, Forbes is finding that renegade candidates can't expect to hold enthusiasts from one leap year to the next. Only 5 percent of Republicans say they want Forbes as their nominee—and it's lower than that in New Hampshire and Iowa. But selling a presidential candidate as if he were fish sticks has to be the silliest campaign strategy since Joseph Kennedy announced to his conclave in 1959, "We're going to sell Jack like soap flakes." Umm . . . then again, Jack Kennedy—a northeastern patrician with a negligible national following—won.

Eisner has designed a seven-ad campaign that will air over the summer. It's a $10 million buy: The ads will air nationally on cable channels—CNN, Fox News Channel, and CNBC—and on network television in early primary states—Iowa, New Hampshire, California, Arizona (where Forbes enjoyed his most stunning success in 1996). There will be a four-week trial period, during which the campaign will step up airings of the commercials they like and scrap the stinkers.

It's a good idea. There's only one precedent for going up this early—18 months before a presidential election—with a multi-million-dollar TV drive and that's the 1996 Clinton campaign. In 1995, under Dick Morris's tutelage, with a bundle of Chinese money, President Clinton defined


himself as the author of welfare reform and 100,000 cops on the streets. Republicans want to believe that ad campaign didn't matter, because they hate to give Bill Clinton credit for anything. Democrats do the same because they hate Dick Morris. But given the president's wide margin of victory in 1996, the burden of proof would seem to rest with those who think the effort failed. Forbes has even more reason than Clinton to launch early. For one thing, he is an unusual-looking man, with a rutted face and a slushy, ticky verbal delivery. The better side of people insures that such superficialities get forgotten over time. Why not get them forgotten early?

Forbes's ads won't win any prizes. The candidate occasionally sounds condescending, as when he refers to "the American people, God love 'em." There are shots where Forbes appears to be speaking into a wall for the benefit of the camera. Among their strengths are a black-and-white scheme that, as intended, makes Forbes look presidential. And they do enunciate campaign themes.

The Forbes campaign has a formula, which the candidate has taken to repeating, "No message, no victory." Last week he got specific: "We had no message in 1998, no message in 1996, no message in 1992," he told CNN. That leaves the 52-seat congressional landslide of 1994, on whose small-government message he has staked his claim to the presidency. Forbes is trying to present himself as the privatize-Social-Security guy. He's trying to present himself as the spend-more-time-with-your-families guy, a vague pair of messages that allows him to benefit whether national opinion drifts towards the Christian Coalition values he's adopted of late or towards the Ripon Republicanism from which he sprang.

Although the ads have a public audience, they have a private audience that is just as important. Forbes is working on the assumption that there are actually two Republican primaries going on. There's an establishmentarian one between George W. Bush, John McCain, and Elizabeth Dole. There's a second primary that consists of anti-establishmentarian candidates Gary Bauer, Pat Buchanan, Bob Smith, and Forbes himself and also includes neither-establishment-nor-anti-establishment middle grounders Lamar Alexander and Dan Quayle. None of these other non-establishment candidates has raised as much as $3 million. In such a climate, $10 million for a mere Forbes campaign bagatelle can make a daunting shot across the bow.

There is a realpolitik at work here. According to Forbes's spokesperson, Juleanna Glover Weiss, "Steve Forbes is the only anti-establishmentarian candidate who can go the distance." In other words, if there is one thing that stands out about this $10 million ad campaign it is that it is a *$10 million* ad campaign. ("That's at a minimum," says one Forbes campaign aide.)

Forbes has already put on his payroll several Republican county chairmen in Iowa. If he is now trying to intimidate his opponents with the kind of talent an amply funded, serious campaign can buy, he's doing a splendid job. John Herrington, former California state chairman, has just signed up to head that state's primary effort. So has Tony Denny, the master South Carolina organizer who railed against gambling money in the last election. Nancy Streck, an important conservative organizer has been on board since March 15. Sandy McDade of the Eagle Forum, who helped engineer Pat Buchanan's stunning victory in the 1996 Louisiana caucuses, is also now working for Forbes. Herman Cain, the black California pizza magnate who is Jack Kemp's leading acolyte on tax reform, is scheduled to join the campaign next week.

Pat Buchanan is the only candidate who has publicly stated his fear that Forbes will "buy" the election. But if Forbes can go the distance, bringing the votes of the less well-funded anti-establishment Republicans into his camp, who's going to complain about a "bought" election? George W. Bush?

Christopher Caldwell is senior writer of **The Weekly Standard.**

Divinity and Pornography

by Dennis Prager

Last fall, after serving thirteen years as the dean of the Harvard University Divinity School, Ronald F. Thiemann resigned. The reason has just been made public.

Harvard president Neil L. Rudenstine asked for the resignation. According to Joe Wrinn, a university spokesman, the Harvard president was told that Dean Thiemann had pornographic images on his computer. The dean had apparently asked computer technicians to supply him with a bigger computer hard drive, and the technicians, transferring files, found the images.

All parties to the issue note that none of the images were of minors. There is not the slightest suggestion that the dean ever acted improperly toward a female, whether student or employee. Indeed there is not the slightest suggestion that he ever did anything improper at all. This Harvard University dean was told to give up his position because of what he looked at, not what he did.

We have entered an era that is beyond what George Orwell imagined in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: a time wherein the fantasy life of citizens is monitored by authorities.

Those who defend Harvard's position argue as follows:

(1) Thiemann was the dean of the divinity school, from whom different behavior is expected than from the dean of any other school. Had he been the dean of, let us say, the business school, he would not have been asked to resign.

(2) Any man who consumes pornography is a misogynist or, at the very least, regards women as less than human (as sexual objects) and is unworthy of a position of moral or other authority.

(3) The computer with the pornographic images was owned by Harvard University and therefore should not have been used for private purposes.

There are a number of problems with the first argument. One is that it misrepresents the task of the contemporary school of divinity. Unlike seminaries, which seek to inculcate a religion in their students, divinity schools teach their students *about* religion, just as schools of business teach about business and schools of education teach about education. Indeed, there are students and faculty at schools of divinity who believe in no religion or are even atheists.

It is true that Dean Thiemann is an ordained Lutheran minister, but that is only of concern to the Lutheran church. If it wishes to defrock a minister who has viewed pornography, that is its business and its prerogative. Religions are free to make any rules they want for their clergy. However, to the best of the public's knowledge, the Lutheran church has taken no steps toward punishing Pastor Thiemann, let alone removing him.

Harvard University clearly deems the private viewing of pornography more worthy of punishment than does the Lutheran church. I have long argued that contemporary liberalism serves for many of its adherents as a secular fundamentalist religion, and here is an example of that.

If Thiemann had been dean of another of its schools, would Harvard have ignored his pictures? Not likely. The Harvard feminists who protested against Dean Thiemann after they learned about the pornography—and who intimidate most universities' administrators—would have protested just as strongly against any other dean. The protesters' argument was not that Thiemann was the dean of a religious institution (which he was not), but that he engaged in a form of misogyny by consuming pornography. No politically correct college—which unfortunately means almost no college—has a president who will say the truth: that it is none of our business what legal pictures a man looks at in private, and that there is no correlation between viewing pornography and woman-hating. A university president who admitted that would be out of office before he could say "Catharine MacKinnon."

This brings us to the second and most important argument—that men who use pornography demean women, or regard them as second-class beings, or simply harbor some conscious or unconscious hatred of them.

Those who make this argument either know very little about men's sexuality or are afraid of male heterosexuality (which is understandable—it can be frightening) and therefore demonize it. The plain fact of life is that normal and honorable heterosexual men enjoy looking at partially clad and naked women. I feel a bit silly having to write in a publication read by college graduates what my unschooled grandmother knew. But the denial of unpleasant realities is one of the features of the highly educated at the end of the twentieth century.

Enjoying looking at pictures of naked women no more means a heterosexual man loathes women or wants them demeaned than looking at pictures of naked men means a homosexual man loathes men or wants them demeaned. In fact, it means absolutely nothing.

The Harvard affair is an example of heterophobia,

the fear and loathing of male heterosexuality—a far more accepted condition among modern elites than homophobia. After all, if the dean had been a homosexual man who had pictures of naked men on his computer, the chances that Harvard would have asked him to resign his position are next to nothing. And if it had asked him to resign, charges of homophobia would have engulfed the university.

As it happens, the minister of Harvard University—the person who embodies whatever commitment Harvard has to religion—is a gay man. Presumably, Harvard has neither asked nor cares if the minister is chaste. Presumably, it is of no concern to Harvard University whether the minister it has chosen to embody its concept of the holy has sexual relations with another man, other men, or men and women. But Harvard cannot tolerate a dean who is married, who is the father of two children, who, to the best of Harvard's knowledge, is faithful to his wife, yet who, in private, looks at pictures of naked women! Such lunacy can only be explained by ideological fervor. And the ideology in question is heterophobia.

As for the third argument, that the computer was owned by Harvard—one wonders if those who offer this argument actually believe it or merely use it because they somehow know that having a dean resign because workmen found pictures of naked women on his computer is neither moral nor American. Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, who should be commended for his lonely defense of Dean Thiemann, has effectively refuted this argument. What if, Dershowitz asked, the dean had been a philatelist who had downloaded images of postage stamps—would anyone ask for his resignation because he kept these images on a Harvard-owned computer? Of course not. So, let's drop the pretense. At Harvard and in much of contemporary America, male heterosexuality is on notice not to rear its ugly head. (As for Prof. Dershowitz, I wonder when he will acknowledge that the greatest threats to liberty in America come from the left side of the political spectrum and from academia.)

Even if the three arguments had any merit, they would still pale in comparison to the deprivation of privacy in this case.

Why is abortion private and the viewing of pornography not?

Right to privacy—do these words ring a bell? The U.S. Supreme Court invoked this right in order to allow every woman the right to destroy a human fetus for any reason. I suspect that the president of Harvard and certainly all the feminists who protested Dean Thiemann's looking at pornography are pro-choice on abortion, on the grounds that society must protect a woman's right to privacy.

But do we not have a major contradiction here? On the one hand, these people declare the destroying of another being, a human fetus, an entirely private act that society has no right to judge, let alone restrict by legislation. On the other hand, they deny that what a man does in his most private world of sexual fantasy, by himself, to no one other than himself, is not private and that Harvard has every right to judge it and punish it.

How can we explain such a contradiction? Only by heterophobia—a hostility to heterosexual male sexuality.

And what is the reaction to this unprecedented violation of an entirely private area of a man's life? According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Thiemann's "colleagues at the school, known for its liberal philosophy, maintained a silence over the affair."

Why are Harvard's faculty members so quiet? Because at American universities today there is no contest between feminist political correctness and a man's right to privacy. For a Harvard professor to come out in defense of Dean Thiemann's right to keep his fantasy life private would mean offending the feminist heterophobia that rules academia.

There is another fascinating contradiction here. I suspect that some of those who vociferously criticized Dean Thiemann were also among the most vocal defenders of President Clinton. They argued that society should allow the president of the United States to do whatever he wants sexually so long as it does not implicate his public duties. But how then can they criticize a college dean for his fantasy life? If looking at pictures of naked females alone in one's office fatally compromises a man's ability to be a university dean, why doesn't acting out sexual fantasies in the Oval Office with a real female compromise a man's ability to be president of the United States?

Too bad the dean resigned. I wouldn't have. I would have insisted on a public hearing. The only party in this matter deserving of humiliation is the party that did the humiliating—Harvard.

Fear and loathing of heterosexual male nature is a major problem in American life. That is why first-grade boys are kicked out of school for giving girls kisses on the cheek. The war on boys' natures also explains the desire to drug so many boys to calm them down. America is the first society ever to attempt to remake men's nature in the image of women's. Both men and women will suffer for it.

Dennis Prager is a theologian, author, and syndicated radio talk show host. His latest book is **Happiness Is a Serious Problem.**

The Anointed One

George W. Bush—the Man, the Plan, the Moment of Truth

By Fred Barnes

Austin, Texas

Republicans who've waited impatiently for months to crown Texas governor George W. Bush as their presidential nominee in 2000 may be in for a surprise. They won't get quite the candidate they expect when Bush finally leaves Texas on June 12 to visit Iowa and New Hampshire. Technically, he's still "exploring" a presidential run, not officially starting one. But everyone knows that's a fiction. Barbara Bush, his mother, said at an Atlanta fund-raiser in May: "If he doesn't run, I'll kill him." What's likely to surprise Republicans—and maybe the press, Democrats, and everyone else as well—is the kind of presidential campaign he intends to run. For Bush, at least now, social policy is paramount, economic and foreign policy secondary. So his emphasis over the summer will be on why he's a "compassionate conservative" and what that means for the country if he's elected.

One thing it means is that Bush will focus in speeches on non-traditional subjects for a Republican: the poor, the jailed, the non-English speaking, the badly educated. This is a risky tack, but not because conservative GOP audiences may prefer to hear about other issues. For now, with Bush positioned as the savior of the party in 2000, they'll probably acquiesce. It's risky because compassionate conservatism so far lacks real substance as a political idea. It's more an emotion or an inclination—and a very appealing campaign slogan. Bush's job is to flesh it out with an urgent national agenda. That won't be easy.

"I'll talk about rallying the armies of compassion and about ushering in the responsibility era," Bush told me. "I'll use Texas examples like Prison Fellowship." As governor, Bush tapped the Christian prison program headed by Charles Colson to work with inmates. The idea, says Bush, is that "changing hearts" will also change behavior and "affect policy the way we want it." School choice is another compassionate-conservative theme, but Bush may approach it gingerly, since his voucher plan was rejected by the Texas legislature. Indeed, he admits his proposal came closer to passing in 1995 than it did this year. Nonetheless, he says, "it's an important part of the menu of opportunity." Bush sees vouchers as a way to increase demand for better schools, and he favors charter schools to increase the supply of good schools.

Bush will need more examples, impressive ones. The "Iowa speech" he and his aides have been working on for months must be hefty. Hundreds of journalists will gather in Des Moines on June 12 to hear him deliver it, and they'll render an instant verdict on its weightiness. After Iowa, the speech becomes his basic text for the summer, as he tours the other early-primary states—New Hampshire, South Carolina, California, Michigan, Virginia, Washington, Montana, Connecticut, New Jersey. Bush will add comments for local consumption and tack on a new twist or idea or proposal to give the press a fresh angle for their daily stories. But the thrust of the speech—roughly 90 percent of the text—won't change. That's the plan anyway.

Bush is so eager to deliver the speech he injected parts of it into what were supposed to be humdrum remarks at a fund-raiser in San Antonio on June 1. "Prosperity without purpose is just materialism," he said. In his early campaigning, he says he "wants people to know my heart." These comments, while vague, are at the core of Bush's version of compassionate conservatism. His point is that prosperity alone doesn't ensure a country that's socially and spiritually healthy, and that his heart is in the right place (with the poor, downtrodden, etc.). He didn't amplify, leaving that for the Iowa speech. But he did promise to set a high-minded tone in the campaign. He said he'd "elevate the dialogue" and be a uniter, not a divider. "I believe in positive campaigns. The campaigns of personal destruction must end."

Though Bush and his aides are loath to admit it, his focus on compassionate conservatism has a Clintonesque quality. It amounts to "triangulation," a clever way to reconcile opposites. In 1996, President Clinton sought to connect a liberal approach with a

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

conservative agenda. He came up with a slew of small government programs and presidential orders that dealt mostly with problems stressed by conservatives. The result: He captured centrist and independent voters. With compassionate conservatism, Bush brings a free-market, religious orientation to social ills like poverty and bad urban schools that normally are emphasized by liberals. Clinton distanced himself from the left, and implicit in Bush's approach is that he's different from the Gingrich Republicans who took over Congress in 1994. He wants to put a new face on the party—his.


Daniel Adel

There's certainly a political rationale for doing so. Even with Newt Gingrich replaced by Denny Hastert as House speaker, congressional Republicans are not a lovable group. Bush, understandably, does not want to be identified as an extension of them. This is tricky, however, since 114 GOP House members and 14 senators have already endorsed him. One of Bush's chief supporters is House Republican whip Tom DeLay, the man Democrats hope to demonize in the public's mind as the new Gingrich. And the Bush and DeLay camps are closely allied. But instead of DeLay himself, a surrogate—deputy whip Roy Blunt of Missouri—was included on Bush's presidential exploratory committee. Originally, another DeLay pal, Hastert, had been slated to be the surrogate, but that was scrapped when Hastert became speaker.

Oddly enough, it's House Republicans, more than any other conservative or GOP bloc, who have freed Bush to emphasize compassionate conservatism—or anything else that pops into his mind, for that matter. Their view is simple: With Bush as the presidential nominee in 2000, they'll keep control of the House. They're desperate for Bush to emerge as the party's face, and they have no desire to impose an agenda on him. Hastert says the ideas and philosophy and priorities of congressional Republicans and the nominee should be in close alignment. What he means is: We'll swallow whatever agenda Bush comes up with. And Bush says he's "not uncomfortable with that at all. As a matter of fact, I like the assignment. But first things first, and I've got to win the primary."

If Bush isn't the nominee, one House Republican says the result will be "chaos." Why? Well, look at the alternatives, the Republican says. Senator John McCain is the darling of the media, "but not for standing up for things we believe in." Steve Forbes has alienated congressional Republicans by constantly attacking them. Elizabeth Dole is no friend. Dan Quayle can't win. Senator Paul Coverdell of Georgia, Bush's chief Senate backer, says Bush has worked on issues—drugs, education reform, tax cuts—that matter to Senate Republicans. "The homogeneity of the vision is remarkable," according to Coverdell. "The party will deal with whatever it has to deal with, but it'll be harder if the nominee isn't Bush."

The most amazing thing about the embrace of Bush by Capitol Hill Republicans is the vision of a 2000 landslide he's somehow planted in their minds. Bush has yet to set foot outside Texas as a candidate, but some Republicans talk of a GOP "wave" he might set off, lifting Republican candidates at all levels. Coverdell says when Republicans hear about how well Bush has done in Texas with women, Hispanic, and black voters, "the tree lights up." Normally restrained, Coverdell gets almost giddy appraising Bush: "If he ignites, which he has the potential of doing, he does have a Reaganesque coattail. The House would be bolstered in holding its majority. That would be totally historic, a Republican president and a Republican Congress."

Polls putting Bush far ahead of Vice President Al Gore, a flood of endorsements by Republican elected officials, sky-high fund-raising numbers—these, too, have given Bush the freedom to fashion a campaign based on compassionate conservatism. His record as governor this year also plays an important role, particularly the $1.8 billion tax cut he wheedled out of the legislature. This is smaller than the $2.6 billion he'd requested, but still "the biggest tax cut in Texas history." Karl Rove, Bush's top political strategist, says Bush doesn't have to persuade conservative voters he's truly a tax cutter. He's proved it.

In fact, Bush won't make much of an effort to shore up his conservative credentials. He'll appear at a faith-based social program in Iowa on June 12, but that's part of his emphasis on compassionate conservatism, not conservatism per se. And he intends to avoid specifics as much as possible. His speeches will be, as the Bush euphemism goes, "thematic." After several months of campaigning, Rove says Bush should be seen as "an activist conservative, a charismatic campaigner who talked about ideas in a way that is appealing. Details to follow."

Bush says he wants to answer three questions for voters this summer. Who's the man? What's his plan? Can he lead? "There will be ample opportunity to lay out a specific agenda," including a "detailed tax plan." But Bush says he'll spell it out "on my time. It may seem like a short campaign, but I think I've got ample time to discuss different issues on my timetable. I understand the pacing of a campaign pretty well."

On foreign policy, however, Bush may get specific late this summer. As a governor, he has no foreign policy experience, for which he needs to compensate by delivering serious speeches on the subject. Even before starting to campaign, he's begun addressing foreign issues, notably China. He told me, for instance, his policy toward China will be different from that of his father, President Bush, as well as from Clinton's. "There's no question that 2000 is different from '91," he said. "Engagement is too accepting. Engagement equals strategic partnership. I have a different view. I would treat China warily." Since the early 90s, Bush said, "China has taken a much more aggressive posture as an emerging nuclear power, someone with whom we are going to have to be very strong in our relationship." Nevertheless, Bush said China should be granted MFN trade status again and admitted to the World Trade Organization.

The Bush line is that there's only one problem looming for his candidacy: high expectations. Rove says he asked around, and no one has a good solution for dealing with expectations. Bush says all he can do is "work hard, talk about what I believe, lay out the specific agenda at the appropriate time, and see what happens. If people like what they see, that's great. If they don't like it, that's my fate. . . . I have this sense of freedom about this race."

So much so that he's all but leapfrogged the primaries and begun the general-election campaign. Compassionate conservatism, after all, is a notion not for attracting conservatives and Republicans but for reaching beyond the GOP base to general-election voters. Rove offers two historic tests for determining who the candidate will be. Both suggest Bush has the nomination in hand. First, the candidate of the Republican establishment—governors, senators, House members, state legislators, party leaders—wins the nomination. And Bush is the establishment candidate. Second, a candidate who consistently leads his GOP rivals by 10 points or more the year before the primaries wins. That again is Bush. So all that's left for Bush is to fashion a case for compassionate conservatism. It had better be a compelling one. ♦

It's the Dukakis Campaign, Stupid

How Vice President Gore Will Run Against Governor Bush

By Tod Lindberg

Fast forward to January 20, 2001. The steps of the U.S. Capitol. The president-elect raises his hand to take the oath of office. Forming the backdrop to the scene: a who's who of the best and brightest of the Republican party, now preparing to sit as the most illustrious cabinet in a generation; the vice president-elect, whose choice unified and galvanized the party; and, of course, the 41st president of the United States, looking on with paternal pride as the fateful words mark the start of the administration of the 43rd: "I, George W. Bush, do solemnly swear . . ."

Pause button, please. Agreeable as it no doubt is for Republicans to fantasize about how sweet will be their victory in 2000, history is bereft of a fast-forward button. Politics unfolds day by day, often slowly and painfully, always full of surprises. George W. has not even won the GOP nomination yet, much less the general election. Those currently focused on the fruits of his triumph are way ahead of themselves.

The source of the GOP's current rich fantasy life is one overwhelming and remarkably persistent fact: George W. Bush leads Vice President Al Gore by double digits in every poll taken so far. The closest one, by John Zogby, has Bush 11 points ahead. The ABC News/*Washington Post* poll puts Bush's lead at 13. CNN/Gallup/*USA Today* says 16. Fox News/Opinion Dynamics finds Bush favored over Gore by a crushing 58-32.

Republicans want a winner. They also think they need a winner, that to lose the White House yet again would be an unmitigated disaster for the country and the party. And in George W. Bush, the wildly popular two-term governor of Texas, scion of GOP aristocracy, self-styled compassionate conservative, *habla Español*, they smell a winner. So they have been flocking by the score to Austin, in an unprecedented effort to establish Bush as a consensus candidate more than a year before the nominating convention.

They may be right about Bush. They are not wrong about the polls. Nor is there any polling to support the proposition that there is a better, more "electable" GOP candidate out there, let alone a poll that reveals the identity of such a one. But it's also true that there's nothing inevitable or automatic about a George W. victory. For purposes of argument, let's grant him the nomination (itself a dubious exercise in fast-forwarding, especially considering that Bush has no experience running nationally). It's worth pausing to speculate about what a general-election matchup between Bush and Gore might look like.

ONLY FOUR SITTING VICE PRESIDENTS HAVE EVER RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN A GENERAL ELECTION. TWO OF THEM WON, AND THE OTHERS LOST BY A WHISKER.

Let us begin with the George W.-favoring proposition that vice presidents face unique difficulties in ascending to the Oval Office by virtue of the baggage they acquire in the No. 2 role. Recall one element of the hoopla of George Bush *père*'s elevation: the first sitting vice president to be elected president since Martin van Buren in 1836! Does not the 150-year interval bode ill for Gore's prospects?

No, in fact, it does not. Only four sitting vice presidents have ever run for president in a general election. Martin and George won. Hubert Humphrey lost in 1968—by 500,000 votes out of 73 million cast. This was at a time of maximal turmoil over Vietnam, and Humphrey was heir to a failed president who had decided not to attempt a reelection bid. It seems a bit of a stretch to infer a general curse from that loss and from Richard Nixon's even narrower loss to JFK in 1960 (120,000 votes out of 68 million cast).

Now, one might say, many were the veeps who eyed the office but didn't make it to November for one

Tod Lindberg is editor of Policy Review.

reason or another. This is true. Our scenario simply assumes Gore gets the nomination. But does anyone really think that this is an unlikely outcome—that the Bill Bradley challenge will bump Gore out of the way? No, the most likely course is that Al Gore, having served eight years as vice president, will be the nominee of a united Democratic party, his people already in place in key positions in the administration of a president who long ago indicated his commitment to Gore as successor. That doesn't make Gore weak; it makes him formidable.

In addition, for all the scandals swirling around the Clinton White House, Gore has at his disposal a positive message of some power. While "the Clinton-Gore years" sounds to Republicans like a phrase that should discredit Gore, it sounds rather different to Gore and his Democrats. Republicans will insist until the end of time that neither Clinton nor Gore deserves much credit, but we are looking back on eight fat years of prosperity and peace, and everybody knows it. There's a record for Gore to run on.

Obviously, there is the possibility of an economic downturn or foreign calamity between now and the election. Either eventuality would strengthen any challenger to Gore. But in the absence of such trouble, we can surely expect Gore to note that when the Clinton-Gore team took over from another George Bush, the unemployment rate was 7.3 percent. Now it's 4.2 percent, and the U.S. economy has created some 25 million jobs in the Clinton-Gore years. Interest rates for home mortgages were over 8 percent; now they're under 7. The federal budget deficit was more than $250 billion; now there's a $100 billion surplus. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was under 3,300; now it's over 10,000. And the crime rate and welfare rolls have been halved. Gore will promise more of the same and sharply attack any and all "risky schemes" that might threaten the good times.

But if Gore bids to claim credit here, will he not also have to answer for the sins of his patron? Are people not, in one way or another, regardless of whether they are willing to say so, sick or at least tired of Bill Clinton? Will Americans not insist on a shower and a trip to the dry cleaners?

Well, Republicans certainly feel that way. But they should by now have become acquainted with the perils of extrapolating the views of the American people from their own feelings. In the first place, there is not much evidence that Americans take such a dim view of Bill Clinton's presidency. Admittedly, it would take a weirdo to admire him for his conduct with Monica Lewinsky. Republicans generally see in this scandalous behavior evidence of a fundamentally corrupt character.

But it is evident from polling data that Americans in general have a more complex (incoherent? nuanced?) view of Clinton. And while it is true that his job approval rating has slipped from the heights he once commanded, it is hardly clear that he is now on an irreversible downward slide. Ronald Reagan bounced back from the depths of the Iran-contra scandal in 1987, arriving on Election Day 1988 at a job

approval rating of about 55 percent. George Bush then won the election with 54 percent of the vote. This does not seem coincidental; nor does a similar job approval rating for Clinton on Election Day 2000 seem beyond his reach.

But what of Gore? Is it not the case that what has failed to harm Clinton has nonetheless harmed Gore? His shakedown of Buddhist nuns, "no controlling legal authority," his invention of the Internet, his speech explicating our national motto, "out of one, many." What are we to make of the fact that he trails not only George W. Bush but also Elizabeth Dole? Surely this reflects a negative judgment of the sitting veep by voters.

Or does it? It is abundantly clear that Gore lacks Clinton's charisma and Clinton's way with a chin quiver. Polls likewise show no great outpouring of personal affection for the vice president. But neither do they show vast stores of antipathy. It is not as if *any* potential GOP candidate trounces Gore in the polls. The same Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll from mid-April showing George W. with a 26 point lead over Gore among registered voters shows Gore with a 16 point lead over Lamar Alexander and a 22 point lead over Pat Buchanan. An April CNN/*USA Today* poll shows Gore leading Sen. John McCain by 7 points, and an April NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll shows him ahead of Dan Quayle by 23 points.

Disfavor toward Gore is relative, not absolute. Perhaps Americans have decided they know enough about Quayle and Buchanan to favor Gore. But it's worth asking how much Americans really know about George W. or Elizabeth Dole. Clearly, Americans have taken a liking to them. Clearly, they are politically viable and have genuine credentials, especially the Texas governor. But is their standing in the polls a result of Americans' understanding of who they are and what they stand for, or is it more attributable to the fact that they come from two of the best-known GOP brand names in American politics? If George Herbert Walker Bush is Coke, maybe George W. is a new Coca-Cola product. Sure, people want to take a sip. Diet Coke was a big hit. New Coke, however, was not.

By itself, all of the above ought to be more than sufficient to dispel the notion that George W. Bush can coast from here to the White House. He is barely at the beginning of an arduous and perilous journey, and the outcome is by no means foreordained. And oh yes, there's one more thing, something many Republicans don't like to think about because they find the notion distasteful: Al Gore is going to run a political campaign *against* George W. Bush.

Let's see if this reminds us of anything: A sitting two-term vice president is trailing in the polls in high double-digits behind a popular get-things-done governor from an important state, a governor who has tried to carve a political niche for himself apart from the dominant ideology of his party. Patton read Rommel's book on tank warfare before beating Rommel at El Alamein. It seems likely that for their coming fight again George W. Bush, Gore strategists will be taking a close look at how George Herbert Walker Bush reversed a 17-point deficit in the polls and crushed Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts in 1988.

The parallels between the two situations are really quite striking. Bush *père* had an image problem as a "lap dog," stuck in the shadows, struggling to emerge. Gore is the cardboard cutout placed slightly behind Bill Clinton and to his left. Bush was haltingly inarticulate. Gore is wooden. How much did Bush know about Iran-contra? How much did Gore know about Chinese spying?

Michael Dukakis, the governor of liberal Massachusetts, home of the Kennedys, was a Democrat with a difference, one for whom the central political qualification was "competence," not ideology. George W. Bush of conservative Texas, home of Tom DeLay and Dick Armey, is a "compassionate conservative," someone who can reach out beyond the party's narrow bounds. Michael Dukakis, a staunch death-penalty opponent, had a hard time dealing with a hypothetical debate question about the rape and murder of his wife. George W. Bush is pro-life; he just doesn't like to talk about it.

One could go on. And assuredly, there are important differences between the two situations. But the equivalent of Lee Atwater's successful effort on behalf of Vice President Bush to paint Dukakis as an out-of-the-mainstream liberal is not hard to imagine as the Gore campaign strategy.

It begins with an effort, already well under way, to get as many Republicans as possible to come forward to declare that there is something seriously wrong with certain other Republicans. Paul Begala has an interesting "character test" for the GOP, especially George W.: "Anyone who wants to be taken seriously by the mainstream must first show where he or she disagrees with the troglodyte bosses of the radical right. It's time someone took on the flat-earth Republicans, and the presidential primaries in 2000 are just the place to do it." Now, it's one thing when Begala rails against "troglodyte bosses" and "flat-earth Republicans." It's what you expect from him. Sure, he

believes it, but it's also what he's supposed to say.

If Republicans do the railing, on the other hand, it's news; the charge acquires greater legitimacy. Michael Dukakis found it either imprudent or unseemly, probably both, to identify himself as a liberal; he preferred to change the subject and talk about "competence." The act of changing the subject lent credence *from the Democratic side* to a proposition espoused by the Republicans and highly useful to them: There is something about liberals that's wrong and out of whack with America.

The next move is jiu-jitsu. The Gore campaign portrays George W. Bush, compassionate conservative—by implication, unlike certain other, less savory conservatives, from whom even Republicans distance themselves—as a tool of those selfsame unsavory characters, as a crypto-right-winger who's trying to conceal it from voters because he knows that if they find out, he's finished. DeLay and Armey signed up awfully early, didn't they? Who's pulling the strings here? And what about that extreme GOP litmus test, a ban on abortion? Is Bush against that in principle? And what about that NRA-inspired and funded Texas law encouraging everybody to carry a concealed handgun? Didn't Bush sign that law?

> GORE WILL TRY TO PERSUADE VOTERS THAT, DESPITE GEORGE W.'S CAREFULLY BUFFED IMAGE, HE IS IN FACT A CAPTIVE OF THE FAR RIGHT.

In 1988, Lee Atwater insisted that George Bush attack Dukakis early, often, and savagely as an unreconstructed and unrepentant liberal. The campaign highlighted furloughs for convicted murderers and Dukakis's veto of legislation requiring teachers to lead school kids in the Pledge of Allegiance. As Dukakis pollster Tubby Harrison wrote in a June 9, 1988, memo, "If Bush is able convincingly to paint MSD as a liberal . . . he can reduce the distance between himself and the voters, thereby turning the tables on us." It will be the task of the Gore campaign to persuade voters that notwithstanding George W.'s carefully buffed image, he is in fact a captive of the extreme right wing of the Republican party.

There will be other elements to the Gore strategy, of course. One of these is already in play, courtesy of Democratic National Committee chairman Roy Romer. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on Memorial Day that Romer requested an interview with the paper. He used it to attack Bush. The paper quoted Romer: "He wouldn't be in this race if his name were not Bush. . . . The real question is having the name George W. Bush isn't going to get you there; it is do you have the leadership, the experience, the issues. . . . Somebody who has just been governor for five years, you have to ask the tough questions: Is this the kind of experience that qualifies you to run and occupy the presidency and lead?"

Now, the fact that Romer chose to lead with the issue of experience this early, rather than with "extremism," may be designed to distract the Bush campaign from the far more vicious attack that will be forthcoming. The Dukakis team thought that Vice President Bush would mainly run on his experience in high places, not on the destruction of Dukakis and his record. As Dukakis ad man Mal MacDougall told a *Boston Globe* reporter in October 1988, "I guess they were caught off guard. A lot of people in the Dukakis campaign thought the Republicans would run a more positive campaign and make Bush into a statesman."

Still, experience is, under the right circumstances, a serious issue. Moreover, Republicans have been saying for some time now that foreign policy might well reemerge as an issue in 2000 after a period of quiet. If it does, but remains prospective rather than recriminatory—in the absence, that is, of a crisis that discredits Clinton-Gore, and in the wake of success rather than failure in Kosovo—then we have a vice president with eight years' experience in foreign affairs, not counting the Senate, against yet another plucky governor.

It does not necessarily follow from these observations that George W. Bush would be a bad candidate in 2000 or is the wrong candidate for Republicans if they want to win in 2000. Clearly, Bush's strengths are estimable. But so are those of his most likely opponent. And Republicans have a tendency to be surprised by their opponents' attacks. They tend to think such attacks are unfair—demagoguery of the sheerest sort. (They also tend to think that when they are required to speak ill of their opposition, they are bastions of probity and fairness, never resorting to such tactics themselves, but merely educating the public to the truth about important matters.)

Well, whether Al Gore's attacks on George W. Bush are fair or not, and whether George W. is ready or not, they are coming. That's politics. And whatever *War Room*-like documentary gets made about the 2000 campaign, it is not going to be called *Smooth Sailing: George W. Bush's White House Journey*. ♦

The Man Who Will Define Compassionate Conservatism

Bush Adviser Lawrence Lindsey's Task

By Owen Ullmann

In 1992, Alicia Munnell, research director for the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, wanted to conduct a study of racial discrimination by area mortgage lenders. Known for her liberal politics, Munnell was discouraged by Fed officials, who wanted to duck the touchy issue. But she finally got the go-ahead from Fed governor Lawrence Lindsey, a George Bush appointee who headed up the central bank's minority-lending program. The study concluded that racial bias did indeed exist, and Munnell went on to become a senior economist in the Clinton administration. "Larry doesn't believe the government should give people a handout, but he thinks it should make sure they don't get screwed," says Munnell. "He's conservative, but he's also compassionate."

Hmm. Where have we heard that before? Yes, "compassionate conservatism" is George W. Bush's mantra, and Lindsey is the man the Texas governor has tapped to draft an economic agenda that fits the description. So far, the catch phrase is drawing a lot of snickers inside the Beltway as little more than hollow rhetoric. But Lindsey actually embodies that philosophy, which is why he's the perfect choice to develop a program that blends the bedrock conservative principles Bush must voice to keep Republicans happy with the populist touches he'll need to win the general election.

To put substance behind his campaign slogan, Bush wants to embrace a big tax cut, but he also wants to meet the "fairness" test when the Democrats play the class-warfare card. You see, the income tax has become very progressive during the Clinton years: The top 1 percent of earners now pay more than a third of all income taxes, while the bottom half pay just 4 percent. As Lindsey observes, "Any income-tax cut will be open to charges that it's just for the rich." To counter that accusation, the 44-year-old economist is looking for ways to direct sufficient tax relief toward middle- and lower-income groups.

One idea is to propose a bigger percentage cut in taxes for those in the 15 percent bracket. Another idea is to combine an income-tax reduction with a Social Security reform plan that diverts part of the Social Security payroll tax, which is more onerous for the average worker than the income tax, to personal retirement accounts that individuals can manage themselves. Lindsey and his six-man economics task force are also eyeing regressive levies they can slash, such as the telephone excise tax.

WHAT DOES HE THINK OF FORBES'S FLAT TAX? "MAYBE IT'S THE POPULIST IN ME," SAYS LINDSEY, "BUT CAPITAL SHOULD BE TAXED."

Besides a tax cut for the short term, Bush needs a big tax reform plan for the campaign. Lindsey's preference is an overhaul that, well, Bill Clinton and Al Gore could embrace. In what amounts to a replay of the last big reform, the 1986 Bradley-Gephardt law, Lindsey wants to reduce marginal rates, which have crept up from a high of 28 percent to 40 percent over the last 13 years. And he wants to broaden the base by eliminating most deductions except for charitable contributions and mortgage interest.

What does he think of Steve Forbes's flat tax, which would eliminate levies on capital altogether? Not much. "Maybe it's the populist in me, but capital should be taxed," says Lindsey. "The government spends a lot of money protecting it." That kind of rhetoric should play well with mainstream voters but won't endear Lindsey to hardline conservatives.

That's the same political problem Bush faces, which is why he and Lindsey seem to make such a good fit. Both are pragmatic rather than ideological,

A senior writer at Business Week, *Owen Ullmann will be covering economic policy issues for* USA Today *starting in July.*

and each has a soft spot for society's underdogs. Bush signed up Lindsey late last year at the suggestion of Al Hubbard, a classmate of Bush's at Harvard Business School. Hubbard was working for Vice President Dan Quayle when he got to know Lindsey, then a White House policy adviser for Bush senior. "Larry is a big believer in helping the less fortunate," says Hubbard, who is now advising George W. The governor sees another attraction in Lindsey—he talks in plain English, rare for an economist. "He can explain complex issues in terms that I can understand," says Bush, no policy wonk like Clinton.

Lawrence Lindsey

Kent Lemon

Bush's interest in the disadvantaged might be chalked up to noblesse oblige. For Lindsey, it's the result of a very middle-class upbringing by two public school teachers in Peekskill, New York. Lindsey taught disabled kids in New York and learned microeconomics firsthand by running a hot dog stand in Maine for two summers before going upscale when he entered the doctoral program in economics at Harvard.

His father wanted him to become a lawyer, fearing he'd be unemployed as an economist. But Lindsey landed a nice job as a White House economist during Ronald Reagan's first term. After a stint teaching at Harvard, he joined the Bush White House as a domestic policy adviser, and then served as a Fed governor from 1991 to 1997.

A tax-policy specialist, Lindsey wrote a staunch academic defense of Reagan's supply-side tax cut in 1990, *The Growth Experiment*, based on data he collected for his Ph.D dissertation. But he's no hardcore supply-sider. In fact, his book concludes that a rate reduction pays for itself in the form of higher revenues only when the top rate is 50 percent or higher.

His rationale for a tax cut now is demand-side stimulus—classic Keynesian economics. Lindsey views the stock market as one big speculative bubble that's bound to burst. When that happens, consumers' current spending spree will abruptly end and the economy will slip into recession. His antidote: a two- or three-year cut in marginal rates that puts money in people's pockets as quickly as possible.

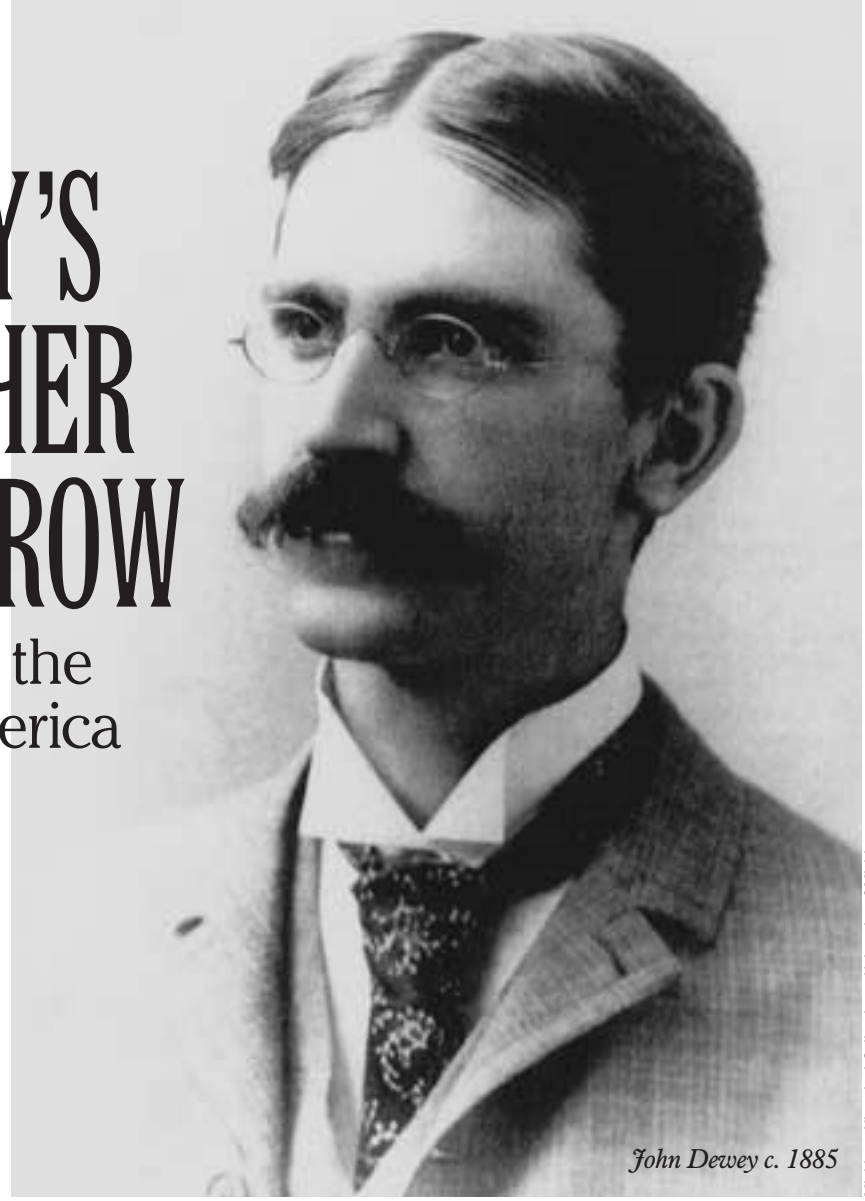
As a Fed governor, Lindsey was a maverick when it came to monetary policy. He never aligned himself with the inflation hawks, who always favored tight money, or the pro-growth doves, who wanted to keep interest rates low. Though his monetary views did not leave much of an impression, Lindsey became a champion of the Community Reinvestment Act, the Fed-run government program that forces banks to increase lending in poor neighborhoods. Many conservatives despise CRA, but Lindsey saw merit in the program after spending a lot of time visiting inner cities. His conclusion: "There is a market failure. Not because of racism, but because it's considered a bad investment." In Lindsey's world, when the free market doesn't work, government has to step in to give people a helping hand.

You're going to hear more compassionate talk like that in the coming months as Bush articulates his "vision" for the country. First, though, he's got to settle on a set of economic principles Lindsey has been preparing for him. The economist was scheduled to fly down to Austin on June 2 for an early morning meeting the next day to discuss an economic agenda. But Lindsey had a personal conflict: His 7-year-old son was starring in a play the night of June 2 and Lindsey was wondering if the governor could push the meeting back a few hours so the economist could hop on the first plane leaving Washington on the 3rd. No problem, Bush said. He'd rearrange his schedule so Lindsey could watch his son's play. What a couple of compassionate guys. ♦

YESTERDAY'S PHILOSOPHER OF TOMORROW

John Dewey and the Education of America

By Wilfred M. McClay



John Dewey c. 1885

Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan

The name of John Dewey generally evokes hissing from conservative intellectuals. But there is at least one way in which even they ought to find his example admirable. Dewey was easily the most prominent American philosopher of his time, and over the course of an enormously long life—from 1859 to 1952—he showed a breadth of interest, a seriousness, and a systematic thrust that reminds us of a time when philosophy was something more than the arid pastime of jargonmongers or the handmaiden of identity politics. One can hardly think of a subject, whether in technical philosophy or workaday politics, on which Dewey did not weigh in during his long, productive career.

The huge resulting body of work brought him a good deal of veneration in the years before his death. His championing of scientific naturalism, educational reform, activist government, civil liberties, academic freedom, and democratic socialism led the *New York Times* to enthrone the grandfatherly Dewey as "America's Philosopher." The University of Paris, in conferring an honorary degree, extolled him as "the most profound and complete expression of the American genius." The historian Henry Steele Commager gushed that Dewey was "the guide, the mentor, and the conscience of the American people," adding, "it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that for a generation no major issue was clarified until Dewey had spoken."

Of course, such testimony is open to question—if only because it remains uncertain how well those who poured honors upon Dewey actually understood him. The nub of the problem is the philosopher's legendary prose, an ever-babbling brook of abstract, bureaucratic, latinate words. Dewey seems to have had a positive dislike of metaphors, images, stories, and concrete examples, and his relentlessly bland and textureless verbiage quickly loses even the most determined reader. All too often, he expends fifty stilted and colorless words to say—well, what exactly he is saying remains the question.

Consider this characteristic sentence from 1931:

> Wherever purposes are employed deliberately and systematically for the sake of certain desired social results, there it is possible, within limits, to determine the connection between the human factor and the actual occurrence, and thus to get a complete social fact, namely, the actual external occurrence in its human relationships.

Is Dewey here saying something incredibly complex—or something of almost tautological simplicity?

Or consider this from 1916:

> Social efficiency is attained not by negative constraint but by positive use of native individual capacities in occupations having a social meaning.

Wilfred M. McClay is SunTrust professor of humanities at the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga and author of The Masterless: Self and Society in Modern America.

Is this an argument for romantic schooling—or the truism that people work better in jobs they like?

Among Dewey's admirers nowadays, it is a common complaint that both his acolytes and his critics have oversimplified and misconstrued this heir of the distinctly American tradition of philosophical pragmatism, the third in the triumvirate of great American philosophers with Charles Sanders Peirce and William James.

But it's worth asking why the misreadings of Dewey, both those of the progressive followers who worshipped him and those of the conservative opponents who despised him, are more interesting than the truisms that may have been his actual intent. To read page after murky page in the two volumes of *The Essential Dewey* recently edited by Larry Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander—and to consider the philosopher's influence on American socialism, secular humanism, epistemological uncertainty, and permissive anti-traditional education—is to be forced to a single conclusion: An author who is pervasively misunderstood and misused has probably not really been misunderstood and misused. An aesthetically wanting style of writing that lends itself to constant misinterpretation must reflect at last the deep and disturbing intellectual intention of its creator.

Dewey was born two years before the Civil War, the son of a storekeeper in Burlington, Vermont. Burlington was not merely a bucolic American small town, but a growing city, with all the typical dislocations and social problems. The tension between the fading rural life of America and emerging industrialization—and the hope of finding ways to reconstruct the essential elements of community in the impersonality of the machine age—became central concerns in Dewey's social and political thought.

When Dewey went off to study philosophy at Johns Hopkins University, however, he gravitated to the neo-Hegelian idealist George S. Morris. Receiving his Ph.D. in 1884 for a dissertation on Kant's psychology, Dewey followed his mentor to the University of Michigan, where he devoted his attention to the effort to meld liberal Protestantism to Hegelianism and combine experimental psychology with idealist metaphysics.

But there was another, more practical outlook stirring in him, one that would eventually lead him to throw off his youthful Hegelianism and embrace the anti-idealist pragmatism of William James. The precipitating agent was his marriage to Alice Chipman, whose passion for education and social problems would eventually lead the Deweys to depart Ann Arbor for the newly founded University of Chicago. At Chicago, Dewey could devote himself to his growing interest in school reform, which he increasingly saw as the key to the problem of social reconstruction. He established the famed Laboratory School in 1896 as a vehicle for these explorations.

LARRY HICKMAN and THOMAS M. ALEXANDER, eds.
The Essential Dewey
Volume 1: Pragmatism, Education, Democracy
Indiana University Press, 448 pp., $45

LARRY HICKMAN and THOMAS M. ALEXANDER, eds.
The Essential Dewey
Volume 2: Ethics, Logic, Psychology
Indiana University Press, 488 pp., $45

DAVID FOTT
John Dewey
America's Philosopher of Democracy
Rowman & Littlefield, 176 pp., $58

PHILIP W. JACKSON
John Dewey and the Lessons of Art
Yale University Press, 224 pp., $30

His own thinking had lost none of its Hegelian zest for synthesis, however, and it became invigorated by the idea that the transformation of America's schools could be the model for the transformation of the entire society, from the industrial workplace to the legislative chambers to the home. But a simmering dispute with the university over Alice's involvement in the Laboratory School cut short this phase of his career and seemed also to temper some of his enthusiasm for the messianic possibilities of education. Dewey resigned from the Chicago faculty in 1904 and moved to Columbia University, where he spent the remainder of his career churning out books and articles and engaging in vigorous, highly visible political commentary.

Dewey's practical judgment was not always wise. He advocated American entry into the First World War, for instance, on the grounds that the sense of solidarity induced by war would be a stimulus to progressive social reform. It was an appalling position, more naive than cynical, that has earned him the contempt of social critics from Randolph Bourne to Christopher Lasch and demonstrated the enduring moral vulnerability of pragmatism. But Dewey remains, in a sense, the complete public intellectual: a first-rate philosopher who also addressed himself to contemporary affairs. In fact, his versatility was even required by his own mature philosophy, which rejected a distant "intellectualism" in favor of an approach to ideas that led to action in the world.

It may be this that has fueled the spectacular revival of Dewey in recent years. "Dewey Rides Again" declared the title of a 1996 review essay in the *New York Review of Books* that was, if anything, an understatement: The 1990s have become Dewey's decade. Probably the most valuable of recent work on the philosopher is the historian Robert B. Westbrook's outstanding 1991 *John Dewey and American Democracy*, which reminded readers of Dewey's radicalism. But other recent examinations by such prominent figures as Alan Ryan, John Patrick Diggins, Cornel West, Hilary Putnam, Charles Anderson, and Richard Rorty all attest to Dewey's return.

There are several reasons for this development, but chief among them is the growing interest in pragmatism (or, as Dewey preferred to say, "instrumentalism") among academics. Much of this interest has frankly political roots. The collapse of Marxism created a theoretical vacuum on the political and cultural left, one that has been only partly, and inadequately, filled by the programmatic skepticism of postmodernism.

To be sure, postmodernism has done the main job that many academics want a new academic theory to do, providing

them fresh grist for the mills of publication. But more sober thinkers have come to understand that the circus-like atmosphere of postmodern hermeneutics actually makes life difficult for radical politics. Deconstruction was great fun when deployed against the texts of the privileged, but there is no reason to believe its logic and its effects will stop there. And without some independent basis for sustaining truth claims, how can a reform movement be mounted?

Of course, the problem for these thinkers is that once they let considerations of truth back in, they need some way to ensure that truth will support the "correct" social agenda of boundless social transformation and personal liberation, rather than the conservatism of those who used the notion of truth to oppose postmodernism in the first place.

Here's where the revivified John Dewey comes in, for the new, 1990s style of pragmatism allows us to invoke only as much truth as we need to obtain a desired social result. Pragmatism understands the human mind as a Darwinian adaptive tool. Because our individual and collective situations alter over time, truth is fluid and changeable, frankly relative to the needs of the agent-mind in a shifting environment. The fittest ideas, like the fittest species, are the ones that survive and get us what we want. That's how we know they are true.

Perhaps this sounds rather postmodern, but in one crucial sense, it isn't. Postmodernism is generally disdainful of the authority of science, seeing it as just another myth perpetrated upon the gullible people by white male elites. But pragmatism endorses science, understanding it as simply a more systematic and socialized version of the process we all follow individually in ascertaining what William James called the "cash value" of our ideas. Properly understood, the scientific standard of truth is not *objectivity*, in the sense of strict correspondence between an object and our knowledge of it, but *consensus* within a community of inquirers.

This modern Deweyan way of putting things makes proper obeisance to the postmodern requirement that all truth be understood as "socially constructed." But it nevertheless establishes a way that we can talk about truth without sounding unforgivably old-fashioned. And it adds a nice communitarian flourish in the bargain, by casting science as a form of human solidarity.

Dewey in 1932

UPI / Corbis-Bettman

What makes this possible is Dewey's belief in the intrinsic connection between science and democracy, as David Fott stresses in his useful study of Dewey's political thought, *John Dewey: America's Philosopher of Democracy*. Much of the postmodern hostility to science stems from the authoritative status that science has staked out for itself in modern society. But for Dewey, democracy properly understood is nothing more than "the idea of community life itself," the human need for association brought to its fullest expression, while science is nothing more than the process by which intelligence is socialized.

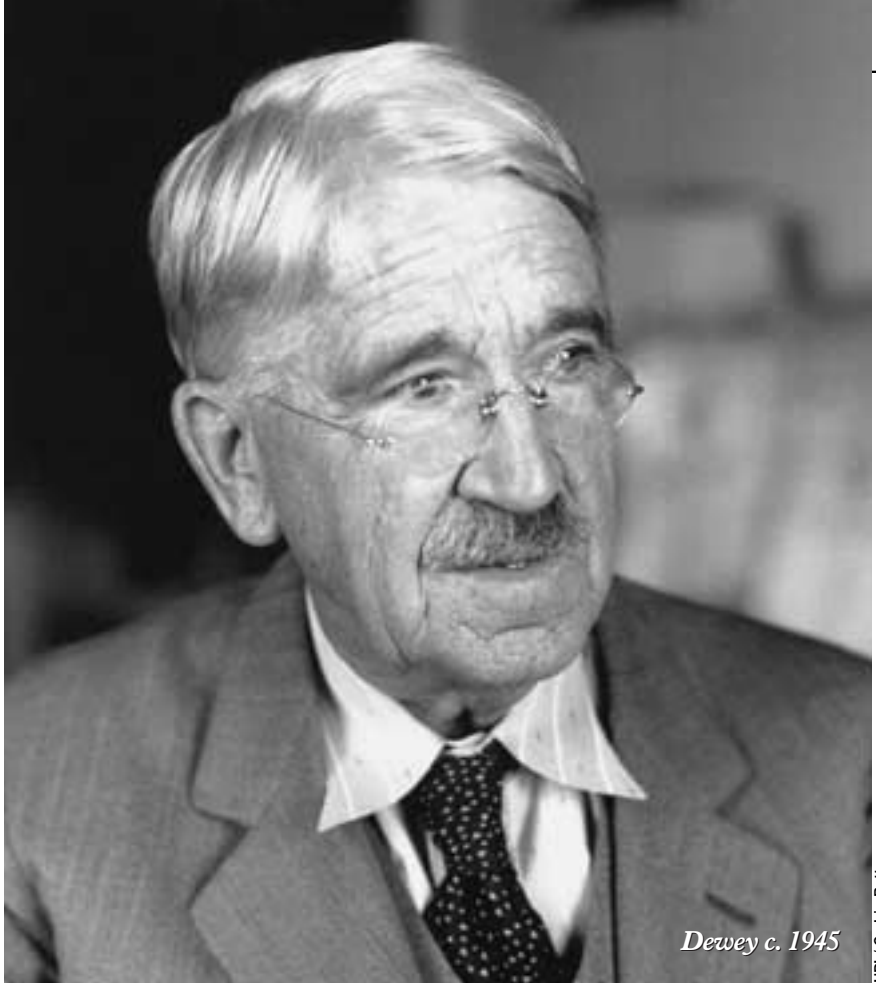
Indeed, not only science, but education finds its ultimate meaning in the great project of democracy. Education, the central task of civilized life, is merely a process of adaptation by which experience is incorporated into the individual's habits, ideas, perceptions, and emotions. With educational institutions working properly, all the chronic frictions that bedevil and cripple modern social life are ultimately harmonizable, so that the interests of the individual, as well as of the public, will be fully expressed and realized.

So too art becomes explicable only in relation to democracy, as Philip W. Jackson shows in his new study of Dewey's aesthetic theory, *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art*. The experience of art can play a critical educative role by giving us a tantalizing taste of what a complete integration of experience might feel like. Or, as Dewey himself puts it in his inimitable prose,

> In art as an experience, actuality and possibility or ideality, the new and the old, objective material and personal response, the individual and the universal, surface and depth, sense and meaning, are integrated in an experience in which they are all transfigured from the significance that belongs to them when isolated in reflection.

Richard Rorty and other recent enthusiastic embracers of Dewey have claimed that the philosopher's pragmatism is best understood as a form of postmodernism. But, as Fott rightly argues, Dewey's commitments to historicism and Darwinian evolution—as well as, one might add, his commitments to scientific method and social democracy—were absolute, dogmatic, and nonnegotiable. Rorty is simply wrong when he asserts that "Dewey thought of himself as freeing us up for practice, not as providing theoretical foundations for practice."

If nothing else, the life of a philosopher who addressed, in a fairly systematic way, just about every important philosophical question suggests that something more than a "freeing up" was going on. But Dewey himself eliminated any doubt when he wrote in 1939 that "any theory of activity in social and moral matters, liberal or otherwise, which is not grounded in a comprehensive philosophy seems to me to be



Dewey c. 1945

UPI / Corbis-Bettman

only a projection of arbitrary personal preference."

In fact, what many of those currently involved in restoring Dewey's reputation seem to miss is that his thought can be accurately understood only when placed very strictly in its historical context. What Dewey's career actually presents us with is the final stage of liberal Protestantism's thinning down into a peculiarly American form of morally infused secularism.

This transformation from Protestantism to secularism had two characteristic forms—the ethics of the Social Gospel movement and the politics of Progressivism—which effortlessly fused social religion with the social sciences to create a crusading, uplifting, ethically charged social analysis. This was Dewey's own view in his younger days, and he gave impeccable expression to it in the closing words of his 1897 essay, "My Pedagogic Creed":

> I believe that every teacher . . . is a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth. . . . [and] that in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God.

Such language might appear to place Dewey on the side of religion, but the situation is more complicated than that. One of Dewey's most exasperating tendencies is his propensity to define problems out of existence by claiming that they stem merely from improper understandings: Our difficulties are always our own fault, because we have stupidly misformulated things and imposed our clumsy dualisms on the world. The religious problem, as he saw it, was thus that both the proponents and opponents of religion had—of course!—*misunderstood the nature of the problem*, and forced it into a *false dualism*.

So, he asserted in his 1934 *A Common Faith*, we hold the mistaken idea that religion necessarily involves belief in the supernatural. The religionists affirm that "nothing worthy of being called religious is possible apart from the supernatural." And their militant secularist enemies affirm that once we have succeeded in discrediting the supernatural, "everything religious must . . . also go." But neither understand that what we call "religion" is something different from "the religious." Belief in the supernatural was merely an unnecessary superstition; once discarded, "for the first time, the religious aspect of experience will be free to develop freely on its own account."

What this means in practice turns out to be quite banal. Since "any activity pursued in behalf of an ideal end against obstacles . . . is religious in quality," even sports fans could qualify. Since "faith in intelligence" counts as a religious disposition, even scientists could be included. In fact, nearly the only people who *can't* be religious are actual followers of religion. The important thing to be achieved, in Dewey's view, is the detachment of "religious values" from the "creeds and cults of religions," which only add "irrelevant encumbrances," such as beliefs in God, sacred scriptures, ecclesiastical organizations, and the like.

There is something remarkable about a chain of reasoning by which Dewey may conclude that an *ideal* expression of "the religious" is more genuine than its *historical* expression in actually existing religions. How is it that a philosophy claiming the name of "pragmatism" ends up asserting that the religious disposition is separable, and *ought* to be separated, from the objects toward which it is actually directed?

Of course, in seeking out the thin commonality of the "religious," Dewey was repackaging the liberal Protestant platitudes of his day and aiming them toward a high, secular universal in which all human conflict and disagreement finds a resolution. In *John Dewey: America's Philosopher of Democracy*, David Fott points out the thrust in Dewey toward abstract universalism—his belief that it is reasonable to hope for the possibility of "complete unity or integration between individual and society."

We should be careful not to exaggerate this tendency, imagining the philosopher as a utopian or foolish Pollyanna who hoped for a world without conflict or difficulty. But it is true that Dewey was unwilling to accept that the basis of

human conflict might be fundamental and irremediable. In all his works, it remains inconceivable that everything could not be ultimately harmonizable, even if merely in a theoretical harmony rarely glimpsed and approachable only slowly and tentatively.

Dewey's conservative critics are right to see in all this something profoundly opposed to their view of the world—just as they are right to see in the 1990s revival of Dewey the post-Marxist, post-postmodern Left's casting around for a new philosophical foundation. But they can still find good reasons to reflect on the philosopher's work.

In, for example, his balanced and thoughtful analysis of what has become in our time a rather sterile and overwrought debate between individualism and communitarianism, Dewey's allergy to dualisms serves him well. We should take to heart his insistence that "the individual and associative aspects of the unitary human being" cannot possibly be separated from one another.

So too, we should remember that Dewey's vision of democracy was his most fundamental idea, and that vision was generous and humane, utterly free of the snobbishness and veiled contempt for the common man that lurks beneath so much of our age's putative liberalism. Indeed, it is haunting to read his 1922 "The American Intellectual Frontier," which touched upon the religious crusade against evolutionary theory that would culminate so catastrophically in the Scopes trial three years later. There could be no doubt where Dewey's sympathies lay, but he pointedly refused to disparage those who followed William Jennings Bryan:

> The church-going classes, those who have come under the influence of evangelical Christianity . . . form the backbone of philanthropic social interest, of social reform through political action, of pacifism, of popular education. They embody and express the spirit of kindly goodwill towards classes which are at an economic disadvantage and towards other nations. . . . It has been the element responsive to appeals for the square deal and more nearly equal opportunities for all.

How different the history of modern liberalism might have been, had his fellow intellectuals followed the dignified generosity of Dewey rather than the mocking puerility of H.L. Mencken.

And yet, the Bryan conflict showed that there was something Dewey simply could not cope with: the horrifying possibility that two of his non-negotiable ideals, democracy and science, might ultimately be at war with one another. This thought Dewey found impossible and inadmissible. His cosmic optimism, his conviction that all things were harmonizable (a conviction he owed to the liberal Protestantism he had discarded) would not permit him to entertain such tragic thoughts. Surely there was a misunderstanding. Surely this could all be cleared up tomorrow, as education improved, old habits of thought receded, and humankind more firmly established its control over existence.

It is this that finally marks Dewey as a period piece, a figure frozen in amber: Yesterday's Philosopher of Tomorrow. Even those now trying to resurrect Dewey only half-believe, at best, in what the Progressives held with all their hearts: that the mastery of the terms of our existence will surely bring us happiness and peace and joy and fulfillment.

Our modern failure to hold this progressive faith doesn't make us enemies of the future. It merely means that we cannot work our way through Dewey's famously murky prose without noticing all the things he has used that prose to mask.

Whatever small treasures we may mine from him, we cannot read Dewey today without thinking how much more there is in heaven and earth than is dreamt of in his philosophy. ♦

Dulles—Allen Dulles

The Life of a Legendary Spymaster

By Robert D. Novak

The CIA's headquarters in Langley, Virginia, was recently named in honor of George Bush, who served there only one year as its director and whose connection with the spy business was tangential at best. The honor should have gone to Allen Dulles, called, by his British counterpart Sir Kenneth W.D. Strong, the "greatest intelligence officer who ever lived."

JAMES SRODES
Allen Dulles
Master of Spies
Regnery, 624 pp., $34.95

But Dulles was no former president whose name would be immortalized by a bill pushed through a Republican Congress. He is dimly remembered in today's Washington as the younger brother of the more familiar John Foster Dulles (as in Dulles International Airport). Yet, Director Allen arguably exerted a greater influence for a longer period than Secretary of State John Foster.

Indeed, Allen Dulles plied the dark arts of espionage and covert operations for fifty-three years, starting in the summer of 1916 and climaxing with his plans for the Central Intelligence Agency, which he headed for more than eight years until the Bay of Pigs fiasco forced his resignation in 1961. His last three years as director of central intelligence coincided with my first three years as a Washington reporter. But I remember him as a vivid figure in the capital until his death in 1969 at age seventy-five, a stalwart at Georgetown dinner parties (wearing slippers sockless because of chronic gout), where he regaled fellow elitists with spy stories that never revealed all that much.

It is not merely that he is forgotten in a city with a diminishing sense of history. As seen through the prism of the late

Robert D. Novak is a nationally syndicated columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times *and a CNN commentator.*

Regnery

Allen Dulles in the 1950s writes on the desk of his brother, John Foster Dulles. Right: Dulles in the 1960s revisits the site of his European war work.

1990s, Allen Welsh Dulles seems hugely improbable in comparison with those pale bureaucrats who followed him as director. He was born into the upper-class Eastern establishment, the grandson of one secretary of state (John Foster) and the nephew of another (Robert Lansing).

Conflicts of interest did not bother him as he blithely mixed practicing international law for the New York firm of Sullivan & Cromwell with special State Department assignments.

Journalist and biographer James Srodes does justice to this remarkable career in *Allen Dulles: Master of Spies*, though it does not achieve the seamlessly smooth narrative of the 1994 biography *Gentleman Spy: The Life of Allen Dulles* by Peter Grose.

Srodes, however, has considerably more primary source material, and makes a greater effort to place his subject in history. To the counter-culture of the 1960s, Dulles was a mindless anti-Communist interfering with popular movements throughout the world. But Srodes, more accurately, describes him as a "Wilsonian liberal" calling for an American tutelary global role.

Dulles probably could thank his "Uncle Bert" (Secretary of State Lansing) for his not beginning public service as a private soldier in General John J. Pershing's fruitless search for Pancho Villa along the Mexican border in 1916. His National Guard unit was activated for that duty just as young Allen was graduating from Princeton. But he wound up joining the U.S. foreign service in Vienna as one of his uncle's new diplomat-intelligence officers.

After America entered World War I, the young diplomat managed a transfer to the Swiss capital of Bern. In that neutral hive of espionage activity, he entered the "Great Game." It would provide him with a favorite anecdote. As Dulles told it, he "was about to close the legation early for a Friday afternoon tennis date—with a girlfriend—when the telephone rang." It was Bolshevik emigré V. I. Lenin wanting to negotiate with somebody. He did not take or return the call, and that very weekend Lenin was off on the legendary sealed train to St. Petersburg's Finland Station and a place in history. Never refuse to talk to anyone, any time, Dulles would tell young intelligence officers.

He was back in Bern during the Second World War running American espionage operations with fabulous success. Srodes provides a fascinating account of the abundance of information provided by anti-Nazi Germans and of Dulles's contacts with Hitler's enemies in the German military. He is painted as a remorseless spy chief: Whenever he "suspected a walk-in of being a German plant, he routinely gave him a mission into France where the Resistance could execute him summarily." The war ended with Dulles's negotiation with SS General Karl Wolff resulting in a surrender that enabled the Western allies to beat the Russians to Trieste. Without this secret surrender, Srodes concludes, "the fighting could have lasted far longer."

In postwar maneuvers over the shape of U.S. intelligence, Dulles was a midwife of the CIA, ended up as its deputy director, and pulled off a distinctly Dullesian maneuver. President Truman detested General Eisenhower, who had drafted plans for a revived Cold War military. "Dulles skillfully conveyed the suggestions to Averell Harriman, a trusted adviser to Truman, who, with equal delicacy, slid the recommendations into a stack of proposals already on the President's desk." The result: the historic NSC 68 rearmament plan, authorizing covert operations against the Soviet Union. Dulles won the gratitude of Eisenhower, who named him CIA director upon entering the White House in 1953.

That began the "golden years of the CIA's clandestine war against the Soviets." There were highly publicized triumphs (saving the shah of Iran and overthrowing Guatemala's leftist regime) and covered-up defeats (the annihilation of attempted insurrections in Albania and Tibet). Allen Dulles was, Srodes writes, "enchanted by the darker side of the clandestine struggle. . . . There was a sense of accomplishment in a successful operation—even one as banal as bribing a third world politician—that did not come from the most trenchant NIE [National Intelligence Estimate] presentation."

The U-2 spy plane was one of the director's greatest intelligence coups and its discovery by the Kremlin one of his greatest embarrassments, resulting in advice to President Eisenhower—reject-

ed—that the president fire him. The end came less than two years later at the beginning of the Kennedy administration when the CIA-planned invasion of Cuba proved a failure. There was plenty of blame to go around, but the director of central intelligence had to take it all. President Kennedy told him: "If this were England and I were Prime Minister, I would have to resign. But it isn't England, and I can't resign. It's you who has to go."

Srodes's book is so jammed with six decades of the Great Game that the master spy himself is obscured. The author devotes some space to Dulles's well-deserved reputation as a philanderer. Under today's standard, "it is inconceivable that he would have been hired by the Central Intelligence Agency at all, let alone serve as director."

Srodes is more successful delineating his subject's ideology. Far from a fierce anti-Communist ideologue, Dulles was an old-fashioned liberal Republican who "wanted a party that advanced a less grandiose version of the New Deal, along with a strong pro-preparedness position on defense."

At the Versailles peace conference, he was a 25-year-old adviser to Woodrow Wilson (the only Democratic presidential candidate he voted for until Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964). Librarian of Congress James Billington, once a young CIA staffer, told Srodes that Dulles was a "real Wilsonian," adding that he "was not in the world to make money, or to make trouble, but to make the world a better place for freedom." The director himself praised Wilson for his "deep concern for the freedom and independence of people everywhere."

So, it was in the Wilsonian tradition that Allen Dulles sanctioned dirty tricks, authorized secret wars, and silently sent men to their deaths. Srodes concludes that Dulles today would call for "a new elite" to enter the CIA to confront "a thousand smaller virulent tumors of terror" that have succeeded the Soviet menace. I would guess the old spymaster, Wilsonian to the core, would be at the forefront of the Kosovo interventionists and appalled at the way the operation was conducted. ♦

BCA

A Comic Epic in Prose

Vikram Seth Pens a Genuine Novel

By Margaret Boerner

Henry Fielding, the author of *Tom Jones*, once famously defined the novel as a "comic epic in prose." This turns out to be a surprisingly negative definition, when you think about it. A novel is prose, you see, because it's not poetry. It's an epic, since it's not a lyric; novels tell stories rather than set moods. And it's comic mostly in the sense that it isn't tragic; the novel as an art-form wants to end with more weddings than funerals.

VIKRAM SETH
An Equal Music
Broadway, 381 pp., $25

Each of these elements is routinely violated by books we'd all want to call novels, but what else is there to say about the genre? Fielding's definition does at least express the fact that when we pick up something labeled a "novel," we reasonably expect a story of human characters reacting to one another in social situations: meeting and parting, marrying and burying. Indeed, one of the pleasures of reading fiction is its concentration on how "real people" think and act. Readers can don different selves, become voyeurs, experience possible lives, and feel unimagined emotional climaxes—without incurring a punch on the nose, a term in jail, or a new family to support.

Curiously, here in 1999, exactly 250 years after Fielding's *Tom Jones* appeared, there seem to be very few among the innumerable authors publishing ostensible novels in English who still remember this minimal requirement for what a novel is supposed to do. But the novelist Vikram Seth is one of those few. His new book, *An Equal Music*—a tale of no-longer-young musicians trying to rekindle the passion they had known as students—is not quite up to the level of his previous work. But it's still enough of a genuine novel to offer the novel reader's greatest pleasure: an opportunity to live for a few hours in another person's life.

Vikram Seth (rhymes with "gate") was born in Calcutta in 1952, the son of a shoe company executive and India's first woman judge. He was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, before coming to America to train as an economist at Stanford. Along the way, in 1982, he attended Nanjing University in China.

This is the sort of background from which dilettantes loom, and Seth has something of the dilettante's wide range. But he has nothing of the dilettante's shallowness, and his writing has continuously garnered plaudits. *Heaven Lake: Travels through Sinkiang and Tibet* won the Thomas Cook travel book award in 1983. Then came a collection of poems, *The Humble Administrator's Garden*, followed by *The Golden Gate* in 1986. When *A Suitable Boy* appeared in 1993, it sold over a million copies, even though the book is a 1,349-page novel set in India shortly after independence and centered on a young woman's difficulties in choosing whom to marry while dealing with the demands of kin, caste, and love.

For the larger audience of readers, *The Golden Gate* was Seth's breakthrough volume. Set in San Francisco, the virtually unadvertised book spread by word of mouth among San Franciscans until it too was a best seller. It is a novel made up of sonnets (a comic epic not in prose), born in an encounter with Alexander Pushkin's 1831 verse-novel *Eugene Onegin* and employing a fourteen-line stanza of iambic tetrameter lines (rather than the pentameter usual English sonnets). The table of contents in *The Golden Gate*, for instance, runs:

The world's discussed while friends are eating.
A cache of billets-doux arrive.
A concert generates a meeting.

Margaret Boerner teaches English at Villanova University.

A house is warmed. Sheep come alive.
Olives are plucked in prime condition.
A cat reacts to competition.
Arrests occur. A speech is made.
Coffee is drunk, and Scrabble played.
A quarrel is initiated.
Vines rest in early winter light.
The Winking Owl fills up by night.
An old affair is renovated.
Friends meditate on friends who've gone.
The months go by; the world goes on.

Seth's plain style—characteristic of his prose as well—draws the reader directly to manner, mores, and character, with the short line charging the narrative with energy. So energetic is Seth's style, in fact, that readers turned all 1,349 pages of his second novel, *A Suitable Boy*, without noticing how long it is.

In *A Suitable Boy*, Seth follows the example of Fielding, Thackery, and Trollope, turning a mother's search for a husband for her daughter into a set of interlocking stories. Revolving around four families, three Hindu and one Muslim, and sprawling across India, the novel uses its length to paint an epic depiction of, among other things, the life of Muslim women in purdah, everyday use of the *Bhagavada Gita*, the deference paid to caste, and the pomposities of new Indian judges, as well as the modernizing of shoe manufacturing and British Literature at a university. *A Suitable Boy* takes us back to the beginnings of the novel in English, where the panorama of life can be surveyed in the course of getting two young people married.

The musical themes in Seth's latest, *An Equal Music*, have appeared in his work before. The sonnet 3.37 from *The Golden Gate*, for instance, describes a musician's son reacting to Brahms:

The lights have dimmed. Now they're returning
Throats clear. Brahms' A Minor begins.
The brisk allegro. Then a yearning
Warm ductile length of lyric spins
Its lovely glimmering thread at leisure
Inveiglingly from measure to measure
With a continuous tenderness
So deep it smoothes out all distress,
All sorrow; ravishing, beguiling . . .
And on and on till silence comes.
Paul whispers, "That's the tune Mom hums!"
Phil's eyes are closed, but Paul is smiling,
Floating on a slow tide of Brahms,
Back in his absent mother's arms.

So too, in *A Suitable Boy*, the heroine and an "unsuitable" boy disguise their romance by meeting at classical concerts.

In some ways, *An Equal Music* is the least interesting of Seth's works. It is a short book, in prose, employing the most traditional plot possible: Boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy goes through trials and regains girl—with the appropriate modern ironies. But then, this is the plot of the vast majority of novels, from *Tom Jones* to *Great Expectations* to *Ulysses*, and, in all of them, the plot is merely the vehicle for the novelist's conception of manners, mores, and character.

An Equal Music is told in the first person by the second violinist in the Maggiore Quartet, who loves an ensemble pianist. From the blurb on its jacket, *An Equal Music* plays like *An Equal Muzak*:

> When an English quartet undertakes a challenging work of Beethoven's, violinist Michael Holme is overwhelmed by memories of mastering the piece as a student in Vienna. . . where he met Julia McNicholl, a pianist whose beauty was as mesmerizing as her musical genius, and Michael loved her with an intensity he never found again. Now, years later, a chance encounter reunites them and their passion is reawakened. Although Julia is married and has a child, she agrees to tour Vienna and Venice with Michael's quartet. But she carries with her a heartbreaking secret: She is gradually going deaf. Together, Michael and Julia must confront the truth about their love for one another and their love for the music that brought them together.

Here the blurb writers have betrayed the author. In an interview, Seth emphasized that he wanted the reader to discover Julia's deafness along with Michael: "Why lay a trail," he moaned, "if the book jacket gives it away?"

But Seth eschews sentimentality, and *An Equal Music* is no corny novelette. There is a more important trail to follow. The real secret is that its lovers love music above all else. And Michael has another love in an increasingly valuable violin he was lent by an old lady from his hometown when he first started serious competition. He cannot bear the probability of surrendering it to her heirs.

The essence of their characters is that Michael and Julia are so competitive as performers, they cannot come together. In the last stages of the novel, the Maggiore Quartet lands a lucrative contract to record Bach's *Art of the Fugue*. The pianist Julia too undertakes to perform the *Art of the Fugue* in concert, because her increasing deafness prevents her from ensemble playing any more (and, the reader guesses, because she wants to compete on Michael's turf). But when Julia contracts for the concert, Michael gets the string player's equivalent of stage fright and has to quit his quartet—just as, ten years earlier, he had had to quit Vienna and Julia because his third finger "responded slowly, and was only effective after a long warm-up." His teacher

> reacted with fury and impatience. . . as if one of the potential diamonds on his crown was proving itself to be merely carbon, convertible to its ideal form only under intense and continuous pressure. He applied it, and I crumbled.

When Julia tried to talk Michael into staying in Vienna with his lessons, he found her defense of his teacher "an unbearable betrayal on her part." His inability ten years later to play the *Art of the Fugue* at the same time as Julia indicates Michael's continuing narcissism and immaturity. It is with considerable irony that Seth takes his title from John Donne's description of Heaven: "In that house they shall dwell, where there shall be no cloud nor sun, no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light, no noise nor silence but one equal music, no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession, no foes nor friends, but one equal communion and identity."

In commenting on his protagonist, Seth describes Michael's behavior as "dubious." Indeed, Seth's view is that many musicians are immature and their "maturity, such as it is, comes out through the interpretation of their music."

Rather than being a love story, then, *An Equal Music* is a novel of growing up, a *bildungsroman* in which the date of maturity has crept up to thirty-seven years old. Michael Holme's only chance at obtaining "one equal communion" with Julia requires that he accept her as a deaf soloist. Of course, in the end it turns out that his reward is permanent possession not of the girl but of his beloved fiddle. But that's the kind of thing to be expected of a "comic epic in prose." ♦

Free Press

Up from Liberalism

In These Books, You Know They're Right

By Max Schulz

By the 1950s, the classical form of liberalism that we call conservatism—enshrined in the Constitution and prevalent through the 1920s presidency of Calvin Coolidge—was clearly moribund. Conservative notions about capitalism, free markets, and limited government had been indicted by Hoover's Great Depression and sentenced to death by Roosevelt's New Deal.

Even Eisenhower's presidency, and the Republicans' brief control of Congress, seemed no great break in the Left's triumphal march. The Supreme Court was increasingly viewing the Constitution as an obstacle to get around, a mild socialism seemed ascendant in America and Great Britain, and various Marxisms appeared on the rise throughout the rest of the world.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the socialist revolution. The Communist regimes in Eastern Europe disappeared. The plans of Roosevelt and Truman, Clement Atlee and Harold Wilson, sputtered and ran aground. The American public ceased to believe wholeheartedly in the ability of big government to care for its citizens from cradle to grave. A movement that hardly existed in 1950 has managed to elect presidents and Congresses, prime ministers and parliaments. And it has managed as well to construct something that looks like a coherent conservative philosophy for modern times.

Afraid that the victors are being shortchanged in the history books, Lee Edwards, former aide and biographer of Barry Goldwater, has written *The Conservative Revolution: The Movement that Remade America*, a new chronicle of the conservative movement over the last half century. And afraid the organization and manpower that brought about victory have also been forgotten, Gregory L. Schneider has added *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right*.

LEE EDWARDS
The Conservative Revolution
The Movement that Remade America
Free Press, 391 pp., $27.50

GREGORY L. SCHNEIDER
Cadres for Conservatism
Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right
New York University Press, 288 pp., $40

Presenting a blow-by-blow account of the major political events since 1946, Edwards pins his narrative to four towering figures: Robert Taft, Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, and Newt Gingrich. If this technique leaves the impression that conservatism owes some of its success to its cults of personality, that may not be entirely wrong. After World War II, conservatism, Edwards notes, "was so irrelevant that no major politician would dare call himself a conservative." But 1946 was a year loaded with portents: John F. Kennedy, Richard Nixon, and Joe McCarthy all joined Congress, and the GOP obtained a congressional majority—a hiccup during a time of general dominance by the Democrats.

The parallels to the 1994 Republican sweep are striking. Both were off-year elections. Both offered stinging rebukes to the Democrats in the White House. Both produced activist Republican majorities that got to work quickly and accomplished much. Yet both were turned into foils which the incumbent presidents, Truman and Clinton, could run against to maintain the presidency.

Nonetheless, the Republican successes of 1946 and the growing fear of Soviet militarism helped a conservative movement begin to gel. Its first leader was the mild-mannered Senate Republican leader, Robert Taft of Ohio. (Taft's untimely death in 1953 left the nascent movement rudderless, according to Edwards, and unable to rein in the excesses of Joe McCarthy.)

And the movement began to find as well a definite philosophical road to follow. Many analysts of the time could hardly fathom the new conservatism and its proponents. Arthur Schlesinger averred that only Henry Cabot Lodge and Jacob Javits—two eastern liberal Republicans—represented "intelligent conservatism." He also dismissed a study by the conservative intellectual James Burnham as "an absurd book by an absurd man."

But a powerful new intellectual groundwork was being laid at the time. Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* in 1953, Whittaker Chambers's *Witness* in 1952, F.A. Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* in 1944, and William F. Buckley's *God and Man at Yale* in 1951 provided important ammunition for waging the political battles of the next fifty years. (Strangely, Edwards does not elevate Buckley to the level of his four key figures, for his treatment of Buckley is among the strongest parts of *The Conservative Revolution*, explaining the influence of *National Review* and the importance of Buckley's expulsion of the John Birch Society from the new movement.)

The Conservative Revolution leaves part of the story untold by mostly ignoring

Max Schulz works at the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.

Richard Nixon before he became president in 1968. Certainly Nixon was no deep conservative as president, expanding the leviathan state and instituting wage and price controls. (Edwards is surely wrong when he claims that Nixon's "floating currency rates" pleased conservatives. No conservative defended jumping off the gold standard, which only exacerbated the stagflation of the 1970s.) But he was a hero in 1952 after bringing down Alger Hiss and had considerable presence among conservatives and anti-Communists. An analysis of the strengths and liabilities he brought to the conservative movement would have improved Edwards's account.

Similarly, Edwards is intent on seeing President Reagan's doubling of the national debt in the 1980s as a "conservative failure." Reagan, unlike his predecessors, understood that the United States was at war with the Soviet Union. This was the single most important objective of the Reagan presidency and, it should be noted, of the conservative movement as well. Spending increases were the tradeoffs Reagan made to get his military buildup from a skeptical and recalcitrant Congress. And the economic boom of the 1980s more than offset the increased federal spending.

The Conservative Revolution remains an important and worthwhile telling of a story that is among the most compelling imaginable: an ideology, apparently nearing extinction, resurrected within a few decades to transform America and save the world.

Of course, it took more than ideology to accomplish this. And this is where Gregory L. Schneider's *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right* sheds light. Whenever the 1960s are invoked these days, the picture is always of the radical students at Berkeley, Columbia, Michigan, and Kent State, storming deans' offices, dodging the draft, and being fired upon by the National Guard. But there was a different set of students during the 1960s that has never gotten its due—and it's no exaggeration to say these students engineered the conservative takeover of the Republican party, elected the Republican answer to Roosevelt, and won the Cold War. Not bad for a bunch of kids who rarely had enough money to pay the rent.

Schneider, unlike Edwards, doesn't hail from the ranks of the conservative movement, but he nonetheless comes to the conclusion that the students involved in Young Americans for Freedom were concerned, intelligent people "motivated to take action by what they believed were the excesses of American liberalism." They were the ones who read the books of Kirk, Burnham, and Hayek until their dog-eared copies fell to pieces. And they were the ones who took direction from Buckley's *National Review* and M. Stanton Evans's *Indianapolis News* (at age twenty-six, Evans became the youngest editor of a major newspaper in America).

The Young Americans for Freedom staffed the movement to draft Barry Goldwater into the 1964 presidential race, serving warning to the Eastern Establishment of Rockefeller and Lodge. And the world didn't know what to make of them. Referring to a demonstration outside San Francisco's Cow Palace, Walter Cronkite told the nation, "They're the Young Americans for Freedom, but I don't know what kind of freedom." The *New York Herald Tribune* editorialized against these "purveyors of hate and the apostles of bigotry." Drew Pearson warned, "The smell of fascism is in the air." Baseball legend Jackie Robinson said, "I believe I now know how it felt to be a Jew in Hitler's Germany." California Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown added, "All we needed to hear was 'Heil, Hitler.'"

It would take sixteen years after Goldwater's defeat before Reagan would carry their ideas to victory. And as the members of the Young Americans for Freedom grew older and graduated to more prominent positions, their organization itself grew irrelevant. The improbable Goldwater nomination of 1964 represented the organization's high-water mark, though it slogged on until the mid-1980s, beset by comical bouts of factionalism and infighting and poverty. Yet Schneider also shows that they weren't always unpopular. Supporters ranged from Eva and Zsa Zsa Gabor to baseball Hall-of-Famer Lou Brock.

Schneider's *Cadres for Conservatism* ultimately shows how those extraordinary individuals profiled by Edwards's *Conservative Revolution* never could have succeeded had it not been for a group of rather ordinary but determined people who were willing to buck the established orthodoxy and translate their ideas into action.

The conclusion these books force upon us is that the rebirth of conservatism required not just thinkers, or political leaders, or on-the-ground activists, but a combination of the three—and none of them could have succeeded without the others. ♦

BCA

NOTHING HILL

Julia Roberts's Latest is Pretty—and Pretty Empty

By J. Bottum & Jonathan V. Last

The newly released *Notting Hill* is as pretty a film as you're ever going to see. The gloss is high, the writing skillful, the editing brilliant, the leading actors dazzling, and the supporting actors superb. The film has so much going for it, in fact, that the only remaining question about it is why you'll feel a mild urge to wash your hands on your way out of the theater.

In *Notting Hill* Julia Roberts plays superstar actress Anna Scott, whose misadventures in love are the stuff of tabloid legend. In real life, *Notting Hill*

J. Bottum is Books & Arts editor and Jonathan V. Last is a reporter at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Universal Pictures

Julia Roberts, Rhys Ifans, and Hugh Grant argue in Notting Hill.

has just made Roberts the highest-paid actress in movie history—and she clearly deserves every penny of it. Her presence on screen shouts "Star!" at every moment, so loud and convincingly that fledgling director Roger Michell and writer Richard Curtis are able to perform some astonishingly efficient filmmaking, establishing everything the audience needs to know about the movie-actress life of the Anna Scott character before the credits are finished.

No one could say the plot of *Notting Hill* is new. While filming in the Notting Hill district of London, the famed Anna happens into a small shop specializing in travel books. The beautiful English actor Hugh Grant, mumbling well-phrased and charming self-deprecations, plays the bookstore's proprietor, William Thacker, a beautiful Englishman who mumbles well-phrased and charming self-deprecations. After a cool introduction, William and Anna meet again moments later when he bumps into her on the street, dousing her with orange juice. They repair to his flat so that she can clean herself up—and the American actress suddenly kisses him, for no particular reason except that he's so beautiful and English and mumblingly self-deprecating.

The story progresses in predictable Cinderella fashion. Anna charms William's extended family with her down-to-earthness, but the cruel fates that strive to keep true lovers apart intervene: Anna's Hollywood boyfriend suddenly flies in from America, ending their brief courtship. Months pass before Anna gets back in touch with William—and again they are driven apart, this time by the evil press photographers and paparazzi. Again months pass; six months, in fact, conveyed in a five-minute scene of William strolling through snow and sun—a scene so skillfully constructed and beautifully photographed the viewer almost succeeds in forgetting how manipulative it is. But the lovers are at last united against all odds at Anna's final press conference in England, and, sad to say, they marry, have children, and live happily ever after.

But there's another sense in which the plot of *Notting Hill* is entirely new. As a genre, the stagedoor romantic comedy has been around for years, and it always relied on the convention that there's a dreadful price to pay for fame: Being a celebrity is a hard, unrewarding job involving countless sacrifices of self.

The problem, of course, is that no one in movies actually believes it. Anna Scott does have some work to do in *Notting Hill*. As a girl-meets-boy inversion of Cinderella, the film is forced to put all the romantic initiative on Julia Roberts's big shoulders: William can't make a play for her; that would be social climbing, and in Hollywood egalitarianism, only social slumming is allowed. So Roberts's character has to do all the emotional heavy lifting, not to mention the kissing.

But apart from the difficult task of convincing some poor bookstore owner to love the most beautiful, wealthy, famous actress in the world, Anna doesn't really have a lot to do in the film. She doesn't undergo any reformation or endure any sacrifices, and in the end she gets it all: the love, the boy, the baby, and the fame to boot. There's a name for this lack of conflict in a script; it's called "not having a story."

The movie almost gets away with it, however. Roberts gets acted off the screen (in part simply because her character is written as a two-dimensional, non-descript "Actress"). But Grant is perfect. A consummate pretty boy, Grant understood from the first day of his career that overly beautiful men are best suited for comedy. He plays William just right, because as written, the character can't be very manly; his job is to sit back and wait for Anna.

Screenwriter Curtis got his start with the hilarious and bilious BBC television series *Blackadder* and made the move to films with the 1994 *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. For all his faults, Curtis has witty lines to spare. Posing as a reporter for the magazine *Horse & Hound*, William tells Anna "You're our readers' favorite movie star. Well, you and Black Beauty." Curtis is also smart enough to write generously for the fine character actors who round out the supporting roles. As William's friends, Rhys Ifans, Tim McInnerny, Emma Chambers, and Gina McKee display what watchers of such BBC sitcoms as *Fawlty Towers* and *Are You Being Served?* have known for years: British actors possess the finest comic sensibility in show business.

But in the end none of this can fill the absence of conflict in *Notting Hill*. At the heart of even the most middling romantic comedies like *Sabrina* or *Pretty Woman*, there has to be *something* that keeps the lovers apart. Someone has to undergo a transformation, or overcome a character flaw, or suffer a hardship. That's what a love story is and why we remember them. And though *Notting Hill* uses brilliantly every possible filmmaking contrivance and trick to create the feeling of an actual story, you'll quietly dismiss the movie somewhere between the theater and the street. ♦

Fashion designer Donna Karan gave Barbra Streisand $1 million to invest. By purchasing stock in eBay, Amazon.com, Starbucks, Time Warner, America Online, and Pfizer, Streisand was able to turn an $800,000 profit in five months.

—reported in* Fortune *magazine

Streisand, Hopper & Stone

Serving the Investment Needs of the Cinema Artists Community
Since 1999

Life Cycles
As you age, your investment needs change. Streisand, Hopper & Stone offers a full range of mutual funds and investment vehicles. No matter what your stage of life, SHS has the right package for you.

Starting Out
Age 20-25
You're still on your second or third marriage. Your wedding night video is the hottest thing on the Internet, and you've just signed a three-year contract to star in the WB's *CS: Tales of a Cosmetic Surgeon*. This is the time to experiment with high risk investments—commodities such as silicon, Larry King wives, or Slim-Fast futures. Your investment portfolio should reflect this emphasis on long-term growth.

- Growth stocks 60%
- Commodities 20%
- High Yield Corporate Bonds 25%

The Go-Go Years
Age 25-40
Your career is in full swing. You've just been contacted by Quentin Tarantino to play the serial killer in his new movie *Gilligan's Freakin' Island: The Next Generation*. You are generating income, but occasionally you need to generate some quick income, such as when your psychopharmacologist, Medellín Mark, demands payment for recent deliveries. This is a good time to stay liquid while still keeping your long-term focus.

- Small Cap Stocks 55%
- Bonds 35%
- Money Market Funds 15%

The Doldrums
Age 40-50
Your career is in the toilet. Your accountant has demanded that you cut back on your lovers in order to reduce your outflow, and in a desperate budgetary measure, you have begun sleeping with your spouse. This is the time for some discreet investments, in places that will not be observed by the collection agencies hired by the Betty Ford Clinic.

- Russian Timber 40%
- Swiss Gold 15%
- Ricky Martin futures 5%

Rebound
Age 50-65
You are hot again. Turner Classic Movies has hired you to introduce its *s* Your agent is talking about a six-picture deal with the Lifetime channel. Best of all, the oldies tour you are producing is generating millions. You've persuaded classic rock groups to update their image and tour Florida and Arizona. So far, the acts you've inked include Jefferson Wheelchair, Blood, Sweat and Metamucil, and Three Trips to the John Night. At this stage in your life, your time horizons are short, but you don't want to completely neglect growth.

- Money Market 60%
- Income Stocks 37%
- Mortgage Backed Securities 4%

Past Performance is No Guarantee of Future Results