the weekly
Standard

AIN'T NO SUCH THING AS A FOX
DAVID GELERNTER

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John Kennedy's America

John McCain
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William Kristol

the weekly Standard

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Books & Arts

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

Profile in Lying: Clinton on JFK

At a rare White House press conference last Wednesday, President Clinton, reminiscing about the late John F. Kennedy Jr., recalled a tour of the presidential residence he'd once given his younger friend. It must have been a bittersweet moment for Kennedy. All the more so, according to Clinton, since "John Kennedy had actually not been back to the White House since his father was killed, until I became president."

It was typical of Clinton to turn this into an anecdote as much about himself ("until I became president") as about Kennedy. Self-aggrandizing claims like these are very much our president's habit. And like many such claims, it turned out to be a falsehood—crafted no doubt on the spur of the moment to reflect flatteringly on Clinton's imagined superiority to his graceless predecessors.

In fact, on February 3, 1971, President Richard Nixon hosted Jacqueline Onassis and President Kennedy's two children, Caroline and John, at dinner at the White House. Shortly thereafter, 10-year-old John wrote Nixon a note: "I can never thank you more for showing us the White House." This 28-year-old incident is no secret. Three years ago, Kennedy talked about it with Christopher Matthews on CNBC's *Hardball*. Two years ago, Matthews told the story in his book about Jack Kennedy and Dick Nixon. What's more, JFK Jr. also visited the White House for a 1981 ceremony during which President Reagan honored his late uncle, Robert F. Kennedy.

As is, alas, also typical with Bill Clinton, his petty, bragging falsehood is nowhere near as interesting as his behavior after the falsehood is exposed. In this case, with a lack of class astonishing even for this president, Clinton sent his spokesmen out to say that if he got his facts mixed up, it was only because he was repeating what JFK Jr. had said to him. Talk about non-falsifiable.

Postscript: When did the Associated Press start doing free spin for the White House? Sonya Ross's initial AP stories duly repeated as fact Clinton's misty-eyed claim to be the first president to invite John Kennedy Jr. back to the White House. Once his prior visit to the Nixon White House had been reported elsewhere, AP amended its dispatch—not to report Clinton's whopper, however, but to help the White House press office obscure it.

The new improved AP story read: "It was during Clinton's first term, in 1994, that Kennedy visited the White House for the first time *as an adult*, when Kennedy was serving on an advisory committee on schools, Clinton said" [emphasis added]. But Clinton said no such thing; this paraphrase was a lawyerly evasion, courtesy of AP.

It got worse. Even this new version failed to account for JFK Jr.'s visit, as an adult, to the Reagan White House in 1981. Thus, the final (unbylined) AP dispatch on the subject: "It was during Clinton's first term, in 1994, that Kennedy visited the White House *inner sanctum* for the first time as an adult, Clinton said." No he didn't say it that way, either.

Had Clinton phrased it as AP did for him, it would indeed have been true, in a very Clintonian sort of way. Maybe AP should just start drafting the president's remarks for him.

On the Origins of the "Listening Tour"

Was there something just the slightest bit *royal* about Hillary Clinton's "listening tour" in upstate New York? Faithful Scrapbook reader Margaret Morell thought so and tracked down this charming description of Queen Elizabeth's 17th-century "royal progresses," as described by Prof. Edward P. Cheyney in his 1904 tome, *A Short History of England*:

> These "progresses" were a series of visits which she made from time to time from one country house to another, or from one town to another, spending sometimes some months in this way. The relief from the living expenses of herself and her subjects appealed to her thrifty instincts; she took sincere pleasure in the festivities that accompanied her visits, and they served a useful purpose in rousing the devotion of the people to herself and giving opportunities for the familiarity and courtesy with which she so well knew how to please those whom she wished to please.

AP/Wide World Photos

Plus ça change: The modern-day Queen Elizabeth, continuing the royal listening tradition, in Scotland earlier this month.

Scrapbook

Perfect Pitch

A week ago Sunday, New York Yankee ace David Cone threw just the 16th perfect game in major-league history. Baseball experts say it may well have been the most perfect game ever pitched: only 88 pitches, 68 for strikes, not a single three-ball count to any batter. Most baseball analysts now say Cone—who already has three World Series rings and a .647 career winning percentage—should be a lock for the Hall of Fame.

The Scrapbook is also prepared to endorse Cone for the Hall. But not so much on account of the perfect game. We're impressed, instead, by what Cone did last Tuesday, at a New York City Hall ceremony in his honor. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani gave Cone a "Key to the City" award. And Cone then thanked the mayor, possible rival to Hillary Rodham You-Know-Who in next year's Senate campaign, as follows: "Mr. Mayor, I'd like to say, on behalf of all the Yankee players . . . how your sincerity as a Yankee fan really comes across. We see it. I mean, there's a lot of politicians that say they're baseball fans and put on the cap and—"

At this point, according to the *New York Post*, Cone's words were drowned out by cheers from an audience drawn exclusively, so far as The Scrapbook can tell, from the city's most honorable families.

And In Other Sports News

President Clinton surely had a great lot of fun at the women's World Cup soccer championship, what with post-game visits to both team's locker rooms—hubba, hubba! But according to *Soccer America*, the sport's paper of record, "not everyone was so happy." It seems the First Fan showed up at the Rose Bowl late, forcing a greeting party of event organizers—and "scores" of ordinary spectators who'd paid $110 for tickets—to miss as much as 30 minutes of the U.S.-China title match. Hastily arranged Secret Service checkpoints kept fuming ticketholders wilting outside the stadium in the hundred-degree heat while the president breezed to his seat. Later in the afternoon, when Clinton's face was flashed on the giant Rose Bowl video screen, he was roundly booed. And why had the chief executive been delayed in the first place? Matters of national security? Nope. Seems Clinton had insisted on finishing a round of golf with his close adviser, Sylvester Stallone.

Experience Required

Rep. Earl Hilliard of Alabama beefed to the congressional newspaper *The Hill* last week that there aren't enough black staffers working for congressional committees. "Prejudice, discrimination, and outright racism," are the reasons, he said, but simply calling his colleagues racists, Hilliard knows, isn't going to turn things around. So he has recommended his travel agent for an open committee position. "She has done a commendable job arranging travel for me around the world. I believe that her knowledge of countries and geography has prepared her well to serve on the International Relations Committee," Hilliard wrote to the committee's ranking Democrat. No word yet on whether Hilliard will recommend his driver for the Transportation committee.

Help Wanted

Casual

Confessions of a Craven Materialist

I don't expect ever to write anything that will gain me less sympathy than this, so I might as well get right to it: I bought a new car this week, rather a grand car, I'm afraid. It's a Jaguar, something called the S-Type sedan, with the smaller of the two engines offered, and I would like everyone to know that I chose not to have the telephone that comes with a system that allows one to turn on the radio, adjust the temperature, and do other things in the car by voice; I also eschewed the computer-screen navigational system, though I did order a CD player, and they seem to have thrown in heated seats without my asking for them. The car's color is sapphire blue and its interior is ivory white with something called Connolly leather. It drives the way a butterfly floats—effortlessly, lyrically.

Why, it seems fair for you to ask, is this man telling us this? To incur our envy, possibly hatred? No, he is telling it because, sad to report, he is ever so slightly edgy about owning so elegant a machine. A crass materialist is one thing, a craven materialist—yo, friends, that's me—quite another. The day I bought this car I thought perhaps I ought to keep it covered in our building's garage during the day, taking it out only late at night, driving it wearing sunglasses and a slouch hat through sleeping suburban neighborhoods.

My dear mother would be ashamed of my feelings. Her own taste ran to fancy cars, the fancier the better. Her last car was a maroon Cadillac Seville, with a boxy back, produced in the middle 1980s, very swank. Driving with her once at O'Hare Airport, we were caught in heavy traffic, and I suggested that she put her arm out, in the hope that another driver would give her a break and let her into the moving line of traffic. "With a car like this," my mother said, "no one gives you a break. They assume that you've already had your break."

In the short stories I have written, whenever I have characters in cars, I always specify what make of car it is that they are driving, designating not only the make (Buick, Chrysler, BMW), but the series within the make (Park Avenue, New Yorker, 328i). The kind of car a person drives tells you a fair amount about that person's wealth, aesthetic inclinations, his interest in status, and his actual status. It isn't the last word about the person, but it isn't, I believe, a bad first or second word.

One of the reasons I am nervous about my new Jaguar is that I don't want any word out about me at all. The extreme form my vanity takes is, above all, not to wish to appear vain. I was not reared but later educated to take a dim view of such small but obvious delights as a swell car gives. If one were an intellectual—yo, me again—one was supposed to be above such things. I recall being with Saul Bellow in the garage of his rather expensive building in Hyde Park, the neighborhood of the University of Chicago, where I noted a large number of dismal cars: dreary Dodges, tired Buicks, Volvos that had seen better days. "Ah," said Bellow, "Academic motors," his point being that it was of course considered unseemly for academics to drive expensive cars.

Until the past decade or so, my own program with cars was that of a strict reverse snobbery. When I could afford to buy new cars, I deliberately chose dull ones: first Chevys, then Oldsmobiles, middle of the line both. At some point, Oldsmobile jumped its prices up roughly five grand, and I said to myself that for another few thousand dollars I could get a small BMW. Which I did. And then, after four years or so, I stepped things up to the next size BMW. I became a leather-seat man. Two BMWs later, ready to buy a fourth, I saw this new Jaguar S-Type (the English not only pronounce but put heavy emphasis on that U in Jaguar), whose grill reminded me of the lovely, old bright red Jag that the actor John Thaw drives in the English television show Inspector Morse.

My worry is that the sheer elegance of the machine will draw attention to me, its owner, who may not be up to a comparison with his car. In the less than full week I have thus far owned it, people have stopped me on the street to ask how it drives. A number of pedestrians have pointed at the car as I have driven past. People stare at it. On the South Side, a young guy in a beater looked over at me at a stoplight in a way that made the word askance all too vivid. I accelerated, leaving him at the light, astew in his combined envy and contempt.

On second thought, as W.C. Fields is alleged to have said on his deathbed, screw 'em. I have taken the cure. My new motto comes from a bumper sticker I saw the other day, which read: "Get In! Sit Down! Shut up! Hold On!"

Joseph Epstein

the weekly Standard

Pressuring Taiwan, Appeasing Beijing

"We've apologized, we've expressed our regret, we've offered compensation, we're talking about compensation, we've provided a report"—so said State Department spokesman Jamie Rubin last week describing the U.S. response to the accidental bombing of China's embassy in Belgrade. But his plaintive words just about sum up the Clinton administration's current policy toward China. The official posture of prostration before Beijing—the China hands call it "engagement"—would be merely pitiful, perhaps even amusing, were it not so dangerous. But the Clinton administration is now applying its strategy of appeasement to the brewing crisis over Taiwan, and the result may be to hasten the military conflict the administration is trying to avoid.

Two weeks ago, Taiwan's president Lee Teng-hui had the temerity to declare the obvious: that Taiwan should negotiate with China as one state to another. The Chinese government, which wants Taiwan to accede to its demand for reunification under Beijing's rule, and sooner rather than later, threatened armed retaliation. Given Beijing's record—which includes firing ballistic missiles off Taiwan's coast in the spring of 1996—this threat is hardly an idle one. The Clinton administration, in a desperate effort to avoid further deterioration in its wonderful "strategic partnership," did what the Clinton administration does best. It took Beijing's side.

Last week, the administration cancelled a long-planned visit of an American technical team to Taiwan to discuss security matters, including missile defenses for the island. Officials also intimated that planned U.S. arms sales to Taiwan would be postponed. The Clinton administration's message is clear: If Lee doesn't back away from his statements, he shouldn't count on American military support in the event of a conflict with the mainland. Meanwhile, top administration officials were dispatched to Beijing, no doubt to "apologize," to "express our regret," to "offer compensation," etc. So, in the midst of a growing conflict between a longtime American friend and a potential American adversary, the Clinton administration threatens the friend and cajoles the potential adversary.

> IN THE MIDST OF A CONFLICT, THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION THREATENS A LONGTIME FRIEND AND CAJOLES AN ADVERSARY.

This approach is morally repugnant, given that Taiwan is a democracy and China is a dictatorship that needs to repress a "cult" of middle-aged ladies who like to meditate and do breathing exercises. It's also dangerous. President Lee has not backed down under Clinton's intimidation, nor should he. But the Chinese government now has good reason to believe that if it waves around more ballistic missiles later this year or takes other belligerent actions, like a partial blockade or the seizure of some small Taiwanese islands off the coast of the mainland, then the United States might just stand back and do nothing. After all, the Clinton administration has made it clear that it shares China's view of Lee's actions as unacceptable. If Lee fails to buckle under American threats, it's only reasonable for the leaders in Beijing to assume that they are entitled to increase the pressure on Taiwan. Sure, the Clinton administration has called for a "peaceful" resolution of the problem, but it has also made clear that it holds Lee responsible for the confrontation. The Chinese—who don't feel they need American permission before they act in any case—may well believe they now have an amber light to use tactics of military intimidation. That may be a miscalculation, but it is precisely through such miscalculations that wars start.

The best way to avert a crisis now is for the United States to make absolutely clear that it will respond to any military action by Beijing aimed at intimidating Taiwan. The Clinton administration should dispatch

an aircraft carrier or two to the region as a sign that its commitment to a "peaceful" resolution is more than just diplomatic mumbo jumbo. In addition, the administration should drop its efforts to intimidate Taiwan, go forward with the security talks, and put the arms sales back on track. Whether or not the administration wants to cling to the outdated fiction of "one China," these are essential steps to prevent a serious miscalculation by the Chinese leadership.

Unfortunately, we don't expect the Clinton administration to do this, let alone what is really necessary, which is to abandon "one China" and agree that the unification of Taiwan and the mainland will be possible only when the mainland has a democratic government. But the good news is that leading Republicans in Congress are rising to challenge Clinton's anti-Taiwan policies.

House International Relations Committee chairman Benjamin Gilman has demanded that the Clinton administration restore the arms sales to Taiwan. Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms has proposed a Taiwan Security Enhancement Act to strengthen U.S. security ties to Taiwan and provide much-needed defensive weapons systems to the Taiwanese. And last week, Senate majority leader Trent Lott drafted a letter calling on President Clinton to reverse an anti-Taiwan course that will only "increase the chances of Beijing precipitating a military crisis." Senator Lott wants the president to make clear to Beijing that the United States will "fully support democratically elected President Lee and the people of Taiwan in their search for greater international status." This is precisely the kind of sound strategic thinking and bold political leadership that Republicans need to provide right now.

What about the Republican presidential candidates? The leading candidate, George W. Bush, has declared that he considers China a "strategic competitor," not a "strategic partner," and that he wants to "refocus America's policy in Asia on friends and allies." So far so good. But on the burning topic of Taiwan, Bush has yet to separate himself from the policies of the Clinton administration, which, it is only fair to point out, are little more than a continuation of the policies of the previous Bush administration. George W. has the opportunity now to make clear what he means when he talks about "redefining" the relationship between the United States and China. He should seize it.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan, for the Editors

Michael Ramirez

"That Discourtesy of Death"

by John McCain

Two months ago, I was invited to participate with John Kennedy, his sister, Caroline, Sen. Ted Kennedy, and several other members of the family in the annual Profile in Courage Award events at the Kennedy Presidential Library. As it happened, the award ceremony occurred on the eleventh birthday of my youngest son, Jimmy. Ted Kennedy went to considerable lengths to make sure the birthday was publicly noted and celebrated. Jimmy reacted to the attention as most kids his age would, with a mixture of pleasure and embarrassment. All the Kennedys present were very kind to my son. But John and his lovely bride, Carolyn, were especially so. They talked with him in a quietly playful way that Jimmy appreciated as much as my wife Cindy and I appreciated John's compliments for raising a nice boy and for choosing Arizona over Washington as our children's home.

Cindy and I left Boston grateful for the experience and impressed by how gracious and considerate John and Caroline were; how seriously they took their responsibility to honor their father's memory; and how well they reflected the loving care with which their mother had raised them.

AP/Wide World Photos

John F. Kennedy Jr., 1960-1999

John Kennedy was a splendid young man. Though we had only a passing acquaintance, I saw, as others did, that it was easy to like him. Given the temptations attending wealth, privilege, and beauty, it would have surprised no one if he had been arrogant and self-centered. But he was quite the opposite. In our encounters, he was friendly, well mannered, and thoughtful, not just to me but to everyone in the room. When, at his invitation, I appeared before his magazine's editorial board, he encouraged the office interns to attend and ask questions, an unusually considerate gesture to them by their editor-in-chief (unless, of course, they were needed to fill seats because I had failed to draw much of a crowd, in which case it was an unusually considerate gesture to me).

Were that all I knew of him, I would grieve his loss. But, of course, he was more than that. He was a featured player in one of the more powerful legends in American political life, a legend that most Americans at one time or another have been enamored of, and that now seems inexpressibly sad. The nation grieves for him—an honor accorded relatively few people—and after my brief exposure to him, I understand why.

The personal loss of those who knew him well, of course, is immeasurably more painful. It's a cold heart that has no sympathy for the Kennedy family; for Ted Kennedy, who must too often assume the duties of the head of a family on whom fortune and misfortune fall in great and equal measure; and especially for Caroline, who has suffered more loss than anyone of her young age should ever have to bear. The Bessettes, whose broken hearts mourn the staggering loss of two beautiful, accomplished sisters, must know a grief that in this moment is inconsolable. I pray for their comfort, as I pray for the repose of the souls of their loved ones.

The older we grow the more accustomed we become to death. And yet there are some whose loss seems impossible to accept. That is true of John Kennedy, who to many of us seemed only yesterday a fatherless 3-year-old.

A Yeats poem, "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory," laments the passing at a young age of a "dear friend's dear son." It is inconceivable that this son should now "share in that discourtesy of death" alongside friends of the poet's who died in old age. Near the end of the poem, Yeats observes how good a life his young friend made of his too few days, and tries to reconcile himself to the loss with the wistful remark, "What made us dream that he could comb grey hair?"

Maybe that kind of sentiment is all we have to assuage the nation's, perhaps even the families', grief; that, and the comfort of knowing that John has been reunited with the father he lost long ago and the mother who loved him so well that he became a good man.

John McCain is the senior senator from Arizona.

John Kennedy's America

by William Kristol

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON? Yes, in their verve and grace. Yes, in that their lives were sadly cut short. Yes, in that both men lived, in important respects, admirable lives.

But no. Not in their individual characters: Jack Kennedy, all drive and ambition; John Kennedy, remarkably decent and considerate. And not in their times. For who, this past week, could fail to be struck by the difference between our America and the one that mourned Jack Kennedy only 36 years ago?

AP/Wide World Photos

The most memorable image from Jack Kennedy's funeral was John's salute. Today it seems from another world. The salute suggests an era in which, at moments of great sorrow, the appropriate bearing was formal, dignified, almost military. Today, we are informal, expressive, sentimental. We leave handwritten notes and flowers outside John and Carolyn's New York apartment building. When Ted Kennedy and his sons were taken to the Coast Guard ship Wednesday, as the bodies were brought up, they wore shorts. One must of course allow for the difference between an assassinated president's state funeral and chaotic events surrounding accidental deaths near a vacation island. But I suspect informal attire in any funereal circumstance would have been unthinkable in 1963. The only shorts then to be seen were the three-year-old John Kennedy's—and his formal dress shorts are unimaginable today.

It was a different country. Only a year before, Douglas MacArthur had given a much-noticed, and justly acclaimed, farewell speech at West Point. That speech ended with a phrase that he said "echoes and re-echoes: duty, honor, country." Does it echo still? MacArthur's rhetoric seems closer to the 19th century than to the late 20th. Yet MacArthur, born in 1880, outlived President Kennedy.

The most memorable funeral of recent times was Princess Diana's. Her death, and the public reaction to it, ratified and made evident for all to see the ascendancy of "Cool Britannia." But Americans of Jack Kennedy's era remembered another British funeral—that of King George VI, in February 1952. Prime Minister Winston Churchill's announcement of the king's death was broadcast in America as well as in Britain. Churchill concluded his eulogy: "I, whose youth was passed in the august, unchallenged, and tranquil glories of the Victorian era, may well feel a thrill evoking once more the prayer and the anthem: God save the Queen." Churchill's invocation of the Victorian era, his hope that Queen Elizabeth could usher in some sort of renewed Victorian greatness, did not yet seem in 1963—despite all the talk of a new generation and a new frontier—hopelessly archaic. Churchill, after all, had inspired Jack Kennedy; and he too outlived him.

When did it all change? Obviously, during the 1960s. But if you want to pick a date, consider July 20, 1969. We landed on the moon, fulfilling President Kennedy's promise. We demonstrated that we had the right stuff. But it soon became clear that we no longer much cared. In our national consciousness, Vietnam and "the 60s" trumped the moon landing. Last week marked the 30th anniversary of Apollo 11. We might have paid it more notice had it not been for John Kennedy's plane crash. But the last three decades have altogether undermined Apollo's meaning. Who since 1969 has embraced Kennedy's grand vision for our space program?

Jack Kennedy was a member of the World War II

generation. It shouldn't be a surprise that, in certain ways, he had more in common with other members of his generation than with the son who barely knew him. But the continued prominence of the Kennedy family in our public life has obscured the gulf between President Kennedy's America and his son's.


AP/Wide World Photos

The doorstep of John F. Kennedy Jr.'s apartment in New York

Jack Kennedy was justifiably proud to be considered the author of *Profiles in Courage*. John Kennedy was justifiably proud to have founded *George* magazine. *Profiles in Courage* offered a profoundly un-ironic account of American politics. *George* views political life through a prism of irony. Jack Kennedy was skilled enough at irony, but his tempered a grand (even grandiose) view of politics. There is not much grandeur in *George*. The magazine was intended to be, John Kennedy explained in the first issue, not really "a political magazine" but rather "a lifestyle magazine with politics at its core." After all, "culture drives politics." And "if we can do just one thing at *George*, we hope it's to demystify the political process." His father sought rather to cast a heroic mist over politics. Each tendency has its dangers. But how different the inclinations are! As Sam Tanenhaus points out in the *New York Times*, *George* "made sport of politics. . . . It seems somehow emblematic that on a recent visit to South Dakota Mr. Kennedy wanted to rappel down Mount Rushmore (a request denied by park officials); rather than trying to scale the heights of elective politics, he was . . . thumbing his nose at it." In this he was very much at one with the spirit of his age.

Why are we moved by John Kennedy's death? Some of our reaction is, to be sure, Diana-like in its sentimentality and celebrity worship. But the contrast with Diana seems greater than the similarity. Diana was a perfect exemplar of our confessional and bathetic age. John Kennedy was better than our age. His decency suggested a refusal simply to surrender to the temptations of our celebrity culture. Mary Elizabeth Williams, writing in *Salon*, says John seemed to be something rare among the famous of our time: In "a world of crotch-grabbing rock stars, adulterous presidents, and petulant movie actors," John seemed "a true gentleman." If his magazine sometimes simply celebrated popular culture, John Kennedy's life was better than his magazine. He rose above our popular culture. Shawn Hubler observes in the *Los Angeles Times* that our sorrow over John Kennedy's death was not unrelated to the fact that "the end of this century has not been kind to America's sense of itself as classy and graceful." The loss of this classy and graceful young man brings into relief the vulgarity of the culture we have made.

But our sense of loss, I believe, goes beyond this. In mourning John Kennedy, we mourn the loss of our most direct link to Jack Kennedy and his America—the America of *Profiles in Courage,* of un-ironic idealism, of John-John's salute. That America no longer exists. It began to lose ground after President Kennedy's assassination, and has lost it ever since. It did survive politically through the 1980s, long enough to win the Cold War. That America carried out the promise made by President Kennedy: to "pay any price, bear any burden . . . to assure the survival and success of liberty."

That America is gone. We live in a lesser time. Our America is in many ways a lesser America. Our sense of loss suggests that we know this. Could John Kennedy's death sting us to act on this unwanted but inescapable knowledge?

William Kristol is editor and publisher of **THE WEEKLY STANDARD.**

Hands Off Our Cigars

by Andrew Ferguson

With the longueurs of summer pleasingly upon us, the demand for beach reading is brisk, and so the *Federal Trade Commission's Report to Congress: Cigar Sales and Advertising and Promotional Expenditures for Calendar Years 1996 and 1997* arrives just in time. The report was released last Thursday, ready to be tossed into the tote bag alongside the huarache sandals and the Panama Jack Pabafree SPF 30. At 13 pages, exclusive of footnotes, it is brief, taut, a crisp and compelling read: perfect for all those who care about the inexorable, glacier-like expansion of the federal government. Not a big audience, true, but it's free. The report, I mean.

Federal Trade Commission's Report to Congress: Cigar Sales and Advertising and Promotional Expenditures for Calendar Years 1996 and 1997—or FTCRCCSAPECY9697, as the acronym-crazed feds call it for short—made some noise on its publication last week. For the anonymous authors of *Cigar Sales* (as we will call it here) wanted to do more than report on cigar sales. They wanted as well to recommend to Congress ways in which those sales might be stymied. Astonishing to contemplate, the federal government has so far kept itself pretty much uninvolved in the cigar trade, making it, along with paper routes and neighborhood lemonade stands, one of the last businesses in America which can make that claim. In any case, that day is now over. The FTC made three recommendations. Congress should ban broadcast advertising of cigars; require that cigars be packaged with health warnings; and require that "youth access to cigars" be limited. As is often the case with agency recommendations, however, they were much more than suggestions. The chairman of the FTC has announced that if Congress fails to enshrine them in law, the FTC may enact them on its own power.

For anyone familiar with the logic of public service, the report's reasoning is easy to follow but hard to caricature, since it is so plainly a caricature all by itself. *Cigar Sales* was written, the introduction tells us, "in response to information showing a resurgence of cigar use in the United States." No employee of the FTC, faced with such information, would be content merely to note it, murmur, "Bully for the cigar-makers," and then move on to other matters. No: If people are doing something out there, and if it appears, further, that they might be enjoying it, then the FTC wants to know why. And will stop it if necessary.

So "Special Orders" were issued to the cigar industry, by which it was obliged to furnish data on its sales and promotional expenditures. Though the authors labor mightily to push them in the other direction, these data tend to the unsensational, not to say uninteresting. The upshot is that the cigar business had a very good couple of years. In 1996, 3.8 billion cigars were sold; in 1997, 4.4 billion were sold—an increase of 15 percent, by the reckoning of the FTC's green eyeshades, who are expert in such calculations. This increase the report dubs "dramatic." Still, it's not so dramatic as the old days, before the FTC swung into action against the current crisis; in 1973, for example, Americans bought 11.2 billion cigars. And the 1997 rate of increase, by the way, has since slowed to a less dramatic 4 percent, and seems to be falling further. But anyway. This increase, says the report, "has occurred in tandem with the increase in promotional activities surrounding cigar smoking."

> IF PEOPLE ARE DOING SOMETHING OUT THERE, AND IF IT APPEARS, FURTHER, THAT THEY MIGHT BE ENJOYING IT, THEN THE FTC WANTS TO KNOW WHY.

Promotional activities? An industry promoting its product? Who would have thought it possible? The authors continue, with mounting alarm: "Cigar enthusiasts began promoting fancy cigar dinners and smoker's evenings in expensive restaurants and hotels. Such cigar events are now common. . . . Two magazines devoted almost entirely to cigar smoking have been introduced and rapidly gained popularity. . . . Cigars have appeared as props in the plot lines of numerous movies and television shows [the Starr report, too!]. . . . It is likely that the cigar industry's presence on the Internet is substantially greater than what is reflected in their actual advertising expenditures . . ."

Reeling, the authors get down to hard numbers. The most interesting of these, given their final recommendations, has to do with "electronic advertising." Alas, "Between 1996 and 1997 . . . expenditures for television and radio advertising declined slightly—from approximately $327,000 to $325,000." The number is so small that the industry has trouble accounting for it, but those three-hundred-some thousand dollars in "electronic advertising" seem to have been spent on a handful of local cable television and radio shows, mostly in the form of underwriting. In any case, the amount is anticlimactic, and in keeping with

what marketers like to call "industry trends": For all forms of advertising and promotion, the cigar industry spends less than one percent of the total spent annually by cigarette companies.

The authors are undeterred, however, and proceed bravely to their recommendations. As the report notes, "there is no data on teen cigar use prior to 1996," so there is no way of knowing whether teen cigar use is increasing. By the logic of regulation, however, this requires that the industry take further steps to reduce the increase that may not be occurring. Similarly, there are no studies measuring the health effects of cigar-smoking as cigars are usually smoked. The large majority of adult cigar-smokers smoke fewer than one a day, as the report notes, and the data suggest that new cigar sales have gone to consumers who smoke infrequently. And studies show that for those people who do smoke a cigar a day, the "excess risk mortality" (compared to non-smokers) is negligible—an increase of 8 percent. For infrequent smokers it is almost non-existent.

So what is to be done? The layman's answer would seem to be: well, nothing. The FTC thinks otherwise, of course. In addition to the ban on broadcast advertising, it would require warning labels, three of them, to appear on cigar packaging in rotation, which would inform consumers of what they probably know: The more you smoke, the greater your risk of disease. As it happens, the state of California already requires warning labels on cigars, and as a result 96 percent of the cigars sold in the United States have them.

There is a lovely irony here, however—one that could only exist between industry and government in a regulatory state that has grown to such vast dimensions. The cigar business is not objecting too strenuously to the FTC's expansion of its powers. Having learned from the experience of its brothers in the cigarette industry, it welcomes labels, for example. A uniform federally mandated label would preempt state regulation, and forestall the confusion of 50 different warning labels on cigars shipped nationwide. A warning label would also help indemnify the industry against the predations of trial lawyers, who even now are contemplating lawsuits against cigar manufacturers from the bereaved survivors of men who went to their graves with a Swisher Sweet gripped between their teeth. The new regulations will probably proceed, therefore, with the blessing of the regulated.

This is how it goes in the regulatory state. Responding to a crisis that isn't a crisis, the FTC will require labels on a product that is already labeled and ban advertising that doesn't exist, in order to keep cigars from children who don't seem terribly interested in smoking them. *Cigar Sales* is thus a signal document of the age—an elaborate, data-laden rationale that serves to obscure the real reason the federal government wants to launch another flotilla of pointless regulation: Because it can.

Andrew Ferguson is senior editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

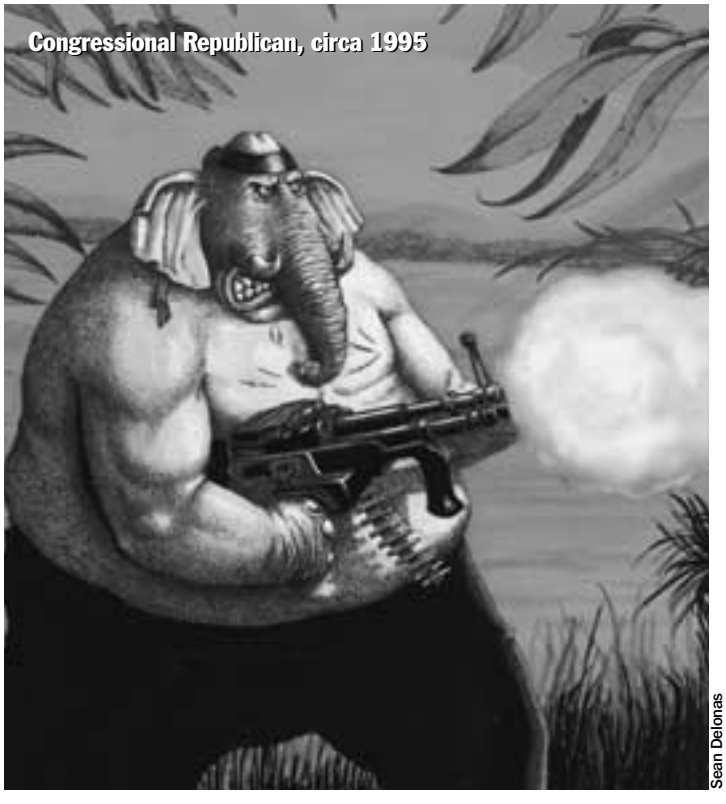
End of the Leave-Us-Alone GOP

by David Brooks

Look how far the Republican party has traveled in just four years. In 1995, the main thrust of the Republican Congress was to get government off our backs. The Gingrichites called themselves the Leave Us Alone Coalition. Government was the problem, and the GOP mission was to cut and devolve federal power.

Now read the major policy speech that presidential candidate George W. Bush delivered in Indianapolis last Thursday. Bush attacked the "destructive mindset: the idea that if government would only get out of our way, all our problems would be solved. An approach with no higher goal, no nobler purpose than 'Leave us alone.'"

Bush went on to defend limited but energetic government: "I know the reputation of our government has been tainted by scandal and cynicism. But the American government is not the enemy of the American people. At times it is wasteful and grasping. But we must correct it, not disdain it. Government must be carefully limited—but strong and active and respected within those bounds. It must act in the common good."



Congressional Republican, circa 1995

Sean Delonas

Bush's language reflects the new Republican mainstream. After the failure of the government shutdown of 1995-96, key GOP figures began backing off the prevailing libertarianism of the early Gingrich/Armey era. Senator Dan Coats put forth a series of proposals that would use government in a positive way to encourage charitable giving, to tackle social problems like divorce and illegitimacy, to help rescue neighborhoods. In that spirit, congressmen like James Talent, J.C. Watts, and Rick Santorum created the Renewal Alliance. John Kasich, who in 1995 had issued a list of over 200 government agencies that could be eliminated, began emphasizing compassion and positive governance. Even House whip Tom DeLay has launched a touchy-feely effort he calls Shine the Light on Children in the Darkness.

Whereas the Gingrich revolutionaries were rugged individualists who put the emphasis on freedom, the post-Gingrich crowd talks about other values—compassion and community. The GOP of 1995 rebelled against authority. The GOP of 1999 wants to restore faith in public authorities, including sections of the federal government.

Even more striking is that this dramatic change in emphasis has been achieved without bloodshed. When the Republican party tries to de-emphasize issues like the Human Life Amendment, there are always screams of protest from religious conservatives. But here is the leading Republican presidential contender veering sharply away from the libertarian song book, and there are no discernible howls of outrage from the free-market right. Sure, the free marketeers can be heard quietly disparaging compassionate conservatism as mumbo jumbo, but they go along with Bush nonetheless.

When I read some of Bush's statements to Grover Norquist, the man most responsible for formulating the Leave Us Alone Coalition strategy, he insisted that the speech was "not a problem." Whatever Bush says on the level of theory, Norquist says, Bush supports the Leave Us Alone voters on the issues they really care about. The gun people want to be left alone on guns. The tax people want to be left alone on taxes. That's what they vote on. Which suggests if you give these people their way on their issues, they don't mind government's intruding further into social policy.

They are special-interest voters, not across-the-board libertarians.

Bush's speech reflects not only a new GOP view of government, but also a new GOP view of the country. The Gingrich Republicans described a country of hard-working taxpayers who were bedeviled by a liberal elite that burdened them with workplace regulations, meddlesome environmental rules, and an intrusive nanny state. At the height of the Gingrich era, the GOP even seemed hostile to federal law-enforcement agencies. (Remember Waco and Ruby Ridge?) The Bush speech describes a country that is essentially content, but in which certain people are being left behind. Bush wants to devote his energies to helping "children abandoned by fathers. Children captured by addiction and condemned to schools that do not teach and will not change. Young mothers without self-respect or education or the supporting love of a husband." In other words, Bush is targeting his policies toward people who, by and large, are not Republicans and would probably never dream of voting Republican. This is not a risk-free strategy for someone running in the Republican primaries.

Bush took a detour in his speech in Indianapolis on Thursday to explain why folks in Republican rural and suburban areas should want their candidate to give such priority to underclass issues. It is a matter of national cohesion, he said: "For many people, this other society of addiction and abandonment and stolen childhood is a distant land, another world. But it is America. And these are not strangers, they are citizens, Americans, our brothers and sisters."

Specifically, Bush proposed federal grants to ministries to help mentor the 1.3 million children who have a parent in prison. He wants to help expand a program called InnerChange, run by Chuck Colson's Prison Fellowship, which uses faith to help reform inmates in a Texas jail. He also proposed a series of tax-code changes of the sort that do not necessarily sit well with flat-tax proponents: expanding the federal charitable deduction so that non-itemizers can take advantage of it; raising the cap on corporate charitable deductions; creating a charitable state tax credit so individuals and families can get a break on state taxes; changing IRA laws so gifts can be made from retirement accounts without penalty.

This is not liberal, big government stuff. But it does represent, as the Bush press release bluntly states, "a different role for government." Different from the role envisioned by Clinton Democrats and Gingrich Republicans. For that matter, if you look around the Republican primary field, there is not a single candidate running in the spirit of the Gingrich revolutionaries (Forbes comes closest). McCain calls for "A New Patriotic Challenge." Dole revives Ripon Republicanism. Bauer and Buchanan want to use government each in his own way, to preserve Social Security or regulate trade.

Republicans will always be skeptical of government programs, but the vehement anti-government thinking that crested in 1995 is now in retreat.

David Brooks is senior editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Hastert's Hour

by Fred Barnes

At the critical moment in the House debate, speaker Denny Hastert was handed a list of eight Republican moderates leery of voting for a tax cut of nearly $800 billion. At first, Hastert flinched. He needed to persuade four of them to vote yes for the tax cut to pass and was skeptical that he could do it. His alternative was to offer a much smaller cut—no more than $500 billion—that would embarrass Republicans on their trademark issue. The Washington press corps, monolithic in its loathing of tax cuts, would prefer the smaller cut. But then reporters would question Hastert's ability to lead. So he went for the bigger tax cut, arguing chaos in the House would result from a defeat on the tax issue. Soon moderates began falling into line: John Porter and Ray LaHood of Illinois, Sherwood Boehlert of New York, Tom Campbell of California.

There was more to this victory than meets the eye. Obviously, Hastert established himself as a leader to be reckoned with. He succeeded where Newt Gingrich, given the level of mistrust toward him among House Republicans, would have failed. Also, it extended an unexpected GOP winning streak in Congress. Senate Republicans, led by Don Nickles, recently slam-dunked Democrats on the patients' bill of rights. And House Republicans, in early July, forced President Clinton to accept the concept of a "lockbox" to keep Congress from spending the Social Security surplus.

But to understand the real significance of the tax cut, you have to remember where the issue was six months ago—nowhere. The debate then was over how the surplus could be divided to pay off the national debt and spend the rest. Any tax cut would be tiny. Even Hastert expressed doubts about a 10 percent across-the-board reduction in individual rates. Senate Republicans were disinclined toward serious tax relief. But then Hastert conducted a listening tour of GOP members and discovered their top priority was taxes. So in the budget resolution, most of the non-Social Security surplus was earmarked for tax cuts.

That was the easy part, but it had an enormous impact. If House Republicans had been unwilling to set aside roughly $800 billion for tax cuts, the Senate Republicans never would have done the same. (Just last year, they killed a House tax cut.) Nor would a bloc of Senate Democrats have talked up a tax cut of $500 billion or so. Nor would Clinton have raised his ceiling for tax cuts to $300 billion. All this occurred in the teeth of weak polls and seething media hostility to cutting taxes. After faulting Democrat John Dingell for siding with House Republicans on gun control, the *Washington Post* belittled House GOP moderates as docile for *not* bolting on taxes. The point here is that leadership can overcome many obstacles, even in Washington, if it leads.

All the progress would have been for naught if the House had voted down the Republican bill. It contains not only the 10 percent cut in personal income, but a drop from 20 to 15 percent in the capital gains tax rate, a phasing out of the federal inheritance tax, and an easing of the marriage penalty. (The Senate version cuts income taxes less, expands IRAs more.) Since the GOP has only a five-vote margin over Democrats, Hastert's task was to hold Republicans together. This was hard. "We have 20 guys who just don't get the program," says a Republican aide. At a party gathering in March, about 15 members said they opposed cutting taxes in 1999, period.

Hastert's approach, in meeting after meeting, was low-key. According to a GOP official, "Newt's attitude was to say, 'You're too stupid for your own good. Do what I say.' Hastert's attitude was to say, 'I need you. How do I get your vote?'" The Gingrich style sometimes worked, if only because Republicans had votes to spare. Now they don't. From Vern Ehlers of Michigan, Hastert heard about making the rate cut contingent on a shrinking national debt. This idea, refined by Nick Smith of Michigan, appealed especially to Campbell, and was incorporated in the bill.

At one meeting, Greg Ganske of Iowa said he couldn't vote for the cut even with the Ehlers addition. He was asked to leave, and did. On the House floor, Republicans pleaded with Mike Castle of Delaware to go along, the Ehlers modification having been aimed at satisfying his desire to curb the national debt. He voted no. Castle and Ganske are now on Hastert's pariah list. In the end, Hastert had votes to spare. Two Democrats—Virgil Goode of Virginia and Ralph Hall of Texas—promised to back the GOP tax cut, and four more voted for it once passage was certain. And one Republican defector, Jack Quinn of New York, was ready to vote for it if his vote was needed. It wasn't.

So what have we learned? First, Hastert is pretty good at maneuvering the GOP majority. He's no outside player like Gingrich, rarely appearing on TV or giving "major" speeches. He works from the inside, where he is more effective. Second, the traditional speaker's approach—taking the temperature of members before moving forward—seems to be working again. Gingrich, for his part, acted like a president and treated GOP members like staff. And last, Republicans may finally be learning how to manage Congress and deal with Clinton. Or is that too much to believe?

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

A New Democrat

by Tucker Carlson

Mike Forbes likes soup. But he doesn't like corn. So when Forbes, a third-term congressman from New York, found corn in his dehydrated soup-in-a-cup, he had a member of his congressional staff remove every kernel.

Picking corn out of soup is a tedious task, even by the standards of Capitol Hill, but members of Forbes's staff were used to such assignments. Many had already seen the congressman explode after an aide was slow to wash a dirty cereal bowl Forbes had left in a sink. Others had heard about the time Forbes lost his temper when a female assistant forgot to drain the water from his canned tuna before serving it to him.

Forbes has never been an easy man to work for. Over the course of his first four and a half years in Congress, a total of 53 staffers resigned or were fired from his office, a rate of about one a month. Then, two weeks ago, Forbes announced he was leaving the Republican party and becoming a Democrat. Every member of his staff immediately quit. Many say they are happy to be looking for new jobs. "He's a screamer," says one. "I was afraid of him," says Tina Mufford, his former staff assistant, "afraid he'd go off."

Michael Forbes

Not afraid he'd go off and become a Democrat, though. Virtually no one in Forbes's office anticipated that. Late in the afternoon of July 16, Forbes, still a Republican, left the Capitol and drove with a member of his staff to Reagan National Airport outside Washington. When he got to the airport, Forbes drove past the terminals and into the private airfield next door. His aide, legislative director Brian Fauls, was confused. "I asked him what he was doing," Fauls remembers. "He said, 'I'm bumming a ride from someone.'" As Fauls discovered later, the "someone" turned out to be the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, which had sent a Learjet to take Forbes home to Long Island.

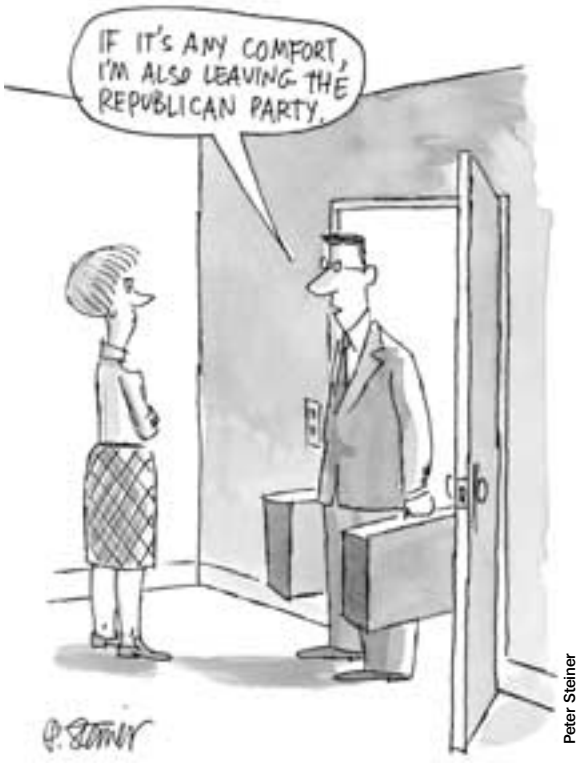
Forbes landed in New York and was picked up by a member of his district staff. Forbes and a DCCC operative sat in the back of the car talking. Forbes's driver listened, stunned, as the two chatted about Forbes's new party affiliation. At one point, Forbes fretted about his wife, Barbara, a staunch Republican who once worked at the Bush White House. "Barbara's still not sure about this," Forbes said. "You may have to help me convince her."

The driver dropped Forbes at his house and immediately called the staff at the Washington office to pass on what he had heard. Forbes himself called several hours later. The next day he held a press conference to tell the world. Ordinarily, Forbes's switch would have made the evening news. Unfortunately for him, Forbes chose to become a Democrat on the same day John Kennedy Jr.'s plane went down. The competition for coverage irritated Forbes. "This is really going to hurt my press," he told his executive assistant, Jeff LaCourse.

In his statement, Forbes complained, "There's no room in the Republican party in Congress for moderates like myself." The only problem is, Forbes was never a moderate. A pro-life, pro-gun member of the famously ferocious freshman class of 1994, Forbes voted for all four counts of impeachment against President Clinton. Each January, he held a reception in his Washington office for anti-abortion protesters commemorating the anniversary of *Roe* v. *Wade*. This spring, he endorsed George W. Bush for president.

Forbes has since suggested that his endorsement of Bush was less than wholehearted, and it probably was. Forbes originally planned to back Sen. John McCain in the presidential race. Earlier this year, he had discussions with McCain strategists, even floated the possibility of giving stump speeches on McCain's behalf. Then Al D'Amato called. Forbes once worked for D'Amato, and has remained in close contact with the former New York senator. According to LaCourse, "D'Amato told him, 'You're going to endorse Bush, and that's all there is to it.'" Forbes, who by all accounts is afraid of D'Amato, grudgingly agreed. "We paid the price for it," says LaCourse. "He was in a bad mood for a week."

Forbes won't have to take calls from Al D'Amato anymore. But he still hasn't retracted his endorsement of George W. Bush. Nor, apart from the usual talking points about Republican extremism, has he explained why, exactly, he switched parties. A high-level Democratic staffer who has spoken extensively with Forbes says two events pushed him over the edge. First was a speech that Rep. Tom DeLay gave shortly after the shootings at Columbine High School. In it, DeLay seemed to blame day-care programs for producing a generation of violent children. "That upset Forbes a great deal," says the staffer, "especially since his own kids had been through day care. He thought it was out of touch." The second event occurred just four days before Forbes switched parties, when Republicans sponsored a non-binding resolution condemning sexual relations between adults and children. Like just about everyone else in the House, Forbes voted for the resolution. At the same time, explains the Democratic staffer, he was disgusted by Republican grandstanding. "He said, 'Of course [pedophilia] is bad. But should we really be talking about this?'"



Peter Steiner

LaCourse remembers Forbes's reaction differently. The pedophilia vote was held on a Monday, which forced Forbes to return to Washington earlier than usual. Forbes was infuriated by the time he got to Washington, yelling at his chief of staff when he arrived. "He's very lazy," says LaCourse. "He just hated coming in."

After this fall, Forbes may never have to come in again. His district—mostly Suffolk County, at the Hamptons end of Long Island—is largely Republican. By switching parties, Forbes has guaranteed himself a tough general-election race. But he may also face a primary challenge. For months, Tony Bullock, the 42-year-old chief of staff to retiring New York senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, has been mulling a run for Forbes's seat. Bullock held various elected offices in the district for more than a decade, beginning in 1983. He is smart and well connected, and he loathes Mike Forbes. "Intellectually, he's a lightweight," Bullock says. "He's a person with very little basic decency."

Worse, Bullock claims, Forbes is still a conservative. "Mike Forbes is pro-life, pro-impeachment, pro-assault weapon, pro-Bush," Bullock says. "My phone has practically melted the past few days from Suffolk County Democrats calling to say, 'My God. I'm not going to work for this guy. I'm not going to vote for him.'" Party strategists at the DCCC, Bullock claims, didn't learn anything about the politics of the district before encouraging Forbes to become a Democrat. "The geniuses who thought this up should have done the research," Bullock says. Instead, "they may have gone to the Hamptons once for the weekend. . . . They're running a dead animal for this slot."

Staff at the DCCC, meanwhile, dismiss Bullock as a malcontent who will never find the courage to challenge Forbes. Bullock may or may not run, but some of his points are harder to dismiss. How, for instance, will the state party run Forbes alongside its presumed Senate candidate, Hillary Clinton? "How can he stand there next to Mrs. Clinton," Bullock asks, "with his George W. Bush pin and his pro-life record?" And how will Forbes explain away his long association with Dov Hikind, the hotheaded Brooklyn assemblyman who has repeatedly denounced Mrs. Clinton for her "love affair with Yasser Arafat"?

It's not clear that Forbes thought about any of this before he took the plunge. None of his former staffers seems to have any idea why he switched parties, though many mention that he had been acting odder than usual in recent months. "He's bi-polar," says one. "I think the clinical term is manic-depressive," says Jeff LaCourse. "All his behavior is weird. This is just the culmination of it."

Tony Bullock has never worked for Forbes, but he sees the same pattern. "It's a desperate act of self-immolation," Bullock says. "He's a few fries short of a Happy Meal."

Tucker Carlson is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Ain't No Such Thing As a Fox

From Michelangelo to Nabokov, Everyone's a Hedgehog

By David Gelernter

Isaiah Berlin's "The Hedgehog and the Fox" is one of this century's most famous essays—a virtuoso performance in which Berlin lays down his convenient distinction between two basic intellectual personalities, foxes and hedgehogs. Berlin's main topic is Tolstoy's historical thinking in light of Joseph de Maistre's, but the categories he introduces in order to explain Tolstoy are thriving on their own, like characters who have escaped from a novel and set up housekeeping. He based the distinction on Archilochus' familiar fragment, "The fox knows many things, the hedgehog one big one." According to Berlin, the intellectual world divides into fox-type thinkers and hedgehog types, and there is a "great chasm" between them. The foxes have many ideas and "pursue many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory." The hedgehogs "relate everything to a single central vision." The distinction is now well established. Does it make sense?

> ISAIAH BERLIN'S BIASES, HOWEVER DEFENSIBLE, DISTORT HIS VIEW OF THE HUMAN MIND. HE DOESN'T PROBE FOR THE DEEP STREAMS.

Berlin (not coincidentally) knew many things himself, and it will always be a pleasure to follow him as he strolls spryly through the intellectual landscape pursuing many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory. His work is a noisy party where you meet lots of interesting people. His range and depth are wonderful. His elegant dove-gray prose is always graceful and neatly tailored. His best sentences rise in long mesmerizing plumes, like smoke streams elaborating themselves at the glowing tips of after-dinner cigars in Oxford dining halls. "The Hedgehog and the Fox" is a tour de force.

But when the piece is done and you have finished applauding, the impression grows on you that you have been had. On inspection, Berlin's logic is sketchy and his conclusions unsupported. It isn't clear what a fox or a hedgehog really is. The weaknesses of the scheme show up clearly when you try to apply it to thinkers Berlin himself doesn't discuss and you get lost immediately.

Consider for the sake of argument two wildly different Renaissance men: Vladimir Nabokov and Michelangelo. Nabokov, like Berlin, is a Russian expatriate who is in vogue this year, the centennial of his birth. Michelangelo is in vogue every year. Both men are exceptional for the grand scope of their interests and accomplishments, and their magisterial command of detail. Berlin's scheme fails on both. If we follow his guidance, we misdiagnose them both as foxes, and they were both blatant hedgehogs.

Berlin is in fact consistently pro-fox, anti-hedgehog. No wonder; he associates hedgehogs with the idea that "truth is one and undivided, and the same for all men everywhere at all times" (as he writes in another context, in "Giambattista Vico and Cultural History"); foxes he associates with the tolerant, humane pluralism that he admires above all other virtues. His biases, however defensible, distort his view of the human mind. He doesn't probe for the deep streams that underlie and unify an artist's varied work. He doesn't investigate the hovering visions (cloud by day, fire by night) that beckon an artist forward—as Racine is drawn, in Robert Lowell's poem, "through his maze of iron composition, by the incomparable wandering voice of Phèdre." He doesn't confront the astonishing fact that when a man seeks unity in nature, he usually finds it. Unity is a basic human desire: We seek sexual union, and often a form of social union with the community or nation. Scientists seek unity in nature and monotheists in God. But

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Berlin dislikes hedgehogs and disdains to investigate what one might call the "unity drive." He knows many things—but he misses many, too. And he never succeeds in proving that there *is* any such thing as a "fox."

What makes a so-called fox? For Berlin the quintessence of foxness is meticulous, concrete observation of real life in all its dazzling variety. A fox is a happy browser in life's shopping mall; a hedgehog dashes in with a shopping list, grabs what he needs, and dashes out. Thus, we know that Tolstoy is a fox because, says Berlin, "he perceived reality in all its multiplicity. . . . No author who has ever lived has shown such powers of insight into the variety of life." A hedgehog, on the other hand, scans the world through the narrow gunsight of his preconceptions. He is interested only in such facts as confirm his pet, pat theory, whatever it is. Marxists are Berlin's paradigm hedgehogs: They can only sustain their Marxist beliefs by ignoring all contrary evidence.

But just because a fox perceives many things doesn't mean he thinks many thoughts—and the idea that no single-minded hedgehog can be a good observer is demonstrably wrong. A hedgehog might allow his one big idea to skew his vision, but he might also *seek out* observations that contradict his theory, for the sake of refining and testing it. Devout religious believers are as likely as anyone to dwell on the multifarious reality of evil. Scientists with new theories seek counter-examples. A great scientist such as John Von Neumann or Richard Feynman has a hedgehog lust for deep, unifying themes—and yet Von Neumann and Feynman were each superbly observant, had wide interests and voracious appetites. They each spent a lifetime observing keenly, tying loose ends together, and pursuing fundamental unities. That's what science is: a fox eye plus a hedgehog brain. Berlin's scheme leaves too little room for science.

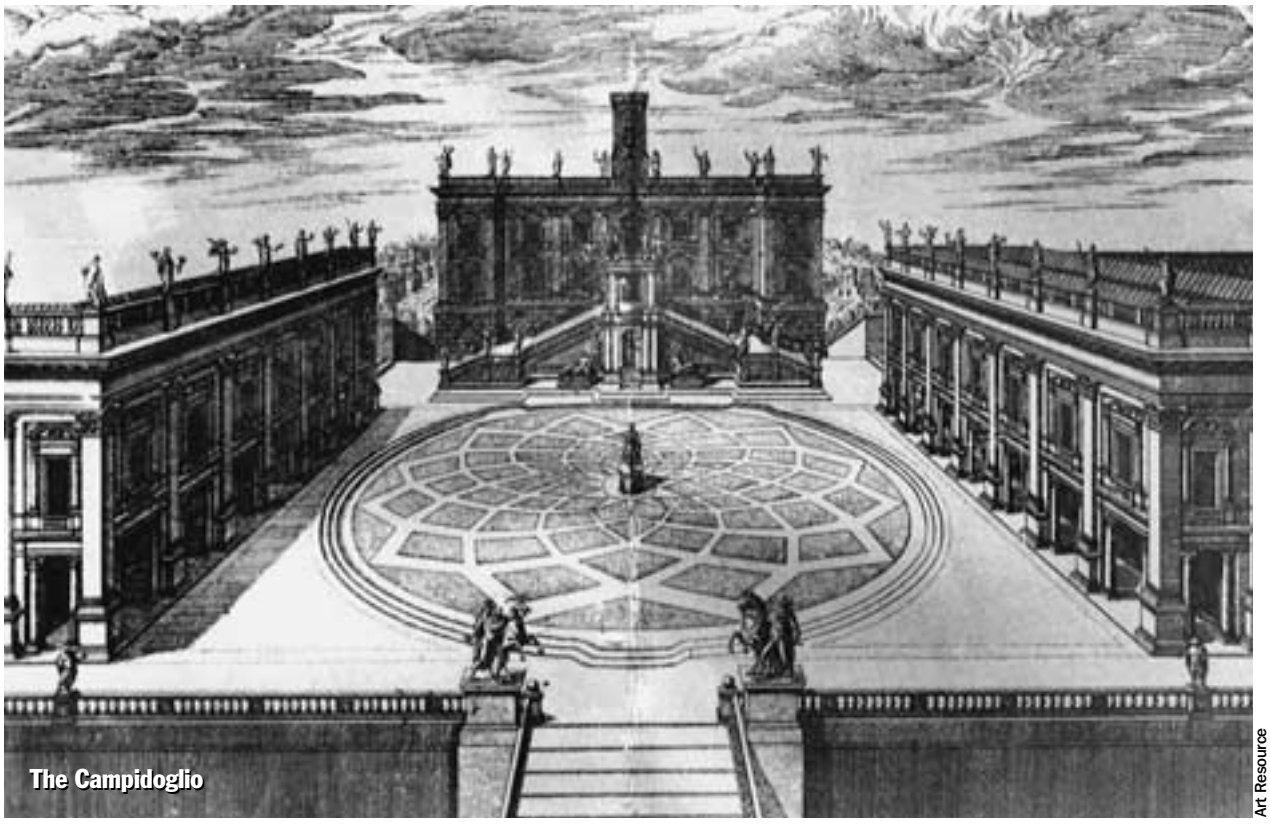
It also leaves too little room for people who think in pictures instead of (or in addition to) words. For Berlin, a hedgehog's big idea is something he "believes in," "advocates," "preaches." But you might be a hedgehog whose big idea, being a picture, can't be put into words and can't be advocated or believed in; can only be perceived. It's not surprising that writers and not painters, architects, or sculptors are the only artists who appear in "The Hedgehog and the Fox."

Berlin's refusal to consider the image-thinker goes to the flawed heart of the hedgehog-fox dichotomy. What does it mean to pronounce someone a fox? That there is no single unifying idea behind his work?—or only that we can't find one? Is "fox" an actual personality type or only a convenient way to say, "We give up"?

Michelangelo was a sculptor and painter and architect of unique, transcendental greatness; also a distinguished poet and a fine engineer. For Berlin, the sheer range of his interests ought to qualify him as a fox. And listen to Vasari praising the detail and individuality of the figures in the Sistine Chapel lunettes: "It would take too long to describe the many beautiful and different poses and gestures. . . . It is impossible to recount the diversity of details in these pictures, such as their garments, their facial expressions, and countless extraordinary and original inventions." This passage calls to mind Isaiah Berlin praising Tolstoy's foxness, "the celebrated lifelikeness of every object and every person" in Tolstoy's created world.

The Laurentian Library Staircase

Art Resource



The Campidoglio

Art Resource

Yet Michelangelo was *the* quintessential hedgehog. Charles de Tolnay says so in the first paragraph of his famous study. "Throughout his life," Tolnay writes, Michelangelo "seems to have been haunted by a single vision."

If Berlin insists that we tell him what that single, haunting vision *was*—we're stuck. It can't be reduced wholly to words. Yet we miss something crucial in Michelangelo's work if we don't look for it anyway.

Michelangelo's unifying vision has something to do with man's soul struggling through the gross, beautiful medium of his body to master the spiritual chaos of the universe. The image Michelangelo associates with this theme has to do with vivid, organized motion around a definite center. Many of his single figures (a Jonah, Moses, God as He creates Adam) are caught in the act of powerful movement. The crowd scenes in the Last Judgment and Pauline frescoes are famous for whirlpool motion around a focal figure or axis. The same themes exist in more "abstract" media. The strange architectural masterpiece of the Laurentian Library staircase "seems to run down and spread," Tolnay writes, "like a cascade of lava"—captured motion. An ordinary flight of stairs is a line between two points, but Michelangelo's staircase has a focus: three up from the bottom, a stair-tread broadens into a complete oval. The rest of the structure subtly gathers around this point, as if the staircase were tendering between thumb and forefinger some exotic oval jewel. At the Campidoglio in Rome, Michelangelo surrounds the ancient bronze of Marcus Aurelius at the plaza's center with an oval shield of pavement. The shield is patterned with a radiating starburst that creates, at its fingertips, a lovely symmetry of outward-moving ripples. Michelangelo's pattern converts Marcus Aurelius from a lifeless tent pole, the center of a static composition, to the motion-creating dropped pebble in a rippling pool.

We could go all through Michelangelo's work picking out manifestations of his underlying big idea. That would be fruitless. The hunt for the hedgehog's big theme ought to be done judiciously and not pushed too far. (Berlin's idea that a hedgehog must necessarily be inflexible and dogmatic is wrong.) We ought to be willing to settle for a series of clues that show the way (like the converging sides of an unfinished obelisk) to a top-point—the one big unifying vision—that remains unrealized; that may never exist outside the artist's mind.

But if the search *is* judicious, it can be crucial to our understanding of the artist's work. Berlin claims that hedgehoggery brings about "not many levels of consciousness but reduction to some single level." Yet our goal in recognizing Michelangelo's unity of purpose is not "reductionist," not to reduce or flatten his achievements to a series of variations on a theme. Our goal is to see his work more clearly by understanding, for example, the relationships among the Campi-

doglio's patterned pavement, the oval tread in the Laurentian Library staircase, and Jesus at the center of the Last Judgment, realigning the whirling cosmos forever. By hearing surface details and big basso themes simultaneously, the hedgehog-seeker operates at "many levels of consciousness"; acknowledges the many forms that a thought might take.

Berlin might not have minded classifying Michelangelo as a hedgehog. Nabokov is a different story; given Berlin's approach, it's hard to see how Nabokov could be anything *but* a fox. His biographer Brian Boyd mentions Berlin's dichotomy and quotes a Nabokov acquaintance: "In Berlin's terms, he was the fox, not the hedgehog." Nabokov had several careers: writer, critic, and scholar; lepidopterist; chess-problem designer. His two best and best-known novels, *Lolita* (1955) and *Pale Fire* (1962), seem radically unlike. One is the love-tale of a murderer, the other a poem with a bizarre and hilarious pseudo-scholarly commentary.

On the other hand, both *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* tell the story of an arrogant, handsome, unsavory, self-absorbed sexually deviant European literary scholar who has settled in America, fallen in love with a native (Humbert with Lolita, homosexual Kinbote with the elderly poet John Shade)—and himself been the object of unrequited love. Both books center on murder and the gradual unraveling of disguises. Both main characters become fugitives, and their love-objects wind up dead. Like twins separated at birth, the two books even share strange minor plot twists—each protagonist hides a crucial manuscript on his person (Humbert his diary, Kinbote Shade's poem) at the time of another main character's death. Thus, two dazzling-cold masterpieces in different shapes and colors (ruby *Lolita*, topaz *Pale Fire*) that are lit from below (inspired and inflamed) by one blazing knot of ideas. We are reminded of Tolnay quoting Proust on Michelangelo's hedgehogness: "The great artists," Proust wrote, "have never made more than a single work, or rather they have never done more than refract through different settings the same beauty."

Nabokov was a writer and lepidopterist—seemingly unrelated occupations, but aspects (for Nabokov himself) of one basic urge. He explains in his autobiography, commenting on lantern slides he encountered in childhood: "What loveliness the glass slides as such revealed when simply held between finger and thumb and raised to the light—translucent miniatures, pocket wonderlands, neat little worlds of hushed luminescent hues! In later years, I rediscovered the same precise silent beauty at the radiant bottom of a microscope's magic shaft." He is an image-thinker, and the unifying themes that captivate him are pictures. He is fascinated by the image of a certain type of microcosm, which draws him to novel-writing *and* butterfly science. In his formidably peculiar novel *Ada* (1969), Nabokov refers to "the rapture of her identity, placed under the microscope of reality." To Berlin (who is enraptured by Tolstoy's gift for "expressing the specific flavour, the exact quality of a feeling"), the "microscope of reality" is the fox's favorite instrument. The fox specializes in the rapture of individual identity. But Nabokov is a master of the telling, concrete detail; and the microscope is the symbol of his hedgehoggery, a unifying theme hover-

Detail of the 'Last Judgment'

Art Resource

ing over the complex, opalescent surface of his life's work.

How do the strands come together? As usual, we do better to catch a glimpse of the grand unifying theme than to run it into the ground and insist on finding its fingerprints everywhere. But Nabokov himself gives us a clue. "A colored spiral in a small ball of glass," he writes in his autobiography, "this is how I see my own life." Spirals first interested him in childhood, and came to haunt him as he recognized the spiraling course of his own life—from Russia to England to Germany to France to America to Switzerland, always spiraling onward, never circling back. His characters tend to be fugitives too. A spiral is (in a way) an unraveling circle, and "unraveling" (as of disguises) is a central theme of Nabokov's fiction. He deals not in love triangles but in love spirals: Haze loves Humbert loves Lolita loves . . . Even his microscope shaft is a circular porthole with a view that spirals inward—growing closer and deeper as you click round the spiral of lenses to ever-higher magnifications. (There is a photograph that shows Nabokov at a lab bench, cradling just this type of microscope tenderly in both hands.) Nabokov's spiral is a perfect example of the pictorial big idea that might haunt a hedgehog—which Berlin misses entirely.

THE "HEDGEHOG DRIVE"—TO SEEK UNITY—RESEMBLES THE SEX DRIVE: STRONGER IN SOME PEOPLE, WEAKER IN OTHERS, RARELY ABSENT ALTOGETHER.

We are left with a basic difference of approach. When we encounter the scattered fragments of an artist's work, should we try to piece them together? Even *knowing* that we might never succeed?—might have to settle for a handful of slightly larger fragments, might never reconstruct the whole? Or should we skip the attempted reassembly, declare foxhood, and move on?

My own guess is that there is no such thing as a fox; there are only different types of hedgehog—actual and incipient hedgehogs, obvious and less-obvious hedgehogs, contented and struggling hedgehogs. A man may have many facets, interests, skills, and appetites—but he has only one personality. Believers and atheists divide over the question of whether man was created in God's image or God in man's. But everyone assumes implicitly that nature was created in man's image. The soul in its unity looks at the world in its endless variety and wants to see its own unity mirrored back. Wants to discover that, just as a man's varied actions reflect one mind or soul or personality, so also the moon's orbit and a falling leaf, a ball bouncing and water warming in the sun reflect one small, tidy packet of basic laws and forces. One of the craziest hypotheses in human history; also one of the most pregnant and productive.

The "hedgehog drive," to seek unity—the drive that has so much to do with science, art, and monotheism—resembles the sex drive in certain ways. Stronger in some people, weaker in others. Rarely absent altogether. Dividing mankind into hedgehogs and foxes makes no more sense than dividing us into sexual and asexual people. True foxes (and asexuals) are too flukish to form the basis of any rational dichotomy. A fox has a unity drive so weak as to be non-existent. *Are* there such people? Perhaps, but not very many. The hedgehog-fox dichotomy conceals the truth under a false equation between incommensurables. There are infinitely many degrees of hedgehogness, but only one way to be purely sexless or an outright fox.

Berlin's essays continue to be read and valued, and deserve to be. But his fox-and-hedgehog view of human thought has done harm. Notice how Nabokov's brilliant, superbly well-informed biographer refuses to acknowledge the man's hedgehog tendencies although the facts are intriguing and stare him in the face. Although a Nabokov-invented narrator quotes with approval a Nabokov-invented novelist in *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941): "All things belong to the same order of things, for such is the oneness of human perception, the oneness of individuality, the oneness of matter. . . . The only real number is one."

By inventing the fox, Berlin built a handy escape hatch into scholarship and criticism; an easy out. It's always harder to locate the delicate, sometimes subtle, sometimes even ineffable themes that tie an artist's work together than to declare foxhood and leave it at that. But the search for unity (if it is patient and not peremptory, judicious and not dogmatic, relentless but not dictatorial) is the search for truth. Every man has the right to be assumed a hedgehog until proven foxy, even Isaiah Berlin. ♦

Madeleine Albright's Vendetta

The Persecution of a Career Civil Servant

By Matthew Rees

"I have never seen such a blatant, raw attempt to harass and silence a whistleblower who simply told the truth."

That's Sen. Charles Grassley, a normally even-keeled Iowa Republican, thundering in a recent speech about the treatment of Linda Shenwick. A veteran civil servant at the U.S. mission to the United Nations, Shenwick has been the target of a ruthless campaign spearheaded by Madeleine Albright. Her offense? Providing Capitol Hill and the media with public information about waste, mismanagement, and rule-breaking by officials at the United Nations and the U.S. mission.

Albright and her acolytes have been dogging Shenwick, whose job until recently was to monitor the U.N. budget, for much of the past five years. But in recent weeks, the stakes have been ratcheted up a few notches. In mid-June, the State Department expelled Shenwick from the U.S. mission, and on June 29 her pay was suspended pending resolution of a dispute over her next federal job. Grassley, in protest of the "outrageous treatment" of Shenwick, announced on June 24 he was placing a "hold" on Richard Holbrooke's nomination to be the next U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Kevin Chadwick

Linda Shenwick

In the weeks since Grassley's announcement, his spine has only stiffened. He says the State Department, in responding to the Shenwick matter, has provided him with explanations that are "weak, and at times false or misleading." And he says that in order for him to release his hold on Holbrooke's nomination, "fairness and civility must prevail." This won't be easy.

Linda Shenwick started working at the State Department in 1979 while she was still in law school, driven by a sense of public service and an interest in foreign affairs. In 1984 she was transferred to the U.S. mission to the United Nations, where she first was assigned to handle personnel and budget issues. She quickly carved out a reputation for diligence and hard work, which won her three consecutive "outstanding" ratings—the highest given—between January 1987 and July 1989. Her performance also won her regular promotions, and in 1988 she was admitted to the Senior Executive Service, an elite corps of federal civil servants.

In August 1991 and again in November 1993, representatives of other U.N. member states elected Shenwick to serve on the influential Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), which recommends how U.N. money and personnel should be allocated. These votes of confidence reflected the respect accorded to her by U.N. officials. And her service on the committee helped her acquire a detailed knowledge of the byzantine U.N. budget process.

In recent years, some have tried to portray Shenwick as a tool of Jesse Helms and other Republican critics of the U.N. But this is a caricature. While she

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has indeed blown the whistle on U.N. malfeasance, Shenwick didn't shy away from revealing wrongdoing by a senior appointee of a Republican president. In 1989 she reported to the State Department's inspector general that Thomas Pickering, then the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., had violated State Department procurement regulations by having his wife make noncompetitive purchases of everything from furniture to catering services. Pickering challenged the allegation and tried to get Shenwick's job-performance downgraded (in an earlier job evaluation, he had praised her as "well organized" and "very analytical"). She countered by accusing him of illegally retaliating against her, and when the matter was finally resolved in November 1992, Shenwick was granted two retroactive promotions, back pay, and reimbursement of $16,000 in legal fees.

This persistence, coupled with Shenwick's expertise on U.N. budget issues and extensive contacts on Capitol Hill and in the media, led Madeleine Albright to distrust her from the beginning. Shortly after Albright arrived at the United Nations in 1993, Pickering's ethical problems were rehashed in the press in connection with his nomination as ambassador to Russia. That prompted Albright's deputy, Ned Walker, to tell Shenwick, "These articles hurt you with Ambassador Albright; she feels uncomfortable with you."

It's important to remember that while Albright gained publicity in 1995-96 for being an outspoken critic of the U.N. and its secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali—he blames Albright for his not being reappointed—this was not always so. Until the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, she was an enthusiastic supporter of the U.N. and its foreign-policy priorities, enamored of phrases like "assertive multilateralism." Indeed, she viewed criticism of the institution as criticism of her. And given Shenwick's success in uncovering specific instances of waste, fraud, and abuse at the U.N.—such as the production of a book commemorating the U.N.'s 50th anniversary at a cost of $715 per page—a clash was inevitable.

The first instance of outright hostility came in June 1994. During a senior staff meeting attended by Shenwick, Albright blamed her for the hold Sen. Larry Pressler, a South Dakota Republican, had placed on the nomination of David Birenbaum for a top management and reform job. "The president wants this nomination," hissed Albright, "and you are impeding it." Shenwick's supposed sin? She had, in full compliance with State Department regulations, responded to requests from Pressler about U.N. budget and management practices, and he had used the information in Birenbaum's confirmation hearing.

Albright's deputies adopted a similarly hostile tone. On July 17, 1994, the *Washington Post* published a brief article about shortcomings in a U.S.-sponsored proposal for a U.N. inspector general. That morning, following a senior staff meeting at the U.S. mission, Albright's devoted press aide, Jamie Rubin, yelled at Shenwick that she'd be sacked if she ever talked to reporters, or Pressler, again.

> JAMIE RUBIN YELLED AT SHENWICK THAT SHE'D BE SACKED IF SHE EVER TALKED TO REPORTERS, OR SENATOR PRESSLER, AGAIN.

When Shenwick didn't back down, the harassment escalated. In October 1994, Birenbaum—by this time confirmed as deputy representative for U.N. management and reform—relieved her of her authority to assign work to much of her staff, claiming she was too busy with her ACABQ duties. Shenwick disagreed and took the matter up with Edward Gnehm, a senior U.S. mission official. He was no help. "What do you expect after what you did at Birenbaum's hearings," he told her. "This is payback."

In March 1995, Shenwick attended a meeting of top U.S. mission officials, and they criticized her job performance. When she pointed to her favorable personnel evaluations—she'd received an "excellent" and an "outstanding" during the period from July 1992 to May 1994—Albright quickly interjected, "We are looking into changing that." And when Albright learned Shenwick had shared public information with a Senate Appropriations Committee staffer about shoddy U.N. procurement practices, she ordered her "never to meet with Hill staffers alone again" (Rubin repeated the order a few days later).

All of the complaints about Shenwick notwithstanding, Albright regularly called on her for assistance with U.N. budget issues. Indeed, when Shenwick crafted a proposal in late 1995 to cut over $154 million from the U.N. budget, Albright used it as the basis for the American position in that year's round of budget negotiations. Albright also retained Shenwick as a lead

negotiator during multilateral budget sessions and had her conduct briefings on the U.N. budget for congressional staffers.

There was, however, a limit to the use Albright would make of Shenwick's budget expertise. In the spring of 1996, when the United States had to nominate someone for the U.N.'s Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Albright dumped Shenwick, who had just completed nearly five years on the committee. She told her that while her performance had been "excellent," she had been "too tenacious on U.N. reform."

This move was hypocritical on two fronts. Albright makes much of her commitment to hiring and promoting women in government; she once told the *Washington Post* that prominent in her "galaxy of people I have no use for" are "women who don't help other women." But presented with the opportunity to reward a talented civil servant who happens to be a woman, Albright gave more weight to a parochial dispute.

Equally revealing, the decision to dump Shenwick from the ACABQ came at a time when Albright was loudly criticizing Boutros-Ghali for failing to clean up the U.N.'s finances. The ACABQ, dominated by individuals with years of U.N. budget experience who tend to be hostile to macro-reforms, is precisely the kind of forum where a representative with Shenwick's thorough knowledge of U.N. budget issues is invaluable to the United States. And not only was Albright willing to discard Shenwick's expertise, but the individual nominated in Shenwick's place was defeated in the ACABQ election, depriving the United States of a voice in this powerful arena.

These contradictions rarely received press coverage. Albright, super-sensitive about her public image, was always careful to express satisfaction with Shenwick's work. In a February 1996 letter to Sen. Rod Grams, a Minnesota Republican, Albright wrote that Shenwick was a "valued member" of the "reform team." And at a Senate hearing two months later, a senior State Department official, Princeton Lyman, said of Shenwick's ACABQ tenure, "It was Ambassador Albright's judgment that Miss Shenwick had done an outstanding job."

But it was different in private. Albright was known around the U.N. as "the queen of mean" for her rudeness. In *Seasons of Her Life*, an evenhanded biography of Albright published last year, Ann Blackman writes that "many of those who have watched Albright's evolution over the years say that she changed at the United Nations, that the friendly, easygoing woman they had known showed a new tendency to be imperious and somewhat dismissive of those who got in her way."

Indeed, even after engineering Shenwick's ouster from the ACABQ, Albright wasn't content. In April 1996, for example, Albright personally ordered the hiring of a retired former deputy chief of the U.S. mission, Herbert Gelber, and made his primary responsibility overseeing Shenwick and evaluating her performance. This was highly suspicious, given that no such position had previously existed at the U.S. mission and Gelber had once been a top deputy to Thomas Pickering, the U.N. ambassador Shenwick had tangled with years earlier.

SUPER-SENSITIVE ABOUT HER PUBLIC IMAGE, ALBRIGHT WAS ALWAYS CAREFUL TO EXPRESS SATISFACTION WITH SHENWICK'S WORK.

It didn't take Gelber long to strike. Within a month of accepting the job, he had raised questions about Shenwick's use of entertainment funds, telephones, and fax machines (an investigation by the State Department's inspector general found no wrongdoing). Subsequent remarks, however, revealed that his real concerns with Shenwick were not ethical but political. He once said to her, during a meeting in his office, "What you do with Republicans is between you and God, but I don't know how you sleep at night." And when it appeared that Sen. Pressler, who was up for reelection in 1996, was in jeopardy, Gelber told Shenwick, "It looks like he's going to be gone, and you'll be next."

Gelber, meanwhile, had an ethics problem of his own. Shortly after he took the job, Shenwick informed the inspector general that State Department regulations barred employees from receiving a pension while serving in a supervisory role, forcing Gelber to have his pension temporarily suspended.

Gelber got his revenge when he issued his evaluation of Shenwick's job performance on December 4, 1996. He gave her an "unsatisfactory" rating. This was the strongest signal of all that Albright wanted Shenwick ousted, for once State Department employees belonging to the Senior Executive Service have been rated unsatisfactory, they must be transferred out of their jobs. The rating also underscored the hardball

tactics Albright was deploying against Shenwick: According to Office of Personnel Management data, no State Department employee belonging to the SES had ever received an "unsatisfactory" rating.

Shortly after handing down this evaluation, Gelber returned to retirement. Shenwick, meanwhile, tried to make a personal appeal to Albright at a U.S. mission social event, but didn't get very far. Elaine Shocas, Albright's chief of staff and a one-time Democratic party activist, quickly intervened and told Shenwick, "We know all about [the unsatisfactory evaluation] and we are prepared to deal with the legal and political consequences." Albright, who witnessed the exchange, walked away without saying anything and hasn't spoken with Shenwick since.

In the two and a half years since Gelber's career-derailing evaluation, the campaign to intimidate Shenwick has persisted. Senior U.S. mission officials—Richard Sklar and A. Peter Burleigh in particular—have taken the lead. Albright, who's been in Washington as secretary of state, has quietly backed them, as Shenwick learned when she complained about her treatment to Albright's successor as U.N. ambassador, Bill Richardson. He told her, "Your problems are with Madeleine."

Shenwick eventually filed a complaint with the Office of Special Counsel, a federal agency that seeks to resolve personnel disputes, alleging her unsatisfactory rating had been retaliatory and was thus prohibited (according to Shenwick, Sklar warned her against pursuing this complaint, saying in November 1997, "We will break you financially and professionally"). The State Department's attempts to resolve the matter quietly have proven comical and corrupt.

Illustrating the sheer pettiness of the department's case against Shenwick are the charges it forwarded to the Office of Special Counsel last year to justify her "unsatisfactory" rating. Shenwick, according to the State Department, had had a poor relationship with the chairman of the ACABQ, hadn't given proper credit to her staff for writing memos, and had failed to have a going-away party for a member of her staff.

But there was a problem with these charges. The latter two were demonstrably false. As for her poor relations with the ACABQ chairman, they stemmed from her role in helping to publicize that he had determined his own compensation package, traveled lavishly, and put his common-law wife on his staff. These disclosures complied with both the letter of State Department regulations and the spirit of the U.S. effort to curb waste at the U.N. (Shenwick's job performance evaluations praised her approach to the "entrenched" chairman.) The disclosures also factored into the U.S. decision not to support the chairman's reelection bid in 1997.

The State Department abandoned the charges against Shenwick a few months after making them, only to come forward with an entirely new set of allegations last month. Shenwick, according to the department, had become ineffective in dealing with foreign missions to the U.N.; it cited a diplomat from Belgium, Peter Maddens, and one from Britain, Nick Thorne. Similarly, State charged that Shenwick had expressed positions in U.N. budget negotiations contrary to the position of the U.S. government.

But both of these charges collapse under scrutiny. Maddens has told Shenwick's lawyer that he had a professional relationship with Shenwick and never had any difficulty with her, while Thorne says that when U.S. officials approached him, he refused comment. With respect to insubordination, when Shenwick's lawyer asked for examples over two months ago, a State Department lawyer replied that no one could recall any specific instance.

The State Department's final allegation is that Shenwick refused to share information from ACABQ proceedings with her U.S. mission colleagues. The only problem is that information discussed at ACABQ meetings is strictly confidential, and Shenwick could have been removed from the committee for violating her confidentiality oath.

As for the original source of hostility toward Shenwick—her sharing public information with Capitol Hill and the media—the State Department recently conceded in a letter to Grassley that she is a "protected whistleblower."

Surely the strangest development of all came on April 13. That's when the State Department lawyer handling the case, Melinda Chandler, told Victoria Toensing, Shenwick's lawyer, that a job had been found for Shenwick in Manhattan (where she has lived for the past 15 years). The post—"senior program adviser" at a Department of Energy lab—called for advising the lab director on matters such as environmental research. There was just one problem: Shenwick had no experience in any of the areas for which she would be responsible.

So why was she offered this position? On April 23,

Shenwick met with a senior lab official at a Manhattan coffee shop to discuss the job, but the official was unable to answer even her most elementary questions about the offer. Indeed, the official conceded the position of "senior program adviser" to the lab director had never before existed, and that Shenwick was unqualified for it.

The official also confided that the source of the job offer was Bill Richardson, now serving as energy secretary. Richardson had flown the lab official to Washington and met with him for 30 minutes to discuss finding a position for Shenwick. Richardson admitted he had acted only after being urged to do so in a Saturday phone call from Albright (the Department of Energy confirmed in writing that the State Department had "approached" it about finding a job for Shenwick, but refused to confirm—or deny—Albright's involvement).


Kevin Chadwick

Madeleine Albright

Albright's interest in disposing of Shenwick was so great that she not only was willing to transfer one of the State Department's coveted Senior Executive Service slots to the Department of Energy if it would take Shenwick, she also was willing to provide Energy with $2.5 million over five years to cover a variety of projects in addition to Shenwick's salary and expenses. This sum, as a lab official revealed to Shenwick, was considerably more than the lab needed from State.

On April 26, Shenwick reluctantly visited the Varick Street lab—she had been warned not to leave messages with any lab officials, as everything about the job offer was "confidential"—and she came away believing the job was inappropriate for her. Three days later, the State Department upped the ante, telling Shenwick that if she didn't take the position she would be transferred to a job in Washington in 60 days. But she didn't budge, telling State in early May she didn't want the Department of Energy lab job.

This set off a new round of negotiations with State Department officials, which culminated on June 16 with Shenwick's being handed a faxed memo from Alex De La Garza, a State Department personnel official, informing her she had 48 hours to vacate the U.S. mission. The memo also reiterated that Shenwick was to begin a new State Department job in Washington on June 29. She resisted taking the new job—she says she's almost as unqualified for it as she is for the Department of Energy lab job—but State refused to negotiate. Shenwick subsequently asked a senior U.S. mission official with whom she had friendly relations why the crusade against her was suddenly intensifying, and she was given a simple answer: Washington.

That's a reference to Albright, though her office denies any wrongdoing. Jamie Rubin, now the secretary's spokesman at the State Department, said on July 22 that Albright "was not, as some have suggested, engaged in some persecution of Miss Shenwick. It's just not true; it's simply incorrect." The State Department did not respond to multiple inquiries seeking further comment. And Rubin refused to answer questions about Albright's role in the effort to procure a job for Shenwick outside the department, declaring (incorrectly) that the Privacy Act prevented him from answering.

As for Shenwick, she's happy to have the support of senators like Charles Grassley, Trent Lott, and Olympia Snowe, as well as the 287 House members who on July 21 voted for a resolution supporting her complaint against the State Department. (Interestingly, no congressional Democrat—not even foreign-policy hatchetman Joe Biden—has jumped on the anti-Shenwick bandwagon.) But even if these senators help persuade the State Department to give her back her job at the U.S. mission, it won't undo the damage that's been done: six-figure legal bills, loss of salary, character assassination, and the dissemination of unsubstantiated allegations about her personal life.

Shenwick could, of course, have minimized her troubles by resigning a few years ago when it was clear Albright wanted her out. But she says she has no regrets about standing up to the guerrilla warfare. "I want people to know what can happen to anyone who gets on the wrong side of Madeleine Albright. No one deserves to be treated this way." And, she says, "while this is not a battle I have sought out, I'm going to be in it until the end." ♦

From the Streets of Chicago to the Court of St. James

The Annenberg Family Saga

by Noemie Emery

Picture this: A hungry young man of ethnic and immigrant background, a lone wolf and in some ways a predator, rises by means fair and foul, marries a religious and serious woman, settles over one million dollars on each of his numerous children, ends his public career in a battle with Franklin D. Roosevelt, grooms a son and heir to surpass him—and is in fact surpassed by that son, who comes in turn to wield power and be accepted in the highest circles.

No, this isn't another story about Joseph P. Kennedy, but about Moses Annenberg and his son, Walter, who became a publishing giant, art collector, major philanthropist, and friend to a series of presidents, among them Joe Kennedy's son. But power, sex, money, ambition, redemption, presidents, the mob, good works, and social climbing—all the elements that have made the Kennedy saga one of America's favorite soap operas—are equally present in the newly published *Legacy*, Christopher Ogden's account of the rise, dip, and rise again of the Annenberg family, which rose in the space of two generations from brickbats on the South Side of Chicago to immense wealth and the company of royalty.

Ogden's last book, *Life of the Party*, told how Pamela Harriman ran through rich men in four different countries until her last husband bought her the entree into politics she desired: Several facelifts and many millions of dollars later, she had become an ambassador. The Annenbergs' rise to an ambassadorship is a more complex story, darker and grittier, with a far broader range of both social background and human emotion.

CHRISTOPHER OGDEN
Legacy
A Biography of Moses and Walter Annenberg
Little Brown, 615 pp., $29.95

A story of legacy begins with a founder, who is often hard to love. "I had to hunt or starve," Moses said, comparing himself to a wolf among house dogs. "I learned how to hunt, and I kept it up." Born in East Prussia in 1877, he was sent at age six to fish all day in a lake near his home to feed his numerous family members. At eight, he stood barefoot on the deck of a passenger ship to glimpse the Statue of Liberty. He found his first paying job at thirteen in Chicago, where his family settled, and for the next ten years held a series of jobs, none of which did much to satisfy what Ogden calls his "increasing passion to make money and a name."

"I was so hungry for success," he wrote later, "that my one wish, for which I prayed night and day, was for an opportunity to demonstrate how earnestly and hard I could work if only I had a chance." The chance came when William Randolph Hearst moved into the city with his *Chicago American* and took Moses on as a subscription salesman, charged with canvassing, and delivering papers.

This was not as tame as it sounds. Papers were stolen or burned by rival

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establishments, and salesmen were beaten and threatened. Moses rose every day at 3:30 A.M. and hit the streets with two guns in his pocket at the head of an army of toughs, some of whom became killers. He held his ground, charmed sales out of housewives, and was sent by Hearst to Milwaukee to re-organize his holdings there in 1906.

It was in Milwaukee that he consolidated several weak papers into the *Wisconsin News*, bought distribution agencies, and made his first real breakthrough on a tip from his wife—offering, on her advice, silver spoons as premiums for new subscribers. He sold 100 million spoons, made his first million dollars, and branched out into real estate.

In 1920, now worth more than $2 million, he was called to New York to direct circulation for the entire Hearst empire, which included thirty-seven papers from Boston to San Francisco and nine magazines. For $400,000, in 1922, he bought the *Daily Racing Form*, the indispensable organ of the horse-racing industry, which was soon fattening the Annenberg coffers by $2.5 million a year. In May 1923, Moses was able to set up the Cecelia Investment Company (the middle name of wife Sadie) as an umbrella organization to shield his multiple holdings, which rose in 1927 to forty diversified businesses. The barefoot boy from Prussia was a multi-millionaire, a press baron, a huge success story, rapidly shedding the stigma of his violent days in Chicago. And then he made three terrible mistakes.

The first involved horses and gambling. In 1927, Annenberg purchased "the wire," the telegraph service that supplied information to the Associated Press, the United Press, and all the illegal bookmakers nationwide. Vastly more profitable than the up-and-up *Racing Form*, the wire multiplied the Annenberg fortune many times over. But it also put him, as Ogden says, "in a very bad neighborhood," set back his campaign for social acceptance, revived talk of mob ties from his days in Chicago, and tarnished the legacy he passed on to his son.

Annenberg's excuse was that he was merely a purveyor of information to customers, and that what they did with it could not be put on his ticket. But the wire was nonetheless the lifeblood of an illegal enterprise and gave ammunition to his long list of enemies. It was also a sign of hubris, and an acute failure of judgment—which would be increased by his second mistake.

In 1935, his old friend Arthur Brisbane (the prize columnist of the Hearst newspaper chain) warned Annenberg about taxes, urging him to make sure his accounts were in order. Annenberg had been involved for some time in evasion on a massive scale: hiding assets, moving them from holding to holding, writing off private spending—a lavish wedding for a daughter at a hotel in Manhattan, a trip with his mistress to South America—as business expenses. Eventually, he would be charged with evading taxes and slapped with a fine of $9.5 million ($110 million in 1999 dollars), the largest ever levied on a single man. The financial management of Moses's companies was so chaotic—his one accountant was a man with a third grade education, who had taken a non-credit commercial course in bookkeeping at age fifteen—that it is hard to tell intent from carelessness, but the evasions were too massive for any excuse of simple error to fly.

If it was a mistake for an ambitious man to tar his name with the racing wire, it was a far worse mistake to make himself vulnerable to criminal tax charges—and the worst mistake of all to do it when he was about to pick a battle with the president of the United States.

In 1936, Annenberg moved to Philadelphia and bought the ailing *Inquirer*, bringing him into a fierce, commercial war with the *Philadelphia Record*, published by David Stern, an ardent supporter of Roosevelt and the New Deal. Annenberg too had backed Roosevelt in the 1932 election and again in 1936. But then he began to turn on the president, criticizing him for his court-packing scheme in 1937 and for what he took to be his increasingly radical and anti-business tone.

In 1938, as the midterm elections approached, he began to challenge the administration in Pennsylvania state politics, picking and then ardently backing what was in effect his own slate of candidates against the local Roosevelt protégés. Soon, the commercial battle of Stern against Annenberg became the political battle of Annenberg against Roosevelt, as the nondescript candidates were all but forgotten in the venomous wars of their backers.

Democrats attacked Annenberg, digging up and adding to all the old charges. But on Election Day, Annenberg routed the Roosevelt slate in a landslide, ending the "Little New Deal" in Pennsylvania and terrifying the national Democratic party, which was heading into the next elections with a failing economic program.

Unforgiving—and apprehensive about his 1940 prospects—Roosevelt launched unconditional war against Annenberg, insisting not only that he be fined heavily for his tax problems but also that he be jailed. And jailed he was when—as part of a plea bargain to lift an indictment against his son Walter (who was

wholly innocent)—he pled guilty to one count of evasion and entered the medium-security prison at Lewisburg on July 23, 1940.

Parole efforts failed, and Moses Annenberg was grudgingly released two years later only when it was abundantly clear he was dying. He died one month and seventeen days later, on July 20, 1942, leaving his largely untested heir with a sense of guilt, a huge fortune, and a tarnished name.

Walter had suffered his own problems, which made his future appear less than bright. The sixth child and first son in a family of sisters, he was the object of his father's blowtorch attentions from his birth. Intensely pressured, he was also not "perfect"—deaf on one side (a family failing), with a deformed and shrunken right ear.

Not surprisingly, he developed a ferocious stutter as well. (Also not surprisingly, it abated after his father died.) His attentive father was a difficult parent who entertained his children by listing his companies and unnerved them with his unsettled temperament. Ogden notes, "Moses had a colossal temper, a blast that could appear from nowhere and leave his children quivering and associates with their mouths agape."

Marking him as the heir from the beginning, Moses took Walter into business and kept him beside him while giving him no job and no power. And though loving the boy, he also browbeat him, undermining what little confidence he might have had. "Walter adored his father, he really did, and yet the old man treated him just like dirt," Ogden quotes an associate of the Annenberg family. Said another, "Walter was the apple of ML's eye, but he didn't look very promising. If he asked Walter a question and he didn't know the answer, ML would just lay him out." This was a pity, as Walter could have better judgment, as when he begged his father not to purchase the wire. Thus Walter, a young thirty-two when his father went to prison, an older thirty-four when he died—took over the family business as an unformed and untested man, forced to train and invent himself.

All Photos: Little, Brown

Above: Bettors reading the horse-racing wire. Opposite page: Moses Annenberg's children, c. 1917.

Walter believed, Ogden says, that his father's fall made a man of him. It not only secured him access to power, but it gave him what many dynastic heirs lack: a challenge and a sense of purpose. He had to prove himself a worthy business successor and redeem through his life the name of his father—which he turned into a crusade, embracing the idea that his father was an innocent man unfairly pursued by a vindictive president.

It was only half true. Moses was a *guilty* man unfairly pursued by a vindictive president, as his daughters realized. But it gave Walter a kind of emotional balance: To repay his father's sacrifice in going to jail (as he thought) to save him, he would redeem the name of his father: "It was a whip on my back, a lash spurring me on." The burden of a flawed parent to whom one owes everything can be a heavy one for a child. Because Joseph P. Kennedy had been called a political appeaser and a personal coward, his first son volunteered for a suicide mission and his second son, who should have been deferred for medical reasons, saw dangerous service in the South Pacific. Courage—in politics—was the theme of John Kennedy's books. Respect would be the theme of Walter Annenberg's life as he struggled to lift his family's name.

One of the nicer tales in dynastic sagas is the undervalued heir apparent—bookish Jack Kennedy, mousy Kay Graham—who, compelled by death or disaster, more than lives up to the job. It was two years after his father's death that Walter proved himself a marketing genius. In 1944 he founded *Seventeen*, the first magazine for the teen-aged consumer and a fountain of revenue. He bought TV stations, then in their infancy. In 1953, he launched *TV Guide*—the *Racing Form* for the recumbent home viewer—the bestselling weekly publication of all time. Profits doubled, quadrupled, and doubled again, aided by the booming postwar economy. From mere millions, the Annenbergs' holdings zoomed into the billions.

He began the "University of the Air"—educational television—that won major honors. From his seat at the *Inquirer*, he backed reform politicians like Joseph Clark and Richardson Dilworth. He became a friend to a series of presidents, with most of whom he felt something in common. Like John Kennedy, he was the tough but far more subtle son of an aggressive and primitive father, whose imperatives had dictated his destiny. Like Lyndon Johnson, he was thought an inadequate heir to an idolized leader. His closest relationship was with Ronald Reagan, with whom he had the most sustained and genuine friendship. But it was Richard Nixon, his friend since the 1950s, who crowned his quest for redemption by naming him—the son of an immigrant whom people had called a thug and a felon—ambassador to the Court of St. James.

Nixon had nominated him because he seemed so unsuitable: super-rich, inarticulate, from a déclassé background, a

Nixon chats with his ambassador to England, Walter Annenberg.

man whose publications catered to the middle class. "I wanted him for the reasons the [*New York*] *Times* opposed him," Nixon told a biographer. In the place of the patrician David K.E. Bruce, who collected old books and had an ante-bellum estate in Virginia, London was getting, as the *Daily Mail* put it, "an American ambassador who owns the country's top racing sheet, has a private army, a private golf course, and seven sisters who are multi-millionairesses." The paper added, "This refutes those people who say Richard Nixon has a flair for being dull."

Annenberg's plans to renovate Winfield House, the ambassador's residence, were not taken kindly. To his critics, he was "a know-nothing conservative crony of that awful man Nixon," who was coming in with a "nouveau riche blonde" (his elegant second wife, Leonore) to "build a screening room, pipe in Muzak," and paint everything pink. The elegant Bruces showed terrible form by staying on in London in a rival "court," tearing down their successors in terms the *New Statesman* summed up nicely: "If President Nixon had a sense of humor, he might have conceived of the designation of Walter Annenberg to ambassador in London as a monstrous practical joke."

But as he had with the jailing and death of his father, Walter soldiered on. The turning point came with the unveiling of the restored ambassador's residence, filled with exquisite antiques and Impressionist paintings, with not a touch of Hollywood in sight. Artists raved. Aristocrats fluttered. The Annenbergs won over the press. They won over the queen (who was less fussy than Georgetown aristocrats) and the salty queen mother (a woman resembling his own mother, who had died in 1965).

A love affair began between Walter and Britain that healed all the old wounds of his life. This in turn tapped a gusher of charity that flowed out liberally, first in England and then to good causes in general, until he had become, in the late 1990s, the distributor of over $2 billion and one of the greatest philanthropists of all time.

Largesse brought tributes, which in turn loosed more charity. In 1976, he became the first American ambassador ever knighted by the queen. In 1972, he had commissioned a sumptuous book about Westminster Abbey, one of his favorite churches. In return, the abbey bestowed a stained glass panel in his honor, giving him a place among kings, poets, and generals; a stunning tribute to the son of Moses Annenberg and the culmination of his ambitions. England became the jewel of his life.

"London changed our lives," said his wife Lee. Walter was a different man after England, better and happier—which makes his original appointment as ambassador all the more strange. What bound him to Richard Nixon were their shared resentments and injured pride. "Each man had been hit by criticism and was constantly on the alert for the next incoming slight," Ogden notes. The son of the jailed millionaire and the son of the failed small farmer from California had in common a sense of grievance and a feeling of being despised by the social establishment. Walter resented his deafness and stutter, his family tragedies (a teenaged son committed suicide), his rejection by the old guard of Philadelphia society as a Jew and his father's son. Nixon resented his childhood poverty and the admiration people gave his golden-boy rivals—Nelson Rockefeller and John Kennedy—while mocking his buttoned up manners.

Underneath, the two had quite similar feelings and instincts. The difference was what they then did. Nixon gave in to his grudges until they defined him. Walter decided "he would be bigger than those who had wronged his family." Did people think that his name had been tainted? All his works would be ultra-respectable. Did people think he just cared about money? He would give billions away. Nixon decided to stiff the establishment. Walter seduced it. Nixon would disparage the Kennedys. Walter would make them like him.

The London appointment defined their approaches. However much Nixon might have wished to reward his friend, his real motive was to thumb his nose at the *Times* and its allies by giving them, in his choice assignment, the kind of man he thought would insult them. If this hurt his friend (as it did, for a while), the point would still be made. By 1972, when Walter was being honored by Westminster Abbey, Nixon was becoming entangled in Watergate by trying too hard to throttle his enemies. And, in the bicentennial year in 1976, when the queen knighted Walter, President Nixon was not there. He had been booted from office two years before.

Nixon, for Walter, was the dark road not taken, the last of his several tests. The Annenberg clan had to fight many battles, in the climb to the heights Walter attained. Moses had the drive to blast his family free of the ghetto, but he was greedy and arrogant and paid too much for it. Walter then had to fight to redeem his name and rebuild his fortune; and then he had to fight to keep his resentments from taking him over. This was his last and most difficult battle. It was also his best. ♦

The Greening of the News

How Environmentalism Captured the Media

By Eric S. Cohen

The initials "DDT" still give Americans the jitters—and that fact alone demonstrates the remarkable success of the environmental movement at (as the activists say) "raising our consciousness."

The problem, however, is that a raised consciousness and sound judgment don't always go hand in hand. The campaign against DDT marked the first lapse of the American green movement. In 1962, Rachel Carlson published her now famous *Silent Spring*, which warned that the secondary effects of pesticides would destroy the environment, seep into the food chain, and threaten human life. Hysteria followed; nations around the world banned DDT; and the modern environmental movement emerged with the immodest goal of "saving the earth."

S. ROBERT LICHTER and STANLEY ROTHMAN
Environmental Cancer
A Political Disease?
Yale, 235 pp., $35

As it turns out, Carlson and her readers simply ignored the health benefits of DDT in killing the nasty little bugs that cause even nastier diseases. Before DDT, third world countries suffered malaria epidemics. Once they started using the pesticide, the incidence of malaria shrunk to almost nothing. After the DDT ban, the deadly disease came back with a vengeance, and—despite an extensive study in which the National Cancer Institute concluded that the enormous benefits of DDT far outweigh the marginal risks—the pesticide remains banned through much of the world.

As S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman argue in their new book, *Environmental Cancer: A Political Disease?*, there are real, often severe, consequences when environmental activists and sympathetic journalists distort or ignore the best scientific evidence: Bad policies and costly regulations strangle the economy, misallocate resources, and needlessly encroach on liberty and property rights. Lawsuits based on myths rather than evidence unfairly punish law-abiding businesses. Court costs skyrocket. Potentially beneficial products—such as fertilizers and medicines—never make it to market. And the public is irrationally alarmed, feeding the politics of emotion.

Environmental Cancer is not a polemic against the environmental movement. It is, rather, a rigorous and empirical study of how environmentalists, journalists, and scientists differently assess the impact of various environmental factors on the incidence of cancer. As the authors explain, "We want to know . . . to what extent scientists' findings accord with the views of mainstream environmentalists . . . and how accurately the media report the views of scientific experts on environmental cancer." Their findings do not inspire confidence.

The book begins by tracing the intellectual and social history of the environmental movement in America, pointing out the distinction between "ecocentrists" and "technocentrists." Ecocentrists are romantics, descendants of Thoreau, who make nature a religion and generally feel guilty about enjoying modern conveniences. Technocentrists are rationalists, descendants of Malthus, who believe government regulation is necessary for "sustainable development." The modern environmental movement emerged in the 1960s, combining ecocentrism, technocentrism, and countercultural alienation into a vast political machine. By 1994, the so-called Group of Ten, a loose alliance of the most influential environmental groups, had a combined membership of 8,534,000 and a combined budget of $315 million.

"Environmentalists have had remarkable success in winning both the high ground and the grass roots away from their wealthy, well-established, politically connected opponents in corporate America," the authors write. "This political success rests largely on their ability to embody a combination of intellectual and moral authority." And that authority doesn't always have much to do with reality.

Lichter and Rothman surveyed a representative sample of over four hundred members of the American Association for Cancer Research, the most respected professional organization of cancer researchers in the nation. The survey asked the researchers to evaluate how various aspects of the environment contribute to human cancer rates in the United States. It also asked them to consider specific substances, like tobacco, asbestos, and pesticides, that periodically generate political controversy. The authors asked the same questions of the nation's most prominent environmentalists.

The findings are unsettling, if not surprising: Environmental leaders assigned higher risks than cancer researchers to eleven out of thirteen substances; 64 percent of activists but only 30 percent of experts said that industry causes cancer; and more than twice as many activists as scientists believe the country faces a cancer epidemic. Activists are equally out of sync with the public at large—despite the fact that a majority of Americans describe themselves as "environmentally conscious"—leading the authors to wonder: "If the activists don't represent the public consciousness and don't speak for (or from) expert opinion on scientific matters, precisely where do their views on environmental health threats come from?"

Environmentalists have a liberator complex that seems to prevent them from accepting tradeoffs, complexity,

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and the fallibility of man and institutions. All mistakes appear to them to be conspiracies; all injustice oppression. Liberators need a fallen world to decry and save, an evil status quo to protest against and then regulate out of existence—if only to confirm them in their belief that they are in a unique state of grace.

In his own book on the environment, *Earth in the Balance*, Vice President Al Gore compares ecological activists to "resistance fighters" during World War II and modern society to an environmental holocaust. This lack of perspective, from a presidential candidate, is telling. He decries modern civilization as "corrupt" and "inauthentic," and declares that we must "use every policy and program, every law and institution, every treaty and alliance, every tactic and strategy, every plan and course of action . . . to halt the destruction of the environment and to preserve and nurture our ecological system."

The tragedy of the environmental movement is that activists turn legitimate concerns—the effect of industry on natural resources, the need to balance technological and industrial advance with the preservation of nature and wildlife—into prophecies of doom. Seeing the world through a single prism, they ignore the inevitable tradeoffs that come from balancing competing risks, goals, and values. Sacrificing scientific reality on the altar of ideology, environmentalists distort the premises upon which rational political discourse could take place.

Lichter and Rothman examine mainstream media coverage of environmental cancer from 1972 to 1992. The news agenda reflects the views of environmentalists, not scientists, misrepresenting not only the best available evidence about cancer risks but the nature of expert opinion. Eighty-five percent of media sources agreed that the United States faced a cancer epidemic, but only 31 percent of cancer researchers did; 66 percent of media sources said that cancer-causing agents are unsafe at any dose, but only 28 percent of scientists did. Furthermore, the media overwhelmingly emphasized the cancer risks of man-made chemicals, which received more than twice as much coverage as any other cancer-causing agent (including tobacco, which scientists judge to be more than three times as harmful). As the authors conclude, the information environment has become "hazardous to our health." Environmental cancer "is at least partly a political disease."

When it comes to environmental issues, many journalists proudly admit, as Charles Alexander, *Time* magazine's science editor, said in 1989, that "we have crossed the boundary from news reporting into advocacy." The press often functions as a "passive conduit" for environmental critics, affirmed Nicholas Wade, science editor at the *New York Times*: "Often we're just doing our duty in following the activism of environmentalists." Journalists want to be liberators, too.

Such media advocacy has real political consequences. "Making news is making policy by other means," Lichter and Rothman observe. "This is particularly true for an issue like environmental health risks, which engages primal fears of physical safety and well-being." *Environmental Cancer* is filled with historical examples—DDT, Alar, Agent Orange—of what happens when the shared enthusiasm of activists and journalists subverts reason and science: alarm, litigation, regulation, and a vast misallocation of resources, and only much later, the discovery that the original fears had been greatly exaggerated. But by then, of course, it is too late. The cancer of zealotry has spread beyond cure. ♦

Free at Last

Past and Future in the Baltics

By Amanda Watson Schnetzer

Despite their remarkable progress since 1991—the year Moscow recognized their independence—the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are little noticed on this side of the Atlantic.

The time has come, however, to pay some attention, for these three independent states are among the few unambiguous successes among the nations broken loose from the old Soviet empire. With freer systems than other former Soviet republics, they are expecting to enter NATO, and Estonia, the strongest of the three, is already on the European Union's "fast-track" to membership and one of Europe's fastest-growing economies.

MODRIS EKSTEINS
Walking Since Daybreak
A Story of Eastern Europe, World War II, and the Heart of Our Century
Houghton Mifflin, 258 pp., $27.50

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was little material available in English about the history of the eastern Baltic region, and the best source probably remains Georg Von Rauch's *The Baltic States*, translated in 1974. But Modris Eksteins, a Latvian-born history professor at the University of Toronto, has now added *Walking Since Daybreak*, an unusual and fascinating contribution to what is a rapidly growing body of literature.

Originally intending to write an academic study of European culture at the end of World War II, Eksteins soon transformed his project into a personalized history of Baltic statehood as witnessed by four generations of his family. The book is told in a curious and sometimes awkward chronology that culminates in the "zero hour" of the end of

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UPI / Corbis-Bettmann

The Baltic capitals: Houses in Riga, a street in Tallinn, the city square in Vilnius.

the Second World War by working, in alternating passages, forward from 1850 and backward from 1999.

Situated on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have deep roots in European history. In the twelfth century, traders discovered the region's commercial promise. From that time to the twentieth century, Estonians and Latvians—almost all serfs—knew nothing more than subjugation: to the German Teutonic Order from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, Sweden and Poland in the seventeenth century, and Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth. Lithuania had been more successful at maintaining its independence and building an empire, but in the twentieth century, it joined Estonia and Latvia as a battleground for German and Russian expansion.

Born in 1834, Eksteins's maternal great-grandmother, Grieta Pluta, was a chambermaid for a Baltic-German baron. Family lore has it that the baron seduced Grieta, who gave birth to his child. The baron, in turn, married her off to a young Estonian and gave them a farm. Grieta's husband soon became a model of success—a "respected landlord, farmer, and family man."

Greater opportunities awaited ethnic Balts like Janis Vajeiks, the author's grandfather, who was born in 1874. The abolition of serfdom, the end of servile tenure, and the growth of modern industries contributed to a flowering of ethnic cultures and the rise of nationalist political movements. Janis started out as a domestic servant on a large estate in Latvia. There he met his future bride, Grieta's youngest daughter, and with her dowry, founded a small but flourishing coach business and soon joined the ranks of a growing, indigenous middle class.

The First World War and the Bolshevik revolution in Russia offered independence for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, but established as well the German and Russian tug-of-war over the Baltics. Families like Janis Vajeiks's were caught in the crossfire that lasted until 1919 when Germany finally collapsed and Baltic nationalist armies managed to push back the Bolsheviks. In 1920, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania signed separate peace treaties with Russia, and by the middle of the next decade all three states were controlled by authoritarian governments.

At the start of the Second World War, the Soviet Union grabbed the Baltics. A secret provision in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, signed in Moscow in August 1939, assigned Estonia and Latvia to the Soviet sphere of influence and Lithuania to the German, but the following month, Stalin agreed to renounce any claims to Poland in exchange for Lithuania.

By June 1940, Stalin had rigged elections in the Baltics that brought Communist parties to power, and the new governments quickly declared Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania republics of the Soviet Union—with the result that when German troops invaded in 1941, they were greeted by many as liberators. "Earlier in the years of national awakening and then independence, Latvians had talked of seven hundred years of slavery under German domination," Eksteins observes. "There was no trace of such talk now. After a year of Bolshevik terror, German rule appeared like the return of sweetness and light." But German terror, especially for the region's Jewish population, was not far behind. Herberts Cukurs, a Latvian national, became known as the "butcher of Riga," and of the 250,000 Jews living in the Baltics when Germany invaded, only 50,000 survived.

Eksteins himself was born in 1943, and in 1944 Soviet troops reentered the Baltics, staying for nearly fifty years. Eksteins's family joined Europe's thousands of displaced persons, wandering until a Baptist organization sponsored their passage to Winnipeg in 1949.

For Eksteins, past and present converge in May 1945, at the end of the Second World War. At the heart of the author's lament is not only the Baltics' failure to regain their sovereignty after the war, but the base inhumanity exhibited during it. It was "the result not just of a few madmen and their befuddled followers, not just of 'others,' but of humanity as a whole and of our culture as a whole."

Eksteins is right, of course—and yet he's completely wrong. His chronicle of the collapse of Baltic culture is accurate and moving, but the way he tells his story—the non-linear structure he imposes on his story—forces him into a vision of history in which no one is ever on the right side.

By arguing, for instance, that the Allies "had no moral authority to 'reeducate'" Germany after the war, *Walking Since Daybreak* turns the conduct of the Western Allies into the moral equivalent of Nazi and Soviet aggression. Eksteins can, of course, point to moments when western tactics proved costly to the Baltics. At the 1945 Yalta conference, for example, in "the great betrayal," Roosevelt and Churchill accorded postwar administration of Eastern Europe to Stalin. But even before Yalta, Soviet troops had already secured the Baltics, and only the Allies' use of force against the Soviet army could have freed them. Churchill, at least, knew the right of it: "The deadly comb ran back and forth, and back again, through Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania," he wrote, and "the Baltic States should be sovereign independent peoples."

The greatest failure imposed on *Walking Since Daybreak* by Eksteins's non-linear method, however, derives from the author's capacity to look only backward from the present, and not forward. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have entered their most hopeful period in hundreds of years. Their liberal democracy and their market economy seem well established and growing.

That wouldn't have happened, of course, if no one ever fought on the right side of history—if the Allies had not been the standard bearers for freedom both during World War II and through the Cold War. But it also would not have happened if the Baltic peoples could only spend their time remembering the "deadly comb" that has raked back and forth across their countries—if history only ran backward to grievance and not forward to hope. ♦

Under Western Eyes

Chinese Opera Comes to America

By Laurance Wieder

This summer, in three performances, Lincoln Center in New York presented something rarer than Halley's Comet: *The Peony Pavilion*, the classic Chinese opera written at the end of the sixteenth century by Tang Xianzu (who died in 1616, the same year as William Shakespeare). Part of the rarity of the opera is due to its length: When staged in entirety, *Peony* takes nearly twenty hours to perform, and the new production at Lincoln Center required attendance over three consecutive days.

But—like staying up all night to see a comet—going day after day to see *The Peony Pavilion* repays the effort. The opera is spectacular, accessible, funny, and incredibly refined. It illuminates an entire world as its fifty-five scenes employ poetry, song, dance, acrobatics, martial arts, puppetry, and instrumental intermezzi to proclaim the primacy of love.

In his 1598 preface (as translated by Cyril Birch), Tang Xianzu wrote:

> Love's source is unknown, yet it grows ever deeper. The living may die of it, by its power the dead live again.... Must the love that comes in a dream necessarily be unreal?...There is no lack of dream lovers in this world. Only for those whose love must be fulfilled on the pillow and for whom affection deepens only after retirement from office, is it entirely a corporeal matter.

The story begins with the sixteen-year-old Du Liniang, only child of the prefect Du Bao and his wife. Assigned the first poem in the *Book of Songs* by her tutor, she regrets her maidenhood. Overwhelmed by a stroll through a springtime garden, she falls asleep and encounters a scholar-lover in a dream. She wakes up and, unable to fulfill her dream of love, eventually dies of longing. Her dreamed lover, Liu Mengmei, has also seen a beautiful girl in a garden as he slept. Unwilling to let his scholarly talents go to waste, he sets off for the capital to compete in the imperial examination that will establish his career. Travel-weary and ill, he recuperates near the tomb and shrine of Liniang. Her ghost has been given leave to return to earth by the Judge of the Underworld. She steals into Liu's room at night, where they become (again) lovers. At Liniang's command, Liu digs up her corpse, and restores it to life. The couple travels to the capital, where Liu wins the academic prize.

Meanwhile, Liniang's father has been called to defend the Southern *Song* Empire against a rebel attack fomented by the barbarian North. He succeeds, but is deceived into believing his wife has been killed during the disorders. Recalled to the capital, he is made chief minister. When Liu presents himself to Du Bao as a son-in-law, the old man's rage and bitterness prevent him from believing Liu and accepting his daughter's resurrection. The "dead" wife reappears, and in the end all are established in their proper places.

Like the unquiet souls of its protagonists, and the vexed wishes of parents and children, the thirteenth-century China where the story takes place is divided and out of harmony. The opera travels from study to garden to sickroom to shrine, from agricultural villages to besieged cities, from the Court of the Underworld to the court of the southern emperor. Du Liniang's journey through dream to death and back to life, and Liu Mengmei's quest for distinction and appointment, bring to the stage maids and scholars, priests and officials, loyal servants and rebel bandits, merchants, farmers and soldiers, prostitutes and demons, a Judge of the Underworld and the offstage voice of the emperor himself.

In Western opera—in *The Magic Flute* or *Aïda*—the oppositions of heart and head, family and duty, parent and

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child, intuition and tradition, usually resolve in the triumph of one side over the other. But in *The Peony Pavilion*, imbalance is only the beginning and the engine of the plot. Rather than closing in a triumphal march or sobbing over a heap of corpses, this drama travels enormous distances to attain spiritual poise.

The young Chinese director Chen Shi-Zheng, who emigrated to America in 1987, brings Western notions of textual completeness and authentic performance practice to Tang Xianzu's Eastern masterpiece. Such ideas encounter inherent resistance when applied to an opera written in a performance style, *Kunju*, that has been transmitted by oral tradition. No records exist of a complete presentation of the opera; the archives contain no indication even how it would have been performed. The earliest instrumental musical score dates from 1792. And the modern Chinese opera companies that carry on the *Kunju* tradition greeted Chen Shi-Zheng's notion of a complete presentation with disbelief.

For Chen Shi-Zheng's production, Lincoln Center used the La Guardia Concert Hall with two small platforms projecting into the orchestra pit and a Southern *Song* style landscape painting of water and mountains as backdrop. The twelve-player orchestra of flute, percussion, double reeds, strings, gongs, and cymbals occupies a platform and plays for all but a few moments of the epic performance. The platforms reflect in a pool of water about thirty inches deep and as long as the stage, stocked with live carp and mallards. Below the side platforms are hung wooden cages with yellow finch, who sing throughout. This relation between the natural and artificial, real ducks in man-made settings, quacking and birdsong underlying singers and orchestra, informs the entire production.

Classical Chinese poetry prizes the reinflection of traditional images; elaborate rules govern the numbers of syllables in a line, the use of rhyme, and the subjects associated with forms; distinct melodies were attached to verse forms. In *The Peony Pavilion*, the noble figures of Du Liniang, her scholar Liu Mengmei, her father Du Bao (a descendant of Du Fu, China's greatest poet) and her mother express their heightened sensibilities through restricted forms and stylized gesture, their voices suddenly high or low, sleeves passed before the face or twirled around the hands. Every turn of plot has an apposite literary response. The form may be artificial, but the longing, the grief, the rage, the delight, the rapture they express are direct and piercing. By contrast, the low characters—a Taoist nun and the wife of the lead bandit (both played by men), poor scholars, servants, soldiers, the outlaw rebels, barbarians, and the administrators of Hell—are more natural in their movements, more vulgar in their language, and less conflicted in their appetites.

Courtesy of Lincoln Center

A scene from the last episode of The Peony Pavilion.

At times the line between audience and player is crossed onstage, such as when the actors applaud a sword dance or tumbler's solo. Such stagecraft may be familiar to Western theatergoers: Bertolt Brecht wrote his own version of the Chinese play *The Good Woman of Szechuan*. In this production of *The Peony Pavilion* a silk placard announces scene changes; makeup is applied in full view; costume changes are made off to the side; puppeteers stand behind their puppets; the narrator approves of certain scenes; the search for the prize candidate begins in and is carried out through the audience, then onto the stage. Where Brecht's intention was to heighten the tension between social life and dramatic illusion in the service of a realism that was sardonic and material, the *Peony* audience and players participate in the same event, in a kind of community enchantment.

Far from sounding alien or inaccessible, the music has a real beat and sounds akin to a Scotch-Irish string band of banjo, fiddle, and guitar, with flute and percussion added. The music of disorder, when there are barbarians, or battles, or demons about, is a structured New Year's Eve celebration played on flute and double reeds (which sound like a shawm or bagpipes). In addition to supporting the dancers, coloring scenes, and bridging action, the orchestra also provides sound effects. The flute often sings the aria along with the character.

In the world of *Peony*, love and belief are countered by authority and skepticism. When Liniang tells her story to the Tenth Judge of the Underworld, his first response is disbelief: "This is all lies. When did anyone ever die of a dream?" In Hell, there is only interrogation, and law, and punishment. Love, the source of poetry, and music, and intuition, rather than lore, distinguishes the realm of the living from the land of the dead. ♦

Parody

Two days after announcing he was done with TV appearances on John F. Kennedy Jr., historian Douglas Brinkley agreed to become NBC's exclusive Kennedy expert. Disgusted *George* staffers have reportedly removed Brinkley's name from the masthead of the magazine, where he was a contributing editor. *—News item*

March 14, 1999: Confidential transcript of meeting between *George* editor John F. Kennedy Jr., executive editor Richard Blow, and Douglas Brinkley.

Blow: John, I'd like you to meet Doug Brinkley. He's going to be writing some pieces for us.

Kennedy: It's very nice to meet you, Don. Welcome aboard. Say, did you happen to notice if it was still raining when you came up?

Brinkley: It had just stopped.

Kennedy: Great. Thanks.

Brinkley: It's really a tremendous honor to meet you, Mr. . . . ah, I guess he had to rush off.

Blow: Yeah, he's late for lunch.

July 32, 1999: Excerpts from the *Today* show, with host Katie Couric and professional John F. Kennedy Jr. expert Douglas Brinkley.

Couric: Welcome back, Doug. You were one of John Kennedy's closest friends. Do you think he would have taken unnecessary risks?

Brinkley: Absolutely not, Katie. Often when we spoke he would display this amazing awareness of the world around him. He was always curious, always mining people for information, which he would then just file away for later use. I remember one time I came back from a trip. And of course he was awfully glad to see me. But one of the first things he did was ask me about meteorological conditions in the place I'd just been. He had this incredibly acute environmental awareness. This is a trait you find in many Kennedys. As I'm sure you know, Robert Kennedy's oldest son has been an environmental activist for many years now, and Sen. Ted Kennedy has been one of our most ardent champions on environmental matters. So it's inconceivable to me that he would have gone up in that plane without thoroughly studying the weather and any other atmospheric condition.

Couric: That's fascinating. And flying over water sometimes presents special risks . . .

Brinkley: Well, you know, John-John just loved the sea. I rarely had a conversation with him where he didn't throw in some nautical reference: Welcome aboard, heave-ho—something like that. He just felt at home in a sailboat on the ocean. He could get away from all those parasites on earth who were always out to exploit him. When John-John was out in a boat, he just felt free. That's what we called him—John-John, or sometimes Johnny, or sometimes JFK Jr.—those of us who really knew him well. We . . . excuse me, Katie, I'm misting up. It's just that I fear we'll never see his like again (voice trembling). Good-night, sweet prince. Look homeward angel (sobbing).

Couric: Take your time, Doug. This is a difficult time . . .