the weekly Standard

THE DEMS' LEFT TURN
FRED BARNES

Alpha Males—Wannabe & Real

Al Gore's Wolf Trap
by Christopher Caldwell

John McCain's Temperament
by Andrew Ferguson

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Contents

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Articles

Features

Cover illustration: Gary Locke

Books & Arts

the weekly Standard

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"Encouraging" News for Al Gore?

Remember that "encouraging" news for Al Gore a few weeks ago? A Pew Research Center poll showed Gore gaining on George W. Bush in a head-to-head race: Bush's 54-39 percent September lead had shrunk to only a 51-44 percent advantage in the poll's October tally. The Pew press release even implied that "Gore's more assertive campaign" might be making a difference.

Not so. In a memo to clients last week, researchers Hans Kaiser and Bob Moore of Moore Information in Portland, Ore., revealed the particular devil in the Pew poll's details. "This supposed surge for Al Gore is attributable to one single factor: a significant increase in the percentage of Democrats in the October sample. In the September survey, the partisan make-up of the sample was even: 32% Democrat, 31% Republican and 32% Independent. But in the October survey, the partisan breakdown was 40% Democrat, 28% Republican and 28% Independent. This represents a major shift in overall party identification in the sample.

"Furthermore, Bush actually improved his standing among Republicans (+5%) and Independents (+9%) from September to October, while only falling off 3% with Democrats. So, there is only one mathematical way for Al Gore to have improved—a dramatic increase in the number of Democrats in the sample."

As Kaiser and Moore note, this was "actually *bad* news for Al Gore. He is doing worse with Independents (i.e. swing voters) than he was in September, and he has not improved beyond the margin of error among Democrats." ♦

Pop Quiz

Quickly now: Which nation in East Asia receives the largest amount of U.S. aid? Is it our impoverished, long-time ally, the Philippines? War-torn Cambodia? Is there an emergency relief package in the works to help East Timor create a viable, independent democracy?

The correct answer: none of the above. The largest recipient of American aid in East Asia is a nation fanatically hostile to the United States, North Korea.

Over the past five years, the Clinton administration has buttressed the world's last pure Stalinist dictatorship with some $645 million in aid, supplying half of North Korea's heavy fuel oil needs, provisioning it with nuclear reactors, and feeding a third of its population. All this according to a report issued by the congressional North Korea Advisory Group, which was set up by House speaker Dennis Hastert to review U.S. policy toward North Korea.

The aid money, not to put too fine a point on it, is a bribe to get the North Koreans to halt their nuclear weapons program. It might even be cheap at the price if the policy were achieving that end. But as representative Ben Gilman, advisory group chairman, points out, North Korea can easily use the plutonium produced by the nuclear reactors supplied by the West as fissile material for nuclear warheads. And thanks to the agreement negotiated by the administration in 1994, the North Koreans will be able to produce enough plutonium to make 100 weapons per year when these reactors come on line. North Korea, lest we forget, is also developing ballistic missiles capable of reaching much of the continental United States.

The Clinton administration interprets such developments as a call for increasing the payoffs. Based on current trends, the advisory group reports, aid to North Korea could top $1 billion next year. The administration wants to lift economic sanctions on North Korea, too. "We think our policy is leading in the right direction," says State Department spokesman James Rubin. Huh? Is the unsuccessful propitiation of a despotic and dangerous regime the "right direction" for American foreign policy? No doubt raising such a question makes THE SCRAPBOOK a knuckle-dragging isolationist. ♦

Newsflash: Beatty Still Pro-Choice

Rumors of Warren Beatty's pro-life sympathies turn out—small surprise—to have been greatly exaggerated. Matt Drudge reported in September that since the birth of Beatty's three children with Annette Bening, the man who was once the inspiration for Carly Simon's "You're So Vain" had become an unlikely pro-lifer.

Not true, Beatty explained to students and faculty last week at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Prompted by a question from the vice president of Harvard Right to Life (yes, there really is such a group), Beatty recounted running into Drudge locked in conversation with Dustin Hoffman at a Beverly Hills gathering. It was then, Beatty said, that Drudge asked him, "'Now that you have three kids, how do you feel about abortion?' I said, 'It really makes you think.'"

Then Beatty stammered a bit and looked uncomfortable (as he did in response to numerous questions) but recovered in time to conclude with the unflinching reaffirmation, "I'm pro-choice." ♦

Scrapbook

The Education Prez?

Shortly after Bill Clinton was inaugurated, he promised to make college more affordable by reforming the student-loan program. Now, the administration is opposing a bipartisan proposal that would reduce interest rates on student loans, and do so in a way that both the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget have said would save the government millions of dollars.

The Clinton approach, from day one, has been that the Department of Education can lend to students more cheaply than banks do. Dubious as this proposition sounds, hundreds of institutions of higher education were persuaded to enroll in the Education Department's so-called direct-lending program. Now some are rethinking.

The *Burlington Free Press*, hardly a conservative paper, began publishing editorials earlier this year calling on the University of Vermont to withdraw from the Clinton direct-lending program. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, a non-profit lender, was offering a more attractive loan package than the federal government, so the university took the paper's advice. Other schools are likely to follow suit.

And how is the Department of Education going to stem defections? Apparently, by breaking the law. Federal law mandates a 4 percent fee when students take out a loan. But in June, the department announced it was lowering its fee to 3 percent, so it can undercut other lenders. The department has also been trying to discredit a study, released by its own inspector general, showing that the government spends 31 percent more than private lenders would spend if they administered the program.

The congressional plan would tinker with the formula used to calculate loan rates. The likely effect would be to attract more banks to the private-loan market, creating greater competition, and, in turn, lower rates. That will benefit students, which is why the proposal has the support of liberals like Bill Clay and Matthew Martinez, both senior Democrats on the House Education and the Workforce Committee. But the Clintonistas cling to the idea the Department of Education is the supreme lender. Guess that's why Clinton calls himself the education president. ♦

More Notes on the Hairless Man

David Ignatius devoted his Oct. 31 *Washington Post* column to the increasing narcissism of the American male. Reporting from the health spa of a Beverly Hills hotel where an attendant is stripping the hair from his back, Ignatius says he can't "help thinking that something bad is happening to men in our culture." No kidding. Ignatius pouts as the fur is torn from his shoulders, "It will be weeks before I can even look at a candle without cringing."

Too bad Ignatius missed David Skinner's prescient report on male vanity in these pages, "Notes on the Hairless Man" (June 21, 1999). But here's a tip for future reporters wanting to do the first-person angle on male vanity: You don't need wax. A mirror will do just fine. ♦

Casual

Hats Off

I hope it isn't too early to begin predictions for the new millennium, because I have a small, modest, even parochial one to make, and here it is: Before the first decade of our third millennium, a Jewish high holiday service will be led by a rabbi—I do not say an Orthodox rabbi—wearing a baseball cap. Whether that cap will be worn backwards, I cannot predict. It will, though, be one-size-fits-all.

This vision came to me roughly a month ago when I saw a man—in his middle sixties, I would guess—come out of a nearby synagogue in a dark suit. In his hand was the small velvet bag in which Jews keep their prayer shawl, prayer book, and sometimes phylacteries, and atop his head sat the black cap with white lettering of the Chicago White Sox. In his look I noted not the least glint of humor, playfulness, irony. It was evidently his standard headgear, part of his regular get-up.

I own a few baseball caps myself—one a replica of the old Gas House Gang St. Louis Cardinals of the 1930s, another with Stanford written across the top, a third with the name of the town of Stonington, Connecticut—but I tend not to wear them on religious holidays, at funerals, to circumcisions, or while lecturing at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. I wear them, in fact, infrequently and mostly to keep off the sun, for I find that they do not increase my natural beauty.

I do not know exactly when baseball caps went ubiquitous, as they now are, but I do recall my first memory of one being worn indoors. I was teaching a course in a seminar room in the library at Northwestern University when a student entered wearing the black cap with orange logo of the San Francisco Giants. "Mr. O'Brien," I said, "that hat, are you perchance wearing it for religious reasons?" When he allowed that he wasn't, I gently suggested he remove it, which he did, without argument or obvious resentment. Not long after, when I suggested another student remove his baseball cap, he did so, displaying a fierce bramble of hair, and told me that he was wearing it because he hadn't a chance to shampoo that morning and was having what we should now call, in our nicely nuanced psychological age, "a bad hair day."

Darren Gygi

I continued to ask male students to remove their baseball caps in my classrooms. But when female students began wearing them, with their ponytails sticking out the back, I knew the game was up. All that is left for me now is occasional sniping. When recently teaching a class on irony, I said that the ironic method entails saying one thing and meaning another, and offered as an example that "I find nothing so invigorating as teaching about the meaning of evil in the novels of Joseph Conrad to a group of students wearing their baseball caps backwards." No baseball caps showed up in that class for another three weeks.

A salesman at Brooks Brothers once told me, with great chagrin, that he had a 26-year-old grandson who didn't know how to tie a necktie. Many more people, much older than 26, apparently are unaware that men aren't supposed to wear hats indoors, let alone that they used to be doffed or at least tipped outdoors in the presence of women. Anyone who does remember such things can only have exulted at that scene in *The Sopranos*, the splendid HBO soap opera, when Tony Soprano, dining in a respectable Italian restaurant, goes up to a youngish man wearing a baseball cap and suggests that, if he doesn't remove it, he will at the very least maim him. I myself could, as we say, "identify."

The spread of the baseball cap is part of the large trend toward the informalization of American clothing. A friend who has a men's shop tells me that nowadays his only customers for suits are lawyers. I myself buy fewer suits. I still teach in a necktie, for I like the distance it puts between the students and me. I also prefer to fly wearing a necktie, perhaps because, should the plane go down, I wouldn't want to meet my Maker underdressed. Yet, great stiffo that I am, I nonetheless find myself more and more lapsing into the informal. Not long ago I proposed to a friend, quite as formal as I in these matters, that, at dinner that evening with our wives, we forgo wearing neckties. A longish pause ensued. "Audacious," he said.

Joe DiMaggio was perhaps the only man of intrinsic elegance whose looks were not diminished by a baseball cap. Impossible to imagine Cary Grant, Fred Astaire, or Noël Coward in one. Coward it was who once discovered himself, in a business suit, at a party in which every other man in the room was in white tie and tails. "Please," he said, "I don't want anyone to apologize for overdressing." I don't believe he could have quite brought that off had he been wearing the cap of the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Joseph Epstein

Correspondence

Use Your Illusion

Charles Krauthammer exceeds even his high standard of clarity in his essay on arms control policy, but two points need amplification ("Arms Control: The End of an Illusion," Nov. 1). First, Krauthammer notes that it would be difficult for the United States to amend the 1972 Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty to allow us to build needed defenses. This may be true politically, but not legally. When President Carter abrogated our treaty with Taiwan, the Supreme Court refused to intervene (*Goldwater* v. *Carter*, 1979). Hence an incoming Republican president could abrogate the ABM treaty without Senate approval.

Second, why do so many people place so much faith in treaties? I believe this exemplifies a wider malady, one endemic to diplomats, academics, lawyers, judges, and administrators. The condition is characterized by the delusion that the external world must reflect what is written on paper, rather than vice versa. Apparently, years of looking at paper may cause one to alter his basic concept of reality. Most of us have encountered administrators who rarely check to see what is actually happening in the field, while insisting that their procedure manual reflects reality. Televised trials have shown us judges and attorneys who accept convoluted hypotheses in place of evidence. One who rejects anti-missile defenses and inspections, but instead believes that a piece of paper will protect us against nuclear missiles, is dangerously deluded.

Regrettably, much of our political system is controlled by such people. Perhaps the solution is to elect fewer attorneys and theoreticians, and more engineers, scientists, physicians, and ordinary workers and business people whose life work has trained them to be grounded in reality, not paper.

David C. Stolinsky
Los Angeles, CA

Congratulations on your Nov. 1 cover á la *Private Eye*. I never imagined arms control policy could make me laugh this much. How else to stay somewhat sane in this theater of the absurd we call Democratic arms control fantasy?

Doug Symmes
White River Junction, VT

The Scandal of Singer

As a parent of a child with significant disabilities, I also find Peter Singer's presence at Princeton "intolerable and unconscionable" ("Princeton and Its Principles," Nov. 1). I would like to thank J. Bottum and The Weekly Standard for speaking out and defending what should not need defending: the right of babies not to be murdered. *All* babies. *Any* babies.

I am not a philosopher, nor a learned academician. I hold no advanced university degrees. I can't offer a seasoned, logical counter-argument in debate. My voice, however, is one of rare authority in this arena: I am a mom and know what it is like to raise a baby whom Singer suggests is expendable based on chromosomal count. And I say with this singular authority: Peter Singer is wrong. He knows nothing at all about raising children with disabilities—the children who grow from the newborn babies he would have no problem murdering. He finds them valueless, but his understanding is shallow, his experience nil.

It is difficult to raise children with significant disabilities in America today. That Singer offers an easy solution to the problem of supporting these children and their families is a dangerous, horrific thing. If parents across this country do not wake up and see that Singer's teachings are dangerous to our living children, we may live to see the day we are faced with the charge: You should have killed it. You had the chance.

Mary Wilt
Virginia Beach, VA

I have just read J. Bottum's editorial "Princeton and Its Principles," and I heave a great sigh of relief. Not just because someone of Bottum's intellectual stature has finally addressed the Singer issue, but because it is very complex and Bottum has hit the nail on the head on every point.

All of us former philosophy graduate students had the likes of Singer, R.M. Hare, Jonathan Glover, etc., foisted on us, and I can tell you from experience that the "scholarship" is not there, nor is it academically defensible—at least when they have to go up against real scholars. But the "clique" makes sure that never happens. Real philosophers simply shake their heads in disbelief.

Bottum is also the first commentator to understand that the issue is not disability, but personhood. Singer has stated time and again that even normal, healthy human infants are neither sentient nor exercise rational attributes, and therefore they are not "persons." *That* is why they can be killed, because they are not "persons." The tactic being used by Singer et al. is to preclude any real debate or discussion by means of reducing the protesters to "fringe right radicals." Only "nuts" would consider protesting the profound and brilliant "theories" of the likes of Singer. And that strategy has already worked. "Normal" people don't want to be associated with those "nuts," so they stay out of the discussions.

Bottum also points to one critical distinction which escapes even most academic commentators: The "brand" of utilitarianism used by these philosophers is "preference utilitarianism"—quite different from Bentham and Mill. Its methodological grounding includes symbolic logic—used quite proficiently by these eugenicists, but extraordinarily difficult for undergraduates, graduate students, and even most faculty to master. This, among other salient features of the bioethics movement, is one reason why there will really be no "academic freedom" in these Princeton classes. Academic freedom requires a level playing field, and that is non-existent when these philosophers and bioethics are involved. But if people think Singer is a problem, wait until Hare and Glover pop on the scene.

Dianne N. Irving
Bethesda, MD

I appreciated J. Bottum's informative editorial regarding Peter Singer. The fact that Singer's appointment is

not universally accepted by those at Princeton gives me hope.

I'm the mother of a disabled child. Her name is Crystal Aquielle. Yes, she has a name. She is not some faceless entity taking the place of a child more worthy of life. My family and I have a personal stake in all of this. If what Singer is promoting becomes reality, children like Crystal will have to *prove* they are persons.

When Crystal was born she appeared perfect. I had no clue there was anything wrong with her until she was 4 months old. She "presented" with Infantile Spasms (a form of childhood epilepsy). This is very rare, and it took two months for the doctors to properly diagnose and treat her. She was placed on ACTH (a steroid) and it eradicated her seizures within a week. She's been seizure-free for over a year now, and is only mildly developmentally delayed. Her doctors performed two MRIs (and numerous EEGs) to determine the cause of her seizures. Four pediatric neurologists and three diagnoses later, I finally know that my daughter has Bilateral Parietal Polymicrogyria. According to all of the textbooks, she should be very handicapped. But she's not.

If a doctor influenced by Singer were to go by what my daughter's prognosis should be, they could very easily encourage the termination of such a child. This is ludicrous. No one can determine how another human being will develop over time—not even a doctor. The reason I'm on my *fourth* pediatric neurologist is that they don't know everything.

Singer obviously has no understanding of how things work. By promoting his theories, he is opening the door to a very bleak future. I cannot believe he is being funded by Laurence Rockefeller/population-control money. How reprehensible! How can Princeton stand by and allow this to happen? Crystal and all of the other children who will be born with a severe handicap deserve a voice too.

CHRISTINE WICKMAN
Egg Harbor Twp., NJ

I JUST WANTED TO THANK YOU for publishing the editorial by J. Bottum on Peter Singer's appointment at Princeton. As the mother of a little girl with Down's syndrome, I am weary of seeing legitimate objections to this man being scoffed at as so much ignorance and closed-minded, right-wing-conspiracy nonsense. This man will be influencing future doctors—the very doctors who will be advising parents what to do with their newborn handicapped children. I was lucky to have supportive medical people. Many of my fellow moms were not.

Peter Singer will also be influencing future policymakers—the very people who will consider making infanticide legal. He is right about one thing: Most parents follow the advice of their doctors in times of stress. That is precisely why his ideas are so dangerous. Singer's magic "28-day window" occurs right when parents are most emotionally vulnerable.

Singer claims to have lofty ideas, yet he doesn't have a clue regarding the value of these children. I know. I live with one on a daily basis. I am the one who gets the sticky kisses, the smiles, the cheers with each new accomplishment. My daughter has made me a more compassionate person. She has brought me up short with my own limitations. Anyone who could say that the world would be better off without her is somewhere on the axis between cruel and cuckoo.

I find Peter Singer to be an embarrassment. If it is true that no department at Princeton wants him either, then apparently I am not the only one who does.

GINGER HOUSTON-LUDLAM
Edgewater, MD

POTTER PRAISE

I MUST SAY that J. Bottum's review of the *Harry Potter* books is accurate but not particularly insightful ("Success Story," Nov. 1). Granted, J.K. Rowling's writing is neither completely original nor brilliantly crafted, but those observations miss the point of these books and overlook their value. Harry Potter is not only a hero to whom most children can relate, he is a hero who does the right things. Of course Harry makes mistakes, defies authority, gets in trouble, and even gets injured. But when it really matters, he is able to make the correct decision and take what is ultimately the right course of action. At the climax of each of the three books, Harry's salvation comes not from external, magical sources, but from his ability to act in accordance with moral principles, regardless of his fear of personal feelings. The real lessons he learns are not about magic, but about trust, selfless love, honor, respect, and courage. Sadly, these values are missing from most of the popular culture of which our children are a part. As a parent of three (two of whom stayed awake reading all three *Harry Potter* books under the covers with a flashlight), I am gratified to find children's literature our whole family can read, enjoy, and meaningfully discuss.

MICHAEL M. SHAHANI
Walnut Creek, CA

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the weekly Standard

A Gambling Backlash?

In May 1986, state senator Jack Lindsay engineered an unnoticed amendment to a South Carolina budget bill. The amendment made legal the distribution of "property" but not "money" to anyone playing a commercially operated game of skill. By the time Lindsay died in January 1991—while a focus of Operation Lost Trust, the massive FBI bribery investigation of the South Carolina legislature—the true significance of this maneuver was still unclear. But three months later, in April 1991, a man named Dick Harpootlian, lawyer for the state's emerging industry of rinky-dink "video poker" parlors, finally let the cat out of the bag. Harpootlian somehow convinced the South Carolina Supreme Court that when his clients awarded free-game credits to winning poker-machine customers, they were distributing only "property" under the governing Lindsay amendment, not "money." Even though the credits were redeemable for cash. Lots of cash.

Awakened by the shock of a statewide election unmistakably mortgaged to bookies, South Carolinians have finally this year recoiled.

Just like that, without debate or formal design, South Carolina effectively legalized gambling. Other states have succumbed in much the same fashion. Indeed, the mute passivity with which dozens of state governments have surrendered their restrictions against betting—and thus invited a nationwide explosion of gambling—is among the signal features of recent American social and political history. But in the process of welcoming the bookie into semi-respectability, few states have so corrupted themselves as did South Carolina in the 1990s.

By the middle of the decade, South Carolina's video poker barons had grown sufficiently rich and powerful to evade even those modest and belated regulatory controls the legislature attempted to impose on them. Poker parlors paid no taxes and convicted felons were allowed to own them. The owners ignored a ban on advertising. They let children play the machines. When a law was passed limiting those machines to five per retail establishment, the owners simply partitioned their properties into walled rabbit warrens—and incorporated each resulting five-machine closet as a "separate" business. When a law was passed capping daily payouts at $125 per machine, the owners simply winked; you could still win vastly more than that on a given machine, but they made you collect the booty in $125 installments.

And when, in January 1998, incumbent Republican governor David Beasley rather bravely declared video poker a "cancer" and proposed to outlaw it, the state's gambling interests simply bought themselves a new governor. There's no other way to describe it. Poker consiglieri Dick Harpootlian had by then been installed as chairman of the state Democratic party. Democratic gubernatorial nominee Jim Hodges, who had earlier crusaded against the poker parlors, was quickly persuaded to reverse himself. He promised to allow a statewide referendum on whether video machines should become a taxed and regulated *permanent* industry. The choice was clear. Poker businesses spent a phenomenal $3 million on the November 1998 election. Beasley lost.

So as 1999 began, gambling was far and away the most powerful political force in South Carolina, and South Carolina was far and away the most gambling-saturated state in the Union. Video poker machines were in operation at fully a quarter of the state's retail businesses—7,000 mini-casinos in all—and were generating tax-free betting revenues of nearly $3 billion a year. How is it, then, that the entire industry has since been consigned to outright extinction? The story is very complicated, but the best short answer appears to be: Awakened by the shock of a statewide election unmistakably mortgaged to professional bookies, South Carolinians finally this year recoiled from the sleaze and pathology of their own video-poker addiction.

Notwithstanding the wealth and insider influence of the video-machine magnates, Governor Hodges's poker

referendum proved much less popular than anyone anticipated and seemed headed for defeat at the ballot box two weeks ago. As it happened, that ballot wasn't held at all. In mid-October, the South Carolina Supreme Court invalidated the referendum as technically unconstitutional, the practical effect of which ruling will be to abolish video poker throughout the state, beginning next July—unless a new law is enacted specifically reauthorizing the industry. And nobody expects that to happen. Finger to the wind, Governor Hodges has abandoned his poker patrons just as abruptly as he once embraced them. "We will move on and talk about other important issues on the agenda in South Carolina," he now announces.

Which most definitely does *not* mean, however, that South Carolina's gambling adventure has ended. The new agenda Hodges has in mind is his plan fully to resuscitate statewide gambling, with the government itself as proprietor and croupier, through a public lottery modeled on neighboring Georgia's much-hyped "HOPE scholarship" program. To the average South Carolina gambling junkie, Hodges's proposed lottery would no doubt *feel* very much like the current electronic poker racket; Georgia's HOPE scheme broadcasts high-stakes video keno games every five minutes, 18 hours a day, 365 days a year. But the proceeds of such a lottery would ostensibly be devoted to an unimpeachable goal: improved public schools.

So the smart money in South Carolina has it that this time *next* year, Hodges will succeed. For who could object to a nice, clean, voluntary game of chance that profits not some strip-mall shyster but . . . "our kids?" Only the "religious right," that's who: people eager to inflict their "narrow private moral views" on the "larger sensible majority." By themselves, according to received wisdom, these religious right types won't be able to block a South Carolina "education lottery" referendum in the year 2000. Because there just aren't enough of them.

And maybe there aren't. But maybe—if recent developments in Alabama are any indication—it won't matter.

Alabama last month resolved a lottery proposal of its own under circumstances strikingly similar to those in South Carolina. In the 1998 election, a Democratic challenger, Don Siegelman, ran against Alabama's incumbent Republican governor, Fob James. Siegelman endorsed a new form of gambling for the state: an "education lottery," again modeled on the Georgia HOPE program. James opposed the lottery. But Siegelman won. And Siegelman then spent most of his first year in office stumping to get the lottery approved—in a referendum scheduled for October 12. His allies accumulated a fortune of money for the campaign, largely from businesses with state contracts. And they loudly advertised their plan as if it were self-evidently virtuous. People resisting his "lottery for the schools," Siegelman insisted, "ought to be ashamed of themselves."

Yes, well. Those resistants were slow to organize. They didn't start an earnest funding drive until late August, and they were never anything but heavily outgunned. But in six short weeks, Alabama lottery opponents did manage to fashion a serious debate on the issue. They did so by raising insistent questions. What's so great about the Georgia HOPE program, anyway? Isn't it simply a regressive transfer of money from relatively poor lottery players to middle-class (and academically marginal) college students? Why should an independent, unaccountable "Alabama Education Lottery Corporation"—in a state famous for political corruption—be trusted with hundreds of millions of dollars in public revenues each year? And, above all else, what legitimate business can a state government possibly have in promoting a get-rich-quick sucker scheme to its citizens?

Don Siegelman could not answer these questions. A majority of Alabama voters rejected his lottery.

Were those voters, as they have been widely described in national news accounts, dominated by members of the moralizing, Republican-leaning religious right? Actually, no, they weren't. Alabama's anti-lottery drive was led by a businessman. One of its principal advocates was attorney Lenora Pate, Siegelman's liberal opponent in the 1998 Democratic gubernatorial primary. At the grass-roots level, Alabama's anti-lottery movement was spearheaded by a remarkable alliance of black and white church congregations, to be sure—but there was nothing particularly "religious right" about them. Alabama's Christian Coalition affiliate did *not* distribute voter guides to the lottery referendum. And Alabama's Republican party did *not* spend a dime of its treasury in the controversy.

It turns out voters needn't share the "private moral views" of a religious conservative before they will reject the public morality of state-sanctioned gambling. It turns out they need only be asked to think about and directly act on the matter.

That's the good news. The bad news is that some form of gambling is already legal in 48 of the 50 states, 37 of which explicitly encourage the vice through their public lotteries. Americans have an awesome amount of thinking and acting left to do before our runaway betting habit can be conquered.

—David Tell, for the Editors

Dollar Bill Shoots an Air Ball

With men's college sports at risk, Bradley scorns the ladder by which he ascended. **BY JESSICA GAVORA**

THIS POLITICAL SEASON, the pundits tell us, "personal narrative" is the driving force behind a candidate's popularity with the electorate. If that's the case, Bill Bradley owes his appeal—the really catchy stuff at least—almost entirely to sports. Basketball to be more precise. *College* basketball to be exact.

But for all Bradley owes athletics as a candidate, he's showing little concern as a potential chief executive for a growing threat to men's collegiate programs. Title IX, the 1972 law passed to ban discrimination against women in education, has been morphed into a federal gender-quota law in the hands of Clinton administration civil rights enforcers and activist federal judges. Men's sports programs are being eliminated at a startling rate. The wrestling program at Bradley's alma mater, Princeton, was a recent victim.

But when he was approached on the subject in Iowa recently, Bradley was less than sympathetic to the plight of his former brothers in sports. For him, Title IX presents two options: Either accept men's losses or go back to widespread discrimination against women. And given that choice, Bradley says, "let's not go back on Title IX." In other words, let men's programs bleed.

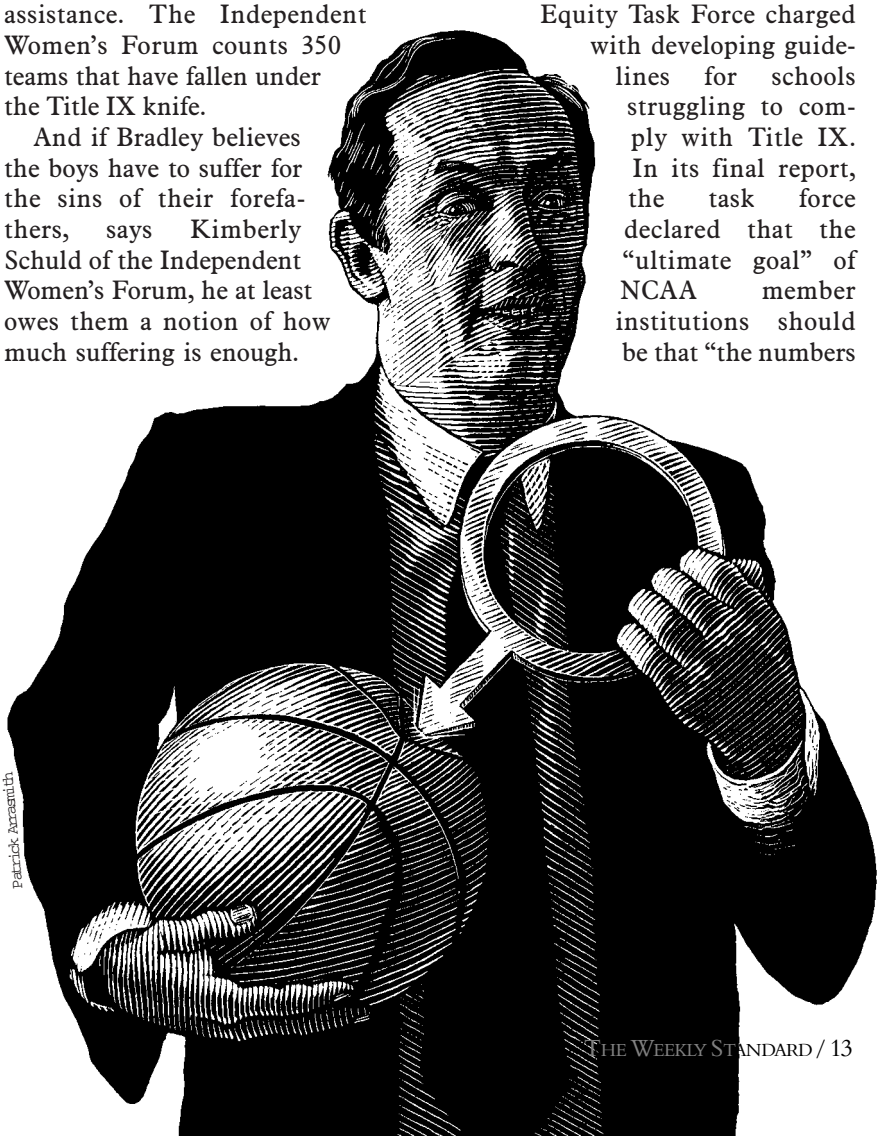
This position echoes that of other gender bean counters who are content to turn their backs on male athletes as long as the political cause of feminism gains. But at more than "the occasional university," men's programs are being cut—by publicity-conscious administrators fearful of lawsuits, federal investigations, and the appearance of insufficient commitment to "gender equity"—without women's programs' being added.

The General Accounting Office has calculated that 12 percent of men's sports opportunities have been eliminated since 1985—including 10 percent of their scholarship assistance. The Independent Women's Forum counts 350 teams that have fallen under the Title IX knife.

And if Bradley believes the boys have to suffer for the sins of their forefathers, says Kimberly Schuld of the Independent Women's Forum, he at least owes them a notion of how much suffering is enough. Will "gender equity" be realized when wrestling no longer exists on the collegiate level? Will justice for women be achieved when more low-cost, non-scholarship men's baseball and swimming squads are cut? When revenue-producing football and basketball programs are trimmed? How many men will have to lose for women to win?

Sorry guys, "Dollar Bill" ain't saying. When ninth-grade wrestler Clarke Davidson asked Bradley at a campaign stop in Des Moines earlier this month if he supported "proportionality"—the Title IX quota mechanism that forces men's and women's athletics to mirror the gender balance in the student body as a whole—Bradley played dumb. "What's proportionality?" he shot back.

But Bradley knows very well what proportionality is. In 1992 he served as a consultant to a NCAA Gender Equity Task Force charged with developing guidelines for schools struggling to comply with Title IX. In its final report, the task force declared that the "ultimate goal" of NCAA member institutions should be that "the numbers



Patrick Arrasmith

Jessica Gavora is currently writing a book on Title IX.

of male and female athletes are substantially proportionate to their numbers in the institution's undergraduate student population." In other words, "gender equity" means proportionality. Period.

To be fair, Bradley's support of gender quotas under Title IX is not unique among presidential aspirants. Al Gore has served as a loyal second-in-command in an administration more culpable than any other for the transformation of this anti-sex discrimination law into a quota-enforcement regime. And the Clinton-Gore team has not confined itself to sports programs. Any day now, the Justice Department is expected to publish a Title IX "mega-reg" that will extend Title IX enforcement to every institution that is touched (whether directly or indirectly) by federal education dollars.

That means math and science programs, museums, grant recipients, private associations, training programs—all will come under the widening circle of Title IX enforcement.

On the Republican side, the outlook for ending gender quotas in athletics is only marginally brighter. Besieged male athletes and their female supporters, frustrated by a lack of support from Congress (even House speaker Dennis Hastert, a former wrestling coach, has offered little more than a sympathetic ear), have turned their sights on presidential candidates.

A group called Iowans Against Quotas is approaching the presidential candidates with a petition pledging them to abolish quotas under Title IX if elected president. So far, only Steve Forbes has signed. Frontrunner George W. Bush is only halfway on board, saying he supports Title IX but that he doesn't believe that men's sports programs should be dropped in the name of Title IX.

Meanwhile, the casualties mount. Baseball players at Providence College, gymnasts at the University of New Mexico, soccer players at Miami of Ohio, swimmers at Northern Arizona, tennis players at the University of Cincinnati, trackmen at New Mexico State, wrestlers at Brigham Young, and hundreds of other male athletes at schools across the country won't suit up this season because their programs have been cut.

And the question remains: How much will be enough? Bill Bradley, who, after all, completed his collegiate sports career in 1965—seven years before Title IX was enacted into law—isn't saying. ♦

The New "Desegregation"

Clinton's Justice Department sides with schools that select by race. **BY ROGER CLEGG**

ONCE UPON A TIME, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division opposed the assignment of students to public schools on the basis of race. No more. Now the division defends schools that want to take race into account in deciding who gets in and who doesn't. Consider several friends-of-the-court briefs the Clinton Justice Department has recently filed in federal courts.

Montgomery County, Maryland, and Arlington County, Virginia, both have public school systems that treat students differently according to skin color and ancestry, in order to achieve what the administrators deem an optimal racial and ethnic mix in their schools.

The two counties are similar—populous well-off suburbs of Washington, D.C. Their neighborhood schools reflect neighborhood populations—some are mostly white, some mostly black, others mostly Hispanic. Unlike the blacks-only and whites-only schools that the Civil Rights Division worked to desegregate a generation ago, these public schools do not segregate children by skin color or ancestry.

But people have not sorted themselves out into the perfectly integrated neighborhoods of liberal dreams, and the neighborhood schools as a result are considered insufficiently "diverse" by administrators. Moreover, even for the public countywide magnet schools with attractive features parents want (some focus on science and math; some require uniforms), applications sometimes come "disproportionately" from particular groups.

So administrators have intervened to fine-tune the racial mix of the magnet schools and neighborhood schools. For example, a white student might be kept out of a school that was already "white enough" or denied permission to transfer to a school that was "too black." All very politically correct—and unconstitutional.

Parents in both counties have sued to stop such racial discrimination in admissions. But the Civil Rights Division took the side of the schools, arguing that when "diversity" is the goal, the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of "equal protection of the laws" need not apply. In neither instance was the argument persuasive: The division lost the Arlington case on September 24 and the Montgomery case on October 6.

The Civil Rights Division is defending discrimination not only in elementary and secondary education, but at colleges and universities too. It filed a brief on September 16 defending the right of the University of Washington Law School to discriminate in its admissions in the name of diversity. (Katuria Smith, the white plaintiff in that case, would have been admitted had she been of a different race.)

And the division is defending Alabama's right to discriminate against a black student who was denied a state scholarship to a historically black school, because Alabama is trying to use the scholarships to encourage more white students to attend the school. The acting head of the Civil Rights Division, Bill Lann Lee, has endorsed racially discriminatory admissions in his speeches.

What the division is *not* defending is school officials' freedom to manage their schools as they wish. In fact, it may surprise some to learn, there are literally hundreds of school districts around the country that remain under federal court order because a generation or more ago they practiced racial discrimination in admissions. Indeed, during the Clinton administration, the Justice Department has been most reluctant to return power to local school boards, and has filed briefs opposing the relaxation of judicial management.

One reason is that continued federal involvement allows bureaucrats to block education reforms—like charter schools—that they oppose on policy grounds. Never mind that these reforms help students of all races. At hearings before Congress on October 14, a deputy in the division admitted that it had opposed charter schools in districts it oversees in Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

Continued federal supervision of schools—over 45 years after *Brown* v. *Board of Education* was handed down by the Supreme Court—also enables the bureaucrats to insist on fashionable education policies that have nothing to do with ensuring that white and black students are allowed to go to school together. This is vividly demonstrated by 10 consent decrees—one each for 10 school districts—that the division filed on September 10 in the Middle District of Alabama. Here are some excerpts from the decrees.

DISCIPLINE: "If disciplinary figures at an individual school exceed the racial balance of that school by more than 10 percent [one school was at 15 percent; another 5 percent], the central office administrator responsible for discipline shall meet with the principal of that school and the employee responsible

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for student discipline to determine the reasons for the disparity, and shall include in each annual report the reasons for such disparity."

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: "Whenever there is underrepresentation of any racial group (minority or nonminority) in any extracurricular activity, the School Board shall conduct a study to determine the cause of such underrepresentation and, where appropriate, develop strategies to address the causes."

CHEERLEADING AND BANDS: "To the extent practicable, the Board will ensure that the cheerleading squads and bands are racially diverse."

FACULTY HIRING: "The Board shall notify school principals that hiring qualified minority teachers, counselors, and staff is a priority." Specifically: "The Board will make every reasonable effort to increase the pool of black applicants. . . . It is expected that the Board's success in recruiting more black applicants will lead to its success in hiring and retaining more black faculty. . . . [If it doesn't, the] Board will re-evaluate its recruitment efforts." Vacancies must be advertised for 20 days "unless the position is filled by a minority." Emergency hires will not be automatically renewed unless they are minorities. The Board must explain why "any minority applicants were not selected." There shall be "cultural diversity and sensitivity programs."

GRADUATION RATES: "The Board shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the graduation rates and types of diplomas awarded reflect the racial composition as a whole to the extent possible."

In other words, quotas for everything. The Civil Rights Division now opposes the admission of students to public schools without regard to race, and it uses its authority in desegregation cases to advance policies that have nothing to do with ensuring that students are not assigned to schools on the basis of skin color. It insists on racial counting in everything a school does. My, how times have changed. ♦

Right to Choose, or License to Kill?

An exchange on the Senate floor exposes the dark side of "pro-choice" dogma. BY HADLEY ARKES

Barbara Boxer

Illustrations by Fred Harper

IT IS RARE THAT U.S. SENATORS fall apart on the floor of the Senate under questioning from one of their colleagues, but Senator Barbara Boxer did just that during the October 20 debate on partial-birth abortions, and there was nothing random in the spectacle. Her frustration sprang from the flaws that run through the defense of these grisly abortions, and the questions, posed by Senator Rick Santorum, proceeded from the design of the argument.

Santorum was asking how Boxer would defend a so-called abortion at the very point of birth, with about 70 percent of the child's body already emerged from the birth canal. In a partial-birth "procedure," the doctor punctures the skull of the child, so that the body can be removed, so to speak, intact. Santorum asked, What if the child had been reversed in the womb so that it came out head first, and only the foot, or a toe, was left in the womb? No one, by this point, is professing to believe that the child is not human or that the killing of the child is necessary for the health of the mother. Santorum then pressed the point: Was it an abortion—and therefore a legitimate killing—only because a part of the child was still in the birth canal?

To that, Boxer replied, "Absolutely not." Santorum then followed up with another apt question: Why, he wondered, should it make a difference if it is the head remaining in the birth canal, at the time of birth, rather than the toe? Yet that question inflamed Boxer. Instead of answering it, she accused Santorum of trying to "bait" her. "I agree with the *Roe* v. *Wade* decision," she said, "and what you [Santorum and his colleagues] are doing goes against it and will harm the women of this country."

Santorum moved then to an even more elementary question: Boxer and her friends are presumably opposed to infanticide and would cast the protections of the law over children. Santorum then asked, When would those protections of the law begin?

SANTORUM: I would like to ask you this question. You agree, once the child is born, separated from the mother, that that child is protected by the Constitution and cannot be killed. Do you agree with that?

BOXER: I think when you bring your baby home, when your baby is born

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. . . the baby belongs to your family and has rights.

Senator Boxer slipped into rare candor here, as she made explicit the premises behind abortion rights: namely, that human beings, as human beings, have no inherent rights; they are assigned those rights by their families if the families are willing to confer them. But even for the defenders of abortion rights, it is surely too jarring to say that a baby once born could be killed legitimately up to the time when the family took the baby home. If Boxer meant that, the right to abortion is in fact the right to infanticide. And so the Pennsylvania Republican persisted:

SANTORUM: Obviously, you don't mean they have to take the baby out of the hospital for it to be protected by the Constitution. Once the baby is separated from the mother, you would agree—completely separated from the mother—you would agree that baby is entitled to constitutional protection?

BOXER: I don't want to engage in this. You had the same conversation with a colleague of mine, and I never saw such a twisting of his remarks.

Boxer treated it as a bit of insolence that Santorum should ask the most elementary question of all, which runs back to the core of the argument over abortion: What is the earliest moment at which the child can be protected by the law? If it is not when the child is separated from the mother, then when? Or is it that the right to an abortion—as some commentators have suggested—is the right to an "effective abortion" or a dead child?

Just a year ago, Santorum was on the threshold of introducing what still stands as the most modest first step of all on abortion: a proposal simply to protect the child who *survives* an abortion. At that moment, the interests of the child are separated entirely from the interests of the mother. The only thing at issue then is this: Does the right to an abortion entail the right to kill the child, even when that is not necessary to end the pregnancy?

Barbara Boxer's hysterical response to that simple question should confirm the deep utility of forcing the issue. Advocates of abortion do not want to face the question—clearly, it unnerved Boxer and inspired a frantic effort to get off the floor without addressing it. For as modest as that question sounds, a bill forcing the issue would establish these critical

Rick Santorum

premises, which could unravel the whole apparatus built upon *Roe* v. *Wade*:

(1) The right of a child to receive the protections of the law cannot pivot on the question of whether anyone "wants" him.

(2) If that is correct, then the child must constitute a real entity, in the eyes of the law, a being whose injuries "count," or have standing.

(3) If the Supreme Court can articulate new rights under the Constitution (such as the right to abortion), the legislative branch must have the authority to fill out those same rights, and in filling them out, *to mark their limits*. The one notion that should be plainly incompatible with the principle of the separation of powers is that the Court may articulate new rights —and then assign to itself a monopoly of the legislative power in defining those rights.

If the courts—and the Democrats—deny those first two points, they are obliged to tell us just what the ground is on which the law claims to protect the newborn child. Or, if they would deny that the law can protect the child born alive, they would have to say now even more explicitly what the federal courts have been suggesting in the cases on partial-birth abortion: that it is no longer legitimate to bar infanticide if doing that would inhibit abortions. Over the past year there have been several cases of children who survived abortions, but the reactions of Barbara Boxer confirm yet again that the importance of the bill moves well beyond the number of cases.

Santorum was persuaded by the leadership in the Senate to hold back last year at this time, rather than distract attention from the bill on partial-birth abortion. And yet, it should be clear by now that this simpler bill would help to prepare the ground for banning partial-birth abortion. For it would compel the Barbara Boxers to declare themselves on the point they still wish to evade: whether there is a real child or entity there with a right to the protection of the law. The bill on partial-birth abortion looks likely to be vetoed again by President Clinton. And so, too, may be congressman Lindsey Graham's bill on "the unborn victims of violence," a bill that simply covers unborn children who are injured in the course of crimes that are already covered by federal law. If both measures are vetoed, Santorum and Graham should resume collaboration on a bill to protect the survivors of abortion.

The reaction of Barbara Boxer to Rick Santorum's questions reveals, powerfully, that the "pro-choice" contingent in both parties cannot face directly the simplest question that stands at the root of the issue; that the very posing of the question produces, on their part, anger and incoherence.

What more signs are needed? Bring that draft out of the files—and press it now. ♦

Eggs for Sale

Believe it or not, on issues of bioethics, we can learn from Europe. **BY NAOMI A. SCHAEFER**

SEVERAL THOUSAND MEN visited Ron Harris's Web site the other day and paid $24.95 each for the privilege of bidding in an auction for the eggs of beautiful models. These men may have fallen for a highly profitable publicity stunt launched by a well-known pornographer, but what Harris proposed to do—sell human eggs—is perfectly legal. In fact, his venture is only the most recent instance of commerce in human eggs to make the news. A few months ago, an anonymous couple offered $50,000 to a donor who was five-foot-ten, athletic, and had an SAT score of at least 1,400. Another couple was willing to pay the same sum to a donor three inches shorter and with 100 fewer SAT points.

"The great egg hunt," as one Seattle reporter dubbed it, has elicited criticism from infertility organizations, which typically pay donors on the order of $2,000-$5,000. The clinics are careful to call this compensation for the donor's time and discomfort, not payment for the egg. Representatives of these organizations worry that the bidding wars might reflect unfavorably on them and cause Americans to question the morality of egg donation.

Usually when Americans develop moral qualms about some practice or policy related to reproduction, intellectuals are quick to look to our transatlantic and Canadian neighbors to show us how backward we are. But this time they have come up empty-handed. No European country, it turns out, allows the buying and selling of human eggs, and most forbid even their donation.

There are a number of possible explanations for the greater conservatism of European policy on this issue. Perhaps the events of the 20th century have made Europeans particularly wary of practices that could be perceived as eugenic. But Dolly the sheep was genetically engineered in Scotland, and similar experiments have been conducted elsewhere in Europe. We Americans, moreover, are selectively wary of genetic manipulation. Thus, the Clinton administration recently imposed a (temporary) ban on human cloning. While many European countries are trying to restrict genetically engineered vegetables and the like, this has more to do with protecting small farmers than with any fear that the techniques used to grow redder tomatoes will eventually be used to improve the human race.

A second possible reason for European restrictions on egg selling is distaste for American-style capitalism. Recent protests against McDonald's restaurants invading the Continent remind us that Europeans are not uniformly enthusiastic about cheap, generic fried food. In Canada, which has restrictions similar to those in Europe on egg donation, officials denounce the selling of eggs for profit. "We don't want billboards saying 'Womb for rent,'" Patricia Baird, former chairman of Canada's Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, told the *Orange County Register* in May 1995. But even an aversion to the cash nexus would not explain why many European coun-

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tries are banning the transfer of eggs when no money is exchanged.

Perhaps it is time Americans entertain a third possibility—that our European neighbors are not so liberal on the social issues of the day as our intellectual elite would have us believe. Although Europeans and Canadians may mock our impeachment hearings as prudish, they have their own moral scruples.

Consider abortion. While public opinion in both Europe and America is relatively conservative on abortion, the laws in the two places are quite different. As Mary Ann Glendon, a professor at Harvard Law School, documented in *Abortion and Divorce in Western Law*, European statutes, although permitting certain abortions, tend to acknowledge a developing fetus at any stage as a form of life to be respected. Even today, 12 years after that book was published, Glendon observes, "We haven't really looked carefully at Europe. If we had, we would see that they have worked out approaches to [social issues] that are more attentive to what is going on in their society."

Glendon cites several laws to support this point. In France, first-trimester abortions are available to women "in distress" (though no sanction is imposed on those who obtain abortions without proving distress). European countries often require seven-day waiting periods. Most require that a doctor fully explain to the woman all of her options, including adoption and any day care to which she would be entitled should she keep the child. In France, this consultation is to be performed "with a view toward enabling her to keep her child."

Glendon argues that because European law is based on the "Rousseauean" principle that "no one owns his or her own body," Europe and Canada regulate abortion and fertility technologies much more strictly than the United States. Thus, in contrast with the United States, where late-term abortion is legal everywhere and as many as a few hundred partial-birth abortions are performed every year, some European countries have recently tightened their regulations, reducing by a number of weeks the period during which a woman can have an abortion without certifying that her own life is in danger. The principle that individuals do not have absolute title to themselves is so firmly established, according to Glendon, that France had to pass a special enactment to allow blood transfusions. This is a far cry from the pro-choice mantra that a woman has the right to do whatever she chooses with her own body.

Many of the same issues are at stake in the egg donation debate. Canadian Patricia Baird warns, "These [fertility technologies] have the potential to turn children into a commodity, to commercialize them, and that diminishes human dignity." Europeans and Canadians who see human dignity at stake both when fetuses are aborted and when human eggs are sold bring a more morally coherent outlook to bear on decisions in areas like genetic engineering.

In America, moral confusion is compounded by legalism. In the surrogacy case of *Kass* v. *Kass*, for example, a New York man is trying to prevent his ex-wife from having implanted in her womb an egg he fertilized before their divorce. This case has already made its way to television in a bizarre episode of *Law & Order*. In a debate last year on National Public Radio, host Ray Suarez asked a panel of experts about the Kass case: "Is it clear in any legal sense . . . whether those eggs—those pre-zygotes—represent joint property? Individual property? Property to be disposed of at the end of the marriage?"

The morally serious answer may be "none of the above." But neither Suarez nor his panelists seemed willing to consider that possibility. While some Americans express reservations about egg donation, these tend to take the form of questions about distribution: Should rich people be able to buy better genetic material than poor people? What if poor women decide to take advantage of lucrative offers: Will this amount to harvesting the eggs of the disadvantaged for profit? Seldom raised is the question of the intrinsic value of the genetic material itself.

Americans have been told that we lag behind sophisticated Europe on issues relating to sex. Instead, Glendon concludes, "when the Supreme Court established a new American abortion policy in 1973, it did so in a way which put the United States in a class by itself." The Court's decision in *Roe* v. *Wade* gave the United States at a stroke the most radical abortion regime in the industrialized world. Media stereotypes may represent Europeans as having advanced farther towards enshrining the principle of sovereignty over one's body than we have, but this isn't so. It appears we Americans, like Gigi, "don't understand the Parisians." It's high time we tried. ♦

Earth Tones in the Balance

What does Al Gore see in Naomi Wolf? The vice president's campaign faces a sex scandal without sex.

By Christopher Caldwell

At a book party for Erica Jong's *What Do Women Want?* at the Town Hall Theater in New York last January, Naomi Wolf tried to answer the question herself. "More!" she declaimed. "Better orgasms. More touching. More love. . . . We really are demon goddesses of lust."

That was the very month Al Gore began discreetly paying Wolf a $15,000 monthly retainer for campaign advice. If there's a legitimate controversy over the arrangement, it's not because Wolf is a "controversial feminist," as she's inevitably described. Wolf may have a gift for purple prose and a weakness for (as they used to say in the Catskills) "working blue." But what's controversial about her writing or speaking? Where's the constituency for *lousier* orgasms and *less* love? Who would be up in arms about Wolf's insistence that sexuality be "a source of pleasure and strength, not of shame and vulnerability"? Not even the pope.

Wolf came to public attention in 1991 with *The Beauty Myth*, an updating of half a dozen feminist classics that claimed women were tyrannized by physical expectations. Two years later, in *Fire with Fire*, she argued that women should seek political and financial power. Her best book, *Promiscuities* (1997), a sexual autobiography of the seventies and eighties, has keen vignettes of the time: the girl at hippie camp whose friends taxonomized each other's new breasts as either "nuzzies," "squeeners," "dudleys," or "bonkers"; the pornography of the Ohio Players rock record covers; sleepless nights of panic in the weeks and months after AIDS was discovered. *Promiscuities* was lampooned all last week for its urging of "sexual gradualism." But, really, what could be more sensible, and less "controversial," than proposing that teens and pre-teens would be well-advised not to proceed directly to coitus on the first date?

Wolf calls her philosophy "power feminism." Ruder critics call her a "lipstick feminist," a "bimbo feminist," even a "do-me feminist." It's perhaps better to say that Wolf's thinking is a matter of "having it all" in the field of logic: She wants everything and its opposite. Beauty is a means to power, and power is the most important thing—but beauty is unimportant. Sexual freedom of choice should be strengthened—and so should sexual-harassment law. Women who have abortions should realize they are killing a human being—in order to strengthen their *pro-choice* convictions. As Katie Roiphe once wrote, Wolf, like Walt Whitman, "contains multitudes."

It has often been called "ironic" that Wolf's good looks and media savvy were keys to her success with *The Beauty Myth*. But there's nothing ironic about it in the least. Wolf is like those precocious people who can't get off the subject of youth, or famous people fascinated by the topic of fame. It's not that she's bragging: It's just that beauty is something Wolf *really likes to talk about*. As a young professional in New York, Wolf started an exclusive coterie of media movers and shakers she called the "Culture Babes." Yasmin Alibhai-Brown of London's *Independent* described her last summer as "the luscious Naomi Wolf, who has never let feminism interfere with her bum-hugging wardrobe." And who likes most to talk about luscious women and their bum-hugging wardrobes, not to mention read about crazy love in the seventies?

A Scottish journalist put it bluntly: "Most of Wolf's fans are men."

It's Wolf's most prominent man fan, not Wolf herself, who is now in big trouble over their association. This is not an intellectual scandal. Granted, taking money in secret from a political campaign is a sneaky act for one posing as an independent intellectual. Granted, Wolf has been paid $15,000 a month through Bob Squier's consult-

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ing firm so her checks don't show up on Federal Election Commission reports. But Wolf has been forthright in saying she doesn't *want* to be thought an independent intellectual. She told the *New York Times*, "I wanted to make a transition in a respectful way from being a journalist to being a partisan." That ought to be clear to anyone who has followed her career. Her husband David Shipley worked in the Clinton White House, and Wolf explained to Fox News this fall, "I consider our whole family unregenerate partisans." Katha Pollitt of the *Nation* calls Wolf a "Clintoholic." (In 1996, Wolf put in long hours for the Clinton campaign—but *for free*.)

Wolf is better suited to the role of political adviser than independent essayist. She has spent much of her time in recent years at the Woodhull Institute in upstate New York, which she co-founded to teach women political power. That she also thinks her seminars can teach twenty-somethings "how to be kind, how to be honest" shows that she shares some of the Gore team's liberal sanctimony. Wolf herself appears to be honest, as good political advisers should be. For all her Clintoholism, she was forthright in condemning Clinton during the Lewinsky affair, even if it was on the truly wacky grounds that women have a semi-constitutional right to a purely meritocratic workplace. (As if Monica Lewinsky would have come anywhere near the White House under such a regime.)

In many ways, Wolf is a perfect adviser for Gore. She herself has devoted a good deal of mental energy to looking snappy and appealing to viewers on TV, areas in which Gore is in dire need of counsel.

And in many ways, Wolf is a perfect adviser for Gore. She herself has devoted a good deal of mental energy to looking snappy and appealing to viewers on TV, both of them areas in which Gore is in dire need of counsel. Her failings as an intellectual—her illogic, for instance—may be strengths for an adviser. A modern-day politician in a democratic society needs a schmoozer like Dick Morris who can brainstorm with him, not a systematizer like Richelieu who can *think* for him.

What's more, Wolf's writings have a New Age–y tinge. She's even seen a "consultant" to deal with her writer's block. This gives her real common ground with a politician who kept a "facilitator" on the White House payroll, who arranged the embarrassing Camp David group-therapy sessions for the incoming Clinton cabinet, who has a hobbyist's fascination with birth order and a superstitious interest in exercises one can do to determine one's baby's gender. (It also places the Gore-Wolf pairing squarely in the tradition of Nancy Reagan's relationship with her astrologer Joan Quigley, or Hillary Clinton's attempts to channel Eleanor Roosevelt's ghost through the medium Jean Houston—but we'll leave that for another time.)

People *sense* that Wolf is right for the vice president. That's why they are projecting their own misgivings about Gore onto Naomi Wolf's advice, about which they ultimately know little. The early report that Wolf fretted over Gore's being a "beta" male to Bill Clinton's "alpha" turns out to be accurate—even if Wolf, in a non-denial denial, claims only to have *mentioned* it. But it's important not because Wolf said it but because we all know it to be true. Same with the "earth-tone" jackets and shirts Gore is now sporting. Wolf says it wasn't she who recommended the Gore wardrobe, and maybe it wasn't. But we also know the conscious or subconscious calculation by which the campaign arrived at its sartorial strategy. It came from comparing women's rock-solid loyalty to the goatish Clinton with their indifference to the family man Gore—and then trying to bridge that gap by appealing to something in the soul of the American woman voter that most of us would rather not contemplate. Gore's supporters can claim he's trying to look "reassuring" or "casual." But we all know that the look he's attained is that of the aging gigolo prowling the cafés of the Vieux Port for young talent.

By the way: How Bill Clinton must be *reveling* in this scandal!

The scandal lies not in Wolf's being on board, but in the $15,000 a month she was getting paid—which comes to $180,000 a year, more than the vice president himself makes. Again, this is a problem not for Wolf but for Gore, as Gore's campaign manager Donna Brazile understood when she cut Wolf's retainer to $5,000 a month.

It's a problem that Gore has compounded with needless secretiveness. On *This Week* on Halloween, Gore was asked by Sam Donaldson, "Are you really paying her $15,000 a month, as reported?"

Gore replied, "No . . . It's a third of that."

Gore's spokesman Roger Salazar was delighted with the exchange: "When asked about it, he answered it directly," Salazar said. "That doesn't look to me like someone trying to hide something." Really? It does to me.

Gore was able to tell Donaldson exactly what Wolf was making. Was he ignorant of what she'd been making a week before?

You can, of course, take the line that presidential-campaign advisers, many of them bringing considerably less value-added than Wolf, have been paid outrageous sums for decades—and often off the books. "It's quite common to pay consultants the way Carter, Shrum, and I are paid," Wolf explains. Yes, but if Donna Brazile had tried to cut by two-thirds the pay of top strategist Carter Eskew and top media man Bob Shrum, they would have quit the campaign by the time she finished her sentence. By staying, Wolf has assented to a valuation of her consulting services at $60,000 a year—an indication that she had heretofore been overpaid to the tune of $120,000 a year. What psychic reinforcement was she providing for that $120,000? What is it in Naomi Wolf that Al Gore values so much and needs so badly?

Clinton biographer David Maraniss of the *Washington Post* speculates that Wolf "presented a younger, hipper, probably sort of new-age type of advice." In that light, it is hard to remember seeing Gore quite so aglow as when his nomination was seconded at the 1996 convention by 28-year-old Michela Alioto, a wheelchair-bound beauty who went from a job in the veep's office to running for Congress against Frank Riggs in California's first district. "She described Gore not only as 'my boss, my friend, and the very best vice president we have ever had,' but, more important, as a 'very cool guy with his own e-mail address.'"

Gore shows a keen need to be taken as a very cool guy by younger women. What is troublesome is that he clearly thinks of his career as a personal drama that implicates his sexual self-image deeply. Over the course of a life, that may be true of most politicians, even most people. But whether we think of this in an old-fashioned moralistic way simply as "growing up," or in a Freudian way as successful "sublimation," most voters hope that this particular problem will be, if not resolved, then at least handled to the point where we don't have to think about it.

But we are thinking about it constantly and, worse, so is the Gore campaign. The normally demure Tipper has been trundled out to tell us, in so many words, that her husband is a veritable tornado in the sack. Wolf's friendship with Gore's daughter Karenna is invoked to ward off speculation about any possible wandering eye. Gore is being dragged through embarrassing personal speculation, as President Clinton has been for seven years—and treated to none of the winking, oh-you-dog-you, gotta-hand-it-to-the-guy forbearance that the president was granted by his close associates.

The secrecy, the money, the young lady tucked away in New York, the intimate anguish over his manliness . . . This is a feat only Al Gore could pull off: getting caught in a sex scandal that doesn't even have any sex in it. ♦

The McCain Rage

John McCain is gaining on George W. Bush in New Hampshire. Will the controversy over his temperament trip him up?

By Andrew Ferguson

Hampton, New Hampshire

So now we're getting down to the nitty-gritty. All last week the world of American politics—which is alleged to hunger after Serious Discussion of the Substantive Issues—wrestled obsessively with two questions of enormous gravity. First, who talked Al Gore the beta male into wearing those dippy brown suits? And second, does John McCain ever scream at people when he gets mad, and if so, why?

You can't blame our presidential candidates for feeling blindsided. For months now, in response to the demand for Ser. Disc. of the Subst. Iss., Gore, Bill Bradley, Steve Forbes, George Bush, Gary Bauer and the rest have been issuing highly detailed position papers and giving lengthy, showcase speeches weighted down with the arcana of tax reform, health care coverage, education funding, and America's role in the world. And it turns out that what the chattering class really wanted to talk about was . . . clothes.

And temper tantrums. It would be nice to report that all the talk about his temper got John McCain really, really ticked off. But once again the former POW-turned-senator-turned presidential candidate defied conventional expectations. He seemed to be amused.

Rolling down a dismal New Hampshire two-lane in a rented van last week, a staffer handed McCain a fresh column from the New York *Daily News*'s Lars-Erik Nelson, one of the senator's thousands of media idolaters. Nelson described an encounter several years ago between McCain and Chuck Grassley, the Republican senator from Iowa.

McCain scanned the first few sentences of the column and started giggling. "That's a true story," he said. "We were on that special POW/MIA commission together, and Grassley hardly came to any of the meetings. But suddenly everybody started listening to this guy Garwood." Bobby Garwood was a former POW widely discredited as a turncoat and opportunist. "I tried to tell them, 'You can't believe this guy, he's done this and this and this.' But Grassley keeps shoving this piece of paper under my nose, saying, 'Garwood says this, Garwood says that.' And finally I got angry and I said 'You know, I used to think your problem was that you don't listen. But that's not it. Your problem is you're a fucking jerk.'"

McCain giggled again. "I shouldn't have said it, but, you know, what the hell. Chuck and I are fine. We're friends." In the United States Senate, the world's greatest deliberative body of prima donnas, *friends* is a term of art, meaning "Our staffs are willing to do business with each other." (By contrast, *good friends* means "We are on speaking terms"; *he's an old, dear friend* means "We actually *are* friends.") According to these definitions, most of McCain's Senate colleagues are just good friends. But he has made enough genuine enemies, both in and out of the Senate, to have turned the story of his temperament into his campaign's first difficulty.

Among his enemies is his hometown paper, the *Arizona Republic*, which published an editorial on Halloween questioning "whether McCain has the temperament . . . we want in the next president of the United States." The editorial was reprinted two days later in the *Union Leader*, New Hampshire's largest newspaper, and as McCain crossed the state last week, fielding questions in half-a-dozen "town hall meetings," he was asked about it repeatedly.

"Thank you for your question," he said at a meeting in Hampton. "I was just exploding about that this morning." He went on to detail his feud with the *Republic*, which he says dates from a crude cartoon the paper published about his wife's addiction to painkillers, and then closed with a stirring confession of virtue. "Look, I am a passionate person," he said. "I feel passionately about injustice. I have an acute sense of right and wrong. I get angry sometimes. I get angry when I see Congress pouring money into weapons systems the Pentagon doesn't even want while 12,000 brave men and women in our military are on food stamps. I get angry when . . . " And so on.

This carefully fashioned answer is vintage McCain, a blend of charming self-deprecation and grating sanctimo-

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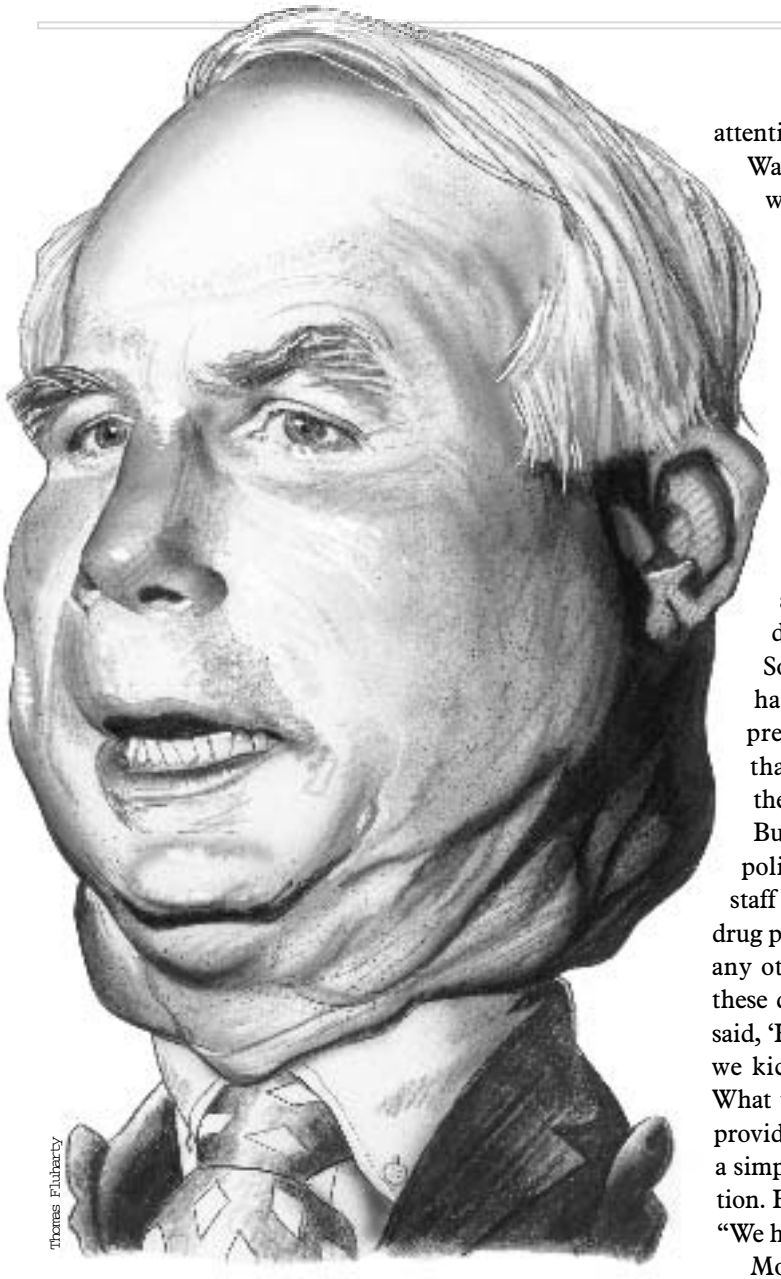
Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor at The Weekly Standard.



ny. And it works. Now is the McCain moment in New Hampshire. With the primary still three months away, his town hall meetings draw enthusiastic crowds of two- to three hundred. At the end of the sessions, after an inevitable standing ovation, dozens of fans line up cradling copies of his book, *Faith of My Fathers*, now at number five on the *New York Times* bestseller list. More astonishing—and more alarming for George Bush—a statewide poll last week put McCain within eight points of the front-runner, 38 percent to 30 percent. A few months ago McCain was in single digits in the polls, and he has only now begun airing TV ads.

McCain is bringing to New Hampshire the same persona that has for 15 years rendered the Washington press corps gaga with admiration and affection. (The press still loves him, by the way, and it's not hard to see why. The attention he lavishes on reporters is unprecedented for a Washington poobah. When I traveled with him last week he took to introducing me to his audiences—identifying me variously as a prisoner from a work-release program, a card-carrying member of the Communist party, and a freelance reporter for *Hustler* magazine.) In place of the standard stump speech that most candidates offer up, he makes a few minutes of remarks and then takes questions for an hour or more—a bit of implied flattery perfectly fitted to the pampered voters of New Hampshire, and a marked contrast to the question-averse front-runner.

From event to event the questions are remarkably uniform. Medicare, the price of prescription drugs, gun control, military spending, education, Social Security—having survived more than 50 town hall meetings in the last three months, McCain has prefabricated a brief response for most of the issues that arise in a happy and prosperous state. Some of these responses are innovative, if questionable. Unlike Bush, he has not assembled a shadow government of policy wonks, choosing instead to rely on his Senate staff to generate positions. On the issue of prescription drug prices, for example, which are far higher here than in any other developed country: "I kept getting asked all these questions about it, so I went back to our guys and said, 'Hey, we've got to come up with something here.' So we kicked around some things for a couple of hours." What they came up with is a plan for the government to provide money to old people who can't afford the drugs—a simple, straightforward, and possibly bankrupting solution. He booms the idea at every meeting, though he says, "We haven't costed it out."

Most of his prefab answers, however, serve to underscore the unremarked secret of John McCain, which is that, stripped of a few complications such as his support for tobacco legislation and especially campaign finance reform, he is a remarkably conventional and cautious politician, of the sub genus Conservative Republican. And like all conventional politicians, he is expert at fudging his positions to the point of incoherence.

On gun control, he announces himself a "strong supporter of the Second Amendment to the Constitution" while simultaneously supporting "whatever further constitutional measures we can have to keep guns away from those who shouldn't have them." He admits to being "proudly pro-life," while saying that "everyone—pro-life or pro-choice—has the same goal, which is to eliminate abortion." This will be news, of course, to Kate Michelman and the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, but so far the point is palatable to garden-

variety pro-choicers in New Hampshire. He promises to rebuild the armed forces and cut the military budget by at least $6 billion.

McCain criticizes the Clinton administration for not being tough enough on China but thinks its "ruthless dictators" should be admitted to the World Trade Organization. He wants to de-fund the Department of Education down to 10 percent of its current funding, paying out the rest of the money directly to the states "with no strings attached"; he would meanwhile attach "incentives" to encourage the states to test and fire incompetent teachers, adopt merit pay, enforce standards, and institute school-choice vouchers. "Incentives" are apparently different from "strings." At every stop last week he bemoaned the growing disparity in incomes. "My friends, that is wrong. We must do something to correct that disparity." And that something would be? "We need to take a hard look at it. Make some tough choices."

His precise positions are further obscured by his passionate advocacy of campaign finance reform. Over the last several weeks the issue has become the centerpiece of his candidacy, and it reaps applause by the bushel from New Hampshire audiences. He calls it a "gateway" issue—the primary problem which, once resolved, will open the way to solving others. The influence of "special interests" has become for McCain a kind of unified field theory to explain all the ills of modern government. On issue after issue, he returns to the need for getting "Big Money" out of politics.

McCain criticizes the Clinton administration for not being tough on China but thinks its "ruthless dictators" should be in the World Trade Organization.

"Do I favor a flat tax?" he asked rhetorically last week. "Of course, I favor a flat tax. I think everybody should be able to fill out their tax form on a postcard: one or two or three rates, a few deductions for home mortgage, charitable deductions.

"But it's not going to happen unless we get rid of those people who make those six- and seven-figure contributions. The tax code is 44,000 pages long. And it got that way because the special interests rule in Washington, and your interests are submerged. We fix that and we can have a flat tax."

The same political miracle would occur, says McCain, in health care. "You and I tonight," he told an enthusiastic audience in Amherst, "we could sit down around this table and figure out a patients' bill of rights in a couple of hours. But it's not going to happen in Washington. It's not going to happen because the trial lawyers bought out the Democrats and the HMOs have the Republicans.

"Who rules in Washington? Who rules? It's the special interests who rule in Washington."

There are ironies here, not the least of which is that campaign finance reform gives McCain a reputation as a courageous plain-talker even as it relieves him of the need to take specific positions on, say, tax reform or health care reform. Another is that the McCain moment has arrived because the other mainstream challengers to Bush—Lamar Alexander, Elizabeth Dole, and Dan Quayle—were unable to raise the money necessary to run a strong campaign. McCain, meanwhile, has raised more than $10 million, much of it from industries he oversees as chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee. At a town hall meeting last week, a college student read a two-page statement challenging him on the point. McCain's reaction was characteristic. He handed the kid a microphone and asked him to re-read the statement—"I don't think they could hear you in the back."

After campaign finance reform, McCain's message tends to trail off. McCain tells audiences the success of his campaign will rest on his ability to "articulate my vision for America," in the manner of FDR, John Kennedy, or Ronald Reagan. That vision is indeed hard to articulate. Once money has been drained from politics, he says, Americans will be called to "a cause greater than their self-interest."

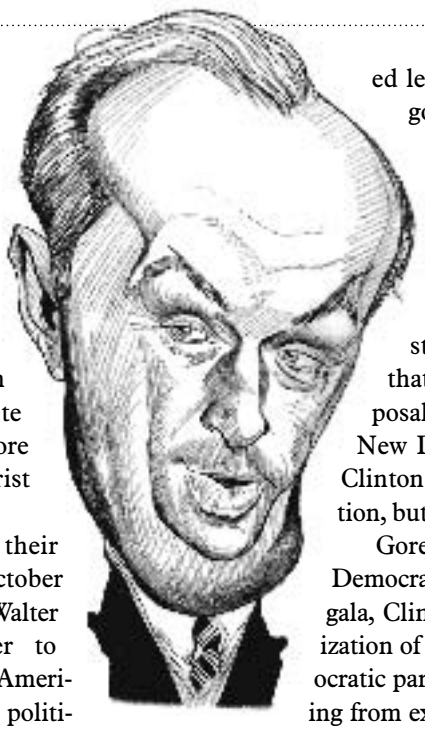
"People say there are no great causes left in America," he said. "I say, wherever there's a hungry child, there's a great cause. Wherever there's a senior citizen without shelter, there's a great cause." And beyond these acts of individual kindness, there is always public service, which McCain terms "the noblest calling"—though this might sound odd coming from a public servant who is trying to convince his audience that the government is a sewer.

Opponents of campaign finance reform argue, of course, that political conflicts are at bottom the consequence of genuine ideological differences, to which the "special interests" have, predictably enough, attached their Big Money. Resolving these differences is called politics. But McCain offers his audiences a vision of politics drained not only of money but of politics, too, in which differences disappear in the universal willingness "to get the job done," to use a favorite phrase. It is a fantasy of Perot-like dimensions, and it may indeed be suited for these wan, de-ideologized days of Late Clintonism. In that case, the McCain moment will last longer than anyone now expects. ♦

The Democrats' Left Turn

From Gore and Bradley to Bill and Hillary, the third way is being abandoned in favor of that old time liberal religion.

By Fred Barnes



In his 18 years in the Senate, Bill Bradley built a reputation as the rare Democrat who is committed to cutting taxes. He even wrote a book about it. Similarly, Vice President Al Gore has positioned himself as a moderate since the day he was elected to Congress in 1976. Far more than President Clinton, says former White House press secretary Mike McCurry, Gore really believes the "mantra" of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council.

Yet when Bradley and Gore met in their first presidential campaign debate on October 27, they sounded like Mario Cuomo and Walter Mondale, old-fashioned liberals eager to increase the federal government's role in American life. David Broder, the sober-minded political columnist for the *Washington Post*, was amazed: "Any listener would have to think that either of these men would be a more liberal president than Bill Clinton."

The chief topic of the debate was how to handle the non-Social Security surplus, projected to exceed $1 trillion over the next decade. Gore went on the attack. Bradley, he huffed, would spend the entire surplus on a new health care plan for uninsured kids and their parents. That would leave no funds for expanding Medicare, which Gore is anxious to do. Return any portion of the surplus to Americans by cutting taxes? The thought never crossed Gore's mind. Nor Bradley's.

There's a simple explanation for Bradley and Gore's lurch to the left. The presidential caucuses and primaries are dominated by the Democratic party's liberal wing of union members, minorities, feminists, and unreconstructed leftists, and these candidates are merely going where the votes are. That explanation, however, is inadequate. True, Bradley and Gore are pandering, but more important, they are part of a broader shift to the left among leading Democrats. It's not quite a liberal counter-revolution. Public opinion, still fairly conservative, wouldn't allow that. But in both rhetoric and policy proposals, it's a rejection of the moderate—or New Democrat, or Third Way—model that Clinton has embodied. Not quite a total rejection, but significant nonetheless.

Gore and Clinton still pledge allegiance to Democratic centrism. At the DLC's October 13 gala, Clinton boasted of "an enormous modernization of the thinking and direction of the Democratic party." But Clinton himself is now retreating from exactly that project. New Democrats prefer market-based solutions, especially to cope with the soaring costs of Social Security and Medicare. In his plan for making Social Security solvent, unveiled at the beginning of this year, Clinton included one of those solutions, the investment of unspent Social Security trust funds in stocks and bonds. But before submitting his formal proposal to Congress last month, Clinton made one major alteration, jettisoning the investment proposal.

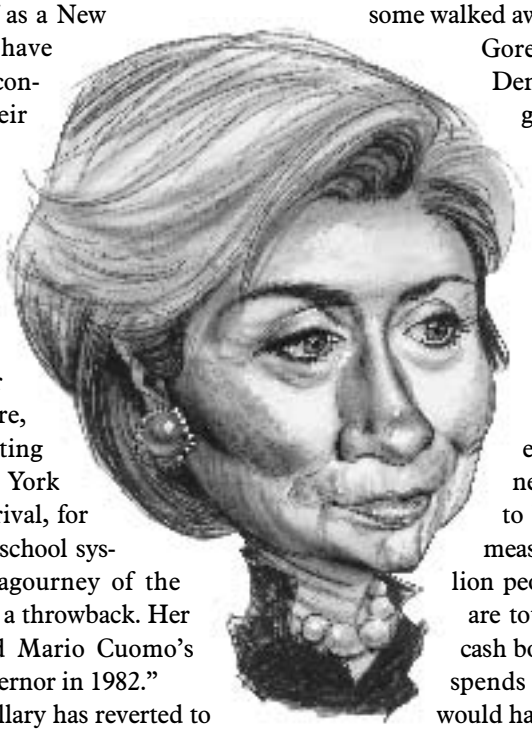
Rather than tame Medicare, Clinton wants to expand it by adding a generous benefit for prescription drugs. So does Gore. And they will settle for nothing less. Last winter, a commission headed by Democratic Senator John Breaux and Republican Representative Bill Thomas announced a Medicare reform scheme that included a more modest benefit for prescriptions. Their plan, in line with New Democrat thinking, brought some market forces to bear on Medicare. Clinton made sure that his appointees on the commission killed the plan.

Illustrations by Thomas Fluharty

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

On another DLC item, free trade, Clinton and Gore have departed from New Democrat thinking, making a strategic concession to liberal protectionists such as organized labor. Gore even mentioned it in his address to the DLC last month. "I will insist on the authority to enforce workers' rights, human rights, and environmental protections in those [trade] agreements," he said. This echoed what is now official Clinton administration policy. Such provisions cannot be tossed off as unenforceable side agreements, but must be integrated into all trade pacts. This will make negotiating trade treaties far more difficult, if not impossible.

Clinton isn't the only member of his household who's charged to the left. There's Hillary Rodham Clinton. She's not ordinarily thought of as a New Democrat. But DLC leaders have counseled her extensively and consider her sympathetic to their viewpoint. You'd never know it, however, from her unannounced campaign for the Senate in New York. She has talked up liberal issues exclusively, endorsing a higher minimum wage, demanding more money but no reform for Social Security and Medicare, denouncing GOP tax cuts, faulting Mayor Rudy Giuliani of New York City, her expected Republican rival, for trying "to dismantle the public school system" with vouchers. Adam Nagourney of the *New York Times* described her as a throwback. Her "campaign strategy . . . evoked Mario Cuomo's first successful campaign for governor in 1982."



There's another sign that Hillary has reverted to 1980s-style liberalism: She's obsessed with attacking Ronald Reagan. "We need to make sure that we have someone representing New York who will stand up against any effort to go back, to make a U-turn to the days of trickle-down, supply-side economics," she told a union gathering October 16. "I don't think Reaganomics and supply-side economics was the right direction for this country."

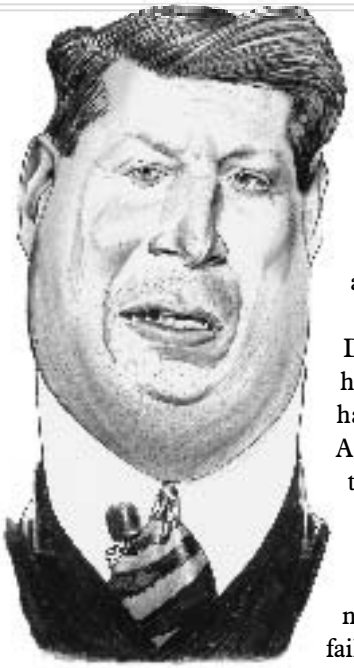
If Hillary mimics Cuomo, Gore is the reincarnation of Mondale, the Democratic presidential nominee in 1984 and a paragon of old Democratic liberalism. Gore attacks Bradley by linking him to Reagan, just as Mondale zinged his Democratic foe, Senator John Glenn, for backing Reagan's economic program. Bradley voted for Reagan's budget cuts in 1981, devastating social welfare programs, according to Gore. This is an incredible stretch—the cuts turned out to be minuscule—but Bradley scarcely defends his vote. Instead, he, too, pummels Reagan, noting that at least he didn't vote for Reagan's tax cuts in 1981. (Gore didn't either.) Gore has also criticized Bradley for voting, with Reagan, to aid the anti-Communist contras in Nicaragua.

At a Democratic dinner in Des Moines on October 9, Gore gave his best Mondale imitation. His appearance was billed by his aides as the "new Gore"—more casual in dress and demeanor. But mostly he was more liberal. He suggested Bradley was a quitter for retiring from Congress in 1996. Unlike Gore, he didn't "stay and fight" against the Reagan legacy. Of course Reagan left office in 1989, but that didn't stop Gore. "When Newt Gingrich took over Congress [in 1995] and tried to reinforce Reagan-omics, some walked away."

Gore makes an occasional bow to New Democrat dogma. He's for a balanced budget. While Bradley opposes welfare reform, Gore defends it. Rather than propose billions in new spending for the poor, Gore often offers up tax credits, still another New Democrat approach. But this is deceptive. Both Gore and Bradley would expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, geared for the "working poor." It is a refundable tax credit, which means many recipients get reimbursed for money they never actually paid in taxes. It's supposed to be an incentive to work, but, in some measure, it's welfare. For more than 10 million people, income and Social Security taxes are totally offset, making them eligible for a cash bonus. To pay it, the government already spends $30 billion a year. Gore and Bradley would have it spend billions more.

In fact, the two have swerved to the left on so many issues that few reporters have bothered to keep track. One who has is Ron Brownstein of the *Los Angeles Times*. "More Liberal Than You Thought" is the title of an article he wrote about Gore and Bradley in the *American Prospect*. Gore, he says, "has proposed a more assertive role for the federal government—in areas from education to health care—than President Clinton has risked offering at any point since the Republican congressional takeover in 1994." Bradley says he's for "big ideas." This consists, Brownstein says, of "putting his name on a lengthening list of liberal social and economic priorities." On most items, Gore's with him.

Bradley recently unveiled a program of near universal health care coverage. Gore has his own plan to provide health insurance to children and up to 7 million more



adults. While Bradley emphasizes more government-funded day care, Gore has put out a plan for universal access to preschool. Both have anti-poverty programs that go well beyond expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit. Bradley, for example, would let mothers on welfare keep their child support payments without reducing their welfare stipend. Gore, too, would increase the amount of child support. Bradley would require all handguns to be registered. Gore would require all handgun owners to be licensed. Both are for the national enforcement of gay rights, though they would use different means. Both would also bar soft money from campaigns.

It's a long list, and getting longer all the time. How come? The conventional wisdom about pandering for liberal votes in the primaries is partially true for Bradley and Gore. Bradley knew there wasn't fertile Democratic ground to plow on Gore's right. And Gore has been pushed left by a non-Democrat, GOP presidential frontrunner George W. Bush. Karl Rove, the top Bush strategist, thinks Gore is alarmed by Bush's appeal to the political center. So Gore has been forced to distinguish himself from Bush by taking liberal positions. But none of this explains why and Bill and Hillary are also moving left.

So, why have the four most prominent Democrats in America veered to the left (as have many congressional Democrats)? Polls haven't changed. Roughly twice as many Americans identify themselves as conservatives as liberals. I think it's two things: the budget surplus and the pitiful performance of Republicans. Freed of the need for fiscal restraint, Democrats instinctively propose new programs. And having seen Republicans fail to stir any grass-roots enthusiasm for cutting taxes, they've decided the tax issue has lost its bite. Without it, they figure Republicans will have no popular themes. At least not the Republicans who for two election cycles now—1996 and 1998—have stumbled to Election Day without making a dent in Democratic arguments. Perhaps George W. will change all that, but Democrats are gambling he won't. Who can blame them? ♦

Stan Freberg directing a Great American Soup ad. Wea/Atlantic/Rhino.

Advertisements for Themselves

Commercials in a Postmodern Age

by Brian Murray

Julian Watkins knew a good pitch when he saw one. In 1949 the veteran copywriter published *The 100 Greatest Advertisements*. Most of these first appeared in the 1920s and 1930s, but they promoted products—Coca-Cola, Camel cigarettes, and Campbell's soup—that remain mainstays in the marketplace today.

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In fact, Watkins's selections reveal that, in some ways, advertising has changed little over the years: It appeals bluntly to our basic wants and fears—our longing for acceptance and success. Thus the makers of Odorono, a "delightful toilet water," reminded women that "it is a physiological fact that persons troubled with perspiration odor seldom can detect it themselves." And Listerine promised to end the halitosis that has left so many unfortunates "often a bridesmaid but never a bride."

Another ad, for the International Correspondence School, depicted an excited husband telling his delighted wife that at last they were headed for "easy street"—and all because of the home study courses designed by the International Correspondence School. According to Watkins, this ad's "fundamental appeal" stemmed from the fact that, "like ole man river, man's desire to get ahead, to earn more money, to be admired, to get the gal, and to keep in the running, is as changeless as the orbit of the earth."

But in other respects Watkins's specimens seem like relics from an ancient time. They belong to an era when major advertisers still turned primarily to radio or print; when words necessarily mattered; when copy was king. Relatively few of Watkins's choices relied mainly on clever slogans or eye-catching illustrations. Some, in fact, aren't illustrated at all.

Watkins's book has been frequently reprinted; the 1959 edition added a sampling of typically crisp and stylish ads written by David Ogilvy, who died, at the age of eighty-eight, this past July. Best known for his 1963 bestseller, *Confessions of an Advertising Man*, Ogilvy was a former door-to-door salesman who mastered his craft by studying the work of such legendary figures as Claude Hopkins, Sterling Getchell, and Raymond Rubicam. Like them, Ogilvy specialized in "long copy," and, like them, he consistently landed leading accounts: Shell, Schweppes, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Rolls-Royce.

Ogilvy also created one of modern advertising's more enduring icons—that suave fellow who sports an eyepatch in countless ads for Hathaway shirts. The "Hathaway Man" campaign, Ogilvy admitted, "made me famous." But it also gave him pause. "That eyepatch," he complained in the late 1950s, "has inspired an entire school of advertising—a school which I deplore. Its adherents place their faith in visual gimmicks, unaware of the fact that pictures don't sell unless you put some hard-selling copy underneath them."

Ogilvy, the consummate adman, adapted well to advertising's changing venues and styles; the agency he found-

ed (now called Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide) continues to thrive. Still, one senses in his remarks of forty years ago a lament for the passing of an era—a recognition that, with the coming of network television, the golden age of copywriting was nearing its close. Indeed, Madison Avenue wasted no time embracing the medium presciently described by RCA president David Sarnoff as "the most effective sales agent in the history of merchandizing." And, for the most part, television advertising in the 1950s belonged to what Watkins called the "rockum and sockum" school. It relied heavily on the sort of "visual gimmicks" and catchy jingles that Ogilvy so roundly deplored.

Not surprisingly, Bernice Kanner all but ignores the 1950s in her new book *The 100 Best TV Commercials*, which attempts to "chronicle the evolution and impact" of a medium that, for better or worse, has "commandeered a place in our psyche." Kanner's earliest selection—"Acapulco Diver"—first ran in 1962. It showed high-diving champion Raul Garcia plummeting from Mexico's "famous La Perla cliffs," a Timex waterproof watch strapped to his wrist, with the veteran broadcaster John Cameron Swayze noting that Garcia "hits that water at more than eighty-five miles an hour." Garcia's watch, of course, easily survived his nose-dive; it "took a licking," Swayze intoned, "and kept on ticking."

The more Garcia plunged, the more Timex soared. And for over a decade, the firm produced similar "torture test" ads featuring Swayze and the same "licking and ticking" tagline. As Kanner notes, Timex came to account "for more than half of all watches sold for less than $100."

Kanner, however, isn't primarily interested in advertising as "an instrument of sales," to use Julian Watkins's respectful phrase. Her list "honors aesthetics more than effectiveness in moving product." These commercials "took a strong-selling proposition" and "served it to customers in a fresh, surprising, and unusually persuasive way." Kanner's "100 best" commercials "have been admired and envied as breakthroughs" within the industry and throughout the world.

Kanner—who used to write the "On Madison Avenue" column for *New York* magazine—describes and briefly discusses each of her choices, most of which were produced by top agencies in Europe and the United States, including Young & Rubicam, Chiat/Day, Saatchi & Saatchi International, and the Leo Burnett Company. Weeding through fifty years of the world's commercials would make anyone weary—or mad; and Kanner, not surprisingly, had help. This assortment, she explains, "was selected from the industrywide Great Commercials Library and winnowed down by creative directors"—a process that "practically guaranteed what I'd be slurping was cream."

The 100 Best TV Commercials
And Why They Worked
by Bernice Kanner
Times, 252 pp., $29.95

Tip of the Freberg
The Stan Freberg Collection, 1951-1998
by Stan Freberg
Wea/Atlantic/Rhino, 4 CDs and 1 video, $59.97

Curiously, however, Kanner's list overlooks the work of Stan Freberg, who did much to inspire the so-called "creative revolution" that—to the chagrin of many on Madison Avenue—changed the face of advertising during the 1960s. *Tip of the Freberg*, a recently released box set containing four CDs and a video, covers nearly five decades of Freburg's work; it confirms him as one of the top talents of modern advertising—an unusually witty and inventive comedian and parodist whose most memorable campaigns, like the best Marx Brothers skits, have stayed fresh for decades.

Freberg first earned wide attention during the 1950s, when he recorded a string of hit comedy records and hosted his own network radio show. (An updated version, "The New Stan Freberg Show," aired on the BBC and NPR in the early nineties.) Produced in the late 1950s, Freberg's first radio commercials spoofed advertising's bombastic and lavish claims. In one, a chorus of singers merrily proclaim that "ninety-five percent of the people in the USA are *not* buying Chun King Chow Mein." On radio, Freberg specialized in imagery at once outrageous and precise. Another early spot, for the Contadina Company, prompted listeners to picture a mammoth can of tomato paste trimmed with lights and perched atop the Empire State Building. In Morse code, the can blinks out the now legendary advertising question: "Who puts eight great tomatoes in that little bitty can?"

Freberg hit full stride in the late 1960s, when he produced a series of movie parodies for, among others, Jeno's Pizza Rolls and Banquet Frozen Foods. In Freberg's 1970 ad for Heinz's new line of "Great American Soups," the dancer and actress Ann Miller stars as a wife who—promising her husband something a little different for dinner—magically transforms her modest kitchen into an elaborate stage set fit for a Busby Berkeley musical. Accompanied by dozens of sequined dancers, Miller hoofs it up atop a giant soup can, singing "Let's Face the Chicken Gumbo and Dance!" "Emily," her husband asks in the concluding shot, "why do you always have to make such a big production out of everything?" This spot won Freberg several awards, including two Clios—the ad industry's top prize.

By 1970, however, funny commercials had become commonplace. The firm of Doyle Dane Bernbach had long specialized in humor; two of their most creative Volkswagen ads are well-known to students of advertising and not surprisingly rank among Kanner's top hundred. The low-budget "Snowplow," first aired in 1963, showed the humble Bug chugging along snow-packed streets in the dark of pre-dawn. "Have you ever wondered," the voice-over asks, "how the man who drives the snowplow drives *to* the snowplow?"

Six years later, "Funeral" again stressed the car's durable economy through a wry tale of wastefulness and greed. A wealthy man, recently deceased, looks down upon his own funeral and comments bitterly on the profligate ways of his relatives and friends. To the business partner "whose only motto

was spend, spend, spend, I leave nothing, nothing, nothing." But to his Volkswagen-driving nephew, a model of prudence, the narrator bequeaths "my entire fortune of $100 billion dollars."

In 1960, the Volkswagen was still widely considered a comical car for bohemians and cranks. But within a decade, thanks largely to advertising, Beetles were everywhere, a familiar feature of American life. Even David Ogilvy was impressed. According to Kanner, Ogilvy called "Funeral" the "funniest commercial he'd ever seen," and credited it with "changing his mind that people don't buy from clowns."

Times Books

Energizer Battery's successful 1989 advertising campaign: a pink bunny mocking advertising.

And yet, by the early 1970s, many in American advertising were eager to eliminate the clowns, contending that wit and whimsy no longer suited the country's tired and contentious mood. Moreover, some studies suggested that humorous irony left too many viewers distracted and confused. Alka-Seltzer's famous "Spicy Meatballs" spot, first aired in 1969, depicted an actor downing endless forkfuls of spaghetti during the filming of a commercial for "Magadini's Meatballs." Dozens of takes are botched, and the hapless actor, gorged and nauseated, can barely utter his big line: "Mama Mia, that's a spicy meatball!" As Kanner notes, "the most famous commercial about making a commercial didn't work. People thought it was for spaghetti sauce and Alka-Seltzer sales slumped."

During the 1970s, production values for commercials continued to improve, and as a result many more took on the tight, polished look of little feature films. And, more frequently, commercials offered nostalgic images or patriotic themes. In the wake of the raucous 1960s, Coca-Cola proposed "to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony." In 1974, in the midst of Watergate, General Motors commissioned a spot for Chevrolet that mixed images of family fun with an upbeat country tune celebrating the timeless pleasures of "Baseball, Hot Dogs, Apple Pie." The song, Kanner recalls, became "an anthem," played by "by organists at ballparks while airplanes flew overhead with banners." The commercial itself—regarded by some industry leaders as the best ever made—aimed to put Chevy "back into a position of trust after a year in which people believed nothing."

As the economy dragged, the ad business tightened its belt, putting renewed emphasis on marketing and research. By the middle of the decade, "creativity" was no longer the buzzword, and—as advertising historian Stephen Fox has observed—the industry returned generally to "hard sell" techniques that had prevailed twenty years before. By the late 1970s, Fox writes, ads "came to resemble each other." In America at least, it was a time for "naked women in bath-oil spots; macho sportsmen in beer ads; pet food commercials with a pet and a bowl of the product."

Fox's *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* appeared in 1984, just as a second "creative revolution" started to boom. This one owed directly to the spread of cable and the VCR—to the new ubiquity of remote control. In effect, during the 1980s, Ogilvy's nightmare came true. Advertisers and their clients now knew that, unless riveted, most viewers would disappear after a second or two, zapping their way to more gripping pictures.

At the same time computerization made special effects increasingly cheap and easy. Internationally, today's top commercials are more than ever like mini-movies, offering elaborate visuals and, increasingly, big stars: Burt Reynolds, Anthony Quinn, Michael J. Fox, Catherine Deneuve. And they're frequently directed by the sort of high-profile directors who, twenty years ago, would have very probably dismissed advertising as a low and vulgar trade. This trend has long been clearest in Britain, where Hugh Hudson and Ridley Scott are among many well-regarded directors who have worked in advertising throughout their careers.

Hudson, best known for the Oscar-winning *Chariots of Fire*, also directed several commercials to win a place on Kanner's list, including "Swimming Pool," a widely celebrated spot for Benson & Hedges that first appeared in British movie theaters in 1978. "Swimming Pool" featured no commentary, only "rhythmic rock music" and an arresting series of images that, as Kanner notes, included a desert, lizards, a glimmering swimming pool, and a helicopter transporting oversized cigarettes in what initially appears to be a "large tin of sardines." As a narrative, "Swimming Pool" made no sense. Nor did it illuminate the product's virtues. Instead, it offered "fantastic imagery to forestall wear-out," luring viewers to watch "repeatedly without getting bored."




Times Books

Timex Watch's 1962 "Takes a licking and keeps on ticking." Apple Computer's 1984 "Big Brother." Cheer Detergent's 1988 "Ice-water washing."

Ridley Scott gained acclaim as a film director with the 1979 *Alien* and 1982 *Blade Runner*. But he also directed what is arguably the single most influential American commercial ever made: Apple computer's "Big Brother," which first aired during the Super Bowl in January 1984. "Big Brother" featured a grimly futuristic setting in which an ominous Big Brother figure, projected from a huge TV screen, addresses a large group of dronelike people with shaved heads and gray uniforms. Suddenly, a young woman in red jogging shorts breaks through the crowd and, hurling a sledgehammer, shatters the screen projecting Big Brother's grim face. "On January 24," a voice proclaims, "Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you'll see why 1984 won't be like *1984*."

Like "Swimming Pool"—and countless commercials since—"Big Brother" was less concerned about the product than the presumed values of its buyers. Apple owners, the ad implied, were fit, energetic, rebellious—and bright enough to savor this updated allusion to George Orwell's famous novel. With this new machine, Apple buyers would decisively declare their independence and creativity. "Big Brother," they recognized, symbolized "Big Blue"—Apple's dominant rival, IBM.

Kanner discusses more recent campaigns for Diesel Jeans, including one 1997 spot in which "a handsome guy in impeccable Diesel Jeans kisses his wife and baby good-bye before dueling with a grubby, despicable man who kicks dogs—and shoots our hero dead." Such oblique and "edgy" spots, Kanner writes, have created "a counterculture personality" for Diesel's "$80 dungarees," making them "the second-best-selling jeans behind Levi's in many European countries."

In other words, Diesel's ads try not to look like ads at all. Their elliptical structure aims partly to exclude undesirable viewers—namely, unhip schmucks who can't or won't put down eighty bucks for a pair of jeans. Diesel's ad director told Kanner that his company's commercials "are about making our mark and establishing our image as a company." Consumers, he suggests, "don't actually buy jeans; they buy the image, what surrounds the jeans." Adds Kanner: "People who think an ad is cool think the company is cool—and that buying their product makes them cool."

Advertising today is more varied—and ubiquitous—than ever before. Still, most prime time advertisements link products to popular "images" or fashionable attitudes: Sports shoes, snack foods, cars—even Cadillacs—are pitched primarily on the assumption that they too are, somehow, cool. As a result, a growing number of commercials—like Diesel's—are determinedly "artistic," often with pretentious results. A recent television spot for Agilent Technologies, for example, mimics Wim Wender's beautiful 1987 film *Wings of Desire*, and manages to suggest that eternal questions of time and mortality are pretty much the same as the universal need for speedy e-mail. One cringes as Kanner exclaims: "If Michelangelo were alive today, he'd probably be working on Madison Avenue."

So, too, in its use of dark sarcasm, Diesel is hardly alone. Whether selling fast food, pistachio nuts, or credit cards, many recent commercials present the world as a grotesque place inhabited primarily by bizarre characters in absurd situations. Presumably such caricatures are designed to make viewers feel better about themselves and somehow superior to others. In this regard, contemporary advertising owes far less to Stan Freberg than to a sensibility—and a sense of humor—shaped variously by Monty Python and *Saturday Night Live*, David Letterman and Howard Stern. Kanner, like Stephen Fox, is largely right when she suggests that "advertising holds a mirror up to show us who and what we are." And, aptly, she dubs the Diesel spots "Nihilist Chic."

In this climate, it's no wonder that so many of Ogilvy's colleagues paid him tribute in recent years; in 1991, for example, the Association of National Advertisers hailed him as "perhaps the last great figure in the advertising world." For them, Ogilvy, stylish and urbane, represented standards that prevailed when the world—and their profession—seemed generally less chaotic and mean. Back in 1949, Julian Watkins argued that "great advertising" was not only "clear" (offering "an idea" that "can't be buried regardless of presentation") but "sincere" (its "belief" reaching "right out from the page and into your heart"). Ogilvy stressed the same points repeatedly in interviews and his own published writings.

"A good advertisement," Ogilvy once wrote, "is one which sells the product without drawing attention to itself." "The consumer is not a moron," he declared, many years ago; "she is your wife. Don't insult her intelligence." After fifty years of television, it still seems like sound advice. ♦

Cold Warriors

Ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, six heroes get the credit they deserve. **BY VICTORINO MATUS**

The end of the century has been a good thing for the publishing industry. Indeed, 1999 could be called the Year of Lists, bombarding us with catalogues of the century's best books, best movies, best advertisements, and so on—and on and on.

One new compendium for the century's end, however, deserves a kinder judgment: *Architects of Victory: Six Heroes of the Cold War*, in which Joseph Shattan explores the lives of Harry Truman, Winston Churchill, Konrad Adenauer, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Pope John Paul II, and Ronald Reagan—looking at the critical choices that eventually led to the defeat of communism. Shattan spent several years working in the Reagan and Bush administrations. He was Vice President Quayle's speechwriter when the Berlin Wall came down ten years ago this week, and it is the belief that we owe "a debt of gratitude to the heroic figures who made our victory possible" that drove him to write this book.

Architects of Victory
Six Heroes of the Cold War
by Joseph Shattan
Heritage, 342 pp., $14.95

By now it's no surprise to find Reagan and the pope on a list of Cold War heroes. But before they got there, others had paved the way. When Truman became president in 1945, relations between the United States and the Soviet Union were fairly warm. But Truman quickly began to realize that kind words, cajoling, and even written agreements would not stop Stalin's drive for domination in Europe. By the time Soviet foreign minister Molotov came to meet with the new president, Truman was prepared to give him a tongue-lashing—and when Molotov complained, "I have never before been talked to like that in my life," Truman responded, "Carry out your agreements, and you won't."

Thus began a transformation of American foreign policy. But Truman's change of heart came with the help of others. Shattan gives credit to the likes of Secretary of State Dean Acheson, George Kennan, Clark Clifford, and George Elsey. And of course, there's Winston Churchill, the first leader to realize the threat Bolshevism posed. As early as 1918, at the height of the Russian Revolution, Churchill urged intervention.

During the Second World War, Churchill understood that Germany posed a greater threat than the USSR. But he also knew that Stalin, if given the chance, would grab as much of the continent as possible. This is why, as Shattan points out, it was of utmost importance for the Allies to carry out Churchill's plan of liberating Europe via the Balkans and not France. But Churchill's warnings of Soviet trickery would go mostly unheeded by the Americans. Only in March 1946, with his famous "Iron Curtain" address in Fulton, Missouri, did heads begin to turn in Washington.

In parts of Europe, however, the fear of Soviet tyranny was already high. And in postwar Germany, with the creation of the German Democratic Republic in the East and the Federal Republic in the West, German citizens found themselves at ground zero of the Cold War. The West badly needed an ally among the Germans, and it found one in Konrad Adenauer.

A former mayor of Cologne, Adenauer was sixty-eight when the Nazis threw him into Brauweiler prison in 1944 as an enemy of the state. Above his cell he could hear the screams of torture victims—screams that would haunt him years later on his deathbed. But that death did not come until 1967, when he was ninety-one. And before that, Adenauer would found the Christian Democratic party and become West Germany's first chancellor. Like Truman and Churchill, he would stand firm against Soviet intimidation, linking his country's security to the West.

If Adenauer, Truman, and Churchill are the political fathers whose ideas and examples impressed Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl, and Ronald Reagan, then one of their spiritual fathers, according to *Architects of Victory*, is Alexander Solzhenitsyn. By the 1970s, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev was touting the triumph of socialism over capitalism, and many in the West believed it. But then, in 1974, *The Gulag Archipelago* was published, and it became impossible not to see that behind the Soviet façade lay the world's most oppressive regime. Solzhenitsyn, a Russian writer and former Marxist-Leninist, had been sent to the Gulag from 1945 to 1953. There he counted himself among the lucky ones, as he explained, for having only experienced "limited" torture consisting of sleep deprivation that lasted for a week at a time. But it was his account of the brutal treatment of others that reminded the world that the fight against communism was indeed a moral struggle.

Shattan fears his six heroes may be forgotten. (In fact, as he relates in his introduction, he discovered that his intern had never even heard of Konrad Adenauer.) And so it is fitting, at the tenth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, to remember those who made it possible—a list of heroes for the last half century. ♦

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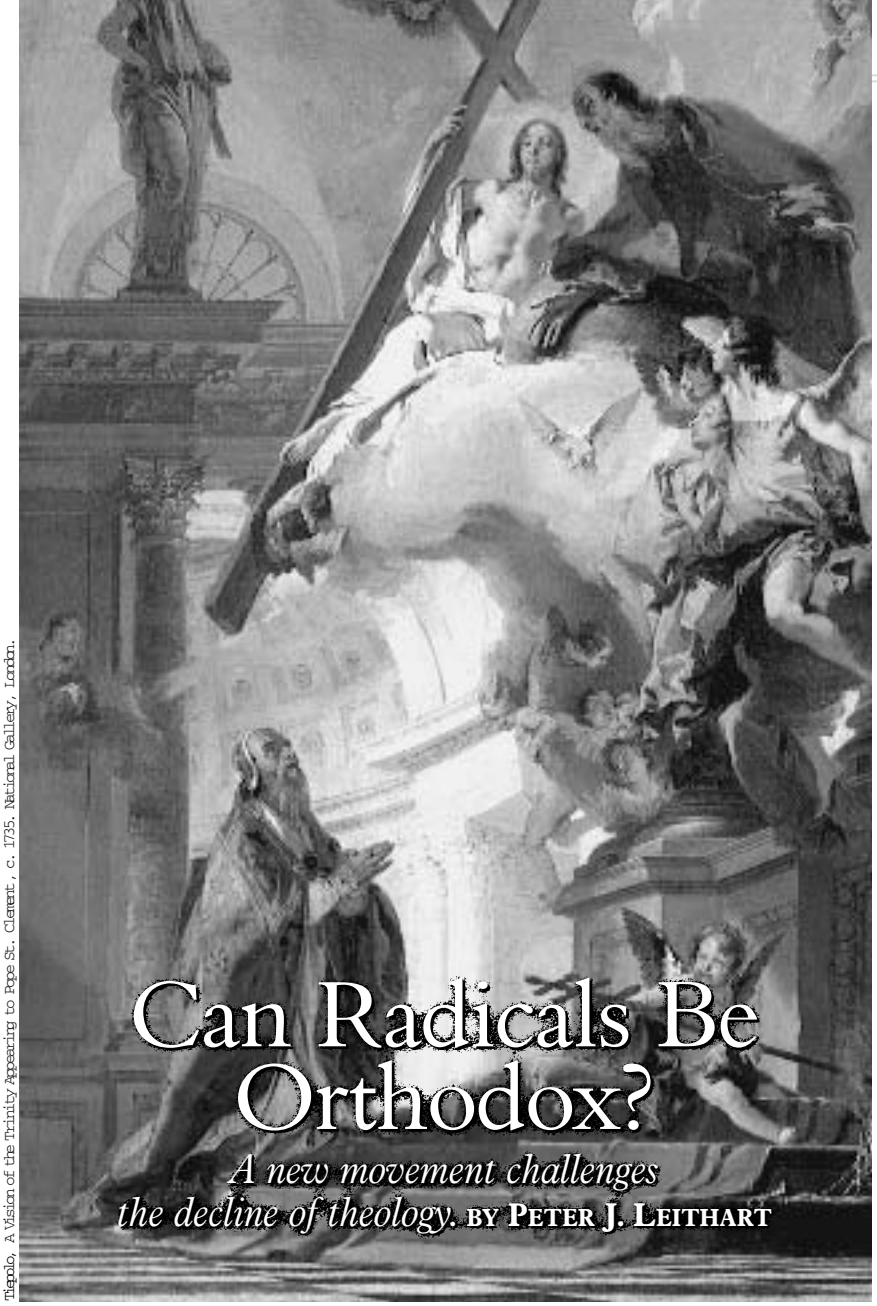

Tiepolo, A Vision of the Trinity Appearing to Pope St. Clement, c. 1735. National Gallery, London.

Can Radicals Be Orthodox?

A new movement challenges the decline of theology. BY PETER J. LEITHART

It was in 1990 that John Milbank's *Theology and Social Theory* hit certain theology circles like a bombshell.

When he wrote it, Milbank was a young theologian at Lancaster University in England, and part of the reason the book had such impact was his Anglican background. Founded as a "middle way" between Lutheranism and Puritanism, Anglicanism favors tolerance and inclusiveness and is unnerved by prophets; it has been congenial to theologians who want to shed the burden of orthodoxy and accommodate the latest trends in thought without giving up the comforts of ecclesiastical life. In Milbank, it found an interlocutor of disconcerting energy and conviction.

Radical Orthodoxy
A New Theology
edited by John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward
Routledge, 288 pp., $75

Milbank contends that for Christians, orthodoxy, not contemporary secular thought, must provide the "organizing logic" for reflection. "Once theology surrenders its claim" to be the most fundamental discourse, he writes, "it cannot any longer articulate the word of the creator God, but is bound to turn into the oracular voice of some finite idol." Milbank's suggestion that many of his colleagues were prophets of an idol was not calculated to win friends in English academia. Posing this stark antithesis seemed distinctly uncivil and un-Anglican.

Outside his own church, Milbank's pointed critique of theologians' use of social science hit a variety of targets. From the far left of Latin American liberation theologians to the far right of American conservatives, modern theological thinkers have attempted to discover correlations between Christianity and the findings of the social sciences. Milbank will have none of it. Secular social science is "actually constituted in its secularity by 'heresy' in relation to orthodox Christianity, or else a rejection of Christianity that is more 'neo-pagan' than simply anti-religious." In short, "'scientific' social theories are themselves theologies or anti-theologies in disguise." A synthesis of Christianity and social science is no more possible than a synthesis of belief and unbelief.

While vigorously challenging much of mainstream theology, Milbank creatively wove together threads from several theological and philosophical movements. Philosophically, he finds inspiration in both "conservative postmodernists" like Alasdair MacIntyre and the radical postmodernists of French philosophy. Several developments in recent American theology have similarly left their mark on Milbank's work. In the mid-1980s, what came to be known as the "Yale School," led by George Lindbeck and Hans Frei, formulated a "postliberal" theology. Postliberals reject the Enlightenment notion that all religions are a manifestation of a generic experience of "religion-in-general," and stress instead Christian particularity. Along similar lines, Stanley Hauerwas of Duke University insists that Christian ethics has a specific shape that emerges from the story of Jesus—and thus necessarily different from any non-Christian ethics.

And yet, while riding the crest of this "postliberalism" in theology, Milbank's *Theology and Social Theory* also expanded the postliberal agenda. Where the Yale School focused much of its attention on theological method and ecumenical concerns, Milbank attempted a larger project. His book was an effort to put theology into the ring with social science and

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philosophy, and he was eager to show that Christianity could address cultural and political concerns in a highly sophisticated way: Milbank's program was nothing less than to restore the Triune God to the center of Western intellectual, cultural, and political life.

Since *Theology and Social Theory*, Milbank has produced a steady stream of books and articles. He has published his doctoral dissertation on the Renaissance philosopher Giambattista Vico, and in 1997 he released a collection of essays entitled *The Word Made Strange*. His collection of poems, *The Mercurial Wood: Sites, Tales, Qualities*, also appeared in 1997. Much of his influence comes from essays published in journals, especially *Modern Theology*. His intellectual energy and brilliance are widely admired. Milbank has described himself as a "theologian and philosopher, and therefore interested in everything." His achievement, according to Hauerwas, is largely sui generis, the product of an "extraordinary intellectual vitality."

But not everyone finds Milbank congenial, with his unapologetic confidence in the Christian tradition and his scorn for the defensive "false humility" of modern theology. In person, Milbank combines the distracted rumpledness of a stereotypical English academic with the look of a middle-aged choir boy: short and pudgy, with wire-rimmed glasses pressed tightly against a round face, head topped by a tousle of graying hair. In print and debate, however, the choir boy vanishes. Pugnacious and even abrasive, Milbank is considered a prima donna by many colleagues, "intellectually ruthless" according to one theologian, with a tendency to be "dismissive" of opposing viewpoints—the sort of intellectual who inspires loyalty and loathing in equal measure.

And the sort of intellectual with whom other intellectuals feel compelled to engage. "Milbank studies" has become a growth industry in academic theology. Virtually every issue of *Modern Theology* includes an article by Milbank or one that deals with his theology. A number of recent books, such as David Toole's *Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo*, include lengthy evaluations of his work.

By the mid-1990s, inspired by Milbank, a circle of Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians and graduate students had clustered at the University of Cambridge, where Milbank had become a fellow at Peterhouse. Graham Ward and Catherine Pickstock form the core of the loosely affiliated Milbankian group. Several American theologians, including Frederick Bauerschmidt of Loyola College in Maryland and William Cavanaugh of St. Thomas University, are more distant fellow travelers.

In the past year, several members of the group have left Cambridge, beginning with Milbank, who was given a premier position at the University of Virginia, which included a chair in theology for himself and a job teaching nineteenth-century English literature for his wife. Ward now holds a professorship at the University of Manchester, while Pickstock remains in Cambridge, a fellow in religious studies at Emmanuel College.

Secularism claims to emphasize the "here and now," but Radical Orthodoxy argues only theology can truly embrace the material world.

On many specific issues in theology and politics, this circle—which has adopted the rubric "Radical Orthodoxy" to describe its agenda—is diverse. Pickstock insists that the group "has many different emphases, approaches and styles and inspirations." What the members share, however, is agreement with Milbank's insistence that the tradition of orthodox Christianity is a viable and even radical alternative to postmodernism.

Earlier this year, Milbank, Pickstock, and Ward edited *Radical Orthodoxy*, a manifesto for their movement and the first volume in a proposed series. They define their "new theology" as "orthodox" in its "commitment to credal Christianity" and especially to the full expression of Christianity that developed in medieval Europe. By "radical," they mean "a return to patristic and medieval roots" and an effort to use their restored Christian vision "to criticise modern society, culture, politics, art, science and philosophy with an unprecedented boldness."

The essays in *Radical Orthodoxy* range from epistemology to linguistic philosophy, from sex to aesthetics, from modern politics to medieval music. Nonetheless, several straightforward themes hold the essays together. Above all, *Radical Orthodoxy* is an attempt to break out of the confines to which theology has been assigned in modern intellectual and academic circles.

Western intellectual history since the middle ages is the story of the deposing of theology from its position as the "queen of the sciences" and the (sometimes savage) warfare for her vacated throne. One of the central claims of *Radical Orthodoxy* is that theologians themselves contributed to their decline by trying to build theological systems out of philosophy, the physical sciences, or sociology. Meanwhile, those erstwhile handmaidens to theology were setting up kingdoms of their own. As a result of a quite literal "treason of the clerks," what Milbank calls "secular reason" holds the intellectual field.

Secularism claimed to emphasize the significant issues of the "here and now" while dismissing as irrelevant the theologians off contemplating the "there and then." But *Radical Orthodoxy* argues that theology alone can actually embrace the material world; only theology can affirm the "density" of the material world, because only theology insists that "behind this density resides an even greater density." Secularism offered to liberate sex and the body, but the members of Radical Orthodoxy argue that outside a theologically grounded vision, sex turns to hedonistic manipulation and bodies are subjected to control and violence. Secular economics promised the abundant life, but the West's astonishing material wealth coexists with a

social and moral wasteland. Far from constructing a city of life and abundance, Pickstock argues, the modern world is a "necropolis," a city founded on the love of death. Modernity made an idol of this world; and this idol, like all idols, fails to deliver.

For *Radical Orthodoxy*, secularism's obvious failure makes the moment ripe for a resurgence of theology. Modern thought has exhausted itself in skepticism and nihilism, and people are looking for alternatives. Attempts to conserve modernity are no help, since postmodernism has exposed the fact that the Enlightenment was nihilistic from the beginning. Western civilization thus stands at a crossroads—forced to choose, in Milbank's words, between "philosophy . . . or theology, Herod or the magi, Pilate or the God-Man."

The rejection of modernity and embrace of the medieval by *Radical Orthodoxy* is not nostalgic. Members of the group have in fact developed some of the key ideas of postmodernism within a theological framework. Pickstock offers a critique of deconstructionist Jacques Derrida in her 1998 volume *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy*, but she accepts the postmodern stress on language and on the indeterminacy of meaning. She agrees with Derrida, for example, that humans cannot exhaustively determine the meaning of anything; any final, all-encompassing grasp of the world is, as Derrida insists, forever "deferred." But we do not have to comprehend the world exhaustively if we live by faith. For those in Radical Orthodoxy, theology marks a path beyond postmodernism, not back to premodernism.

The members of Radical Orthodoxy have so far concentrated on the fight against secularism in Western intellectual life. As Milbank puts it, the first battle is to reestablish the intellectual stature of Christian theology. The theologians involved, however, insist that their agenda cannot be confined to the intellectual arena. Eventually, they hope to liberate theology from its second confinement—the confinement of Christian faith and practice to the sphere of private devotion and worship. Radical Orthodoxy seeks a theology that is inherently political and social.

Reasserting the political role of theology requires a reassessment of the reasons for restricting theology in the first place. According to the traditional understanding of historians, theology was driven from public life to end the religious wars of the early modern period. With people killing each other over doctrine, the only way to achieve peace was to make sure that, however loudly Christians might thunder in the pulpit, in the open air they would be allowed to


John Milbank

Univ. of Virginia

speak, if at all, in hushed and tolerant tones. As William Cavanaugh puts it in one of the best essays in *Radical Orthodoxy*, serious public religion "is perhaps the primary thing from which the modern state is meant to save us." Privatized religion is the price of social peace.

In this account, the secular state plays the role of savior: The prince ensures that Protestant lions will lie peaceably with Catholic lambs. Cavanaugh does not believe this, arguing that in reality the idea of "religion" as a set of privately held opinions or private devotional practices was invented in the early modern period—with the help of theologians. Christianity necessarily has a public and social form, and, though the church does not run society, it necessarily has a political cutting edge.

Exactly what practical effect the Radical Orthodoxy movement might have on public life is unclear, even to members of the group. Politically, the members of the group tend to be leftish—though not all of them, and none of them on every issue. Milbank himself is a self-described "Christian socialist," yet components of his brand of leftishness resonate with parts of the American right: decentralization of political power, suspicion of the modern state, and so on.

Despite these qualifications, two general features of the movement's political outlook are clear. First, whatever the specific positions taken, Radical Orthodoxy demands that political and economic questions be treated as theological questions, examined in the light of Scripture and Christian tradition. Arguments from economic or political efficiency might have some weight, but they are subordinate to moral and religious concerns. In keeping with this, many of the practical proposals represent efforts to reintegrate religious, social, and political life into a coherent whole. According to Pickstock, one of the inspirations for Radical Orthodoxy's political program is the "arts and crafts movement," the attempt led by Conrad Noel in the 1920s and 1930s to give liturgical and sacramental shape to social life in the slums of London.

Second, Radical Orthodoxy rejects Western democratic capitalism, calling it a product of secularism. Thus, the movement's members are reluctant to provide policy prescriptions, but instead offer proposals about how Christians can bypass the logic of capitalism. Milbank has suggested that for Christians, material gain should never be the sole motive of economic production or exchange. Christians must always consider the social and moral dimensions of what they make, buy, and sell. At a more general level, considerations of economic efficiency should be subordinate to the common good, defined theologically. For Milbank at least, this means a revival of the medieval "just price," which Milbank envisions would be formulated and enforced by boards composed of businessmen and government

officials. Radical Orthodoxy also seeks to revive the idea of production as "craftsmanship," and Milbank advocates a restoration of a guild system to ensure that businesses are operated in a socially responsible way.

Radical Orthodoxy is very young, and this fact should enter into any evaluation of its political agenda. But even so, the absence of specifics is worrying. Christianity, as Milbank rightly argues, does in fact condemn in the strongest terms any economics that genuflects before Mammon. But prophetic warnings against the idolatry of materialism get us only so far. Without policy specifics, Milbank's economic proposals degenerate into little more than anti-capitalist sloganizing.

Were Milbank's proposals for regulating prices implemented, for example, producers would be less efficient in delivering goods and services where they are needed, and the total volume of goods and services would be affected. Economics, of course, is about trade-offs, and Milbank expects that in a Christian system both producers and consumers would be willing to accept a lower standard of living as the price of a more cooperative and cohesive society. Or, better, the pedagogy of his "Christian socialist order" would train people not to define standard of living in terms of median incomes and GDP.

This is fair enough, but it is not clear how Milbank calculates a trade-off between sheer material well-being and more nebulous social goods, or how he thinks a just price is to be determined. Along similar lines, a guild system could be used to suppress innovation that would benefit society at large, and guild decisions could be guided by politics or passion. Policy questions arise, in short, even when economics is treated as a theological enterprise.

The lack of specifics also leaves Radical Orthodoxy vulnerable to manipulation in the charged climate of church politics. R.R. Reno, who teaches theology at Creighton University and is active in the American Episcopal Church, worries that the slogans of Radical Orthodoxy might be used to promote destructive agendas in the mainline churches. "Harmony of difference," a central theme in Milbank's work that describes the relation of the Persons of the Trinity, could, Reno envisions, adorn banners of gay rights groups. From the other end of the political and ecclesiastical spectrum, Radical Orthodoxy's attack on secular society could serve as the basis for a theocratic agenda. The fact that it is not altogether clear how members of Radical Orthodoxy would respond to these developments illustrates the size of the gap they need to fill.

A more fundamental danger is that, contrary to Radical Orthodoxy's stated intentions, intellectual and cultural forces outside theology could master theology. This is largely a question about the Bible's role in Radical Orthodoxy. Bauerschmidt has expressed concern about the inattention to Scripture in Milbank's work, and Reno points out that Milbank often takes Derrida or Hegel, rather than Christian texts, as his starting point. This method gives Milbank a hearing within the academy, but it carries dangers of its own.

In this respect, it is instructive to compare the Cambridge-based Radical Orthodoxy with the work of Oliver O'Donovan at Oxford. O'Donovan is as insistent as Milbank that Christianity be incarnated in social and political order, but fully half of O'Donovan's recent *The Desire of Nations* is an effort to tease political concepts from the Bible. With Milbank, even as one marvels at his erudition, one wonders where his ideas are coming from and how they are rooted in fundamental Christian texts.

Radical Orthodoxy may well avoid these pitfalls, for it is impossible to tell in what direction the movement will ultimately grow. Whatever the group's future, Radical Orthodoxy at leasts deserves credit for attempting to release theology from its modern imprisonment by reminding us forcefully that, as Stanley Hauerwas once put it, "Christian theology is about how the world is." ♦

Feminist author Naomi Wolf serves as campaign consultant to Vice President Al Gore.
—News item

Parody

GORE 2000
Staff Directory and Phone List

Albert Gore Jr. (Candidate) . . . . . .ext. 2389

Naomi Wolf (Director, Masculinity Enhancement and Earth Tone Optimization) . . . . . .ext. 2388

Camille Paglia (Chief Discretion Officer) . . . . . .ext. 2134

Elizabeth Holtzman (Chief Joke Writer) . . . . . .ext. 2349

Gail Sheehy (Midlife Crisis and Baldness Acceptance Project) . . . . . .ext. 4210

Erica Jong (Recruitment, Chastity Team) . . . . . .ext. 3215

Daphne Merkin (Discipline and Enforcement Officer) . . . . . .ext. 8976

Andrea Dworkin (Charm and Deportment Coordinator) . . . . . .ext. 3410

Barbra Streisand (Director of Planning and Spontaneity) . . . . . .ext. 8734

Candace Bushnell/Susie Bright (Donor Relations) . . . . . .ext. 7603

Catharine MacKinnon (Accounting Dept., Auditor of Hotel-Room Movie Charges) . . . . . .ext. 2439

Germaine Greer (Pest Control and Testosterone Eradication Officer) . . . . . .ext. 1345

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