the weekly Standard

APRIL 10, 2000

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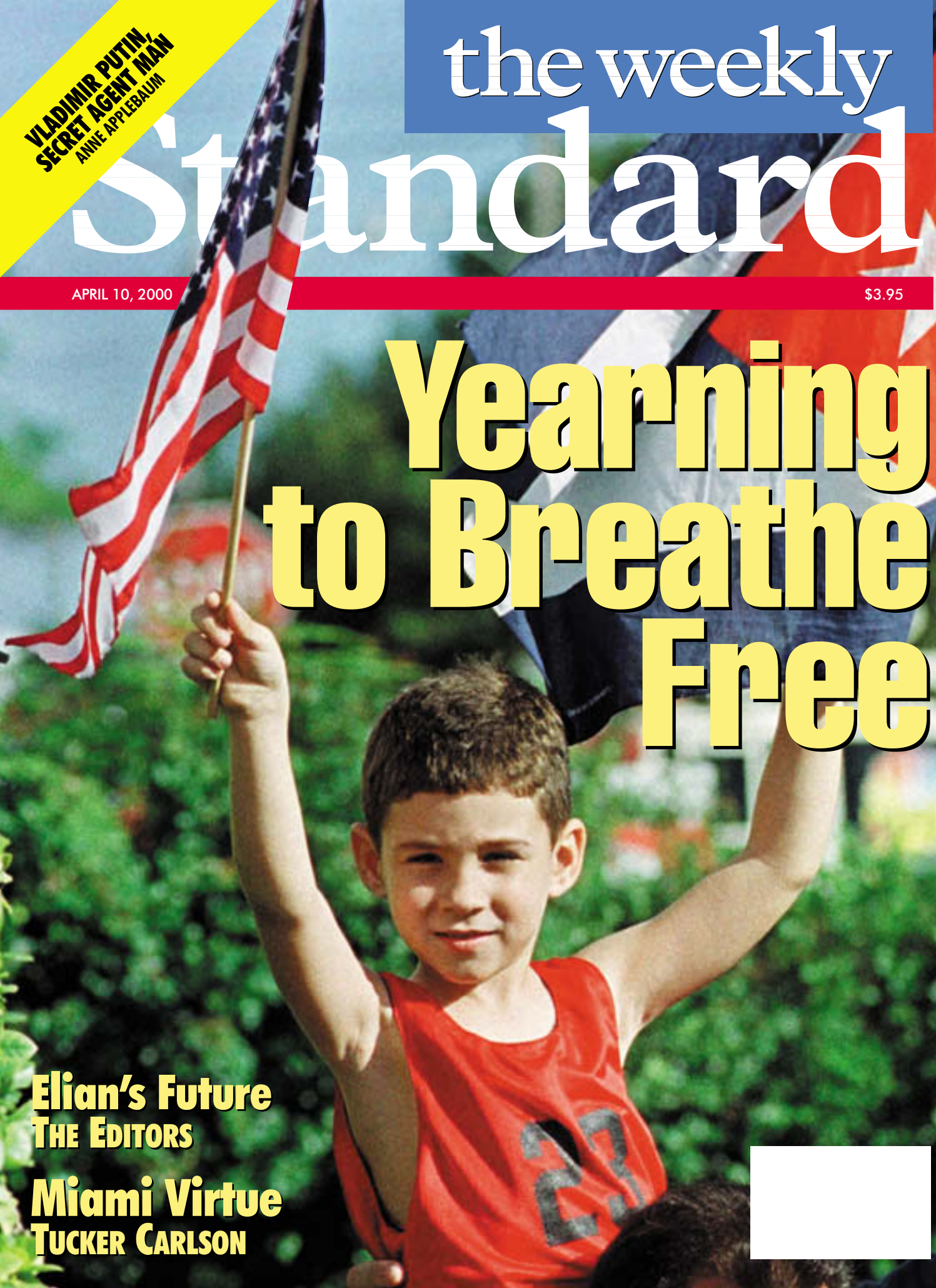
VLADIMIR PUTIN, SECRET AGENT MAN
ANNE APPLEBAUM

Yearning to Breathe Free



Elian's Future
THE EDITORS

Miami Virtue
TUCKER CARLSON

Contents

April 10, 2000 • Volume 5, Number 29

Articles

Cover: UPI / Corbis-Bettmann

Features

Books & Arts

the weekly Standard

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the second week in April, the second week in July, the last week in August, and the first week in January) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-303-776-3605 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Ian Slatter 1-202-496-3354.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

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Al Gore's New Defender

When last the world heard from Robert Parry, the formerly half-respectable journalist (*Newsweek*, *Frontline*) was trumpeting his discovery of the "October Surprise," an alleged mega-conspiracy by which Republican greybeards bribed the Iranian mullahs to delay release of their U.S. embassy captives until after Ronald Reagan could defeat Jimmy Carter in November 1980. You remember: George Bush was supposed to have flown secretly to Paris by supersonic jet right in the middle of the 1980 campaign for a quick meeting to seal this corrupt bargain, and . . .

And, well, the whole story was revealed to be laughably phony, and Parry then all but dropped from view. But it turns out he has kept himself busy enough—as master of an Internet-based "investigative" outfit called *Consortiumnews*, where he has continued to spin out ludicrous conspiracy theories. The latest of which, oddly enough, has just been picked up and published by the *Washington Monthly*, an otherwise reasonably mainstream magazine printed on actual paper.

Why the *Monthly* would embarrass itself by association with a fringe character like Parry is a mystery known only to its editors. But the results are vastly entertaining for connoisseurs of the peculiar psychological process by which *engagé*, left-leaning scribblers have transformed themselves into apologists for anything and anyone associated with the Clinton White House. For it is Parry's latest brainstorm that Vice President Al Gore's reputation as a résumé-polishing braggart is the product of a self-conscious smear campaign by the establishment media.

Why would ordinary reporters enlist in such a campaign? Because, Parry writes in the *Monthly*'s April issue, "savaging Gore protects them from the 'liberal' label that can so damage a reporter's career." Either that, or reporters are "venting residual anger over President Clinton's survival of the Monica Lewinsky scandal."

Either that, THE SCRAPBOOK would helpfully add, or reporters are simply trying to tell the truth, and Al Gore really *is* a résumé-polishing braggart.

Which is what Parry's supposedly exculpatory analysis of Gore's "claim that he discovered the Love Canal toxic waste dump," the centerpiece of his article, actually suggests. Parry wants to prove that the press has "exaggerated Al Gore's exaggerations" through "fabrication of damaging quotes and misrepresentation of his meanings." But try as he tortuously does, Parry cannot explain away the unexpurgated text of the vice president's remarks last November to a group of high school students in New Hampshire.

Alerted in the late 1970s to a toxic waste dump in Toone, Tennessee, Gore told his adolescent audience, "I called for a congressional investigation and hearing. I looked around the country for other sites like that. I found a little place in upstate New York called Love Canal. Had the first hearing on that issue, and Toone, Tennessee—that was the one that you didn't hear of. But that was the one that started it all."

Gore was not claiming to have discovered and first publicized Love Canal, sayeth Robert Parry. Guess it all depends on what the meaning of the word "found" is. ♦

Trent Lott, Cider Fan

Trent Lott surprised a lot of people last week on *Meet the Press* with his Oscar pick. Asked by Tim Russert, "Who's going to win the Oscars?" Lott replied, "Well, I saw *The Cider House Rules*. I enjoyed that tremendously. . . . It was great. Best movie."

Now movies are entertainment, and it's juvenile to impart political meaning to every niggling little film. But *The Cider House Rules*, adapted by John Irving from his novel of the same name, is an unabashed amicus brief for abortion, and not the middle-of-the-road "safe, legal, and rare" type either. In fact, it's so over the top that just hours after Lott proclaimed his affection for the movie, Irving was awarded the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay and, in his acceptance speech, thanked both Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Rights Action League. Memo to Lott staff: Make sure the boss doesn't recommend MTV's *Undressed* for an Emmy. ♦

Rave Reviews Only, Please

When Robert Swope, a senior at Georgetown University, submitted his regular column to the school newspaper last week criticizing the campus production of *The Vagina Monologues*, the editors of the *Hoya* were swift in rejecting it. Why? They thought the columnist's repeated attacks on the Women's Center (which sponsored the show last year) "hurt the newspaper's credibility." Swope says that since October, he has written only twice on women's issues, which may have been two times too many. He complained he was being censored, which led to his getting fired and the article being killed.

THE SCRAPBOOK has obtained the unpublished piece, which was certainly impolitic, since it provided verbatim quotes from the play, including the part in which an adult woman gets a 13-year-old girl drunk and has her way with her. When it's all over, the grateful girl says,

"I'll never need to rely on a man." (For more on *The Vagina Monologues*, see David Brooks's "Our Bodies, Our Surgeons," in the Feb. 7 WEEKLY STANDARD.)

Swope finds it incongruous that the nation's oldest Catholic university is staging a play in which audiences cheer a lesbian seduction. He makes the obvious point that if a man "had gotten her liquored-up and then had sex with her, rational people . . . would consider that rape."

Georgetown was last in the news when the leaders of the Jesuit institution were resisting a student movement to restore crucifixes to the classroom. Celebrations of lesbian rape are apparently another matter. And for some reason, says a bemused Swope, administrators still pretend to be baffled when conservative students complain that the school is losing its Catholic identity. ♦

Anthony Powell, 1905-2000

The English novelist Anthony Powell (pronounced "pole"), best known for his 12-volume masterpiece *A Dance to the Music of Time*, died last Tuesday at 94. The *New York Times* devoted generous space to his obituary as well as a photo of the author at his home but, as Arnold Beichman points out, failed to mention his political views—namely his staunch anticommunism. Beichman, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, wrote on the subject in the Feb. 19, 1996, issue of THE WEEKLY STANDARD ("Anthony Powell, Anti-Communist"). Aside from his storied career as a novelist, Powell was a member of the London eating club known as "The Reactionaries," whose members included Robert Conquest and Kingsley Amis. And much of *A Dance to the Music of Time* is spent, in Beichman's words, "skewering those of his countrymen who indulged in the most destructive passion of our time: the passion for Communist ideology and the Soviet Union." Powell, Beichman rightly noted, "does not deserve to have his passion for freedom and his enduring opposition to totalitarianism ignored." ♦

The China Syndrome

Further evidence that the Clinton administration's propitiation of China is creating a more Beijing-like Washington rather than the other way round: Reporter John Berlau of *Investor's Business Daily* tried unsuccessfully to attend a meeting last week at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, in which U.S. housing industry types were glad-handing Chinese government officials around HUD's table. A HUD consultant told Berlau that the meeting represented "the restoration of the [HUD-China] relationship in the areas of housing and urban development after a 10-year hiatus."

The meeting was closed to the press and the public, in apparent violation of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which was last violated when Hillary Clinton was planning her makeover of the health care system. With its distaste for openness, it's no wonder the Clinton administration is so close to Beijing. ♦

Casual

Multitask, Don't Ask

Fasten your seatbelt, kiddo, we're going over a bumpy bit of language, another little pothole on the rocky road of thought, this puppy yclept—no hyphen, please—"multitasker." The word is popping up of late with a fair regularity in that thesaurus of faux pas, that ample warehouse of wretched excess, the *New York Times*. "I'm a great multitasker," Monique Greenwood, the new editor of *Essence*, recently announced in the business section of the paper. Miss Greenwood also runs an 18-room bed-and-breakfast and a 72-seat restaurant in Bedford-Stuyvesant, in Brooklyn, and she has no intention of dropping them because of her new job. *Essence* has more than a million readers, but, hey, no sweat, the woman is, as she herself says, a great multitasker.

The test for a new word seeking entry into the language is need; I would also allow beauty and simple amusement. In a recent collection of Henry James's letters, I note that James, that great unitasker, refers to an American visitor who arrived for a visit at his house in Rye at 1:30 and stayed until 6:30 as "New Yorkily conversing." Adverbing New York is swell, and I intend to do it myself the first chance I get. I also happen to like "oojah-cum-spiff," which stands for sheer perfection in the world of Bertie Wooster, though I haven't as yet found many uses for it.

But, somehow, I don't think we need multitasker. I say this despite the fact that I come from a long line of the dudes. More than a mere multitasker, my dear mother was a simultasker. On the phone with her, I would sometimes hear a metallic sound and, on inquiring what it might be, learn that she was stirring soup. Once she carried on a phone conversation with me while typing a letter, and as I recall it was a serious conversation. A very smart woman, she didn't require all her powers to talk to her son, so why not, she figured, put some of them to other uses?

I may, at one point, have been a multitasker myself. I once had three different jobs: I edited a magazine, I taught at a university, I published enough of my own writing to come perilously close to qualifying as what Edith Wharton called a magazine bore. I had no notion at the time that I was a

Darren Gygi

multitasker; I thought I was just trying to make a living. But my multitaskesqueness had quite as much to do with my intellectual modus operandi—or MO, as they say down at the station—which is always to have a big project going, then do six or seven other things to avoid doing what one is supposed to be doing on the big project. By evading taking on first things first, I have found, you can get a tremendous amount of work done.

Multitaskers interest me less than do what I think of as chaos merchants. These are those people—most of them, in my experience, men—who can keep on going when their lives are under attack from several quarters. These are the fellows who are in Chapter 11, being audited by the IRS, have been served with papers for non-payment by ex-wives, are cheating on their mistresses, have the mafia on their tail for juice money, couldn't help noting that for the past 10 days they have been urinating blood—and yet seem, as near as one can make out, to be getting a great deal of pleasure out of life.

The hideous "multitasker"—it has a bad sound and a bad look (mul tit, ask 'er)—is probably a digibabble-age replacement first for "moonlighting," then for "Renaissance man." Renaissance man was hugely, comically overused a decade or so ago. A physician who could write a clear English sentence on a non-medical subject, a baseball player who read a book, anyone who could watch television and breathe evenly—all were Renaissance men. When I heard Dick Cavett described as a Renaissance man, I found myself longing for the Reformation. One of the nice things about having been born during the Renaissance is that at least no one could call you a flamin' Renaissance man.

What distinguishes the junk language of our day from the junk language of earlier days is that it is so quickly taken up by people who are supposed to—but of course don't—know better: journalists, public figures, academics in high places with low tastes. Glimpsing a recent book about Henry James, I came across the phrase "James's take on this question." Henry James had a point of view, insights, observations, *aperçus*, a striking *pensée* or two, yet I am certain that he didn't do "takes," ever. Before long I expect to find Leonardo or Michelangelo described as a multitasker.

Multitasker may be around for a while. For one thing, people enjoy the novelty of new words, especially—as multitasker surely is—self-congratulatory ones. For another, with more people working at home, I suppose there is likely to be more opportunity for spreading oneself over more than two or even three jobs and adding to the multitasker army. Multitasker is a word made for a certain kind of person, rainmakers, paradigm-shakers, out-of-the-box thinkers—serious jerks, in other words—and I wish them joy of it.

Joseph Epstein

Correspondence

West Wing Conspiracy

As you know, I am a fan of your magazine. God forgive me, I read it regularly. It is always lively, often provocative, and only rarely flat-out wrong. I was enjoying the guilty pleasure of *schadenfreude* as I read John Podhoretz's whine about the hit TV series *The West Wing* ("The Liberal Imagination," March 27). The heroic portrayal of the president and my fellow Clintonistas must make right-wingers feel about as disgusted as I do every time I land at the airport formerly known as Washington National. But my enjoyment was interrupted by a rather glaring factual error.

Podhoretz writes: "So many celebrities were traipsing through the White House that a starstruck Paul Begala kept a camcorder handy to record their presence." That sentence is simply false. I do not now nor have I ever kept a camcorder handy to record the presence of celebrities, either at the White House or anywhere else. I do confess to having miles of videotape of the three cutest little boys in the world, but none of it shot at the White House, and every inch of it celebrity-free. In fact, while I was a political adviser to the president during his first term, I did not serve on the White House staff until 1997. And even then I kept my office camcorder-free.

Apparently this story, like so many advanced by the right, was just too good to check. The courtesy of a correction would be appreciated.

Paul Begala
Washington, DC

John Podhoretz responds: I owe Paul Begala an apology. The starstruck videocam operator in question was deputy chief of staff Mark Gearan.

Conservatives lament the revisionist tendencies of liberal historians and the effect that they have on the backwards view of the public. That is why it is all the more important for conservative publications to maintain a strictly accurate reporting of events to offset, to whatever degree possible, the pressure of the revisionist left. Imagine my surprise when I saw John Podhoretz provide, in his otherwise excellent article on *The West Wing*, a closing paragraph that begins with "Republicans tried to impeach Clinton, and failed." Of course Clinton was impeached in the House; but he wasn't removed by the Senate. It may sound like technical nit-picking, but it's more than that: The left would love for the belief to take root that Republicans *tried* to impeach Clinton, but failed. I suspect that even today, a scant few years after the actual event, most Americans probably aren't sure what really did happen. So please, don't give the revisionists any more help. They don't need it.

Donald C. Bagwell
Reston, VA

Perhaps John McCain's suspension of his campaign has put the editors at a loss for cover material, but there are surely still items more worthy than John Podhoretz's analysis of *The West Wing* and what it reveals about the longings of a vague (but sinister) group of "Hollywood liberal elites."

Podhoretz would do well to avoid analyzing the mindsets of likely participants in an alleged conspiracy, and instead analyze a television show in the context of its influence on our culture and its industry. *The West Wing* contains relatively few shootings, car chases, or explosions, and the glamorization of politics and public service as noble callings is desirable from any side of the political spectrum. Perhaps more importantly, from the perspective of television viewers, if the show is successful, we may see one-hour television dramas about someone besides doctors, lawyers, and policemen.

Nathan Segerlind
San Diego, CA

Balkan Bias

I have been a faithful and enthusiastic reader of The Weekly Standard since you began, but this one thing I have against you: Why do you give us nothing but consistently and extremely one-sided treatment when you have to deal with Kosovo, Yugoslavia, Clinton, and Milosevic? In a recent issue you emphasize Serbian-caused destruction of a mosque ("Kosovo's a Mess," March 27). The Belgian human-rights organization *Droits de l'homme sans frontières* reported that as of February 8, 70 Orthodox churches and monasteries had been destroyed by the Kosovar Albanians. Unfortunately, your coverage of this conflict is typical of American media coverage. Under such circumstances the nation does not need a propaganda ministry; the media do it themselves.

Harold O. J. Brown
Charlotte, NC

Revisionist Tendencies

In a letter in last week's issue, Robert Conquest stated that my article on Stalin's academic apologists ("Stalin's New American Apologists," March 13) was "gravely marred" by my observation that Stephen F. Cohen was the first revisionist historian and that no one in Soviet studies could conceivably have committed such a mistake. This is bewildering. While it is certainly true that Cohen has not soft-pedaled Stalin's crimes—and I did not say he had—he has strenuously argued that Leninism need not have resulted in Stalinism. Indeed, in the preface to his 1985 book *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, Cohen himself embraces the term revisionist: "[T]his book is, I think, the most general effort to date in the revisionist cause."

Jacob Heilbrunn
Washington, DC

the weekly Standard

Elián Should Stay

We'll say it again: The rush to send Elián González back to Cuba is wrong. The 6-year-old rafter, rescued in the Straits of Florida last November, deserves at least a full hearing in an appropriate court before anyone considers allowing his father to take him back to the dictatorship his mother drowned trying to escape.

President Clinton is in a fix. He has always had two goals regarding Cuba: first, to normalize relations with Castro's regime, which he continues to work on through back channels; and second, to avoid a massive refugee influx such as the Mariel boatlift of 1980. (Clinton blamed massive riots by *marielitos* in Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, for his loss in the Arkansas governor's race that year.) In 1994, he issued an executive order he hoped would serve both ends. It re-interpreted the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966, which had granted Cuban refugees the right to stay in the United States once they got here. Clinton adjusted the Adjustment Act so that it applied only to the American mainland, not territorial waters.

That's why, over the past decade, nightly news programs in South Florida have increasingly shown barbaric battles in waist-deep water, with exhausted rafters trying to stagger onto dry beach, while customs and immigration officials try just as desperately to swarm them and heave them back up onto boats, where they can be transported back to their island homes. (Or, just as likely, jail cells—since "illegally exiting" Cuba remains a crime.)

If the fishermen who picked up Elián González had dropped the boy onto the beach rather than handing him off to the Coast Guard, this case would be bound for an asylum hearing of the sort Elián's Miami relatives demanded. But they didn't. Clinton's Immigration and Naturalization Service moved to send Elián back. His relatives went to court, and the administration obtained a "favorable" ruling rejecting a stay on the INS's decision. This was scheduled to go to the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta on May 8.

Then, last week, Attorney General Janet Reno, who has jurisdiction over the INS, showed the impatience on child-welfare matters she last displayed over Waco in 1993. She decided to wield the executive power over the Gonzálezes that she does in fact possess. After bragging about her forbearance in the case, she gave Elián's Miami relatives less than 72 hours to sign a document promising to turn Elián over if the appeal went against them. Her aides at INS and Justice proceeded to brandish the order with bureaucratic sadism and swaggering machismo. "They think we're bluffing but we're not," said Carole Florman of the Justice Department. After months of posturing by the administration, during which it claimed to have only the interests of Elián at heart, Reno's assistants last week were threatening to "move him to different custody." Armando Gutiérrez, spokesman for Elián's Miami relatives, said this was "not the American way." He's right: No law-abiding citizen we've ever heard of has ever been coerced into signing a document promising to obey the law. The Miami Gonzálezes didn't sign.

The Clinton strategy of pretending to follow the courts is a con job. What the Florida court decided in the Elián case was basically that the INS has the right to enforce INS policy. Big deal. The INS, or at least its boss, Janet Reno, and her boss, Bill Clinton, also have the discretion to let Elián stay. So what's at issue is whether the United States can in good conscience return a 6-year-old to one of the few remaining descendants of the mid-century totalitarianisms.

That's why Al Gore deserves some credit for his two-part break with the administration. He's right to say that the matter belongs in a family court, rather than in the INS bureaucracy. A real court could air such matters as the nature of the Castro regime and the extent to which Elián's father is speaking his own mind in asking for Elián's return. We can even give Gore tepid applause for supporting a congressional bill giving Elián permanent residency, which would make such a courtroom hearing inevitable. Republicans should move this legislation now, and challenge Clinton to veto it. He won't.

We're struck by the way Bill Clinton's interests and Fidel Castro's interests have thus far converged on the Elián matter. Castro's pronouncements on the affair—he recently accused Miami Cubans of wanting to kill Elián rather than repatriate him—have been so intemperate as to be inconsistent with his expressed wishes to have the boy back. Last week, Castro weighed in once more. After four months of mocking suggestions that Juan Miguel González be sent to Miami to reclaim his son, he sudden-

ly announced that not just Juan Miguel, but a 31-person delegation including Elián's stepmother, half-sister, grandparents, and various classmates, teachers, doctors, and Cuban officials was ready to leave for the States on a moment's notice.

Of course, sending a 31-person delegation without the strictest state supervision is not something Cuba does. That's why the trip, if it ever took place, would be organized like Elián's grandmothers' visit in January. According to Barry University president Sister Jeanne O'Laughlin, who met with the grandmothers, Castro was calling the shots throughout. The rule was constant communication from Cuba via cellular phone, and zero communication between the Cuban subjects and Americans. This same desire for absolute control is why the trip to pick up Elián was planned for Washington, not Miami. There is no outpost of Cuban territoriality in Miami—such as the Cuban Interests section provides in Washington, protected by diplomatic convention—where the visitors can be kept sequestered and subject to Cuban authority.

It was thus unsurprising that the Cuban government released a letter allegedly from Juan Miguel González late last week, denouncing Gore's suggestion that he be given residency. Not to say that Mr. González isn't speaking his own mind—only that, if he is, he's the first Cuban who's been allowed to do so in 40 years. If Elián's father and his entourage are given the freedom to circulate like regular American residents, their Cuban handlers will not be able to keep them from defecting.

But this trip has the look of a Castro-engineered bluff, a bluff colluded in by Gregory Craig, best known as the president's lawyer at the bitter end of Monicagate. Craig now claims to be the lawyer for Elián's father, although since Craig's hourly fee approaches the per capita annual income of the average Cuban, we're curious to know who's actually ponying up for his services. Once the American press showed signs of taking the Castro offer seriously, Craig quickly modified its terms in a way that effectively took it off the table. "He needs only to be told: If he comes here, he will in fact be given custody of his son," said Craig. In other words, it was the old Brezhnevite tactic—"We'll negotiate as long as you'll agree to abide by our wishes beforehand."

Castro is not short of defenders. The gravamen of their arguments has been that Cuba is a normal country—or at any rate, no more uncivilized than the United States. The most preposterous such defense came from novelist Gabriel García Márquez, a Cuban resident and dear friend of Castro, who wrote in the *New York Times* of the "harm being done to Elián's mental health" by exposure to American culture: "At his 6th birthday party," García Márquez wrote, "celebrated on Dec. 6 in his Miami captivity [sic], his hosts took a picture of him wearing a combat helmet, surrounded by weapons and wrapped in the flag of the United States, just a short while before a boy of his age in Michigan shot a classmate to death with a handgun."

We think we can live with his uncles' giving him a toy gun and an American flag for his birthday. At least the Michigan boy hadn't been *taught* to shoot his classmates, as Cuban students are. It's the Cuban constitution of 1976 (Article 38, Clause C), not the American, that requires Communist indoctrination and military training for grammar-school children. It's the Cuban school system, not the American, that keeps a permanent file shared with the secret police (the *expediente acumulativo del escolar*) on ideologically suspect children, and requires faculty to interrogate children concerning the "ideological integration" of their parents. It is the Cuban regime, not the American, that dragoons 98 percent of schoolchildren into the paramilitary "Union of Communist Pioneers," and that requires children, starting at age 10, to attend summer Communist indoctrination camps (*escuelas al campo*). It is the Cuban government, not the American, that publishes a pamphlet called *Military Games for Pioneers*, which teaches Elián's classmates how to attack bridges, lay mines, murder sentries, and throw hand grenades through windows.

It's worth noting, by the way, that when his mother loaded him onto the boat she would drown in, 5-year-old Elián González was *already* a member of the Pioneers. But parents such as Elián's are not allowed to object to the indoctrination and arming of their children. Constitutionally, their parental rights obtain "only as long as their influence does not go against the political objectives of the State." This ought to resolve rather starkly the degree to which Greg Craig is Juan Miguel González's lawyer and the degree to which he is Fidel Castro's.

President Clinton has lately taken to traveling the world apologizing for American collusion with authoritarian regimes. This little obsession has more and more the look of a hobby and less the look of moral resolution. If the president is willing to send a 6-year-old child back to a crumbling outpost of Leninism, what is the point of all these apologies? Apologies are promises. Ultimately, the Elián case is a battle over whether we take Communist dictatorship seriously enough to protect refugees in our nation who are threatened by it.

Our answer to this question is an unequivocal yes. The Miamians who are surrounding Elián's house, the Cuban-American community organizers who urge widespread civil disobedience should federal authorities seek to remove him, and even those local elected officials who say they will refuse to cooperate with those same authorities, have our support. They are protecting more than Elián. They are protecting their country from a historic disgrace.

—Christopher Caldwell, for the Editors

Vanishing Voters, Vamoose!

Harvard's Kennedy School finds a non-problem to worry about. **BY ANDREW FERGUSON**

ALL OF US HERE in the vast media-politico-windbaggio-academic complex are feeling blue these days, and have been at least since early March, when it became clear that the presidential campaign had entered a period of quiescence from which it would not emerge for many months. If ever. Within the complex itself, the academics are bluest of all. At the interminably named Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts), the scholars are practically inconsolable. From their perch at the JSCPPPP/JFKSG/HU, researchers have been monitoring "voter behavior" and "voter attitudes" under the auspices of the Vanishing Voter Project. Needless to say, as the political process slumps into a lengthy hibernation, the researchers find the news alarming.

Foremost among its duties, the Project polls; it polls and polls, weekly at least, and sometimes day by day. The purpose of all this information-gathering is to "reinvigorate" the presidential campaign and "improve its structure." Ultimately, according to its mission statement, the Project hopes to "broaden and deepen citizens' involvement in the presidential selection process." It must be a depressing job. In the project's latest poll, only 24 percent of respondents said they were paying close attention to the presidential campaign, while more than half weren't paying any attention at all. "Unless something extraordinary happens—such as a major scandal involving Bush or Gore—we can expect public interest to remain low for the next four months," said Thomas Patterson, co-director of the project. "The question is, [will] the public use this interlude as an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the candidates?"

This question of Dr. Patterson's is surely rhetorical, since the answer is so obvious: Will voters use the present interval of political inactivity to study up on the proposals and personalities of George W. Bush and Albert Gore? You bet—and when they're done with that they'll go back to translating Cicero. Really, though: Even Dr. Patterson must somehow understand that for the next four months (at least) the public will be doing what it always does. I don't know what that is, but I do know it doesn't involve politics.

Which should strike many observers, even some who are themselves obsessed with politics, as perfectly normal. But at the Vanishing Voter Project, and indeed among the political class generally, the public's inattention signifies some terrible malignancy at the heart of contemporary American democracy. This is the premise of the Project. It is why, since the beginning of the year, the researchers have so methodically tracked the sentiments of voters who vote, voters who don't vote, voters who voted but wish they hadn't, voters who didn't but wish they had, and voters who wish that pollsters from the Shorenstein Center would just leave them alone. The political class is a bunch of worriers, and this is doubly true of academics who hang their lab coats at places like the Shorenstein Center. Every election year they worry about (in no particular order) the Decline of Party Discipline, the Role of the 30-second Commercial in Campaigns, the Influence of Negative Advertising, the Shrinking Soundbite on Network News, and, of course, the Turned-off Electorate—now known, at the Center, as the Vanishing Voter.

Why is the voter vanishing? Project researchers think they found the answer a few weeks ago. In a press release headlined "Americans 'Disgusted' with Politics," they painted a picture of a voter not merely indifferent to politics but actively repelled by it. Almost 90 percent of those polled agreed that "most politicians are pretty much willing to say whatever it takes to get elected." More than 50 percent said "most politicians are not worthy of respect." And more than 70 percent agreed with the statement: "Politics in America is generally pretty disgusting."

And so the voter vanishes: He (or she) stays home, gets bored, changes the channel, dozes off as the academics and journalists hover above him, wringing their hands. And it is not merely the academics and journalists who hover and worry—the politicians, too, fret over the supine, grunting figure of the disgusted voter. Each year candidates spend hundreds of millions of dollars trying to woo him: Polls are taken, focus groups convened, pleadings are posted weekly to his mailbox, emissaries are sent to knock on his door, advertisements flood the airwaves in hopes that he might find at least one of them amusing, or informative, or persuasive. His every twitch of pleasure or displeasure is recorded, pored over, and cross-tabulated. Not since the days of the Bourbon dauphins has a single category of human being been treated with such solicitude or pampered so comprehensively.

Nothing works. So desperate did the candidates become this year, in fact, that they were moved to do the unthinkable: They actually ran a substantive campaign—collectively, the most substantial campaign in memory. From Bush to Bauer to Bradley, with Gore and Forbes and the others doing likewise, they issued position papers and memoranda on every conceivable

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subject; their websites bristled with charts and graphs and impact studies. The vast majority of their advertisements were "positive," if not downright perky. In various combinations the candidates held a dozen televised debates. The polls told them, you see, that this is what the voters want: substance, positivity, a lot of interaction and exposure. Yet the Vanishing Voter remained displeased. The exception came in a brief infatuation with John McCain, who—revealingly—engaged in the least substantial and least specific campaign of all. McCain did manage to stumble upon a single word, reform, that briefly lifted the Voter from his Barcalounger, though the Voter, like McCain himself, would have been unable to tell you what the word signified. Now McCain is gone, and the Voter resumes his customary position, vanishing in disgust.

Meanwhile, no one ever stops to question whether we should really wish this state of affairs to be otherwise. The goal of the Project—and of countless similar endeavors, lavishly staffed with worriers and sumptuously funded by Pews and Annenbergs and Fords and Rockefellers—is to "broaden and deepen citizens' involvement." But why? It is not altogether a bad thing in a republic that people feel remote from public affairs; a widespread preoccupation with politics is a sign of tumult and trouble. Self-government involves a process of self-selection. Politics becomes the responsibility of people who take the trouble to understand it—who understand, for example, that it is *not* "generally pretty disgusting," or that politicians, as a rule, will *not* "say whatever it takes to get elected." This process of self-selection is not something we should tamper with. With considerable efficiency it weeds out the lazy, the petulant, the disorderly, the ignorant; it weeds out, that is to say, the Vanishing Voter. By all means, the Shorenstein Center should continue to compile its amusing data. But at the same time it could best serve democracy by showing some restraint. Let the Vanishing Voter go about his business. Let him do what he wants to do. Let him vanish. ♦

Giuliani Fatigue vs. Clinton Fatigue

Rudy's belligerent defense of his cops may endanger his Senate campaign. **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

New York

IN A SENATE RACE between two of the most famous political figures in America, it may come down to this: By November, will New Yorkers be more afflicted with Clinton fatigue—or Giuliani fatigue?

We've all heard about Clinton fatigue—the sense even among liberals that the nauseating moral loop-the-loop of the last eight years needs to come to an end. But two-time New York mayor Rudy Giuliani's response to the March 16 police shooting of an unarmed security guard named Patrick Dorismond has ignited fatigue in some of his supporters, albeit of an entirely different stripe.

Three times in the past 13 months, unarmed black men have been shot dead by New York City cops. This has, of course, given rise to the opinion—abetted and encouraged by racial arsonists Al Sharpton and others—that New York's cops have declared "open season" on black men. The idea is ridiculous—there are nearly 2 million African-Americans living in New York City, and after the Dorismond incident the odds of an unarmed black man's being shot by cops in New York City rose to something like .0000015 percent.

No matter. Ethnic and racial communities often respond to an attack on one person as an attack on all. When an evil cop named Francis Livoti killed a 29-year-old Hispanic man named Anthony Baez with a chokehold in 1994, Spanish-language newspapers declared it a sign of open season on Hispanics. When a schizophrenic 31-year-old terrified residents of the Crown Heights neighborhood in Brooklyn last year and was shot and killed by cops he was smashing with a hammer after being pepper sprayed, politicians and residents in that neighborhood decided it was open season on Hasidic Jews! One witness, though, gave the game away: "They could have shot his hand, they could have shot him in the leg, or kicked the weapon out of his hand," complained Mordechai Lefkowitz.

It seems increasingly the case that people who are not police officers believe cops are the superhuman figures they see on television shows and in movies. Real-life cops are not trained to shoot people in the leg, or the pinky, or to shoot the gun out of somebody's hand, or to use kung-fu moves against someone wielding a weapon. They are not snipers, not sharpshooters (nobody is at close range). They are public-safety officers, and they are in no way obliged to allow people to do them injury with weaponry. If a man does not respond to police calls to drop his weapon, the rules of engagement in every police department are to fire a shot directly into his torso. The reason is simple: To prevent the ricochet of bullets from hitting either other cops or passers-by.

But it takes only a few well-publicized incidents to impress upon New Yorkers the idea that the 40,000-strong New York City Police Department features thousands of out-of-control whites whose hatred of minority groups makes them trigger-happy. And the only strong countervailing force against that slander has been Giuliani's wholehearted and full-throated defense of the cops. Not that he has been entirely uncritical. When, in the most horrifying example of police brutality the city has seen in recent times, a Haitian immigrant named Abner Louima was sodomized with a broken plunger in a precinct-house bathroom, Giuliani reacted with appropriate indignation. Still and all, Giuliani's mayoralty has been marked by a for-better-or-worse loyalty to his police department that is now exacting a price.

For all that he can be extraordinarily charming in private, Giuliani in public is a man as bereft of charm as he is fluent with facts. And that lack of charm has been on distressing public view from the moment Patrick Dorismond was shot and killed. This death bore little relation to the two that preceded it. It was not a case of five different things going horribly wrong in 10 seconds, as was true in the killing of Amadou Diallo—or the simple matter of a drug dealer fleeing a cop and then trying to wrest the officer's gun away, as was true in the case of Malcolm Ferguson, the second black man killed in the supposed NYPD murder spree.

Dorismond was approached in the middle of the night by undercover cops working as part of something called Operation Condor—an effort to roust drug dealers in the area just south of Times Square. The details of the killing are still confused, but even the story the cops are telling in their own defense can't explain why one of them had cause to pull his weapon. Dorismond didn't have any sort of weapon; he didn't know the people who had accosted him were cops; and he was evidently fighting his way through what he might have perceived to be some kind of mugging—or at least a dissing.

Giuliani's response was, first, to say that everybody needed to wait and see what had happened. Fair enough. But then the police department released every piece of paper it could find on Dorismond—which included two disorderly-conduct citations, a domestic-disturbance police call, and details of a juvenile arrest when Dorismond was 13 years old.

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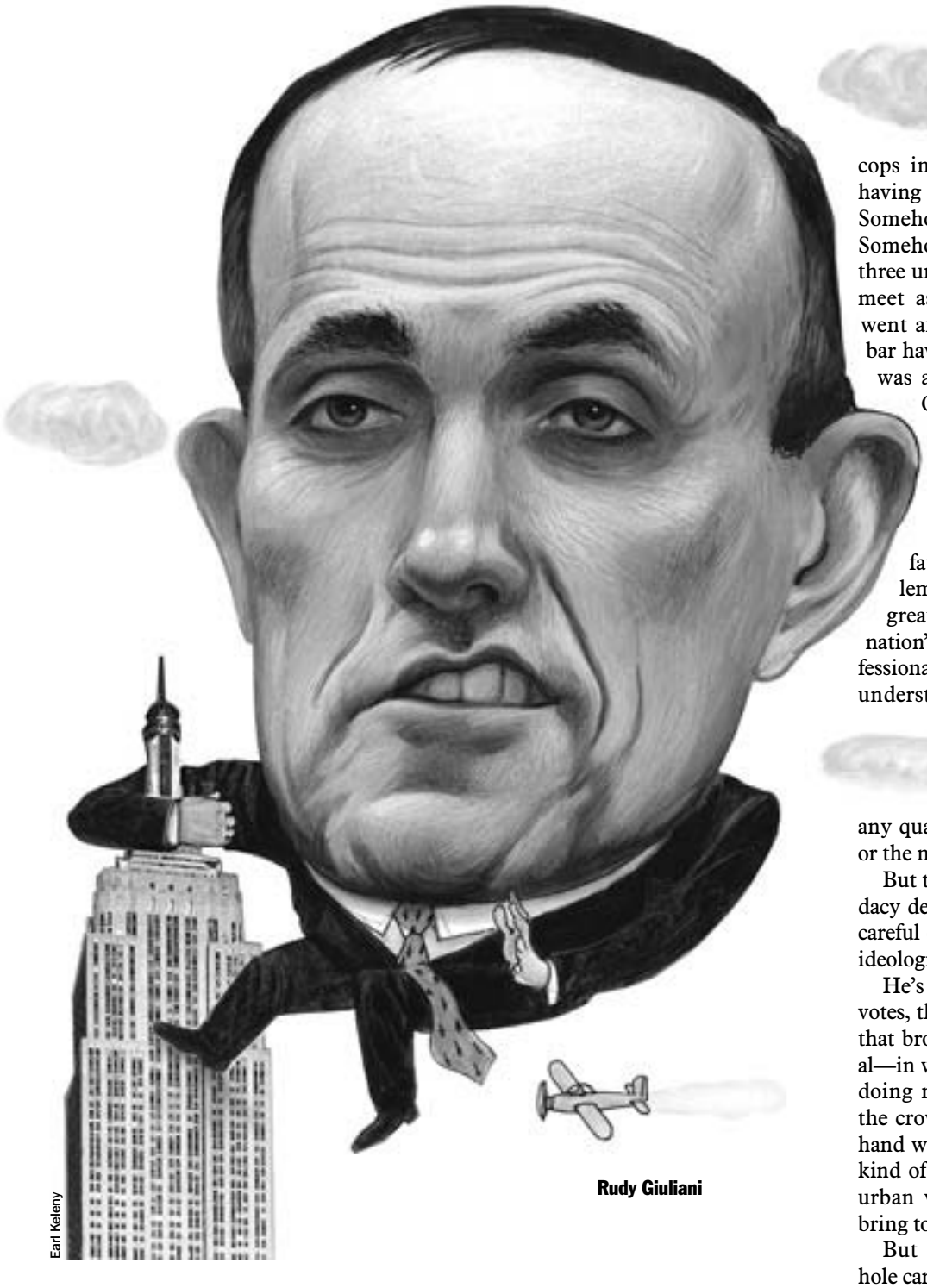

Earl Keleny

Rudy Giuliani

Immediately, publicity hounds and anti-cop demagogues in the city jumped down Giuliani's throat for releasing juvenile records that are supposedly sealed. The mayor pointed out that the seal on such records does not continue after death—and later added, for good measure, "you cannot libel a dead man."

Legally, you can't—but morally, you can. And the mayor has done just that. "That Mr. Dorismond has spent a good deal of his life punching people is a fact," he said at one point. "People do act in conformity very often with their prior behavior."

But while a cop doesn't have to accept injury from a perpetrator—and Dorismond wasn't even a perpetrator, he was the subject of a failed effort to entrap him into selling drugs he wasn't carrying—a cop doesn't have the right to *shoot* someone who's punching him. The cops involved in the incident were having trouble subduing Dorismond. Somehow a gun was unholstered. Somehow the trigger was pulled. So three undercover cops with a quota to meet as part of a marijuana-sweep went after a guy who came out of a bar having had a beer after work. He was angered, and ended up dead. Giuliani's laudable gut instinct to defend the cops turned into something far less laudable when he began to assail Dorismond's character.

This is where Giuliani fatigue may come to be a problem for the man who has been the greatest mayor ever to govern the nation's largest city. He lives his professional life with his dukes up. That's understandable for a politician who has managed to make major changes in the way the city is run with almost no support from any quarter—either other politicians or the media.

But the success of his Senate candidacy depends on his ability to steer a careful course through a state with an ideologically complex electorate.

He's not going to get any minority votes, that much is clear. And the riot that broke out at Dorismond's funeral—in which 23 cops were injured for doing nothing but trying to protect the crowd—may help strengthen his hand with ethnic whites who see that kind of disorder as a reminder of the urban violence Giuliani has helped bring to historic lows.

But right now, the mayor's two hole cards in his seven-card stud game against Hillary Clinton are that women voters don't seem to like her, and that he scores far better among Jewish voters than most Republicans do. If these folks, whom he needs in November, look at the headlines and look at his angry face and listen to his angry words, they may decide he's too mean-spirited for the Senate.

Compassionate conservatism, anyone? ♦

The Holy Father in the Holy Land

Christian-Jewish relations will never be the same after the pope's visit to Israel. **BY GEORGE WEIGEL**

Jerusalem

SHORTLY AFTER his election as pope in October 1978, John Paul II had an idea: He should spend his first Christmas in Bethlehem. When he broached this to the traditional managers of popes, they were aghast. Bethlehem was in disputed territory; the Holy See had no diplomatic relations with any state in the region; popes simply didn't do drop-bys; the logistics were impossible to arrange. For one of the few times in his 21-year pontificate, John Paul let his evangelical instincts be trumped by the ingrained cautiousness of the Vatican's diplomats: He spent Christmas 1978 in Rome.

But on numerous occasions in the ensuing years, he would ask those same diplomats, "When will you let me go?" In 1994, in an apostolic letter announcing the Great Jubilee of 2000, he proposed making a lengthy pilgrimage to the great sites of biblical history; for the next five years, there were endless arguments about whether and how it could be done. Finally, John Paul had had enough. On June 29, 1999, he wrote a letter to the entire Catholic Church announcing, quite simply, that he would go to the Holy Land in 2000. And now he has done it.

John Paul insisted that his was a pilgrimage without political or diplomatic purpose. Virtually everyone present could feel and see the truth of this. Here was a man immersed in prayer, walking in the steps of Christ, reminding the world that the year 2000 is not a mere calendrical quirk. By celebrating Mass at the traditional site of Christ's last supper with his apostles, by preaching at the site of his sermon on the mount, by praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, at Calvary, and at the tomb where Christ's body was laid, John Paul II fulfilled one of the deepest desires of his Christian heart.

At the same time, he reminded Christians (and others) taught by generations of scholars to be skeptical of the Bible that biblical religion is a gritty, earthy business. Critical scholarship can help us read the Bible more intelligently. But at bottom, biblical religion is about a God who, as John Paul put it on his arrival in Israel, "has gone before us and leads us on"—a God who entered history in order to redeem history. Biblical religion is not simply an idea; it is built on events that happened to real people, in real places, at particular moments in time. As he satisfied his yearning to be a pilgrim in those places, John Paul II was also bearing witness to that truth.

But the papacy is an inherently public office, and as the intertwined papal and Israeli flags on Jerusalem's lampposts suggested, John Paul came to the Holy Land as the embodiment of a complex and often tortured history. He also came as Karol Wojtyla, a Pole, a priest, and a pope who has invested enormous energy in building a new conversation between Catholics and Jews. The interplay of that history and this singular personality made for some of the week's most dramatic moments.

For years, some Israeli scholars argued that the Catholic Church could never "recognize" the Jewish state for theological reasons. To do so, they claimed, would be to deny what they took to be Catholic doctrine, namely, that the Jews were condemned to wander the earth as punishment for their forefathers' rejection of Jesus as the messiah. That this was never Catholic doctrine seemed to make no difference, no matter how often that was explained. And as the pope prepared to arrive at Lod Airport outside Tel Aviv on March 21, six years after full diplomatic relations had been established between the Holy See and the state of Israel, one Israeli academic was still claiming that the pope's surreptitious political agenda was to delegitimate the Jewish state and its positions on Middle East issues.

Academics will be academics, and no doubt some of them will continue to make such utterly implausible claims. But for much of the world, the sight of the bishop of Rome raising a hand in salute at the Israeli flag, listening to the solemn playing of "Hatikvah," and being welcomed as an honored guest by the Jewish state settled the matter. What had been accomplished legally in the 1993 Basic Agreement between the Vatican and Israel was now plain for all to see. The remaining bigots notwithstanding, Catholic-Jewish relations could never be the same.

That point was driven home when John Paul II went to the Hall of Remembrance at Yad Vashem on March 23 to pay homage to the victims of the Holocaust. Those who insist on treating Holocaust history as a kind of zero-sum negotiation over degrees of responsibility had been working the press overtime, arguing for or against the proposition that the pope ought to "go farther" this time than in past pronouncements. John Paul took the event to an entirely different level in an intensely personal speech.

Once asked, "Do you ever cry?" John Paul II responded, "Not outside." This man of profound emotion was surely crying inside as he walked

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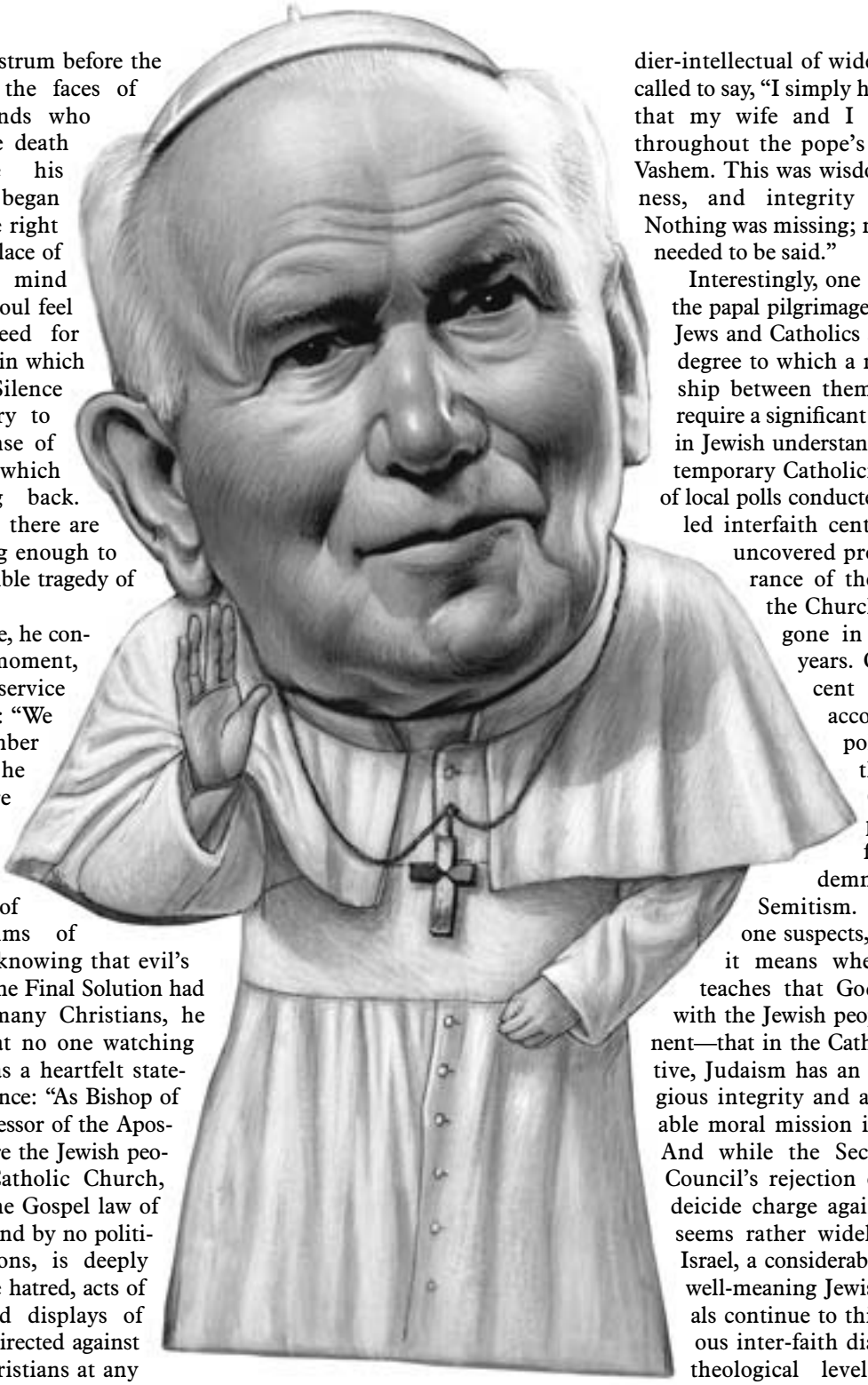

Earl Keleny

slowly to the rostrum before the eternal flame, the faces of childhood friends who perished in the death camps before his mind's eye. He began on precisely the right note: "In this place of memories, the mind and heart and soul feel an extreme need for silence. Silence in which to remember. Silence in which to try to make some sense of the memories which come flooding back. Silence because there are no words strong enough to deplore the terrible tragedy of the Shoah."

Remembrance, he continued after a moment, must be in the service of a noble cause: "We wish to remember for a purpose," he said, "to ensure that never again will evil prevail, as it did for the millions of innocent victims of Nazism." And knowing that evil's victory during the Final Solution had ensnared too many Christians, he then made what no one watching could doubt was a heartfelt statement of repentance: "As Bishop of Rome and Successor of the Apostle Peter, I assure the Jewish people that the Catholic Church, motivated by the Gospel law of truth and love and by no political considerations, is deeply saddened by the hatred, acts of persecution and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews by Christians at any time and in any place." Most especially including, it was clear, the times and places represented by Yad Vashem.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak's moving address thanked John Paul for doing more for Jewish-Catholic relations than any pope in history. The pope's tear-filled meeting with Holocaust survivors from his hometown completed an hour that reduced the previously cacophonous NBC/ MSNBC studios at the Jerusalem Hilton, where I was working, to silence. A few days later, an Israeli friend, a soldier-intellectual of wide experience, called to say, "I simply had to tell you that my wife and I were crying throughout the pope's visit to Yad Vashem. This was wisdom, humaneness, and integrity personified. Nothing was missing; nothing more needed to be said."

Interestingly, one of the things the papal pilgrimage suggested to Jews and Catholics alike was the degree to which a new relationship between them is going to require a significant development in Jewish understandings of contemporary Catholicism. A series of local polls conducted by Jewish-led interfaith centers in Israel uncovered profound ignorance of the sea-change the Church has undergone in the past 35 years. Only 44 percent of Israelis, according to one poll, know that the Catholic Church has publicly and flatly condemned anti-Semitism. Fewer still, one suspects, realize what it means when the pope teaches that God's covenant with the Jewish people is permanent—that in the Catholic perspective, Judaism has an abiding religious integrity and an indispensable moral mission in the world. And while the Second Vatican Council's rejection of the hoary deicide charge against the Jews seems rather widely known in Israel, a considerable number of well-meaning Jewish intellectuals continue to think that serious inter-faith dialogue at the theological level is simply impossible.

One learned and kindly man, for example, told me that, while he very much admired John Paul II, the new, religiously focused conversation the pope was proposing between Catholics and Jews just wasn't on the cards. When I asked why, he replied,

"Because your sacred text is anti-Semitic." When I asked what that meant, he cited the Gospel of St. John and its multiple references to "the Jews" in their contestation with Jesus.

I tried to explain that 200 years of New Testament scholarship had made clear that all the Gospels were written, to one degree or another, in a polemical context amidst a family quarrel—the fight that eventually saw the Christian movement separate, around 70 A.D., from what would become rabbinic Judaism. And in any case, I said, "You can't read 'the Jews' in John's Gospel as though St. John were describing a blackballing session at an upmarket men's club in the 1920s." My friend seemed struck by this, said he would think about it, and hoped that what I said reflected something other than elite Catholic opinion. I assured him that it did, and that when the people in my parish heard "the Jews" during the Good Friday reading of the Passion according to St. John, they were hearing a story about individuals two millennia ago, not making a summary judgment about an entire people.

But his surprise at this was chastening. There has been immense progress in Catholic-Jewish dialogue since the mid-1960s. But dialogue among religious professionals in Jewish and Catholic organizations is one thing; deeply ingrained attitudes and suspicions are another. In that sense, the most important thing John Paul II's pilgrimage to the Holy Land will contribute to the dialogue is a new iconography.

The pope bent in silent homage over the eternal flame at Yad Vashem; the pope at the Western Wall; the pope in happy conversation with the president and prime minister of a sovereign Jewish state—these are images that communicate the truth of this new relationship very, very powerfully. They cannot be ignored. No one can say, plausibly, that these were empty gestures by a crafty politician. No one can reasonably doubt, now, that things have changed. ♦

Fellow Traveling Is Alive and Well

The Rosenbergs find an apologist in a reference work. BY HARVEY KLEHR AND JOHN E. HAYNES

Published last year in 24 volumes, the *American National Biography* has been justifiably praised by reviewers. It received the American Library Association's Dartmouth Medal as the best reference work of the year. Sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies, the *ANB* replaces the venerable but out-of-date *Dictionary of American Biography*, first issued in 1928 as a standard biographical resource, and is already on the shelves of thousands of school and academic libraries.

A reference work like the *ANB* is expected to offer reliable information and reflect the consensus of the best scholarly thinking, not to offer one-sided interpretations or disputatious views. Entries are carefully vetted and edited through several iterations. What, then, possessed the editors of the *ANB* to print a bizarre, even absurd, entry on Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were convicted for espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union and executed in 1953?

For scholars who know the Rosenberg case, the *ANB* entry is either a source of amusement, embarrassment, or irritation, but no reputable scholar can take it seriously as an accurate summary of what is known about the Rosenbergs or their case. For example, it has been common knowledge for years that both Rosenbergs were Communists and that Julius was an active figure among student Communists at CCNY. The *ANB* entry camouflages this information behind euphemisms (Julius was "active in left-wing student circles") and evasions (he was fired from the Signal Corps for being a Communist but "he denied" it).

Without actually saying so, the entry suggests they were religious Jews, both raised in "orthodox Jewish families" and that "Julius also received religious instruction at Downtown Talmud Torah and Hebrew High School." Although the two abandoned their youthful Jewish orthodoxy for communism—a loyalty they retained until their execution—this goes unmentioned in the essay. But the author's conclusion of the case having an "anti-Semitic subtext" remains. A student unfamiliar with the Rosenberg case, exactly the audience that will consult the *ANB*, will come away with no knowledge of their actually being Communists but with the definite impression that they were executed because they were Jews.

The entry offers an equally distorted version of the Rosenbergs' trial, portraying the evidence against them as weak and probably perjured. It devotes several laudatory paragraphs to writers and books that uphold their innocence and, in contrast, dismisses with a single sentence the most detailed and scholarly account of the case, Radosh and Milton's *The Rosenberg File*, which found them guilty. As for new evidence from Soviet archives and interviews with Julius Rosenberg's KGB control officer, the essay cavalierly and incorrectly dismisses such material as "discredited." Even more dishonestly, there is no mention that Walter and Miriam Schneir, longtime defenders of the Rosenbergs, reluctantly admitted several years ago that Julius was indeed a spy.

Those who have concluded that the Rosenbergs committed espionage are

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AP / Wide World Photos

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg at their March 1951 espionage trial in New York federal court

denounced as "conservative writers" and "conservatives and Anti-Communist or Cold War liberals" for whom their "unquestioning belief in the Rosenbergs' guilt" was "a kind of loyalty oath." In contrast, upholding the innocence of the Rosenbergs was "the most significant expression of resistance to the spread of the domestic Cold War in the United States" by "radicals and anti-Cold War liberals."

The author of this tendentious essay is Norman Markowitz, a tenured professor at Rutgers University and one of the few academicians who writes for the *People's Weekly World*—the newspaper of the Communist party of the United States—and its theoretical magazine, *Political Affairs*. He specializes in personally attacking not only those "conservative" scholars who have dared to suggest the right side won the Cold War, but also liberals and former allies who have been persuaded by new evidence of the CPUSA's involvement in Soviet espionage, offering party-line justifications and rationales for his conclusions. Back in the early 1980s, at a meeting of the Historians of American Communism, an academic group in which both of us have been active, Markowitz announced to all that he was most proud of having just joined the CPUSA, surely one of the prime examples of jumping onto a sinking ship.

It is no surprise, of course, that some of the last Marxist-Leninists in the world reside in American universities. But ideological zealots with axes to grind are not usually picked to write entries on controversial political figures for a standard reference work. The Rosenberg entry has some incongruous wording, and this may reflect the *ANB* editors' belated realization that they had made an unfortunate choice in an author. The first sentence of the essay reads "Rosenberg, Ethel (28 Sept. 1915—19 June 1953), and Julius Rosenberg (12 May 1918—19 June 1953), spies," followed by an essay devoted to the message that they were not spies. (Even more bizarre, the online version of the *ANB* calls them "accused spies," as if they had not even been convicted.) And after many paragraphs devoted to arguing for the Rosenbergs' innocence, the essay ends with a non sequitur: "The Rosenberg case has remained subject to debate and reinterpretation."

But to scholars of the Rosenberg case the main points are not subject to debate. The evidence available in the 1950s was enough to sustain their conviction. And more recent documents available from Russia and the Venona files make clear that Julius headed an extensive Soviet espionage apparatus, engaged in atomic spying, and his wife Ethel not only knew about his activities but actively assisted her husband. About the only disputed question is whether the death penalty was excessive.

Norman Markowitz may be so ideologically blind as not to see this, but the editors of the *American National Biography* should have been more clear-eyed. Scholars will be unaffected by Markowitz's absurdity, but the *ANB*'s editors have allowed this distortion of historical fact to be palmed off on many thousands of unsuspecting students for decades to come. ♦

Against Honor

It's an attractive concept, but no basis for governing. BY DAVID BLANKENHORN

ALMOST SINGLE-HANDED, senator John McCain has revived the concept of personal honor as both the basis of a candidacy for president and the core of a governing philosophy. As his notable success in several winter primaries recedes into the past, McCainism may prove to have been a short-lived phenomenon, dependent on the senator's charisma and life story. But even if it does, it has set forth a proposition that deserves our attention—namely, that a distinctly *civic* faith, rooted in the ideals of patriotism, duty, and honor, constitutes the best moral framework for public service and political action.

The proposition has many supporters. Writing in this magazine, William Kristol and David Brooks endorse McCain's "basic innovation," the attempt to "redirect a religiously based moral conservatism into a patriotically grounded moral appeal." McCainism thus offers "a conflation of religion and patriotism" such that "when John McCain starts talking about religious faith, he ends up talking about patriotism," and "when McCain talks of remoralizing America, he talks in terms of reinvigorating patriotism." The editors of the *New Republic* similarly praise McCain's "crusade to reform the GOP," especially his goal of "reconstituting" the party around a moralism that is "defined patriotically, not religiously."

To understand what this might mean, read McCain's bestselling memoir, *Faith of my Fathers*, which stresses his fundamental commitment to "the sanctity of personal honor," calling it "the only lesson my father felt necessary to impart to me." For military men such as the McCains, the "demands of honor" are "not necessarily as many as those required of clergy," but they must be strictly embraced. And what are they? Do not lie, steal, or cheat. Keep your word. Do not shirk your duty. Admit mistakes forthrightly. Trust your comrades. Protect those for whom you are responsible.

Religion occasionally enters the discussion—the U.S. military's Code of Conduct for American Prisoners of War states, "I will trust in God and in the United States of America"—but usually only briefly and almost always in ways that, as Kristol and Brooks approvingly point out, morph religion into patriotism. In essence, the "demands of honor" concern personal conduct guided by patriotic duty.

Many societies have tended to orient behavior, especially male behavior, around notions of honor and shame. Such codes often generate high levels of conflict and violence.

This is an admirable code, and Americans should be thankful that it guides our military. Especially as we begin to reflect on the meaning of the Clinton presidency, the appeal of anyone in public life who seems genuinely to care about truth-telling and personal integrity is very great.

But "the sanctity of personal honor" is no ethical grounding for politics generally. In the first place—and with due respect to the Founders, who set much store by their "sacred honor"—honor is *not* necessarily "sacred" or intrinsically linked to "sanctity." Honor has two main meanings. It can refer to public reputation, respect paid by others, as in: We honor you. Or it can refer to personal fidelity to a code of conduct, as in: You behaved honorably. Sanctity, by contrast, means holiness or godliness and may or may not be conjoined with honor.

Indeed, these two ideals often sharply clash. Murderers and thieves can behave according to a strict code of conduct such as a code of silence or "respect" or "family honor." Fascism has its code of honor, as does communism. Anthropologists report that many societies and subcultures in human history have tended to orient behavior, especially male behavior, around notions of honor and shame. Such codes often generate high levels of conflict and violence.

In our own society, honor-shame codes have had an important (and probably underappreciated) influence. In the antebellum South, for example, according to Bertram Wyatt-Brown, the ideal of "Southern honor" significantly reinforced secessionism and helped shape the rationale for civil war. Elijah Anderson brilliantly describes the honor-shame code—the "code of the street," he calls it—that today shapes the behavior of many young African-American men in troubled inner cities. The code says: If you disrespect me, I will hurt you. A century and a half ago, similar "demands of honor," equally linked to violent outcomes, guided the behavior of many young American males under the "code of the West."

Often, the code of honor is closely linked to the male's desire for fame and glory, typically achieved through military heroism and other displays of bravery and feats of physical strength and domination. The Greeks and Romans understood honor essentially this way. And Shakespeare's Henry V, in arguably the most stirring speech about honor in the English language,

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confesses to the men he is about to lead into battle: "But if it be a sin to covet honor, I am the most offending soul alive."

The relevant point, however, is that Henry knows it *is* a sin to covet honor. For people with religious faith—for those who seek after sanctity or godliness—coveting honor is a sin because honor can never be an end in itself. Honor is not a free-standing ideal. It always depends for its ultimate meaning on something larger than honor. Honor is a path, but honor by itself cannot tell us where the path is leading.

For this reason, the Bible speaks little of honor as a life goal or way of living. The Book of Proverbs tells us that "before honor is humility." The fourth commandment, "Honor your father and mother," domesticates honor, placing it within the context of family. In this and similar ways, for the Jews, honor largely shifts from an achievement to an offering.

In the New Testament, insofar as honor means public esteem, Jesus shows little if any regard for it. He says plainly, "I receive not honor from men." He also chastises those who "receive honor from one another" yet "seek not the honor that comes from God only." And insofar as honor implies a code of conduct that refuses to suffer slights, Jesus regularly offends against its demands, as in his injunction to turn the other cheek.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* includes an extensive discussion of the virtues, but it contains hardly a mention of honor. Discussing the eighth commandment, "Do not bear false witness," the catechism briefly defines honor as "the social witness given to human dignity." Understood in this sense, honor is a good to which all persons have a natural right, since all persons, as children of God, possess dignity. But again, honor is strictly subordinated to something bigger that gives honor its substance and direction.

Indeed, according to some scholars, a major cultural achievement of Judaism and then Christianity was to challenge the primacy of honor-shame codes as guides for behavior, offering instead a new ethic of humility, charity, and obedience to God. No longer would greatness belong only or even mainly to kings and military leaders pursuing glory through rule and conquest. The new idea was that greatness means godliness and "comes from God only." The new idea transforms honor. It chastens patriotism. It also helps make democracy possible.

Fundamental to democracy is the notion that government is not all-powerful, and the limits on its power come from sources higher than the state. Thus is democracy closely allied to the conviction that independent moral truth trumps civic pride, and human rights come from God. Democratic government operates under, and draws its legitimacy from, a moral canopy not of its own making. So when faith and honor are conflated—when morality degenerates into mere patriotism—a foundation of democracy is threatened.

For all the honor due our military heroes, honor cannot supply the basis for our politics. ♦

Miami Virtue

The citizens of Miami are indignant, determined—and right.

By Tucker Carlson

Miami, March 30

According to the Miami police, there are 20,000 people lining the streets of Little Havana. The crowd is packed into about a dozen city blocks, and from the air, illuminated by thousands of flashlights, it can be seen forming the shape of a cross. It is probably the largest prayer vigil in the city's history, and it has been organized to protest the Clinton administration's plan to send 6-year-old Elián González back to Cuba.

At the intersection of 8th Street and 19th Avenue, the center of the cross, a priest stands atop a stage to address the crowd. The stoplight above him changes from red to green and back. The people beneath him are almost totally silent. Some hold crucifixes aloft. Others are on their knees in prayer. Remain organized and restrained, the priest says, and do not commit violence. Cubans, he reminds the crowd, are not the sort of people who break things.

In fact there seems little danger of that happening. This must be among the least threatening crowds of angry people ever assembled. Hardly anyone looks desperate or dispossessed. No one is drinking. There are a surprising number of couples with children. It's steaming hot, but just about everyone is freshly scrubbed, many in ironed polo shirts and blue jeans with dry-cleaning creases. They are for the most part middle-aged, middle class, and well behaved. It could be the crowd at a Bruce Springsteen concert.

An informal survey of protesters finds relatively few who still live in the immediate area. Most have come from more affluent parts of Miami, or from neighboring Broward and Palm Beach counties. Little Havana is where many of these people used to live. Today it is swelling with newer, poorer immigrants from Central and South America, becoming more like Little Managua every day. For many the rally is a kind of reunion, a chance to spend an evening in the old neighborhood making a stand for the anti-Castro cause.

And many are indeed just standing. Every third person seems to be wearing tiny, safety-yellow Sony headphones. They are listening to the radio. There are three Cuban talk radio stations in Miami, and if you want news about what is happening in the city's exile community, you listen to them. (To keep abreast of demonstrations, the mayor's office and the police department monitor all three.) Tonight, the radio is reporting recent developments in Elián's case. The boy's Miami relatives, primarily his father's uncle and the uncle's daughter, have cared for Elián since his mother drowned while bringing him to America in a small boat in November. The uncle has petitioned for guardianship, which would allow Elián to grow up in Miami. But the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the INS's boss, Attorney General Janet Reno, have acceded to the alleged desire of the boy's father in Cuba (who had been estranged from Elián's mother) to take custody. While court appeals continue, the INS is threatening to bring matters to a head by revoking the boy's visa.

Those who don't have headphones can get the news from civic-minded radio owners. On one block, an elderly man pushes an Eisenhower-era bicycle down the street. A radio powered by a car battery that has been tied to the rear fender has been secured to the handle bars with electrician's tape. Ten feet away, a woman has slung a booming boombox from the handle of her baby carriage. Across the street, a van is parked in front of the premium pump at a gas station. Two old-fashioned bullhorn speakers are mounted on the roof, and both are blaring a scratchy AM signal.

The crowd is listening to find out if Elián González's family has come to an agreement with the INS. There is something postmodern about the scene—thousands of participants in a political demonstration not really participating. On the other hand, the INS negotiations are not a minor matter. If they break down, Elián could be returned to Cuba within days. No one is monitoring the news more

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AP/Wide World Photos

Elián on his way to school, accompanied by his great uncle, March 23

closely than Ramon Saul Sanchez. Sanchez is Miami's acknowledged master of political street theater. If Elián is taken from Miami, Sanchez plans to lead many more demonstrations in Little Havana, all less restrained than this one.

Sanchez is sometimes referred to as the Al Sharpton of the Cuban exile set. It is true that both are confrontational and publicity-hungry, though unlike Sharpton, a pudgy former FBI informant, Sanchez has genuine revolutionary credentials. Sanchez came to the United States from Cuba as a teenager in 1967 and promptly joined Alpha 66, the most militant anti-Castro group of the time. Within a short period he was carrying a gun (he was later arrested for pulling it on an undercover police detective) and making secret forays into Cuba with fellow Alpha 66 commandos.

In 1982, Sanchez was subpoenaed by a New York grand jury looking into the activities of Omega 7, an offshoot of Alpha 66 (exile groups have a thing for cryptic number names) that had claimed credit for scores of bombings and at least 10 killings of pro-Castro Cubans in the United States. Sanchez refused to testify. He spent the next four and a half years in federal prison for contempt of court. A couple of his friends from Omega 7 are now serving life sentences for murder.

Sanchez says he left prison a changed man, determined to follow the precepts of non-violence. He began organizing protests off the coast of Cuba designed to draw attention to the plight of refugees. (In 1995, a boat in one of Sanchez's "flotillas" sank in rough seas, leaving one man dead.) He went on hunger strikes. Last year, in protest of the Clinton administration's Cuba policy, he blocked traffic on a Miami bridge with his body. The 1997 death of Cuban-American National Foundation head Jorge Mas Canosa left Miami exiles without a universally recognized leader. Sanchez remains one of the few people in the city who on short notice can assemble a crowd of volunteers willing to get arrested.

For the past week he has been threatening to do just that. In countless television and radio interviews, Sanchez has described the various acts of civil disobedience he and his supporters will carry out if the feds attempt to take Elián González from his Miami relatives. Sanchez promises to close the airport, blockade the Port of Miami, and ring the little boy's home with concentric circles of 18-wheelers. (Many truck drivers in Dade County are Cuban-Americans.) If all else fails, protesters will form a human chain of bodies outside Elián's front door. No one thinks Sanchez is bluffing. On Wednesday he was summoned to a meeting with Miami's chief of police. By all accounts, the chief was very polite.

It isn't always easy to get a meeting with Sanchez. First it is necessary to find him. Sanchez runs an organization called Democracy Movement. The group has letterhead and sends out press releases, but it has skimped on the physical plant. Democracy Movement's headquarters is located on the second floor of a decrepit strip mall on the outskirts of Miami. When I arrived early Thursday afternoon looking for Sanchez, the office was nearly deserted. The lights were off. A Spanish soap opera blared from a television in the middle of the room. The elderly receptionist was asleep face down on his desk. He lifted his head for a moment when I entered, didn't say a word, then went

back to sleep. Finally, a man in a torn Chevy T-shirt emerged from a back room. No, he said, Sanchez was not in, nor was he reachable or likely to be back in the near future. "He's in the streets," the man said, shrugging.

The way to reach Ramon Saul Sanchez, it turns out, is on his cell phone. He spent more than 6,000 minutes on it last month. Sanchez's real office is his car. In it, he and Felipe Rojas, a heavyset aide who wears a diamond pinky ring, cruise the city for hours at a time, doing radio interviews and meeting with supporters. In person, Sanchez doesn't come off at all the way one might expect. He may have been a gun-toting radical in his younger years, but these days he dresses like a real estate agent, in a blue blazer, button-down shirt and tie. He speaks slowly. He never says anything hot-headed or irrational.

It's not that Sanchez has come to accept Castro. Like virtually all Cubans in Miami, he hates Fidel as much as ever. (Only last year, officials at the Miami airport briefly banned the sale of *Cigar Aficionado* magazine on grounds that the cover story was too friendly to the regime.) It is just that, like many in the exile community, Sanchez has been tamed by age, respectability, and the comforts of middle-class life.

This afternoon, he and Rojas are driving aimlessly around the neighborhood near Elián González's house waiting for one of the lawyers on the case to call with a news update. Elián's relatives are downtown at the moment meeting with INS officials. Sanchez wants to know what the government intends to do. At the first hint that federal marshals are on their way to collect Elián, Sanchez plans to shut the city down. The lawyer doesn't call, so Sanchez decides to head for the house to see what is going on.

Elián González's house may be the most famous landmark in Miami these days. Every cab driver knows how to get there. Satellite trucks line the street for blocks in both directions. There is nothing remarkable about the house itself. Like most in Little Havana, it is small and stucco and surrounded by a metal fence. There are Christmas lights hanging from the rain gutter, and two enormous flags, Cuban and American, fluttering on the lawn. Bright colors are a theme in the neighborhood. Though the González house is painted a fairly conventional shade of white, other homes on the street span the full supermarket spectrum: mustard yellow, tangerine orange, grapefruit pink, mint-jelly green.

More than 100 members of the news media sit beneath tents across the street staring at the house all day long. Small groups of Cuban men enter, exit, and take no questions. Spokesmen emerge for periodic briefings. Once or twice a day, Elián himself may come out to play on the yellow slide in his front yard. And that's it. There isn't, in other words, a lot going on at Elián's house.

AP/Wide World Photos

Things get a bit more exciting one morning when a female onlooker in her twenties is overcome by the heat. Friends help her into a chair, while someone calls the fire department. Paramedics arrive, confirm she will be fine, then leave. As an EMT talks to the woman, a network soundman dangles a boom mike overhead to capture the exchange. No fewer than seven cameramen crowd in to film it. The press horde is getting desperate for news.

The public, meanwhile, continues to show up at the house. Tourists come to have their pictures taken in front of the police barricades. A group of middle-aged women assembles every morning to chat and smoke under an umbrella. Vendors hawk T-shirts, Cheetos, and cold drinks. A man walks through the crowd selling chewing gum. A couple of neighborhood oddballs shuffle back and forth talking to themselves. A steady stream of protesters arrive with homemade signs on sticks. Many of the signs make reference to God.

From the beginning, there has been a mystical subplot to the Elián González story. Shortly after he was pulled from the ocean last November, the boy told rescuers about a group of dolphins that had followed him as he floated alone in his inner tube. Many supporters came to believe that the dolphins were guardian angels, sent by God not

AP / Wide World

Supporters throng the street in front of Elián's residence in Miami.

simply to protect the boy's life, but as a sign of the boy's destiny as the redeemer of Cuba. Castro, they said, knew of Elián's power and feared him. Rumors circulated that, once Elián was returned to Cuba, Castro would sacrifice him to the pagan gods of Santeria.

Elián's relatives in Miami did little to dispel such talk. Late last month, the family announced that an image of the Virgin Mary had appeared on a mirror in Elián's bedroom. A few days before, employees at a nearby bank had discovered what they believed was an apparition of the Virgin, visible to some in a streak on the building's front window. A large shrine of candles, flowers, and petitions soon grew at the bank's entryway. Both events were widely taken as evidence that God was using Elián for His own larger purposes.

For believing Christians in Miami, it is not a stretch to see the fight over where Elián should live as a fairly straightforward battle between good and evil. There is no freedom of worship in Cuba. The Communist regime is actively hostile to independent churches and to religious faith in general. Elián's return to Cuba would at the very least constitute a plunge back into state-encouraged atheism. "I don't believe in God," Elián's maternal grandmother, Raquel Rodríguez, announced in February on Cuban television, thereby confirming the worst fears of religious exiles. "To hell with God!" (During the same program, Elián's paternal grandmother, Mariela Quintana, made what still ranks as the strangest statement of the whole saga. "I took out his tongue and I bit it," Quintana said, explaining how she had greeted her grandson during her recent trip to the United States. "I unzipped his fly to see if it's grown.")

By the end of last week, there was not yet a cult of Elián, but it was becoming easier to imagine one developing. On the night of the Little Havana prayer rally, a placard was raised outside of the González house: "Elián is the Child King," it said in Spanish. Another sign was more explicit: "Elián is Christ." If the local Catholic authorities were offended by such obviously blasphemous sentiments, none said so officially. One Dade County priest, the Rev. Gustavo Miyares, told the *Miami Herald* that in his opinion, "it is not so unusual that some people in Miami are seeing [Elián] as the new Christ."

Outside the González house on Thursday afternoon, Ramon Saul Sanchez clearly does not have religion on his mind. There have been a number of developments in the Elián case over the past 12 hours, and for the moment, any federal attempt to take the boy from his relatives' house has been postponed until next week. Whether because he doesn't trust the government or because he cannot decelerate from the intensity of the day before, Sanchez is all but ignoring the news. He has gathered the 40 or so onlookers at the scene and is teaching them techniques of civil disobedience.

Sanchez begins with a pep talk. "We are the ones who will protect Elián's rights," he says. "If the U.S. government doesn't give us an option, we will take action." He is speaking softly, but his new students respond as if he has been screaming. "*Cuba libre!*" they shout, "*Cuba libre!*"

Within minutes Sanchez has assembled the small crowd into an orderly line. They link arms, forming a human chain. "*Uno, dos, tres*," the chain recites, marching loudly in place. Then without warning, as a group, they lunge forward. They advance only a few feet, but the effect is jolting. The country fair atmosphere outside Elián's house has vanished. The Juicy Fruit vendor, the shuffling oddballs, the chatting middle-aged women—suddenly they don't seem like harmlessly charming characters. They seem formidable, defenders of a boy's freedom, resisters against injustice perpetrated by their own government. ♦

Secret Agent Man

The KGB past of Russian president Vladimir Putin is worrying. Then again, the KGB isn't what it used to be.

By Anne Applebaum

Moscow

Over the past few days and weeks, much has been made of the "mystery" of Vladimir Putin, the man who now runs Russia. Yet in some ways, we know far more about him than we ever knew about the very private Boris Yeltsin. We know, for example, how he interprets the history of his country in the twentieth century. And we know who his heroes are. In fact, not long ago, a few weeks before the election, he took time out of his prime ministerial duties to enact a ceremony commemorating both.

He chose the site with care: the Lubyanka, once the headquarters of the KGB and its most notorious jail—prisoners exercised on its roof, and were tortured in its cellars—and now the home of the FSB, Russia's internal security services. He also took heed of the date: December 20, a day still known and celebrated by some as "Chekists Day," the anniversary (this was the 82nd) of the founding of the Cheka, Lenin's secret police. In that place and on that day, both so redolent of the bloodiest pages of Russian history, Vladimir Putin solemnly unveiled a plaque in memory of . . . Yuri Andropov.

Given that Putin has just come to power in Russia by virtue of a democratic vote, Andropov would seem, at first, an odd sort of hero. Andropov was director of the KGB for many years before briefly becoming, in 1982, general secretary of the Communist party. And he was not just some faceless apparatchik: Andropov is still known for his fervent belief that "order and discipline," as enforced by the methods of the KGB—arrests of dissidents, imprisonment of corrupt officials, the creation of fear—would have restored the sagging fortunes of the Soviet Union.

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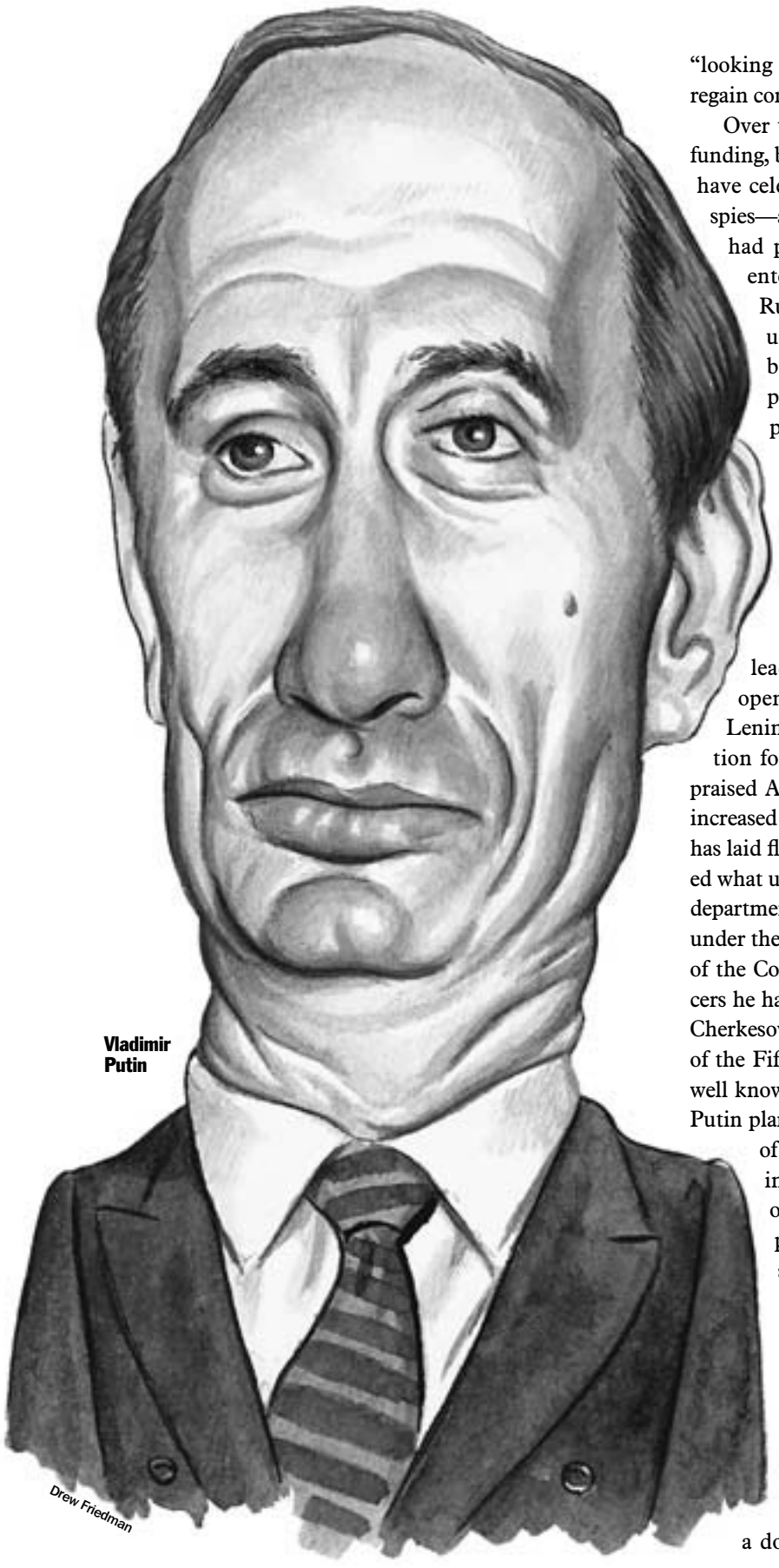
Still known, that is, and still admired. Indeed, the idea that Andropov died "too early," and that Mikhail Gorbachev subsequently bungled the assignment is a sentiment common to many in the ranks of the former KGB, some of whom still see a conspiracy in his premature death. "They got him before he finished the job," one ex-officer told me wistfully. Hardly surprising, then, that in recent months Putin, who first tried to join Andropov's KGB at the tender age of 15, has become the first post-Soviet leader to openly link himself to the same set of beliefs: "Order and discipline" are favorite words in Putin's vocabulary too.

This is not to say that Putin is the second coming of Andropov. Putin is not even the first leader of post-Soviet Russia to have ties to the world of espionage and repression. Both of his predecessors as prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov and Sergei Stepashin, were also former KGB agents. Nor was he ever a Russian James Bond: One former elite agent, based for many years in the West (I spoke to him in his slick offices in a new Russian bank) dismisses Putin as a "second-rate middle lieutenant." Oleg Gordievsky, the former KGB double agent in Britain, is equally scathing about "the gray mass of officers" who were sent to places like Dresden, Putin's only foreign posting. Putin was not, he says, part of that "cosmopolitan group of officers" that clamored for change in the KGB at the end of the 1980s.

Nor can Putin be held responsible for bringing what Russians call the "special services" back from the low point they reached at the beginning of the 1990s, when the Yeltsin regime excluded them, effectively punishing them for having participated in the coup against Gorbachev. Most observers date their "return" not from Putin's appointment to the prime ministership in 1999, but from 1993. That was the year Yeltsin sent tanks to fire on his parliament—and simultaneously decided that the gaggle of squabbling democrats around him were not up to running the country. The services were, says Mark Galleotti, specialist in Russian security for *Jane's Intelligence Review*,



Vladimir Putin

Drew Friedman

"looking to regain ground just as Yeltsin was looking to regain control."

Over the past seven years, Yeltsin has increased their funding, beefed up their public image—books and articles have celebrated the glamorous lives of patriotic Soviet spies—and put them to work. Since 1995, the FSB has had permission to open mail, tap telephones, and enter private residences without a court order—if Russia's "national security interests" (a term left undefined) are threatened. In 1998, the agency began demanding that Russian Internet service providers install technology linking their computers to those at FSB headquarters as well. Increased harassment of small human rights and environmental organizations, particularly those investigating issues of nuclear pollution, dates back two or three years now. Putin's rise to prominence is a reflection of the increased power of the security services, not its cause.

Nevertheless, Putin is different: He is the first leader of post-Soviet Russia to identify himself openly as a "Chekist," using the term invented in Lenin's Soviet Union, and the first to express admiration for Andropov, both in words and deeds. He has praised Andropov's "honesty and uprightness"—and has increased the FSB's role in army counter-intelligence. He has laid flowers on Andropov's grave—and he has recreated what used to be called the KGB's Fifth Directorate, the department responsible for repressing political dissidents, under the new name of the Department for the Protection of the Constitution. Among the many former KGB officers he has put in positions of power in Moscow is Viktor Cherkesov, now deputy director of the FSB, formerly chief of the Fifth Directorate in Putin's native Leningrad, and well known to that city's ex-dissidents. Rumor has it that Putin plans to put Cherkesov at the head of a new branch of the security services, possibly based on the existing "Kremlin guards," designed, in true imitation of Andropov, to "rid Russia of corruption" and provide the president with his own personal security apparatus.

These actions in part account for the near-hysteria with which Putin's triumph is being greeted by some former dissidents (among them Sakharov's widow, Elena Bonner), who have predicted the coming of a "new Stalinism." They may also help account for his popularity. The myth of the wise, all-knowing, secret policeman, the "patriotic Chekist" promoted in a dozen 1930s films, is still propagated in Russia,

and the legend of Andropov—if only he'd had time!—lives on outside the halls of the Lubyanka as well. With a straight face, Boris Labusov, spokesman for the SVR, the foreign intelligence agency, listed for me the qualities of a typical, professional Russian spy: "a wide base of erudition . . . knows how to work with people . . . makes quick decisions . . . psychological strength."

The less frequently examined question is whether, propaganda aside, he can do it. If this is how Putin wants to proceed, can the former KGB really restore "order" and "discipline" to Russia? Are Putin's security services still up to the job?

Walking the small side streets that lead off of Lubyanka square, one can almost believe that they are. This small patch of central Moscow still contains, in effect, an entire KGB village, composed of KGB buildings still serving the same purposes they always served: There is the FSB health clinic and the FSB club, FSB service flats and the FSB garage, the latter housed in the shell of a 17th-century church, one of the few in the city that has not been returned to its original use.

Of course a few things have changed: Around the corner from the Lubyanka, what was once the KGB shop, where agents could buy goods unavailable to the average Soviet citizen, has now become a Western-style supermarket, in which not all of the modern FSB's employees would be rich enough to shop. There have been reports of housing shortages among officers, and even Labusov says that "of course we would all like to be paid more . . ."

And for that matter, Russia's security services no longer form a single, all-powerful institution—the different branches have deliberately cultivated quite separate public profiles. The SVR's Labusov received me in a small but carefully restored palace, complete with mock Biedermeier furniture and silk curtains, and seemed disappointed when I wanted to leave after an hour and a half; the FSB's spokesman refused to receive me anywhere, for any length of time, for any reason. Still, their division into foreign intelligence (SVR), domestic and counter-intelligence (FSB), border guards, Kremlin guards, and communications experts is not as thorough as it seems. Cynics point out that virtually every one of the KGB's former directorates still exists, often in the same office building, albeit under a new name. Konstantin Preobrazhensky, an agent who resigned in 1991 (he was "TASS correspondent" in Japan), calls the breakup "exaggerated," noting that agents "still have the same health service, they go to the same sanitariums, they use the same communications system."

Far more important than the institutional change is the dispersion of the old cadres. In the disarray of the early 1990s, many officers left the service. According to Gordievsky, some went into Russia's nascent "security industry," a broad term that encompasses everything from the thugs who stand outside money-changing booths to the high-tech private intelligence operations of Russia's major companies. Some ("the stupidest," according to Gordievsky) stayed put and continue to form the backbone of the security services: There were no widespread sackings, no purges of the cadres, no democratic reeducation.

Others, to put it bluntly, went into the world of organized crime. To put it even more bluntly, it is not at all clear that these organized criminals lost contact with their former comrades. Indeed, estimates of the FSB's current strengths, and of its ability to re-impose "order and discipline" on Russia, depend almost entirely on one's assessment of the relationship between those still inside the service, and those outside it, and how conspiratorial one feels those links to be. Andrzej Grajewski, a Pole who has written a book about the FSB and follows its development closely, describes the three groups as "working in tandem." He, like many others, suspects that both mafia and business structures do favors for the FSB and vice versa, citing the case of recent banking scandals in New York: "The mafia couldn't do such things if the security services didn't help them."

While many ex-agents think this an exaggeration, if only because it isn't clear why well-paid employees of private banks would want to cooperate with their poorer former comrades still working for the state, there is ample evidence that the former KGB has deep and complicated links to the larger Russian companies. Testifying in Washington before Congress, one former agent recently described in detail the methods by which the KGB set up banks and businesses, stealing millions of dollars of hard currency in the process. Several of Russia's major companies are also widely believed to have been founded with KGB money. There is then, to many, something absurd in the idea of the FSB "cracking down" on corruption. How can it crack down on itself?

Indeed, the security services till now have been quite blatantly used in Russian politics not to stop corruption, but prevent corruption investigations. Notable is the case of Russia's former chief prosecutor, whom mysterious sources filmed cavorting with prostitutes just as his investigations were drawing closer to the personal finances of

Boris Yeltsin—an incident that took place when one Vladimir Putin was running the FSB. Preobrazhensky laughs aloud when asked who is more powerful, the Russian security services or Russian big business: "How would agents survive if the oligarchs didn't pay them bribes?"

If Putin's track record is anything to go by, the use of the FSB to "restore order" on a grand, Andropov-like scale looks unlikely. But even if a "crackdown" on Russian oligarchs turns out to be beyond the scope of the modern FSB, that isn't to say that smaller ventures aren't well within its scope. Putin may well go after some of the smaller crooks, or at least those who meet his definition of a crook. An example of how this might work arose recently, with the peculiar attempt to intimidate the Voice of America journalist Andrei Babitsky. Babitsky was detained by the FSB in Chechnya, and then briefly vanished, allegedly "traded" to Chechen rebels, before he mysteriously reemerged in Dagestan, new passport in hand. Putin, although implicitly taking responsibility for the episode, has refused to apologize for it, on the grounds that Babitsky, a Russian citizen, is "not Russian": Real Russians, according to Putin, "obey the laws of their country," and don't sneak around behind Chechen lines, collecting information unfavorable to the state. Among his many cryptic statements in recent weeks, Putin has spoken of imposing a "dictatorship of law" on Russia, which sounds good if he means that blind justice will apply to everyone, but more ominous if it means that justice will be allocated only to those whom the president, and his security services, designate as "true Russians."

Putin favors "managed democracy"—regular elections but without any serious opposition to the interests of the Kremlin.

In fact, minor incidents of police and security service harassment of people who pose awkward problems to the Kremlin began in the Yeltsin regime and continue more than is usually acknowledged abroad. The first to notice this were the small, independent, human rights and other activist groups, who were recently forced to go through a complicated re-registration process designed to put many of them out of business. Alexei Yablokov, an ecological and political activist, was genuinely surprised to discover that his small lobbying group could not be officially registered, as the constitution did not accept that any organization other than the state could be defined as a defender of human rights, a decision he is fighting in the courts. Another ecologist, Alexander Nikitin—who wrote about ecological damage to the Baltic Sea caused by Russia's Northern Fleet until his 1996 arrest and imprisonment for treason—was acquitted in December after the FSB's long prosecution. But his trial had ominous aspects: Two witnesses from the FSB, for example, testified that even the publication of material *from open sources* can be defined as a violation of state secrets, a crime punishable with prison.

As for harassment of the press, that has long been a fact of life in Russia's provinces: On a visit to Volgograd a few years ago, I asked a television journalist whether she, as a state employee—most regional television is state-owned—could report news unfavorable to the local government. "They would take me off the air," she said, looking at me as if I were stupid. In Moscow, methods are more sophisticated. In the week running up to the presidential election, "someone" broke into the computer system of *Novaya Gazeta*, a newspaper that was about to print an article on Yeltsin's and Putin's election finances, and destroyed the entire issue.

It is that sort of thing that makes Russia's "special services" difficult to dismiss out of hand. Their listening equipment may be a bit rusty. They may have divided loyalties, they may take more bribes than they used to, and it may be true, as one former agent said to me, that "ten years of work" are required "before [the services are] even able to conduct normal intelligence activity," let alone reimpose totalitarianism. But even if nine-tenths of Russia's nuclear arsenal were judged defective, no one would think of ignoring the bombs that remain—and the reimposition of totalitarianism is probably not Putin's aim in any case.

Before his election, Vladimir Putin may not have been very forthcoming about his economic policies, but his views on the Russian political system have been made clear. He favors "managed democracy," to use the phrase of Russia's political scientists. It's a system in which elections take place regularly, you can hold public meetings, and the thought police will not arrest you for complaining about the price of sausage—as long as you do not try seriously to oppose the interests of the Kremlin, publish seriously damaging information about the Kremlin, or create more than a token opposition political party. Within this new system, whose rules are still being worked out, the FSB can play a very useful role—and it has shown itself willing to do so already. ♦

UPI / Corbis-Bettmann

Pious Abe?

Lincoln's Christian Fatalism

By David Frum

Alan Greenspan calculated a little while ago that the United States' economy is getting lighter: One thousand dollars' worth of economic production literally weighs less than its equivalent did in 1973. If true, it's little thanks to the Lincoln publishing industry, whose output shows no sign of miniaturization. Give the word that you'll review the year's output, and you'd better up your Christmas tip to the delivery man, for he's going to be hauling half a hundredweight of books to your door.

Most of these books are, needless to say, intended for specialists. Mark S. Reinhart, a Columbus, Ohio, librarian has compiled a monograph listing every movie and television show in which Lincoln is represented: *Abraham Lincoln on Screen*. Thomas P. Lowry, a doctor and amateur researcher, has made a remarkably thorough study of Lincoln's famously merciful treatment of deserters from the Union Army, *Don't Shoot That Boy!*—a book that offers Civil War buffs great gobs of new facts to master. George Anastaplo of Loyola University in Chicago closely parses Lincoln's rhetoric in a fine essay on the Emancipation Proclamation in *Abraham Lincoln: A Constitutional Biography*.

Abraham Lincoln
Redeemer President
by Allen C. Guelzo
Eerdmans, 516 pp., $29

Lincoln
A Foreigner's Quest
by Jan Morris
Simon & Schuster, 208 pp., $23

Abraham Lincoln
A Constitutional Biography
by George Anastaplo
Rowman & Littlefield, 400 pp., $35

Abraham Lincoln on Screen
A Filmography
by Mark S. Reinhart
McFarland, 304 pp., $49.95

Don't Shoot That Boy!
Abraham Lincoln and Military Justice
by Thomas P. Lowry
Savas, 336 pp., $24.95

These books may venture pretty far off the beaten track. But they add to our knowledge of America's greatest national trauma, and even those who don't feel moved to read them should feel grateful that somebody felt moved to write them.

Alas, it is impossible to feel grateful to the parties responsible for the most lavishly publicized of the new Lincoln books, Jan Morris's *Lincoln: A Foreigner's Quest*. Not even the most scathing reviewer could do justice to this book's worthlessness. It approaches a kind of absolute zero of badness.

A Foreigner's Quest is ignorant: Morris asserts that "the Missouri compromise [drew] a boundary which became known as the Mason-Dixon line"—moving the world-famous line more than eight hundred miles to the south and west of its actual terminus, rather a hair-raising mistake in a book about the Civil War. It is lazy: Morris's idea of research is to visit places where Lincoln lived and quote what the park rangers say about him. It is cynical: In a desperate attempt to find something new to say about Lincoln, Morris borrows without attribution playwright Larry Kramer's flimsy, but at least novel, allegation that Lincoln was homosexual. It is morally obtuse: Morris analogizes New York governor William Seward's role in Lincoln's rise to power to that of Franz von Papen in Adolf Hitler's. And it is almost physically painful to read: Morris, a former

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David Frum is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard *and author of* How We Got Here: The '70s, The Decade That Brought You Modern Life—For Better or Worse *(Basic Books).*

soldier and newspaperman who accompanied the expedition that conquered Mt. Everest in 1953, underwent a sex-change operation nearly 30 years ago and now writes in a tone that is alternately giggly and bitchy, and that altogether sounds as much like a real woman as a blackface minstrel sounds like Paul Robeson.

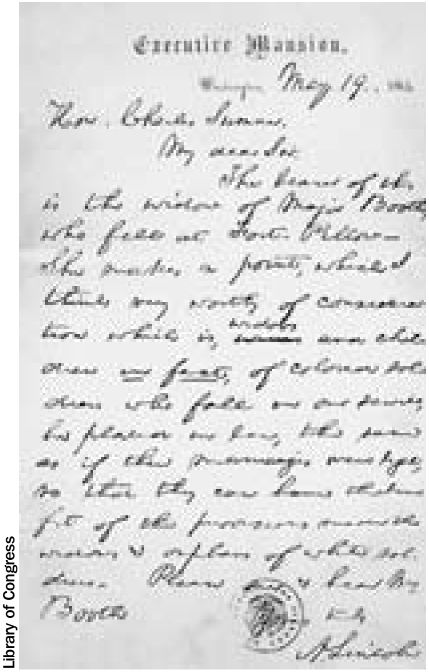
Morris's book is nearly enough to discredit the Lincoln industry. But, as if in tacit atonement for it, that same industry has produced Allen C. Guelzo's *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President*—one of the subtlest and deepest studies of Lincoln's faith and thought in many years.

Abraham Lincoln was born in the last month of the presidency of Thomas Jefferson on the slave side of the Ohio River to a poor farming family. His Baptist parents adhered to an especially grim version of Calvinism. Lincoln himself rejected their faith, but he never fully escaped their predestinarian theology. In 1846, during his first campaign for Congress, Lincoln explained (to reassure neighbors anxious about his reputation for unbelief) that he had never been a "scoffer" at Christianity, but added that "in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the 'Doctrine of Necessity'—that is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control."

Such an opinion might seem to incline a man to despair and fatalism, but Guelzo endorses the opinion of Lincoln's law partner William Herndon that the fruit of Lincoln's Doctrine of Necessity was "not passivity, but charity." "Since Lincoln was a 'thorough fatalist' and 'believed that what was to be would be, and no prayers of ours could arrest or reverse the decree,' then 'men were but simple tools of fate, of conditions, and of laws,' and no one 'was responsible for what he was, thought, or did, because he was a child of conditions.'"

Brooding over the practical implications of providence and free will was by no means a personal idiosyncrasy of Lincoln's. Guelzo powerfully argues that differences over this religious doctrine were as fundamental to the party politics of antebellum America as disputes over banking and tariffs. Whigs and Democrats disagreed over the extent to which state and federal governments should take responsibility for the moral life of the people. Whigs supported universal schooling, restrictions on alcohol, and Sunday blue laws; Democrats opposed all three. One of the recurring controversies of the Age of Jackson was whether the post office should deliver mail on Sunday—Democrats said no, Whigs said yes. That much is familiar, as is the textbook explanation of these disagreements in terms of states' rights and laissez faire. Guelzo proposes that we factor religious doctrine into the story too.

Because predestinarians believed that everybody's destiny was fixed eons before his or her birth, they tended to be skeptical about projects to uplift the human character. They were therefore powerfully attracted to Andrew Jackson's minimal-government Democrats. Anti-predestinarian evangelicals, on the other hand, held that individuals could redeem themselves by accepting Christ and that temperance and public schools could save those individuals from the self-destructive habits that would impede such acceptance and redemption.


Executive Mansion.

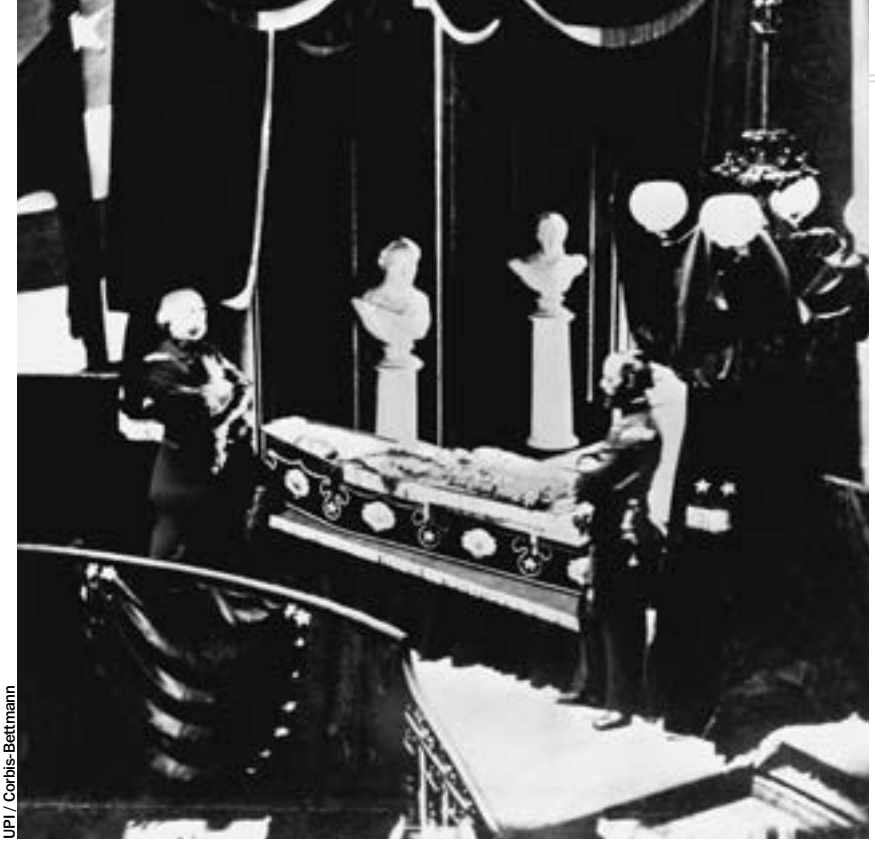
Library of Congress

Left: Lincoln's 1864 letter on black soldiers. Right: Lincoln at Antietam, 1862.

Lincoln was not a devout man. But he did passionately believe in the possibility of individual self-improvement: Indeed, it was this belief that inspired his admiration of Henry Clay, the original author of the phrase "self-made man"—a phrase that did not in fact describe Clay very accurately (his family was quite well-to-do by colonial standards), but which fitted Lincoln precisely.

While Lincoln's early political battles involved such seemingly routine matters as navigability of the waterways of central Illinois, Lincoln perceived something much larger at stake: the transformation of the United States from an agrarian society, in which individual conditions were largely fixed, into a commercial and industrial society that offered individuals an opportunity to rise as he had.

The denial of this opportunity was for Lincoln at the very heart of the evil of slavery. During his 1858 debates with Douglas, Lincoln carefully distanced himself from the proposition that blacks ought to live on terms of social equality with whites. But he insisted that in the right to the fruits of



UPI / Corbis-Bettmann

The only known photograph of Lincoln's corpse in its coffin, in New York's City Hall.

his labor, the black man was the equal of any person in the land. Nor was it only black people whose freedom to rise was inhibited by slavery: In his famous House Divided speech, Lincoln warned that the United States must become all free or all slave and, he seems to have further feared, that over the long haul slavery might not be inflicted on blacks alone. And even if that should not come to pass, it was nevertheless true that a society whose hard work was done by slaves would naturally drift toward condemning hard work as the province of slaves. Laboring men—and Lincoln was always a laboring man, although eventually a reasonably well-paid one—would sink in society's esteem and only men of leisure would enjoy first-class citizenship, as was the case in the republics of classical antiquity.

Many of the more radical abolitionists ended up as socialists, and twentieth-century liberals like Richard Hofstadter have speculated that had Lincoln escaped Booth, he would have arrived by the 1880s at an anti-corporate Republicanism very like that of Theodore Roosevelt in his Bull Moose phase. On Guelzo's evidence, this is implausible: New Deal liberals sometimes chose to regard the captains of nineteenth-century industry as the successors of the plantation masters; Lincoln never would have.

Nowadays, we use the libertarian language of Jefferson on behalf of an ideology of economic growth and technological advance. (To reverse Herbert Croly's famous line about the Progressives, modern conservatives use Jeffersonian means to Hamiltonian ends.) However, Jefferson himself had defended a static, rural way of life, without cities, without credit, without trade—but with slaves.

In the 1830s and 1840s, that Jeffersonian dream still exerted enough power that those repelled by it were pushed in reaction to adopt the whole of the "American System" devised by Alexander Hamilton and named and popularized by Henry Clay: protective tariffs, a central bank, subsidies to canal and railway construction, cheap prices for Western public lands. Lincoln was not an economically minded man, and he was not going to pause to wonder whether each and every element of the Hamilton-Clay program was in fact likely to have the effect Hamilton and Clay hoped for.

It is at least arguable, for instance, that the United States would have industrialized in the late nineteenth century almost as rapidly and with much less class and regional strife had it eschewed protectionism.

Nonetheless, it is true that Lincoln's willingness to use government to promote economic development predisposed him to cooperate with those Northern evangelicals who wanted to use government to promote moral uplift. Improvement was Lincoln's creed, and it necessarily cast him in opposition to those who—like the Jacksonian Democrats—ruled out any hope of individual or collective moral progress. Which is how the skeptical, easygoing Lincoln could make his political peace with these advocates of state-enforced godliness. For him, as for his fellow Whigs, banning Sunday mail service wasn't an attack on the principle of separation of church and state, but an expression of the same spirit of evangelically-motivated moral advance that inspired the founding of the land-grant colleges and the spread of the railways.

The Republican party that Lincoln helped found represented the new commercial and industrial middle class, and it naturally came to be infused with that class's religion.

At the time, it must have seemed incongruous, to put it mildly, that the party of this reforming, improving, evangelical commercial middle class should have been led by a man as personally irreligious as Lincoln—not to mention one as pessimistic, brooding, and obsessed by the immutable workings of providence. In some ways, he too must have seemed old-fashioned, a man more profoundly shaped by the dour Calvinism of colonial times than by the sun-dappled religion of the later nineteenth century.

Yet, in one way at least, Lincoln was a very modern man. The revolutionary generation yearned for a politics of virtue: They believed that wise and impartial men, if protected from the clamor of the populace, would act in the public interest. The Senate and the Electoral College were two of the places where the Founders expected this disinterestedness would manifest itself. A generation of historians—Gordon Wood being perhaps the most famous

of them—have chronicled how this yearning gave way to a more realistic acceptance of conflict and the inevitability of party strife.

Accepting something, however, is not the same thing as approving of it. Many political leaders of the 1830s and 1840s were horrified by the efficient new party organization Martin Van Buren assembled for the Jacksonian Democrats.

Men like Henry Clay understood that the days of high-toned Federalism were over. But their minds never quite adapted to the new world, and they could never quite rid themselves of the feeling that there was something deeply illegitimate about party politics. As for the Jacksonians, they too were not quite up-to-date. While they never doubted the legitimacy of their own party, they were unable to tolerate opposition. The Jacksonians believed that *they* had a party; the other fellows were running an aristocratic conspiracy.

Among the things Lincoln taught his country was a serene acknowledgment of the legitimacy of all parties and points of view. Has ever a national leader waged a civil war against a worse cause with less rancor? Lincoln was led to this generous conclusion by his characteristically gloomy assessment of human nature. Guelzo is especially acute on this point. Lincoln believed human beings to be motivated by their interests; alter their interests, and their behavior will follow. He told self-righteous northerners that if they had been situated as the southerners were, they would think and feel as the southerners did.

Contemporary conservatism is often chastised for its allegedly excessive enthusiasm for material development and its scorn for political idealism. Lincoln, the greatest of all American conservatives, was guilty of both these supposed sins and they in turn led him both to a liberation of America's slaves and a reconciliation with America's slavemasters.

Seldom has the complex connection between Lincoln's predispositions and Lincoln's achievements been more insightfully studied than in Allen Guelzo's superb book. ♦

P&C

Scandalous News!!!

Should the media report on the private lives of political figures? **BY TRACY LEE SIMMONS**

Sander Vanocur, a reporter for NBC News during the Kennedy administration, has been taken to task time and again by younger mavericks over his role, shared with everyone else in the White House press corps of that day, in not reporting on rumors of President Kennedy's affairs with women. Why did so many journalists consent to look the other way? Why were there no stakeouts? Why no blunt questions during those genial press conferences? Vanocur has an answer for those armed with the benefit of hindsight: "Give me the lede." Give me, that is, the news hook big enough to justify dropping such a bomb on the American public.

Peepshow
Media and Politics in an Age of Scandal
by Larry J. Sabato, Mark Stencel, and S. Robert Lichter
Rowman & Littlefield, 177 pp., $22.95

While it's sure to displease contemporary students of journalism, Vanocur's rejoinder reveals one of the lines drawn daily by both editors and reporters, who must offset their desire for a scoop against the standard practices prevailing within their profession. Kennedy's indiscretions were not news because those who wrote the news decided they weren't. That collusive reticence may seem sinister now, but at the time it was deemed merely professional, even collegial. The same spirit that declined to follow up the rumors of philandering also kept under wraps photographs of the grieving president taken just after the death of his infant son. The baby's death was news; the president's expression of grief wasn't.

This wasn't always so. Journalism has seen more vicious and unscrupulous days, perhaps none more so than the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when practically anything about anyone might be printed. The ruckus over the Thomas Jefferson-Sally Hemings liaison, despite the sensation inspired recently over DNA findings, is no modern revelation. In September 1802, readers of a Federalist paper, *The Richmond Recorder*, found the following lede written by J.T. Callender, a hired pen for the Federalist cause:

> It is well known that the man, whom it delighteth the people to honor, keeps, and for many years has kept, as his concubine, one of his own slaves. Her name is Sally. The name of her eldest son is Tom. His features are said to bear a striking…resemblance to those of the president himself.

Here is innuendo at its least-subtle best. Jefferson never responded to the allegation, but the charge was of a piece with the scurrility regularly practiced in the age. Many might have been disgusted; few were shocked. This is the way journalism was done.

The curious thing to ponder now is not the renewed hunger for reticence in the coverage of scandal—an appetite achingly understandable after the furtive grotesqueries of Clinton's affair with Lewinsky—but the assumption that discretion was ever the norm in Grub Street. The Founding Fathers would not have disagreed with Ruskin's view of journalism as a machine churning out "so many square leagues of dirtily printed falsehood." The *Federalist Papers* didn't really set the tone for newspapers of the early Republic.

A recent call for higher standards in journalism, *Peepshow: Media and Politics in an Age of Scandal*, by Larry J. Sabato,

Tracy Lee Simmons is director of the Dow Journalism Program at Hillsdale College.

Mark Stencel, and S. Robert Lichter, has a little bit the tone of a grant-funded policy paper. But Sabato, Stencel, and Lichter aren't calling for a return to a bewigged, courtly gentility that never quite existed anyway. They well understand the demands placed upon editors and reporters anxious not to be scooped by the competition, as well as the greater fecundity of information tidbits expected in modern times by the reading and viewing public. Instead they would have us all—especially professional journalists and all who inform or form opinion—step back and reflect upon the effects, political and otherwise, of recent spates of systematic scandal journalism, and in so doing they offer "ways to raise editorial standards, increase journalistic credibility, and provide reasonable privacy protections to those who seek public office."

The authors don't shy away from granting passage to legitimate, probing inquiries, even into the private lives of public people. Peeping into windows can serve a purpose: "Intense scrutiny by the press and political opponents can drive away scalawags, increase public accountability and foster realistic attitudes about the human fallibility of elected leaders," they write. And private lives have been fair game in modern political journalism ever since the Tidal Basin sporting of Wilbur Mills in 1974. Although the authors worry that relentless and ill-advised exposés may continue to wear down voter turnout and chase away worthy men and women from seeking political office, the public is served when candidates and officials are made to stand before fair inquiries into their public and private doings, especially when the latter impinge sufficiently on their public duties.

The public is not served, though, when the rules of propriety are "set by late-night comedians, grocery store tabloids, [and] crusading pornographers." Fairness is the point here. If the mainstream media have always found professional foul lines difficult to measure and chalk for themselves, now they must compete with a garish multiplicity of new sources of information, some of which exist only to entertain and titillate. The authors of *Peepshow* don't mind embarrassing exposure; it's the gratuity and prurience of recent experience—the peepshow effect—they wish to curb.

President Clinton's antics receive comparatively little attention in the book. With every salacious charge, from fondled interns to escaped paternity to rape, flung his way, one would think the authors could simply put Lexis-Nexis into overdrive and have it write their book for them. This has been a presidency to which only Petronius Arbiter or *Penthouse* could have done justice. Nonetheless, the Clinton story broods over every other story highlighted in the book. It tends to take up all the air in the room. But he isn't typical, and more helpful to would-be journalistic rule-makers are the grayer cases, the ones where delicate judgment calls were made, for better or worse, largely by professionals trying to get it right.

UPI / Corbis-Bettmann

Wilbur Mills visits Fanny Foxe backstage at her stripshow in Boston, 1974.

The authors endorse what they call a "Fairness Doctrine." There are instances where politicians' private lives are fairly subject to review: their financial status and their health, incidents landing them in court, sexual activity where private and public roles are mixed (as with an affair with subordinates or lobbyists), compulsive or "manifestly indiscreet" sexual conduct, illegal drug use as an adult or having condoned that use in others, and private behavior involving public money. But then certain strands of private life are to be considered *out* of bounds: matters involving underage children or other family members (here we have some qualifications), "current extramarital activity as long as it is discreet and non-compulsive" (here too we find qualifications in a category not all are likely to agree with), sexual orientation "per se," and drug or alcohol abuse that could be tagged as "youthful indulgence or experimentation."

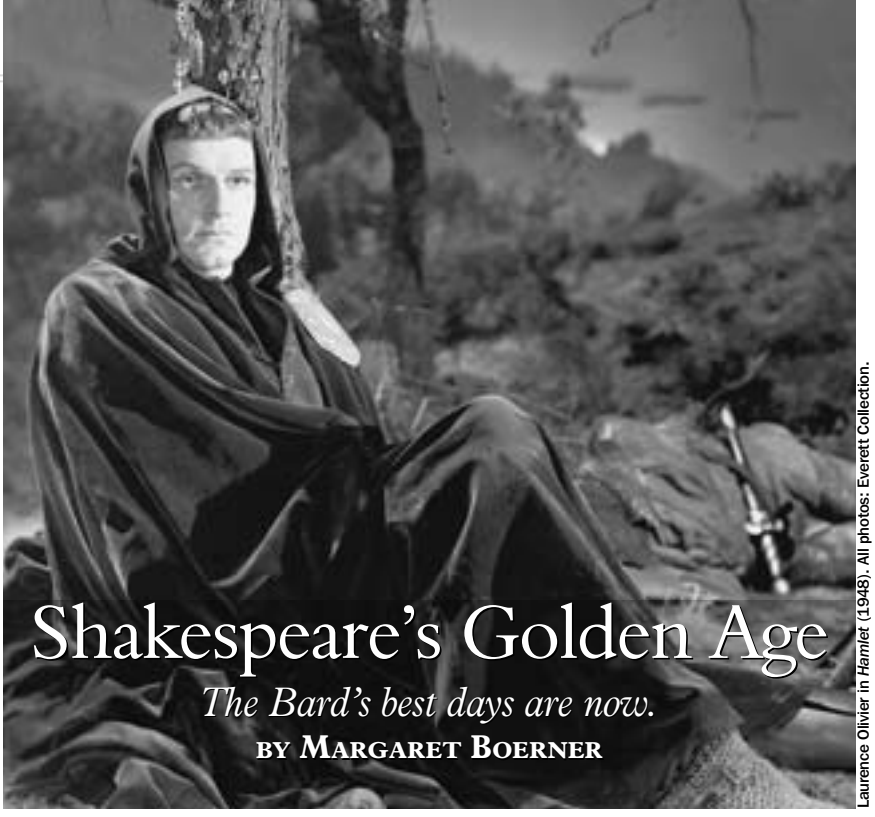
Thus go the principles. Next we see them applied to recent stories. For example, rumors reached numerous newspapers and broadcasters during the 1996 presidential campaign that Bob Dole had had a four-year extramarital affair before his divorce in 1972. The *Washington Post* and *Time* declined to report them. Ought they to have done so, especially as the woman involved had decided to go on the record? No, according to these rules, because the affair, if it had happened, indicated no compulsive conduct on Dole's part, nor had Dole made President Clinton's conduct an issue that year. (Incidentally, why the reference to Bob Dole's "first divorce"? Do the authors know something Elizabeth Dole doesn't?)

How about Vice President Gore's problems with his children? First, his sixteen-year-old daughter was caught with an open beer can in a car in 1995, while his son was found to be playing musical chairs with private schools around Washington and was suspected of having used marijuana in the seventh grade. Surprisingly, the media showed restraint with the second story, but the first, the authors believe, was unfair and overdone. In both cases,

the principles hold that covering these stories violated fairness. The authors even provide us with a score card, based on a lettered scale, that grades the performance of the press on these and a handful of other stories. What about Governor Roy Romer's affair with a top adviser? Or Newt Gingrich's with a young employee? Or the *Boston Globe*'s handling of Ray Flynn's drinking? We even meet the case of John McCain's temper. Under these principles, George W. Bush would have fared well with his cocaine barrage; he would not have had to resort to sophistries and complex arithmetic. John F. Kennedy, though, would have been sunk. Vanocur would have had his lede, with or without the Mafia girlfriend.

The picture emerging from the case studies portrays a press in remarkably good shape, restraining and asserting itself with warrant, and admitting mistakes of fact or judgment when they are made. We have reason to be hopeful. The wildcard, though, is the great slough of the alternative media. Where exactly does the Internet fit in here, the Matt Drudge clones who have an incentive not to be bound by these journalistic rules? Professional standards do not bind non-professionals, and one of journalism's most important tasks today remains much what it always was: "Reminding readers why they cannot believe everything they read and hear, online and off."

One thing needs enforcement more than anything else, and it can't even be helpfully defined: Taste. Audiences haven't been fed up with Peeping Tom journalism and its needlessly licentious revelations alone, but with the lack of decency that characterized much otherwise imperfect press coverage two or three generations ago. We can applaud the greater openness even while lamenting the lapse of a world where we didn't have to hear about stained cocktail dresses and cigars as sex toys. Civility will always require that certain shades be left closed, certain doors shut. As Alistair Cooke rightly noted not too long ago, when reticence passed away, it took more with it than the dearth of information and the circumspect reply. Tastefulness went down too. ♦



Laurence Olivier in *Hamlet* (1948). All photos: Everett Collection.

Shakespeare's Golden Age

The Bard's best days are now.

BY MARGARET BOERNER

Within a hundred years of his death in 1616, Shakespeare's "bardolators" were already celebrating him as the Swan of Avon. But Shakespeare's greatest era is now. We are living when it has never been easier to see his plays, study them, and argue about them. The fact that Shakespeare scholarship has been essentially completed has something to do with it, as does the easy availability of cheap editions, the rebuilding of the Globe Theatre in London, and the mounting of popular Shakespeare festivals everywhere from Stratford, Ontario, to Sante Fe, New Mexico. The single most important cause of Shakespeare's contemporary glory, however, is film.

A History of Shakespeare on Screen
A Century of Film and Television
by Kenneth S. Rothwell
Cambridge Univ. Press, 400 pp., $59.95

Shakespeare in the Movies
From the Silent Era to Shakespeare in Love
by Douglas C. Brode
Oxford Univ. Press, 272 pp., $25

Since World War II—some three hundred and fifty years after the playwright's death—more people have seen his plays on screen than on stage. Many have seen him *only* on screen. The modern filmings of Shakespeare are sometimes vulgar, silly, and mangled. They are often wrongheaded—taking an unlikely interpretation and beating the play to death with it. But there have been seventy-seven of these Shakespearean movies in theaters and on television in the last fifteen years. Just in 1998, we had *The Tempest*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Twelfth Night*, and two versions of *Macbeth*. In 1999, we had *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, an adaptation with teenagers of *The Taming of the Shrew*, a *Hamlet*, two more versions of *Macbeth*, and two of *Titus Andronicus*. Already scheduled for 2000 are an *Othello* called *O*, another *Hamlet*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*. And the effect of this astonishing mishmash has been to rescue Shakespeare from his position as our leading dead white male and bring his plays back to the position they held in his own age: popular entertainment.

The Elizabethan stage was a fluid medium, and Shakespeare did not need to tie himself to any particular locale and time (as did, say, Ibsen and Beckett, for whose "well-made" plays time and the physical setting are integral). In later ages, this became a problem, as theaters adapted the modern stage under a proscenium arch. A

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famous staging of *Antony and Cleopatra* with Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh in the 1950s solved the problem of Shakespeare's more than thirty scene changes by using a gigantic rotating set in which the buildings of Rome could be seen peeking up at the back of Egypt.

By breaking the proscenium arch, however, film can return us to something analogous to the Elizabethan stage. Shakespeare's plays have strong plots with plenty of dramatic action—disguises, stabbings, drownings, battles, shipwrecks, murders, suicides, sleepwalking, ulterior motives, pomp and circumstance, and a multitude of foreign settings. Modern film stock, lenses, and Steadicams can render that fast action in real settings—putting us where Shakespeare sends our imaginations. From Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V* (1989), *Much Ado about Nothing* (1993), and *Hamlet* (1996) to Richard Loncraine's *Richard III* (1995) to Julie Taymor's *Titus Andronicus* (1999) to Michael Hoffman's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1999), we are seeing a new, old Shakespeare on film. In a certain sense, Shakespeare was writing scripts that had to wait almost four hundred years for the means of their production. (His 1996 Oscar nomination for *Hamlet*, however, went to Branagh instead.)

A pair of new books tell the story of Shakespeare on film: Douglas Brode's *Shakespeare in the Movies* and Kenneth Rothwell's *A History of Shakespeare on Screen*. Brode's method of proceeding play by play requires him to restart with each entry, while Rothwell's chronological discussion better coincides with our sense of progress in filmmaking. Brode's breezily semiliterate book is a kind of expanded movie guide, complete with solecisms and mixed-up clichés, and Rothwell's is not without jargon and Hollywood speak. Nonetheless, each author knows the world of film well, and their volumes are worth having for the wealth of information they contain.

Both Brode and Rothwell point out that Shakespeare's plays—or at least scenes from them—have always been popular with the working classes in America. Traveling players recited speeches and soliloquies with more or less skill and fidelity. (One remembers the Duke and the Dauphin's mangled pastiche in *Huckleberry Finn*.) Following this tradition, scenes from Shakespeare's plays were filmed as early as there were moving pictures and were shown at fairgrounds and music halls as entertainment alongside Punch and Judy and freak shows. The bourgeoisie were shocked (as was Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray) "at the idea of seeing Shakespeare done in such a wretched hole of a place" as a music hall.

It was for such commercial reasons that the first film of Shakespeare was made. In 1899 William Dickson, a collaborator of Thomas Edison, enlisted the actor and director Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree to help record excerpts from *King John*, then playing on stage in London. For a long time—with notable exceptions—Shakespeare continued to be filmed as though still on stage. The struggle of early movies, Rothwell argues, "was to break out of the prison house of the proscenium stage on nearby Broadway and make a film that did not look as if it had been photographed with a camera nailed to the floor in the sixth-row orchestra." Even many new productions of Shakespeare still look like stage versions, with close-ups.

The "best major Hollywood Shakespeare movie" was an early exception. Max Reinhardt directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1935 with such panache and feeling for it as a movie, that it is still enormously enjoyable. Its cast included a number of Hollywood stars and soon-to-be stars: Olivia de Havilland, Mickey Rooney, Joe E. Brown, James Cagney (as Bottom!), Dick Powell, and Anita Louise. The movie has long ago lived down the "indignation meetings" in London over the casting of vulgar American actors in filming Shakespeare.

But the generically static filming of Shakespeare prevailed for many decades, even in pretty good films like George Cukor's 1936 *Romeo and Juliet* and Joseph Mankiewicz and John Houseman's 1953 *Julius Caesar* (with Marlon Brando as Marc Antony). Even Orson Welles didn't succeed with his 1965 rendering of Falstaff's story, *Chimes at Midnight*.

The British have always been less insecure than Americans about movies of Shakespeare's plays but even more unwilling to experiment. All of the films starring Laurence Olivier—which stretch from *Henry V* (1944) and *Hamlet* (1948) to *The Merchant of Venice* (1973) and *King Lear* (1984)—show the actors moving in a small space, making speeches at each other, in spite of "filmic" costuming and sets. Only in the patriotic *Henry V*, combined with William Walton's splendid music, does the static presentation work—perhaps because the play is all pageantry anyway.

Anita Louise and James Cagney in Max Reinhardt's A Midsummer Night's Dream *(1935).*

Franco Zeffirelli's Romeo and Juliet *(1968)*

Not surprisingly, the tone of Shakespeare plays changed according to the era in which they were filmed. In the 1960s and 1970s—eras of anxiety and irony, influenced by the Vietnam War and Jan Kott's book *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* (1964)—Shakespeare was filmed as a master of irony. This is seen especially in Peter Hall's 1969 version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the setting is cold and mechanical. But it's there even in Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968), where Romeo and Juliet are made the victims of the rulers of their world (as university students of the late 1960s saw themselves) rather than as guilty accelerators of their own fateful ending.

The more successful of recent directors have been less willing to impose on the plays a strict interpretation. This has always been a mug's game anyway. Now, directors have largely come to let Shakespeare be Shakespeare. Kenneth Branagh wants to make the plays "popular entertainment . . . intended for the enjoyment of ordinary people rather than as elitist escapism." For the same reason, Branagh uses a number of American actors. "I always like the ballsiness of American film acting," he says.

> The full-blooded abandon . . . free of any actory mannerisms and the baggage of strutting and bellowing that accompanies the least effective Shakespearean performances. . . . We wanted audiences to react to the story as if it were in the here and now and important to them. We did not want them to feel they were in some cultural church.

This will come as a surprise to Americans, who would have said the British win any acting contests hands down. And some of the Americans do seem put there only to make Branagh's films saleable—Michael Keaton stupidly overacts Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Jack Lemmon looks positively frightened as the watch in *Hamlet*. But Charlton Heston is a perfect Player King in *Hamlet*, and Denzel Washington makes a noble and generous Duke in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Besides Lemmon and Heston, Branagh uses in *Hamlet* Gérard Depardieu, Billy Crystal, and Robin Williams—leading to a Cecil B. DeMille type of big casting of a "movie-movie."

Branagh's *Hamlet* is not without pratfalls and slip-ups, but it is successful—simply because he lets the play be, cutting little (the film lasts over four hours) and playing it straight, without any particular reading of the "essence" of Hamlet's character. T.S. Eliot's notion that Hamlet's suffering lacks an "objective correlative" is ignored, as is the notion that Hamlet is ensnared by an Oedipus complex. Lowbrow stunts in the film have alienated the more refined type of moviegoer—Hamlet swings on a chandelier to kill off Laertes, and a statue of Hamlet's father loses its head. But Branagh's approach represents the triumph of Shakespeare the film writer.

Another contemporary, Michael Hoffman (known for his work on *Restoration*) directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It has enchanting sets, and the director knows how to make the plot amusing rather than solemn. This latest filming is more awkward than the classic Reinhardt version of 1935, but it has the technical advances since 1935 to help make its setting convincing. Eschewing solemn posturing, the actors move in the Renaissance towns and rooms of Italy—wearing late Victorian shirtwaists and trousers. Stanley Tucci is a grown up and virile Puck, Michelle Pfeiffer makes a predictably enchanting Titania, the actors playing Hyppolyta and Theseus are dignified, Kevin Kline is both funny and touching as Bottom, and Calista Flockhart's Ally McBeal character comes into her own as Helena.

You can see the advantages of such "straight" productions when you watch Jean-Luc Godard's *King Lear* (1987) in a script by Norman Mailer, which "deconstructs" Lear (Burgess Meredith) into a Las Vegas casino boss. Molly Ringwald deadpans Cordelia, reciting her lines by rote. Peter Sellars is there as "William Shakespeare Jr." Woody Allen plays the Fool, but stormed off the set so early that his part was made into that of "Mr. Alien," a film editor we see at the end. Meyer Lansky and Richard Nixon feature prominently. Godard evidently sees *Lear* as an allegory of corrupt American capitalism, and the play is so totally deconstructed that it is shattered into pieces.

Godard's outré approach is not unknown. After World War II, before the last decade or so, it was rare for Shakespeare to be played straight. Olivier plays Hamlet as Freudian man, fixated on his mother; Richard III as a lisping "freak of nature"; Henry V as a heroic preserver of England from destruction (by the Nazis); Shylock as a medieval caricature of a Jew; Othello as a black-faced vaudevillian; and Lear as a Churchillian figure in full command of himself—even when his wits wander. When Olivier's films of Shakespeare's plays were pretty much all we had, there was a constant call that he do more of them. But they have not worn well.

Looking for Richard, Al Pacino's film about *Richard III*, is a good introduction to Shakespeare on screen (and on stage for that matter). Pacino and a cast of fine actors take a much-performed war horse

Richard Loncraine's Richard III *(1995)*

and make it interesting and comprehensible to the audience, as well as illustrating how to listen to Shakespeare in general and how to think about acting Shakespeare. Follow that with Loncraine's Fascist *Richard III*, and one has had a lively, intelligent, and spiritually satisfying Shakespeare experience.

Loncraine's *Richard III* is set in the 1930s of fast cars, jazzy music, jackboots, and perplexed hereditary royals, with a sardonic Ian McKellen acting the part of Richard as he had just done on the London stage. There have been complaints about its setting in an imaginary Fascist England, but the setting brings out the complex relations among the characters nicely. Seeing them in modern dress—in the uniforms of generals, bishops, admirals, princes, queens—makes the corruption of society seem less remote. (Interestingly, the least corrupt characters in the play are dressed in Royal Air Force uniforms. Because that uniform is the least Fascist-looking? Because the RAF saved Britain from the Germans?) All this may sound as though Loncraine were forcing a single interpretation upon the play, but in fact, *Richard III* is not a play much concerned with the psychology of its characters. For all of Richard's analysis of his own motives, he is a standard villain—descended straight from the medieval Vice—and the plot of the rise and fall of a villain dominates Loncraine's version.

Another Fascist setting for Shakespeare is Taymor's *Titus Andronicus* (1999) set in Italy in an empire-building Rome, mostly in Mussolini's "square coliseum." This is Shakespeare's first play and his most violent (although *Lear* runs a close second). Telling the story of a series of bloody revenges that culminate in the villains' being served one of their family members baked in a pie at a banquet in their honor, *Titus* can easily escape the director and end up as farce. Taymor has made a picture whose tone is perfect from start to finish and whose look is exotic, imaginative, and beautiful. (She is the director who staged *The Lion King* on Broadway, to great acclaim, and has a profound visual intelligence.) She makes *Titus Andronicus* what it probably was to Shakespeare's audience, a cautionary tale of the wheel of fortune.

The making of "movie-movies" out of Shakespeare has not gone down well with traditionalists, who see it as a kind of American plot to take over his plays. The Reduced Shakespeare Company, a comedy group that specializes in doing "all thirty-six plays in two hours, including intermission" on the London stage, parodies critics of recent Shakespeare filming. Loncraine's *Richard III* is said to be "like an Oliver Stone movie, only classier." The RSC pretends to be confused by Loncraine's view of the plot: "We finally attributed our confusion to the fact that we had missed the first two movies in the trilogy—*Richard I* and *Richard II*. You may want to rent them before seeing *Richard III*, so that you can follow the story. Incidentally, this is another reason why Hollywood is so hot on Shakespeare: the Bard loved sequels."

Scholarly critics have been harder to ignore, but at this point Shakespeare at the movies is unbeatable. All the theories about what his plays mean seem to have canceled each other out. Some twenty years ago, the deconstructionists delighted in pointing out the lacunae in all writing, including Shakespeare's. The semantic vacuum was taken up by the race-class-and-gender crowd, who sought to make Shakespeare just another writer caught in the contradictions of his age. "Shakespeare would almost certainly not have achieved or retained the dominance he now enjoys," claims Gary Taylor in *Reinventing Shakespeare*, were it not that his eminence was "the fruit not of his genius but of the virility of British imperialism, which propagated the English language on every continent."

It is certainly true Shakespeare has been institutionalized. We all quote him, knowingly or not, and some of his characters are better known than many historical figures: Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet, in particular. But the Bardoclasts have been unable to make lasting headway against Shakespeare. He beats them at their own game. He is already aware of the ironies in a given situation and of the meaning of what is unspoken; he already knows the self-betrayals and lacunae with which we justify ourselves to ourselves.

Our sense of the filmic possibilities of Shakespeare coincides with the reconstruction of his Globe Theatre, more or less as he might have known it. Its great popularity in London is testimony to the attractiveness of the fluid Elizabethan stage and to Shakespeare's continued appeal as popular entertainment. In fact, the most amazing thing about Shakespeare is how he continues to speak to later ages. When the setting and the characters are made coherent by classy production values, we follow Shakespeare easily. Thus the difficulty of filmed staging—the actors declaiming in set poses the words while the camera looks straight at them—turns out to be solved, and the "ancient" words prove not to be a problem for the audience. We are in the Golden Age of Shakespeare. ♦

Since taking office in January 1997, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has barnstormed the country from Alaska to Maine, delivering 89 speeches in 41 cities. "The thing I just love watching are teenage girls," said Barbara Larkin, the assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs, who sometimes accompanies her boss. "They treat her like she's a rock star."

—*Washington Post*, March 28, 2000

Madeleine Albright: UPI/Corbis-Bettmann