the weekly Standard

THE NEW YORK TIMES VS. NATIONAL SECURITY
HEATHER MAC DONALD • GABRIEL SCHOENFELD

JULY 3 / JULY 10, 2006 • $3.95

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Strike Phobia

School boards need to drive a harder bargain

You don't have to be a conspiracy theorist to wonder whether collective bargaining in education hasn't become something more like collusion. The best evidence to support that position may be the steady decline in labor unrest. Strikes by teachers have become increasingly rare since 1975, a high-water mark, when there were 241 nationwide. By 2004 there were just 15. Stakeholder groups, such as newspapers, civic leaders, business groups, and parents, need to rethink their belief that labor unrest is uniformly a sign of leadership failure and accept the fact that collective bargaining is an adversarial process. Established practices in negotiating teachers' compensation and the rules governing hiring, termination, and work routines need to come of age.

—Frederick M. Hess and Martin R. West

Keeping Out the Christians

Evangelical high schools meet public universities

Jordan Trivison's high school is engaged in a battle over whether students who attend Christian high schools will be given the same opportunity as their public-school counterparts to attend California's state universities. When Calvary Chapel Christian School approached the University of California's Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools with some new courses it wanted to offer, all courses were rejected. As one professor explained, there was nothing wrong scientifically with the proposed physics text book. She simply objected to its including a verse from scripture at the beginning of each chapter. Calvary Chapel sued, and because UC's action was perceived by many religious educators as a possible precedent for action elsewhere, the school was joined in its suit by an umbrella organization for four thousand Christian education institutions, the Association of Christian Schools International.

—Naomi Schaefer Riley

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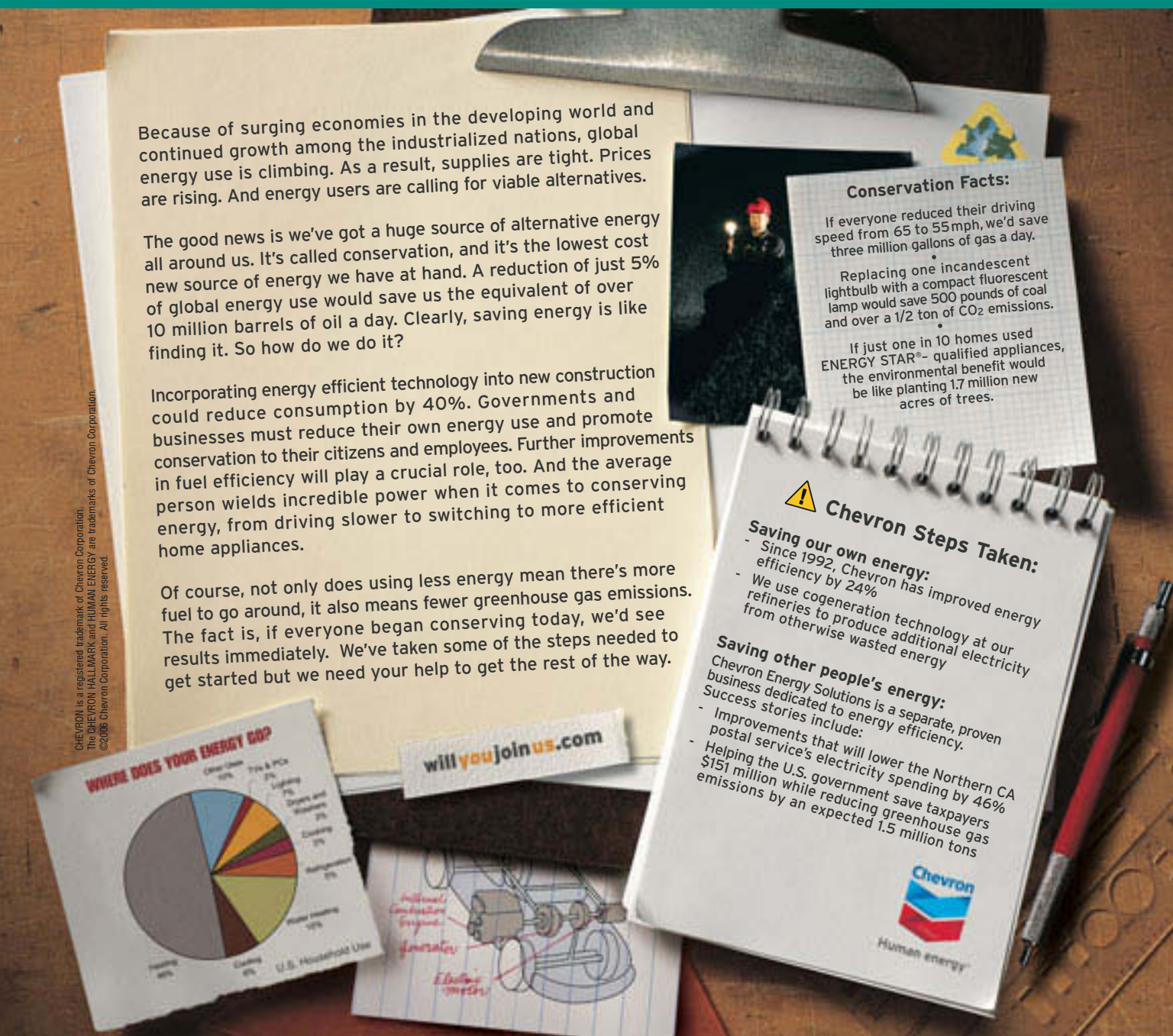

THIS IS A COMBINED ISSUE. THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE WEEKLY STANDARD WILL APPEAR IN TWO WEEKS.

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the weekly Standard

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of News America Incorporated, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, and fourth week in August) at 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, 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. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

Most Pathetic Hunger Strike Ever

When the news crossed the wires last week that Saddam Hussein would be going on a hunger strike, THE SCRAPBOOK paid special attention. The deposed Iraqi dictator wanted to call attention to the June 21 abduction and murder in Baghdad of one of his dozens of lawyers, Khamis al-Obeidi. The Saddam entourage blames the murder on government death squads. A State Department spokesman responded that "every form of protection and assistance" has been made available to the attorneys on both sides of the Saddam prosecution but that "unfortunately, in the case of this individual, he refused" the U.S. offer.

But this back-and-forth wasn't what most interested us. Instead, we wondered: Just how serious a hunger-striker would Saddam turn out to be? Longtime readers of this page know that we have a history on this subject. So indulge us, while we return to an item from our December 8, 1997, edition, for the edification of more recent subscribers:

"Gandhi turned himself into a ribcage in a loincloth. The IRA's Bobby Sands starved himself for 66 days until he died in a Belfast prison. But hunger-striking, like other demanding disciplines, isn't what it used to be.

"Last week, *The Hill* reported that Kathryn Cameron Porter, wife of Rep. John Porter of Illinois, was embarking on a three-week hunger strike to protest Turkish oppression of the Kurds. There was, however, a wee, little qualifier: Porter 'has been eating one meal a day because she has diabetes.'

"Never mind that this is akin to a celibate monk's escaping to the local bordello once a month for relaxation. For today's hunger-strikers, it's the thought that counts. And Mrs. Porter is well within the bounds of recent practice. Jesse Jackson, who's been known to call hunger strikes one day and show up at banquets the next, invented tag-team striking a few years back. After refusing solids on behalf of Haitian immigrants or California grape workers, Jackson then allows somebody else—somebody as hungry for publicity as Jackson is for food—to take over his fast. Jackson calls this 'passing the cross' down 'the chain of suffering.'"

You get the idea. In fact, to continue in Jackson's theological vein, you might say that our attention to the watered-down hunger strike is a close cousin to the Christian concern with "cheap grace."

Despite THE SCRAPBOOK's crusade to put the *hunger* back in hunger striking, the decline has continued. As we reported on this page in March 2003, former University of South Florida professor Sami al-Arian's idea of a hunger strike, when he was confined to a cell in Tampa's Hillsborough County Jail pursuant to a 50-count federal terrorism-conspiracy indictment, was to down "Carnation Instant Breakfast three times a day." Col. David M. Parrish, commander of the Hillsborough facility, told the *Tampa Tribune* that it was "not like any [hunger strike] I've ever seen before." Would that we could say the same, Colonel.

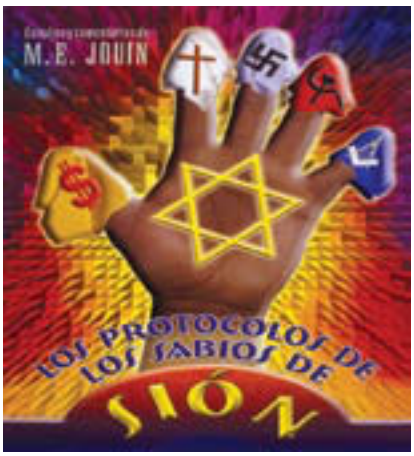
Given this history, it will come as no surprise that we didn't have to wait long for the results of Saddam Hussein's "hunger strike." The day after it purportedly started, Reuters reported: "Saddam Hussein ended a brief hunger strike after missing just one meal in his U.S.-run prison, a U.S. military spokesman said on Friday. The former Iraqi leader had refused lunch on Thursday in protest at the killing of one of his lawyers by gunmen, but the spokesman said he ate his evening meal."

We'll let the blogger known as Captain Ed have the last word: "When we pulled the dictator out of a spider hole pleading for his life, we knew that like most dictators, he had no honor or courage. Now we know he has no stomach, either." ♦

Plus ça change . . .

It's hard to match the breathtaking simplicity of the conspiracy theories rife in the Middle East (the CIA masterminded 9/11!), yet in the end you have to hand it to the anti-Semites. For sheer, audacious scope of paranoia, they remain unmatched.

Consider this choice item, currently on display at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington: the cover of a 2005 edition of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—the notorious, century-old forgery purporting to record the machinations of Jewish conspirators plotting to take over the world—published in Mexico City.



As the image would have it, we can blame the Jews not only for capitalism, communism, popery, and freemasonry, but Nazism, too.

Incidentally, the museum's exhibition on the *Protocols* contains not only historic editions in many languages, but also a depressing abundance of recent paper and online versions from all over the world. The show is on view at least through May 2007. ♦

Scrapbook

Jack, Meet Osama

"When we went to Beirut, I said to President Reagan, 'Get out.' Now, the other day we were doing a debate, and they said, 'Well, Beirut was a different situation. We cut and run.' We didn't cut and run. President Reagan made the decision to change direction because he knew he couldn't win it. Even in Somalia, President Clinton made the decision, 'We have to, we have to change direction.' . . . We need to change direction. We can't win a war like this. . . . At some point you got to reassess it like Reagan did in Beirut, like Clinton did in Somalia. You just have to say, 'Okay, it's time to change direction.'"

—Representative John Murtha, urging a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq,
Meet the Press, *June 18, 2006*

"We have seen in the last decade the decline of the American government and the weaknesses of the American solider, who is ready to wage cold wars and unprepared to fight long wars. This was proven in Beirut when the Marines fled after two explosions. It also proves they can run in less than 24 hours, and this was also repeated in Somalia. . . . After a few blows, [the Americans] ran in defeat. . . . They forgot about being the world leader and the leader of the new world order. [They] left, dragging their corpses and their shameful defeat."

—Osama bin Laden,
ABC News interview, May 28, 1998

Your Tuition Dollars at Work

Conspiracy theories are not just a specialty of the Middle East. The *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s John Gravois reports on the latest trend in academe: "scholars" who believe the 9/11 attacks were a conspiracy orchestrated by the U.S. government. You may or may not be surprised to learn (it is a big country, after all) that there is now "a group called the Scholars for 9/11 Truth, which includes about 50 professors—more in the humanities than in the sciences—from institutions like Clemson University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Wisconsin."

Interested alumni of these and other institutions of higher learning will enjoy perusing the website at *www.scholarsfor911truth.org* to find out how many bozos their alma mater can boast. Our guess is there will be some lively conversations with the "development" folks on this topic during the upcoming capital campaigns. ♦

Lede of the Week

From a June 23 *New York Post* report by Philip Messing and Jeremy Olshan, on an undercover police sting operation: "Subway gropers beware: Next time you cop a feel, you might be feeling a cop." ♦

Casual

I on America

Before coming to The Weekly Standard, I was a newspaper columnist. And in the course of the many years that I practiced that dubious craft, the question I was asked most frequently was, "How do you come up with ideas?"

My response was something to the effect that a cursory reading of the daily press always gave me more than enough ingredients with which to cook 800 words—an answer which not only satisfied inquirers, but had the virtue of being true. In the fullness of time, however, I did adopt a few informal rules to govern my work.

First was the necessity of avoiding those hackneyed themes to which too many columnists resort. These include an "amusing" list of the differences between Democrats and Republicans; a lamentation for the loss of (a) retail manners, (b) good old-fashioned rock 'n' roll, (c) the idealism of the 1960s; and reasons why the writer (a) is offended by loud cellphone conversations, (b) refuses to purchase some electronic gadget, (c) believes this last election was the dirtiest ever. And so on.

To my way of thinking, there is no lazier or less engaging approach to readers than to squeeze a sarcastic piece out of a mail solicitation from the wrong political party, or write variations on the theme of how things were better (a) before the war, (b) when I was in school, or (c) when Tip O'Neill ran Congress.

Since my columns tended to concentrate on issues in the news, such traps were generally missed. But, in essence, they all pointed to avoidance of the personal pronoun. Accordingly, I strictly prohibited such subjects as my beautiful wife, extraordinary children, endearing dog and goldfish, and beloved automobile. I never wrote an open letter to a newborn child, a reminiscence about how my old teacher taught me the meaning of integrity, a poignant tribute to a deceased relative, or an account of my travails in dealing with (a) the plumber, (b) computer prompts on telephones, or (c) the Department of Motor Vehicles.

If I had owned a second house in the Hamptons, I wouldn't have shared the

headaches of remodeling with readers. Any conversations between taxi drivers and me were strictly off the record. Finding a baseball mitt in the closet did not lead to bittersweet memories of playing catch with dear old Dad.

Now, however, I find myself in the unaccustomed position of having to write about myself for the benefit of readers. The purpose of the Casual you are reading, so I am told, is to put a face with the names that produce our magazine, and so ideas, abstractions, prescriptions, and policy—the customary substance of opinion-writing—are banished in favor of the dreaded personal pronoun.

After 35 years in journalism, this has not been an easy transition for me, and if the truth be told, some of my awkward attempts to endear myself to the reading public have fallen decisively flat.

In one piece, for example, I attempted to explain that, in contrast to most men my age, I am not especially interested in sports, especially professional sports. This was taken as an affront by many readers and, in one unfortunate instance, misunderstood by a colleague and friend to mean that I dislike *all* sports, professional or otherwise. Frankly, the fact that the publisher of The Weekly Standard was not able to distinguish between cool indifference and warm hostility was unfortunate, to be sure; but after hundreds of columns and thousands of letters from readers over the years, not entirely a surprise.

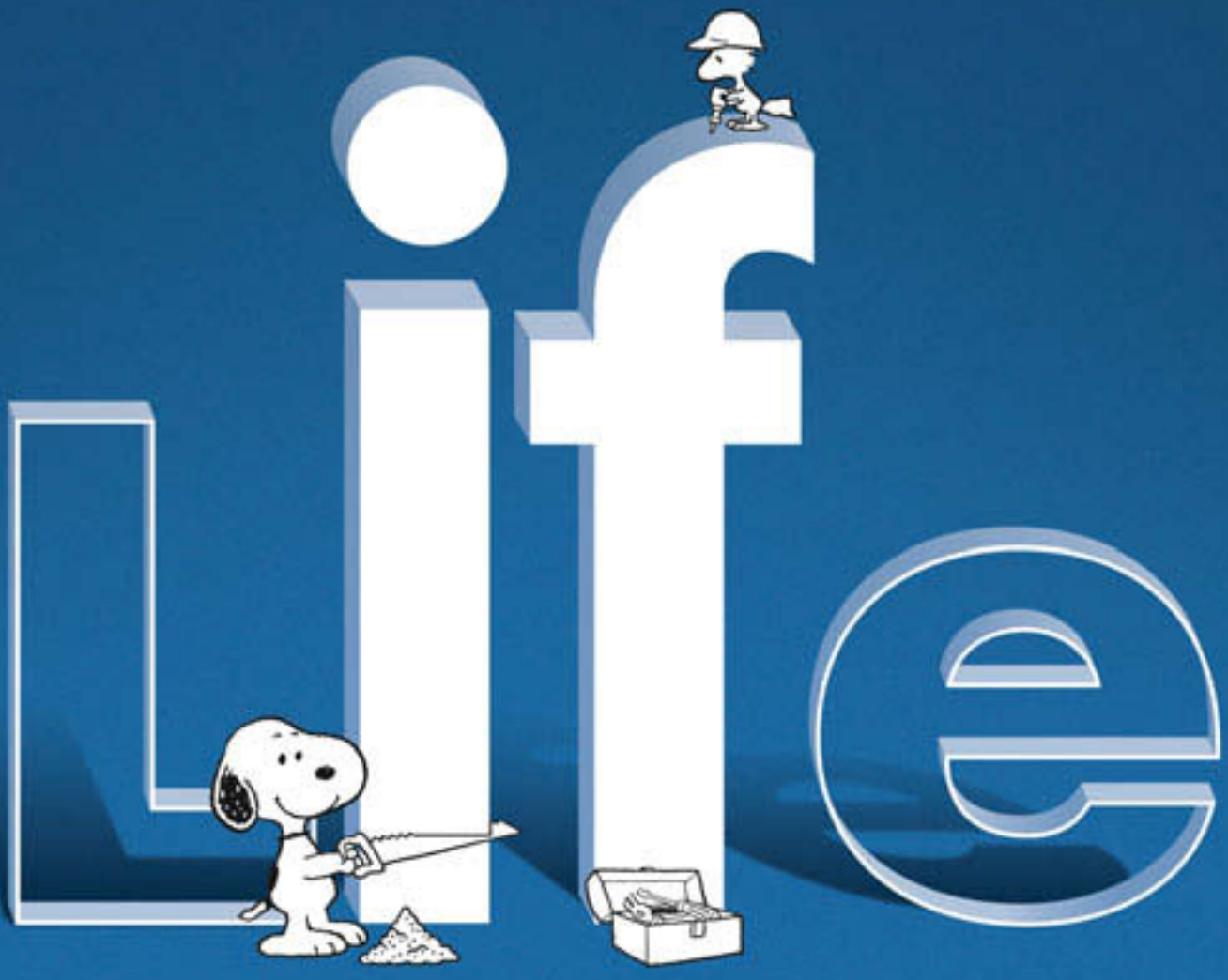
Then there was the column I wrote about commuting to work alone in my car, in which I (subtly) suggested that my alluring wife—who had just taken a new job a few blocks from the Standard offices—might wish to sample the wonders of Washington's subway system before permanently disrupting my morning reverie.

Most readers, of course, were amused by my keen observations, smooth prose, and gentle humor (as they were meant to be); but my wife, for some unfathomable reason, was distinctly annoyed. I won't say she has dwelt on the subject at undue length, but any references to that column have been spoken with a certain edge in her voice.

The meaning of this, it seems to me, is patently obvious: The ancient proscription against the overuse of "I" in journalism is not only sensible in theory, but affirmed in practice. Indeed, that would make an excellent subject for a future Casual, in my view; but, of course, that is not the purpose of these columns. So I will have to wait until next time to tell the amazing story of how I once removed a snake from a birdhouse in our yard, as my wide-eyed children watched from a distance.

My wife helped, too.

Philip Terzian



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Brothers in Arms

Michael Fumento's "The New Band of Brothers" (June 19) deserves recognition as a benchmark description of the war in Iraq for its detailing of the bravery, professionalism, and care for Iraqi cultural sensibilities that characterize the American response to 9/11. It takes a soldier to know and describe so well the upbeat acceptance with which our young men (and women) face the terror of war. That acceptance almost puts to shame those of us who cannot do more.

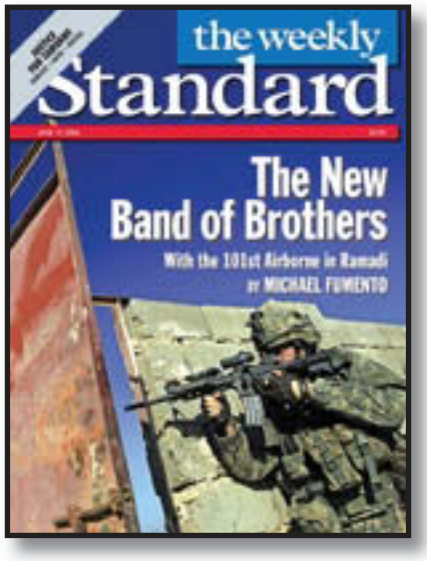
Sheldon N. Feinberg
Mount Sinai, N.Y.

It is discouraging to learn how far Americans are from being in control of the situation in Iraq more than three years after the mission was declared "accomplished." According to Michael Fumento, like clockwork, 45 minutes after going out on patrol, U.S. forces will often be attacked by a sizable insurgent force. Roads that cannot be kept under direct visual observation from the compound have been abandoned to the insurgents. Areas within the compound without armored roofs are no longer used due to bombardment by incoming mortar shells. Yet the White House and some in Congress label as "cutting and running" any suggestion that an alternate deployment of troops might be more effective. Shouldn't we have more of a national debate on what is the most effective way to win the war quickly so that our troops might return to the States in the near future?

Carl Mezoff
Stamford, Conn.

Michael Fumento's account seems to me an accurate, detailed portrayal of the situation in Ramadi. But I do not understand how he can rely on secondhand sources to continue to propagate the myth of the hotel-room-bound Baghdad press corps. Citing the *New York Review of Books* to substantiate his view of the foreign reporters in Baghdad, he claims that Iraq is covered "mostly by reporters who hole up in Baghdad hotels and send out Iraqi stringers to collect what the reporters deem news."

In the past six months alone, two western journalists in Baghdad were



killed, one kidnapped, and three seriously wounded. I don't think these journalists were hit by random mortar shells in their hotel rooms. I just returned from a tenweek reporting trip to Iraq—my seventh trip in 18 months. As I observed while in Baghdad, the vast majority of the press goes out every day in the capital. Perhaps before basing his information on an interpretation of someone else's reporting, Fumento could have used his excellent play-by-play storytelling skills to visit and write about these Baghdad-based journalists to see for himself how they operate.

Ben Gilbert
Beirut, Lebanon

Michael Fumento responds: Although the compelling *New York Review of Books* article was actually extremely sympathetic to the reporters who rarely if ever leave their Baghdad hotels, I do in fact have firsthand sources in my piece who express frustration with the press corps. And if that's not enough, simply plug the name of Iraqi cities other than Baghdad into Google News and see where the reporters are.

Illegal Boarders

Jeffrey Bell's "The Coming Immigration Deal" (June 19) plays the same old deceptive game of grouping all new arrivals in this country under the banner of "immigrants." Most Americans—at least here in the West—are not "anti-immigrant" simply because we expect the law to be enforced and a sane limit to be set on the number of legal immigrants. It is, rather, the flood of illegal and unregulated "immigration" that concerns us.

Brian J. Todd
Bakersfield, Calif.

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the weekly Standard

The My Lai Lie

The media coverage of the killing of 24 Iraqis at Haditha has given rich new definition to the phrase "rush to judgment." The coverage, plus the reaction of antiwar politicians like Democratic representative John Murtha, amounts to a public verdict of guilty, rendered against a handful of Marines, before an investigation of the bloody incident is completed or a trial (if there is one) held.

An egregious example was MSNBC host Chris Matthews's interview with Murtha on May 17. Asked to "draw us a picture of what happened in Haditha," the congressman said he'd tell "exactly" what occurred. "One Marine was killed and the Marines just said we're going to take care. They don't know who the enemy is. The pressure was too much on them, so they went into houses and they actually killed civilians."

"Was this My Lai?" Matthews interjected, referring to the slaughter of more than 300 civilians by American soldiers in Vietnam in 1968. "Was this a case of—when you say cold blood, Congressman, a lot of people think you're basically saying you have got some civilians sitting in a room [or] out in a field and they're executed."

"That's exactly what happened," Murtha replied.

Murtha, of course, doesn't really know if the Haditha civilians were killed in cold blood. There's no way he could know. He's been briefed by Marine Commandant Michael Hagee, but so have other key members of Congress. Republican Duncan Hunter, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, talked to Hagee and did not conclude either that the case was all but closed or that 24 Iraqis had indeed been executed. Murtha, an ex-Marine, claims to have other Marine sources, but it's doubtful any of them were in Haditha on November 19, 2005, the day of the killings. So Murtha is winging it—and in a particularly shameful way.

But Murtha's accusation is only the worst example of prejudicing the case against the Marines. There are others:

⋆ The press has repeatedly likened the Haditha killings to the My Lai massacre, an invidious comparison if there ever was one. *Newsweek*, for instance, wrote that Haditha "may turn out to be the worst massacre since My Lai." True, the magazine writes that "the scale" of Haditha "should not be exaggerated" and the 24 Iraqis killed are "a fraction of the 300-plus lined up and murdered at My Lai." But with the facts in Haditha so sketchy or in serious dispute, the mere association of Haditha with My Lai is, to say the least, tendentious.

⋆ In breaking the Haditha story last March, *Time* relied heavily on statements from a 9-year-old girl, a self-styled human rights activist with credibility problems, and a doctor who has publicly expressed his hatred of America. Since then, *Time* has issued three corrections. A video of the 24 dead bodies and the places where the killings occurred was not taken by "a Haditha journalism student," as first reported, but by a 43-year-old Sunni Muslim who heads the two-person "Hammurabi Human Rights Group." Nor is that group associated with Human Rights Watch, the respectable if anti-American outfit, as the magazine had said. The magazine also allowed that it could not confirm that an alleged photo taken by a Marine, suggesting the killings were executions, even exists.

⋆ The nastiest swipe at the Marines came in a cartoon in the *Chicago Sun-Times* by Jack Higgins. It showed dead men with their hands behind their backs. One had the word "Haditha" on his body. Underneath were the words, offered as an ironic counterpoint: "We will be greeted as liberators." The cartoon was based on a photo, not of the 24 slain civilians but of 19 Shiite fishermen executed by Iraqi insurgents in Haditha. The photo had appeared in the *Times* of London, which misidentified the dead as U.S. victims. To its credit, the *Times* promptly apologized, and so did the *Sun-Times* and Higgins. Another cartoon, this one in the *Arizona Republic*, showed the Marine emblem and said USMC stood for "United States Massacre Cover-Up." An investigation by an Army general later found there was no coverup in the case.

⋆ Perhaps the worst part of the immediate coverage was the failure to provide anything more than minimal context for the Haditha incident. The *New York Times* gave a little in its lengthy June 17 article, noting that Haditha "had taken a heavy toll in Marines that spring and summer." Six from an Ohio reserve unit were killed, then 14 more by antitank mines, and four in a firefight. Haditha was a hotbed of Sunni insurgent activity and an enormously dangerous place for Marines. At least one resident said she knew about the planting of an improvised explosive device (IED) in the town's main road that killed a Marine in a convoy of Humvees. That explosion preceded the killing of the 24 civilians. A reporter for the British *Guardian* newspaper who spent three days in Haditha last year called it "an insurgent citadel." The town the Marines encountered was anything but a peaceful village.

In truth, we know very little with certainty about what really happened that November morning in Haditha. We know one Marine was killed. And we know his fellow

Marines killed 24 civilians, an alarming number of victims. Whether the Hadithans were killed as Marines carried out their duties or whether they were murdered in retaliation for the death of the single Marine—that we don't know. And that's what a probe by the Naval Criminal Investigation Service, not yet finished, is supposed to determine.

For several months, the Marines took an unmitigated beating in the media. "But in recent days," Ed Pound noted in *U.S. News & World Report* last week, "another side of the story has begun to emerge, this one from defense attorneys who insist that their clients did not intentionally kill unarmed civilians. Instead they describe a harrowing house-to-house search for insurgents that ended in tragedy."

Through their lawyers, the Marines say they were following the official rules of engagement (ROE) or the warning of their officers "to be aggressive in taking care of themselves." It was in this manner, they claim, that they killed 5 Iraqi men as they fled and the other 19 in three houses. The Marines say they had been fired on from the area of the houses.

After the IED exploded, they spotted five men in a nearby car, men they assumed were insurgents. The Marines called to them, in Arabic, telling them to stay put. When the men tried to flee, they were shot dead. Inside the houses, the Marines claim they adhered to the ROE by first throwing a grenade in a room where they heard activity, then entering the room and spraying it with gunfire. This resulted, they say, in the accidental deaths of civilians. Given the town they were in, their story is at least plausible.

What's amazing is that so few questions have been raised about the witnesses against the Marines. Were they free to tell the truth about what happened, though the insurgents were likely to return? Or were they forced, on pain of death, to make up stories about a premeditated massacre? We don't know. And why did the "human rights activist" wait months before stepping forward with his tape? At this point, there are more questions than solid answers.

Congressman Hunter has wise advice on what we should do as the true story of Haditha unfolds. "We should slow down and let the military justice system work and let the chips fall where they may," he says. "The military system has integrity." Hundreds of Marines and Army soldiers have been punished, many severely, for abusing Iraqis. Eight Marines were charged last week with murdering an Iraqi man. Whatever occurred at Haditha, Hunter adds, "shouldn't reflect on the value of this mission." In World War II, he says, unarmed Germans were killed by American troops, but "we didn't stop the war." We shouldn't in Iraq either.

—Fred Barnes, for the Editors

National Security Be Damned

The guiding philosophy on West 43rd Street.

BY HEATHER MAC DONALD

BY NOW IT'S UNDENIABLE: The *New York Times* is a national security threat. So drunk is it on its own power and so antagonistic to the Bush administration that it will expose every classified antiterror program it finds out about, no matter how legal the program, how carefully crafted to safeguard civil liberties, or how vital to protecting American lives.

The *Times*'s latest revelation of a national security secret appeared on last Friday's front page—where no al Qaeda operative could possibly miss it. Under the deliberately sensational headline, "Bank Data Sifted in Secret by U.S. to Block Terror," the *Times* blows the cover on a highly targeted program to locate terrorist financing networks. According to the report, since 9/11, the Bush administration has obtained information about terror suspects' international financial transactions from a Belgian clearinghouse of international money transfers.

The procedure for obtaining that information could not be more solicitous of privacy and the rule of law: Agents are only allowed to seek information based on intelligence tying specific individuals to al Qaeda; they must document the intelligence behind every search request and maintain an electronic record of every search; and, in an inspired civil liberties innovation that would undoubtedly garner kudos from the *Times* had a Democratic administration devised it, a board of independent auditors from banks reviews the subpoena requests to make sure that only terror suspects' transactions are traced. Any use of the data for criminal investigations into drug trafficking, say, or tax fraud is banned. The administration briefed congressional leaders and the 9/11 Commission about the system.

There is nothing about this program that exudes even a whiff of illegality. The Supreme Court has squarely held that bank records are not constitutionally protected private information. The government may obtain them without seeking a warrant from a court, because the bank depositor has already revealed his transactions to his bank—or, in the case of the present program, to a whole slew of banks that participate in the complicated international wire transfers overseen by the Belgian clearinghouse known as the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, or Swift. To get specific information about individual terror suspects, intelligence agents prepare an administrative subpoena, which is issued after extensive internal agency review. The government does not monitor a terror suspect's international wire transfers in real time; the records of his transactions are delivered weeks later. And Americans' routine financial transactions, such as ATM withdrawals or domestic banking, lie completely outside of the Swift database.

The administration strongly urged the *New York Times* not to expose this classified program, and for good reason. According to the *Times* itself, the program has proven vital in hunting down international killers. The

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Indonesian terrorist Hambali, who orchestrated the Bali resort bombings in 2002, was captured through the Swift program; a Brooklyn man who laundered $200,000 for al Qaeda through a Karachi bank was tracked via the program. The *Wall Street Journal* adds that the July 7, 2005, London subway bombings were fruitfully investigated through the Swift initiative and that a facilitator of Iraqi terrorism has been apprehended because of it.

A coterie of former and current Democratic and Republican leaders also begged the *Times* not to jeopardize this highly successful counterterrorism program, but the *Times* knew better. In a smug prepared statement, executive editor Bill Keller emotes: "We remain convinced that the administration's extraordinary access to this vast repository of international financial data, however carefully targeted use of it may be, is a matter of public interest."

Now that the *Times* has blown the cover on this terror-tracking initiative, sophisticated terrorists will figure out how to evade it, according to the Treasury's top counterterrorism official, Stuart Levey, speaking to the *Wall Street Journal*. The lifeblood of international terrorism—cash—will once again flow undetected.

The bottom line is this: No classified secret necessary to fight terrorism is safe once the *Times* hears of it, at least as long as the Bush administration is in power. The *Times* justifies its national security breaches by the mere hypothetical possibility of abuse—without providing any evidence that this financial tracking program, or any other classified antiterror initiative that it has revealed, actually has been abused. To the contrary, the paper reports that one employee was taken off the Swift program for conducting a search that did not obviously fall within the guidelines.

The truth the *Times* evades is that while every power, public or private, can be misused, the mere possibility of abuse does not mean that a necessary power should be discarded. Instead, the rational response is to create checks that minimize the risk of abuse. Under the *Times*'s otherworldly logic, the United States might be better off with no government at all, because governmental power can be abused. It should not have newspapers, because the power of the press can be abused to harm the national interest (as the *Times* so amply demonstrates). Police forces should be disbanded, because police officers can overstep their authority. National security wiretaps? Heavens! Expose all of them.

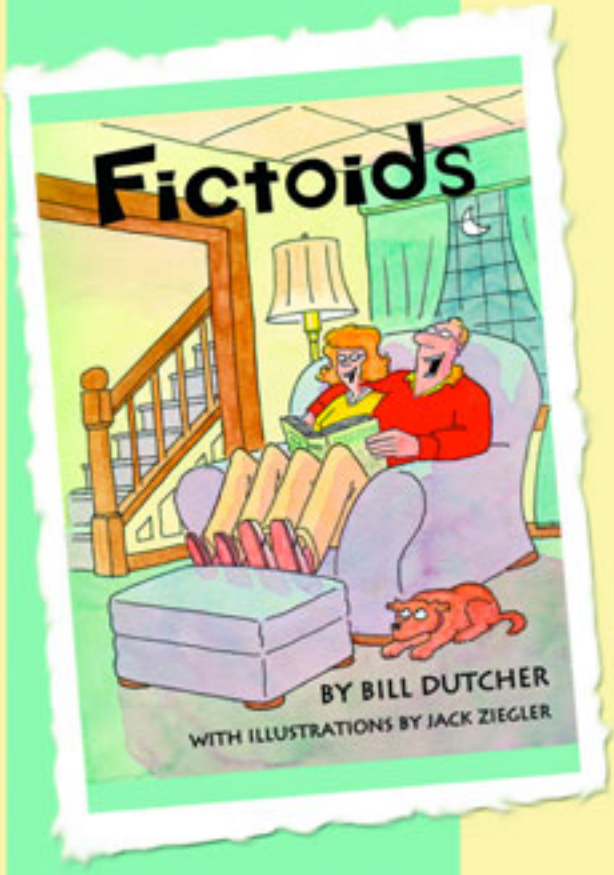
The *Times* implies a second reason it ignored the government's fervent requests to protect the program's secrecy: Large databases were involved. The *Times* has an attack of the vapors whenever evidence of terrorist planning is found in databases, reasoning that any program to harvest that evidence is a privacy threat and should be exposed. Such logic, if taken seriously, would mean an end to all computerized investigations and would create an impregnable shield to terrorist activity in cyberspace. Anything a terrorist does that is recorded by computers will by its very nature be interspersed among records of millions if not billions or trillions of innocent transactions by unrelated parties. That fact alone should not disable the government from seeking the evidence; it merely means that the government should follow existing procedures governing the collection of evidence—as, in the case of the Swift program, it has.

The paranoia of the *New York Times*'s editors really has reached astonishing levels. When you think about it, virtually *every* piece of evidence ever gathered in criminal or national security cases is embedded in harmless activity. On the *Times*'s theory, police officers should not walk beats looking for criminal activity, because they are observing innocent passersby as well.

The *Times* offers a third justification for its reckless breach of national security: "The program . . . is a significant departure from typical practice in how the government acquires Americans' financial records." Indeed. And 9/11 marked a significant departure from most Americans' experience of jet travel. The hijackings revealed unmistakably the need for innovative intelligence programs to disrupt future attacks. By the *Times*'s hidebound ethic, however, anything new that the Bush administration does to protect the public is suspect and must be revealed. Needless to add, this prejudice against innovation will not prevent the *Times* from raising hell about Bush administration incompetence if the country is attacked again, just as the *Times* railed against the administration for "failing to connect the dots" before 9/11—a failure caused in large part by unnecessary civil libertarian restraints on fully lawful powers.

The *Times*'s ritual invocation of the "public interest" cannot disguise the weakness of their argument for revealing this highly successful antiterror program. Its editors seem aware of this, and hence try to link this program to the more legitimately controversial NSA wiretapping program that was revealed (by the same reporters—Eric Lichtblau and James Risen) last December, also in defiance of administration requests. Though acknowledging in passing that the Swift program is in fact separate from the wiretapping program, the *Times* links them on the grounds that both "grew out of the Bush administration's desire to exploit technological tools to prevent another terrorist strike." The revelation of the NSA program has "provoked fierce public debate and spurred lawsuits," the *Times* notes with self-satisfaction, and thus, by implication, the Swift program should, too. Do they seriously believe the U.S. government should *not* exploit technological tools in the war on terror?

Al Qaeda has long worked to manipulate the media in its favor. It can disband that operation now, knowing that, unbidden, America's most powerful newspaper is looking out for its interests. ♦



Fictoids: short fiction ... very short

is a random walk through cultural history from 1220 BC to 2005. A "fictoid" is a fictional factoid, telling a story in one sentence.

Michael Moroni, a scruffy screedwriter and prolific producer of political propaganda films, became the toast of both coasts in 2004 as the far left's leading filmflam artist.

In 2000, syndicated wordsmith and network news commentator William Safari, a savvy if soft-spoken septuagenarian sesquipedalian, admitted on a Sunday morning talk show that he had a small skeleton on his resume: he once worked nights in the Nixon White House as a ghostwriter and occasional off-the-record spooksman.

After rejecting the Kyoto Treaty in 2001, the Bush Administration, in an effort to placate environmentalists, promised a serious investigation of the global warming issue, to be known as "Operation: Who Baked Alaska?"

Asked at a press conference later that week if he was just stalling on the global warming issue, President Bush replied that, first, he wanted to deal with more pressing problems, such as continental drift, adding, perhaps in jest, that he was concerned that our nation may be getting too close to Europe.

DONALD TRUMPET

Adolph Von Egoist, a Manhattan psychiatrist specializing in episodic megalomania (a rare disorder which usually flares up during the late stages of a bull market), is best known for his 1992 diagnosis that real estate mogul Donald Trumpet was suffering from an Edifice Complex that led to frequent overbuilding.

DEAN MARTINI

Suffering from frequent hangovers, movie star and Las Vegas lounge singer Dean Martini began an intensive series of acupuncture treatments in 1966, but he had to quit after a dozen sessions, because his friends began to needle him and he could no longer hold his liquor.

RED HOURBACK

In 1976, after finishing last in the Boston Marathon for four years in a row, Red Hourback, a cigar smoking former basketball coach, vowed he would eventually win the race, despite being labeled by the local press as the Boston Straggler.

Not to mention other colorful characters such as Norwegian film star Harrison Fjord, classical rap artist YoYo Mama, sports philosopher Homer Plato and fashion photographer F. Stop Fitzgerald.

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Give 'em Shelter

Good news for the homeless.

BY WILLIAM TUCKER

WHATEVER happened to the homeless? "We haven't heard much—anything, really—about the homeless since, oh, roughly January 20, 1993," Andrew Ferguson noted in January 2001, predicting that with Bush replacing Clinton, the media would soon rediscover them. As if on cue, days later the *Washington Post* ran a 2,000-word opus on the plight of the homeless in the nation's capital.

But does the reverse hold? If the Bush administration makes progress on homelessness, does it make news? The answer, all too predictably, is no.

At a remarkably underreported conference in Denver in May, advocates for the homeless met to discuss a pattern of *falling* homeless populations across the country. In the past six months, New York has announced a reduction of 13 percent, Denver 11 percent, Portland 20 percent, Miami 30 percent, Philadelphia 50 percent. The story merited squibs in the *Denver Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *Rocky Mountain News*. The *New York Times* ran a page 19 story almost a month later. Beyond that, silence.

"All this comes from President Bush," says Philip Mangano, who worked with the homeless for 25 years in Boston before becoming director of the federal Interagency Council on the Homeless. "The president promised in his 2002 State of the Union that we were going to find a cure for homelessness. It's the 'no-child-left-behind' mentality. He doesn't like to see people left behind." Such declarations have been made time and again over the past 25 years without much effect. The difference this time is that Mangano and the Interagency Council seem to have found a successful formula—"Housing First."

Much of the program is admittedly a rah-rah, get-everybody-on-board effort that enlists mayors, governors, church leaders, shelter organizations, social service agencies, civic groups, business leaders, and everyone else to the task. Pep rallies are held; Malcolm Gladwell lectures on the "Tipping Point"; Harvard's Clayton Christensen talks about the "Innovator's Dilemma" and the "Innovator's Solution."

"We're trying to upset the status quo," says Mangano, who brims with nonstop enthusiasm. "For years we've been patting ourselves on the back and saying we've been serving the same homeless person. It's time to start looking for permanent solutions."

One factor now motivating local officials is a realization of how much the homeless are costing them. "In San Diego, researchers tracked a population of 20 homeless people for almost two years, measuring what they absorbed in free medical care, ambulance services, emergency-room hospital visits, and law enforcement," says Mangano. "They were astonished to discover that every individual was costing the city an average of $200,000 per year. For that kind of money, the city could have bought them each a penthouse apartment. The most dismaying thing was that in the end the people were right back where they started."

What is the council's secret of success this time? The program's slogan—"Housing First"—tells the story. Since the days of the Reagan administration, an argument has raged over whether homelessness is caused by lack of housing or a plethora of personal pathologies. Advocates for the homeless argued "housing, housing, housing," and pointed to alleged cutbacks in federal housing programs by the Reagan administration. This explanation never held up. Although Reagan cut authorizations for *new* housing, projects in the pipeline continued to come on line. More public housing was completed in the 1980s than in any previous decade. Moreover, the Reagan administration engineered a changeover to federal housing vouchers, which reached far more people than public housing ever did. Meanwhile, conservatives argued that homelessness was the result of personal pathologies—particularly the flood of deinstitutionalized mental patients.

Then Andrew Cuomo, son of New York governor Mario Cuomo, started a counterrevolution. In 1986, with generous assistance from the government, Cuomo founded Housing Enterprises for Low-Income People (HELP), which built boot-camp-like shelters that put people through rigorous drug and alcohol treatment before placing them in jobs and permanent housing. In 1991, the New York City Commission on the Homeless, chaired by Cuomo, published a report, *The Way Home: A New Direction in Social Policy*, that defied liberal orthodoxy and argued that housing was not the problem. "The very term 'homeless' is a misnomer," said Cuomo. "An apartment doesn't cure a crack addiction."

Cuomo became secretary of housing and urban development under President Clinton and moved his plan—now called the "Continuum of Care"—to the national level. By 1999, HUD was claiming the effort had "helped 300,000 homeless people get housing and jobs to become self-sufficient." Yet somehow the number of homeless people on the street did not seem to decrease.

"Housing First" has now returned to the original idea—that housing is the problem—with a twist. The problem is not that the federal government is not building public housing. The real problem is that cities have been very efficient in *eliminating* bottom-rung housing through building code enforcement, zoning restrictions, and (in cites such as New York and San Francisco) rent control. All these

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"reforms" were supposed to upgrade "substandard" housing and improve opportunities for the poor. In fact they worsened conditions for the very poor.

The principal victim of "reform" has been SROs—the single-room occupancy hotels that were the last resort of winos and stumblebums in bygone days. Entrepreneurs used to take old factory floors and other buildings and turn them into "partition hotels" where people could sleep behind thin walls for as little as $2 a night. It might have looked like blight, but it was functional housing for transients. "In Chicago, SRO units declined 80 percent between 1960 and 1980," reported veteran social worker Richard White in *Rude Awakenings: What the Homeless Crisis Tells Us* (1991). "In the past twenty years, there has been a net loss of 22,000 low-rent units in downtown Seattle. . . . [A]n increase in the number of homeless singles there in the past five years has corresponded directly to the loss of these SROs."

Mangano witnessed the same pattern in Boston. "Governor William Weld commissioned a study, and we found that almost 96 percent of these bottom-rung units had gone out of business during the 1970s and 1980s," he says. "SROs, lodging houses, mom-and-pop rooming houses, all had fallen before campaigns that were supposed to improve housing. At the same time, there was a mirror-image rise in emergency shelters. By taking away bottom-rung housing, we left the poor with nothing."

The Interagency Council is now encouraging cities to reverse this trend and adjust building and zoning codes to tolerate housing once labeled "substandard." Seattle has created 50 new units with a shared kitchen and a bathroom down the hall and 25 more that are nothing but a partitioned room with a bed and a dresser. Indianapolis found it had 20,000 vacant units ripe for rehabilitation. San Francisco is restoring 1,500 apartments in the Tenderloin district through private ownership.

Street people often have to be persuaded to enter such housing. Some bring their shopping carts. Once established, however, they tend to stay. "Our retention rates are about 85 percent," says Mangano. With a home base, the residents can enter drug or alcohol programs or even train for jobs. Eventually they must pay rent. "The whole program costs about $13,000 per person," he says. "It's a lot cheaper than what we were doing before."

Critics argue that the program is skewed toward winos and shopping-bag ladies and will not serve homeless families. That may be true for now, but it's hard to argue with success, and the formula can easily be extended to families as well. The important thing is that somebody has finally found something that works.

"We made progress that is visible, measurable, and quantifiable," says Mangano, anticipating that Ph.D. students will soon be lining up to study this rare public policy success story. Now if only the press will pay a little attention. ♦

Leaks and the Law

The case for prosecuting the *New York Times*.

BY GABRIEL SCHOENFELD

CAN JOURNALISTS really be prosecuted for publishing national security secrets? In the wake of a series of *New York Times* stories revealing highly sensitive counterterrorism programs, that question is increasingly the talk of newsrooms across the country, and especially one newsroom located on West 43rd Street in Manhattan.

Last December, in the face of a presidential warning that they would compromise ongoing investigations of al Qaeda, the *Times* revealed the existence of an ultrasecret terrorist surveillance program of the National Security Agency and provided details of how it operated. Now, once again in the face of a presidential warning, the *Times* has published a front-page article disclosing a highly classified U.S. intelligence program that successfully penetrated the international bank transactions of al Qaeda terrorists.

Although the editors of the *Times* act as if prosecution is not a possibility, not everyone concurs. One person who is still mulling the matter over is Attorney General Alberto Gonzales. Asked in late May about the prospect of prosecuting the *Times* and others who publish classified information, he by no means ruled it out. "There are some statutes on the books," he said, "which, if you read the language carefully, would seem to indicate that that is a possibility."

Unsurprisingly, given what is at stake, even that tentative opinion elicited a fire and brimstone denunciation from the *Times*. An editorial on May 24 dismissed as "bizarre" the attorney general's "claim that a century-old espionage law could be used to muzzle the press." It has long been understood, added the newspaper, that the "overly broad and little used" Espionage Act of 1917 applies only to government officials and "not to journalists."

But this interpretation, even if it were accurate (which it is not), is entirely beside the point. The attorney general did not mention the 1917 Espionage Act or any other specific law. But if the editors of the paper were to take a look at the U.S. Criminal Code, they would find that they have run afoul not of the Espionage Act but of another law entirely: Section 798 of Title 18, the so-called Comint statute.

Unambiguously taking within its reach the publication of the NSA terrorist surveillance story (though arguably not the *Times*'s more recent terrorist banking story), Section 798 reads, in part:

> *Whoever* knowingly and willfully communicates, furnishes, transmits, or otherwise makes available to an unauthorized person, or *publishes*, or uses in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States or for the benefit of any foreign government to the detriment of the United States any *classified information . . . concerning the communication intelligence activities of the United States* . . . shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both [emphasis added].

This law, passed by Congress in 1950 as it was considering ways to avert a second Pearl Harbor during the Cold War, has a history that is highly germane to the present conduct of the *Times*. According to the 1949 Senate report accompanying its passage, the publication in the early 1930s of a book offering a detailed account of U.S. successes in breaking Japanese diplomatic codes inflicted "irreparable harm" on our security.

The Japanese responded to the book's revelations by investing heavily in the construction of more secure codes. Thanks to the ensuing Japanese progress, the report concludes, the United States was unable to "decode the important Japanese military communications in the days immediately leading up to Pearl Harbor." In other words, the aerial armada that devastated our Pacific Fleet had the skies in effect cleared for it by leaks of classified information.

Leaks of communications intelligence secrets pose an equivalent danger today. The 9/11 Commission identified the gap between our domestic and foreign intelligence gathering capabilities as one of the primary weaknesses that left us open to assault. The NSA terrorist surveillance program aimed to cover that gap. The program, by the *Times*'s own account of it, was one of the most closely guarded secrets in the war on terrorism. After it was exposed, a broad range of government officials privy to the workings of the program, including Democrats (such as Jane Harman of the House Intelligence Committee), said that the unauthorized disclosure inflicted severe damage on our ability to track al Qaeda.

Such leaks cause harm of a more general but no less consequential sort. In waging the war on terrorism, the United States depends heavily on cooperation with allied intelligence agencies. But when our own intelligence services demonstrate that they are unable to keep shared information under wraps, international cooperation grinds to a halt.

This is a matter not of idle conjecture but of demonstrable fact. During the run-up to the Iraq war, the United States was urgently attempting to assess the state of play of Saddam Hussein's program to acquire

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weapons of mass destruction. One of the key sources suggesting that an ambitious WMD buildup was underway was an Iraqi defector, known by the codename of Curveball, who was talking to German intelligence. But Washington remained in the dark about Curveball's true identity, and the fact that he was a serial fabricator.

Why would the Germans not identify Curveball? According to the Silberman-Robb WMD Commission report, they refused "to share crucial information with the United States because of fear of leaks." In other words, some of the blame for our mistaken intelligence about Iraq's WMD program rests with leakers and those in the media who rush to publish the leaks.

Given the uproar a prosecution of the *Times* would provoke, the attorney general's cautious approach is certainly understandable. But what might look like a prudent exercise of prosecutorial discretion will, in the face of the *Times*'s increasingly reckless behavior, send a terrible message. The Comint statute, like numerous other laws on the books limiting speech in such disparate realms as libel, privacy, and commercial activity, is fully compatible with the First Amendment. It was passed to deal with circumstances that are both dangerous and rare; the destruction of the World Trade Center and the continuing efforts by terrorists to strike again have thrust just such circumstances upon us.

If the Justice Department chooses not to prosecute the *Times*, its inaction will turn this statute into a dead letter. At stake here for Attorney General Gonzales to contemplate is not just the right to defend ourselves from another Pearl Harbor. Can it really be the government's position that, in the middle of a war in which we have been attacked on our own soil, the power to classify or declassify vital secrets should be taken away from elected officials acting in accord with laws set by Congress and bestowed on a private institution accountable to no one? ♦

"Proactive Self-Defense"

NATO takes over in Afghanistan.

BY MAX BOOT

Kabul

IT HASN'T GOTTEN as much ink as Iraq, but violence in Afghanistan has been up sharply over the past year. U.S. and Afghan forces suffered more casualties in 2005 than in any year since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, and there has been no slackening in the first six months of 2006. Suicide bombings and sophisticated roadside bombs, once limited to Iraq, are appearing in Afghanistan with disturbing regularity. The Taliban are becoming bolder. So are their narcotrafficker allies. The poppy business is booming, accounting for more than a third of the country's gross domestic product. (Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium, the source of over 80 percent of the heroin consumed in Europe.)

The picture is not unrelievedly bleak. Afghanistan has low inflation and a stable currency. And it has a popularly elected government—not only president Hamid Karzai but also a National Assembly that has proven surprisingly assertive in challenging Karzai's court appointments and spending plans. By all accounts, most Afghans support their democratic leadership and do not want to see a return to the bad old days when even kite-flying was a crime. But they also want and need security and economic development, neither of which the government is capable of delivering.

The Afghan government is as dependent on foreign aid as any on earth: Kabul raised only $269 million in tax revenues last year, while spending $561 million. International donors contributed another $2 billion. Karzai's grip has expanded but remains tenuous, with warlords in control of large swaths of the countryside. The police are noted mainly for their corruption, which is not surprising since many have not been paid in months. The best hope for the country is the growth of the Afghan National Army, but so far it has only 30,000 troops, and they are incapable of operating without extensive support from the United States and other foreign sponsors.

Enter NATO. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has already taken control of the relatively peaceful northern and western provinces of Afghanistan. In August it will expand its control to the tumultuous south, long a Taliban stronghold. In the fall, if all goes well, NATO will take over the eastern provinces too, along the border with Pakistan. When that happens, some 7,000 U.S. troops will fall under NATO command and the alliance will control the entire country, although around 10,000 American soldiers will continue to operate under U.S. command as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Is NATO up to the challenge? Can it pacify this sprawling nation of deserts and mountains, populated by 31 million of the poorest people on earth? Will it have the resources and the will to confront homicidal religious fanatics and ruthless drug lords?

A whirlwind trip to Kabul and Kandahar, organized by NATO for a group of policy analysts and journal-

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ists, did not leave me sanguine about the answers to those questions. I did come away with admiration for the nations that are willing to undertake such a daunting task. The most gung-ho are Britain, Canada, and, surprisingly, the Netherlands, which together are sending 6,700 troops to the south—more than the United States deploys in that region. Romania, Estonia, and Australia are contributing smaller contingents, totaling under 1,000 soldiers.

In Kosovo and Bosnia, NATO troops were strictly limited to "peacekeeping." That is also the role of the NATO troops deployed to Kabul and the northern and western areas, where the Taliban have little support. But it's a different matter in the Pashtun-dominated south. Here, a war is raging, and NATO is getting into the middle of it.

A visit to Kandahar Airfield, the hub of operations in the south, found breakneck expansion underway. U.S. cargo aircraft, fighters, Predator drones, helicopters, Dutch Apache gunships (and soon F-16s), British Harrier jump jets—all maintain a frenetic pace of operations. One officer told us this was the busiest single-runway military airfield in the world. More runways are under construction, as are hangars, barracks, and recreation facilities. Two concrete plants located on the base are constantly churning away, and large numbers of fuel tankers are making the drive from Pakistan.

Similar expansion is going on inside the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) headquarters compound in downtown Kabul—located, inauspiciously enough, on the site of a cantonment occupied by the British army during two famously unsuccessful imperial forays into Afghanistan in the 19th century. ("Third time lucky," joked the British brigadier who runs the base.)

ISAF was born in 2002, when some of America's allies contributed forces to keep the peace in Kabul, while U.S. troops focused on hunting the Taliban and al Qaeda in the southern and eastern provinces. NATO took over ISAF in 2003, and since then its mandate has been steadily expanding. The headquarters compound is taking in more and more personnel from nations as disparate as Germany and Macedonia.

European officers pride themselves on taking a softer approach to counterinsurgency than the supposedly gun-happy Americans. ISAF troops are supposed to focus on providing security, jumpstarting economic development, and, above all, on facilitating the work of 21 civil-military Provincial Reconstruction Teams spread across the country. They are not supposed to chase bad guys.

That's all well and good in theory but difficult to implement in practice. What do commanders do if they get intelligence on Taliban fighters gathering a few miles away? Wait to be attacked, or strike first? For American officers it would be a no-brainer. But NATO troops have the difficult task of interpreting rules of engagement laboriously negotiated among 26 nations. They are not allowed to mount offensive operations, but they can engage in "proactive self-defense operations." Meaning what? That will be up to individual commanders to decide.

One can be pretty confident that some contingents, for instance the British and Canadians, will take a broad view of their mandate. Others, however, are likely to take a narrower interpretation, which is why so many Afghan government officials are pleading with U.S. troops not to turn over their areas to NATO replacements. And it is not only Afghans who are concerned: During our visit to Kandahar Airfield, a British officer was overheard berating a Dutch air force officer for limiting his activities to tame convoy escorts and not having the guts to engage in real combat.

There are some 70 separate national caveats limiting what NATO troops can do. Some of these restrictions are relatively innocuous—e.g., troops are not allowed to operate outside of Afghanistan. Others forbid some troops from taking part in combat operations or even from using chemical riot control agents like tear gas. The complete list of caveats is secret—you don't want to let the enemy know what your forces cannot do, not to mention that many European nations would be embarrassed to have the full list of their caveats revealed.

Among the more important restrictions is that ISAF is not allowed to fight drug production and trafficking. Although ISAF can assist Afghan forces in counter-narcotics efforts, they are not supposed to take on these missions themselves. That could be a big problem, because in Afghanistan, as in Colombia, the insurgency is intimately linked with the drug barons. The Taliban made a big show in 2001, their last year in power, of cracking down on poppy cultivation. But knowledgeable observers believe their motive was cynical—to drive up the value of their own opium stockpiles. Today, despite their own restrictive brand of Islam, the Taliban are happy to cooperate with the drug barons, who provide a ready source of funding.

Further funds—as well as base camps for training and recruitment—are available in next-door Pakistan. President Pervez Musharraf has occasionally sent his forces at U.S. prodding to bag al Qaeda bigwigs, but he has done precious little to crack down on the Taliban and their ilk—whether because he simply does not exercise any real control over Pakistan's frontier provinces (as he claims) or because his government (or elements thereof) still backs the Taliban as an instrument of Islamabad's influence in Afghanistan. The Bush administration continues to dance a delicate minuet with Musharraf, pressuring him to get tough while being careful not to undermine his authority. The upshot is that the Taliban enjoys an essential prerequisite for successful guerrilla operations—secure rear areas. Just as U.S. forces in Southeast Asia could do precious little about the Ho Chi Minh Trail running through North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, so now they can do little about the Islamist supply line running through the Khyber Pass.

This is quite a challenge for any

military force, much less one with NATO's limited resources. It's hard enough to get member states to cough up troops; harder still to get are transport helicopters and aircraft, of which there is a notable deficit outside of the U.S. armed forces. And no wonder: Defense spending outside America is anemic. For years, NATO has urged members to spend at least 2 percent of GDP on defense. The actual average, excluding the United States (which spends more than 3.5 percent), is 1.94 percent—and falling. And that figure is inflated by high levels of defense spending in Greece and Turkey, where the armed forces are preparing not for NATO missions but for fighting one another.

It has taken a lot of public prodding and behind-the-scenes diplomacy on the part of the Bush administration (for which it has gotten scant credit among critics who bemoan American "unilateralism") to get NATO to commit a force as substantial as the one in Afghanistan. There are already 9,000 coalition troops in the country (not counting American soldiers), a number due to grow to 17,000 by the end of the summer and larger still in the fall. But will European states keep sending soldiers for the many years that it will take to make any significant progress? And how will they react when they take the inevitable casualties?

Given all the risks attendant to NATO's takeover, it would be shortsighted to see this as an excuse to prematurely pull out U.S. forces. There are currently 20,000 U.S. troops in the country, but Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld seems eager to withdraw at least 4,000 and possibly more. He is also reducing U.S. support for the Afghan National Army, which was supposed to reach 70,000 soldiers (itself an inadequate figure) but will now number less than 50,000.

There is no doubt that U.S. forces are overstretched, but they are also at war, and it is a war they could still lose. It's not cheap or easy to keep the Afghan government afloat. But it would be a lot more expensive to see it go under. ♦

From Washington to Graceland

The Japanese prime minister's valedictory tour of America. BY DUNCAN CURRIE

In June 2001, as he flew to his first visit with George W. Bush, newly elected Japanese premier Junichiro Koizumi called himself "a diehard pro-American from long before." It was "fate," he told reporters, that his maiden foreign trip as prime minister was to the United States. He soon built a close rapport with Bush, and went on to back the United States on the war in Iraq, contributing more than 500 noncombat troops.

This week Koizumi will again meet Bush in Washington (as well as paying homage to his musical idol, Elvis Presley, in Memphis). It will be his last formal stop at the White House before his term expires in September, when Koizumi, 64, is set to retire. The world looks far different today than it did during the initial, pre-9/11 Bush-Koizumi summit. Yet the U.S.-Japan alliance is stronger than ever.

Not all the credit for this diplomatic accomplishment goes to the Bush administration. The Clinton Defense Department upgraded defense ties, prodded Tokyo to loosen its pacifist straitjacket, and encouraged the Japanese to adopt a more normal foreign policy. "There has been continuity in policy for over ten years," says Joseph Nye, an assistant Pentagon secretary under Clinton, though the pace was slower in the Clinton years, impeded by trade rows and the emphasis on a "strategic partnership" with China.

In 2000, Nye helped draft the so-called Armitage-Nye Report along with several future Bush officials, including James Kelly, Michael Green, Paul Wolfowitz, and Richard Armitage. A private study that served as the new administration's template for relations with Japan, it called for "improving, reinvigorating, and refocusing" the alliance and urged increased cooperation on missile defense, military integration, intelligence-sharing, U.S. base restructuring on Okinawa, and support for systemic economic reforms in Japan.

In Koizumi, the administration found an eager partner. Building on the work of predecessors who had begun embracing a more robust security posture during the mid-1990s,

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Koizumi brought a fresh boldness to the project, and he meshed well with Bush. "Americans should think of him as a cowboy—in a positive sense," says Dan Blumenthal, a former Pentagon official. "We're closer than we've ever been," says Princeton professor Aaron Friedberg, a former adviser to Vice President Cheney.

A decade before, none of this had seemed inevitable. Japan was then a bogeyman of U.S. politics. Japanese companies were buying Columbia Pictures and Rockefeller Center, Honda and Toyota were "stealing" American jobs, the United States had a massive trade deficit with Japan, there was even talk of a resurgent Japanese nationalism. "The United States is rapidly becoming a colony of Japan," warned Maryland representative Helen Bentley in 1990.

Meanwhile, the security alliance began to fray. Japan sat out the first Gulf war, sending money instead of men. During the 1993-94 flare-up of the intractable North Korean nuclear problem, Japanese obstinacy made things worse. "We were not in sync with them," says Friedberg. "They were much more in their older mode of not wanting to rock the boat."

Three big factors changed attitudes in Washington and nudged Japan in a pro-American direction. First, the Japanese economy plunged into deflation and recession, while the U.S. economy began to boom. This helped quell some of the 1980s-era trade spats and forced Japan to accept economic reform. Second, China emerged as the budding superpower in East Asia. The Chinese launched missiles near Taiwan in the summer of 1995 and again in March 1996, prior to historic Taiwanese elections. One month later, President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto signed a joint declaration on regional security. Third, North Korea continued its sabre-rattling, most aggressively in August 1998, when it test-fired a Taepodong-1 rocket over Japan. This ignited a more fervent Japanese push to build missile defenses in concert with the Pentagon.

Then the war on terrorism accelerated things. After 9/11, despite its pacifist constitution, Tokyo sent its maritime Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to the Indian Ocean to provide logistical aid and fuel during the fight against the Taliban. In December 2001, Japanese ships chased and sank a North Korean spy vessel. Two years later, Koizumi crossed the Rubicon: Against public opinion, he deployed a small SDF contingent to do noncombat relief work in southern Iraq—the first time since World War II that Japan had sent troops to a country where conflict still raged, and without explicit U.N. approval.

Last week Koizumi announced the end of the Japanese deployment, noting that Iraqi forces had taken over the relevant bit of Muthanna province. Japan will not leave Iraq altogether; it will actually expand its airlift support into Baghdad and Erbil. But the return home of Japanese ground troops, their mission completed, marks a watershed. This more active role in global security is part of Koizumi's legacy to his successor.

Who will that be? The smart money is on either Shinzo Abe, the chief cabinet secretary, or his predecessor, Yasuo Fukuda. Like Koizumi, both are members of the Liberal Democratic party (LDP), which has ruled Japan almost continuously since 1955. Fukuda, who turns 70 in July, represents the old guard of the LDP, with its factionalism, pork-barrel spending, and opaque backroom dealing. Abe, 51, is more a Koizumi-style populist: hawkish, market-friendly, and charismatic.

Though he is still the favorite, Abe has dipped in the polls of late. Many attribute this to Japan's sour relations with China and South Korea. Beijing and Seoul object to Koizumi's annual pilgrimage to the Yasukuni shrine, a memorial to fallen Japanese soldiers that also honors over a dozen Class-A war criminals. Abe has traditionally favored the pilgrimage. But in a recent interview with the *Financial Times*, he hedged, saying, "I have no intention whatsoever to make a declaration that I will go to the shrine."

His comment may reflect shifting views in Japan. Whatever their thoughts on Yasukuni, most Japanese don't want China or South Korea bossing them around. "It is something that we should decide ourselves," a senior Japanese diplomat told me. But there are growing fears in Japan that Yasukuni may be pinching business interests and bruising Japan's image abroad. In early May, a prominent group of Japanese corporate executives, Keizai Doyukai, counseled against shrine visits. (After all, Japan now does more bilateral trade with China than it does with America.)

"Fukuda will be much more attuned to others in East Asia," predicts former State Department official James Kelly. Indeed, Fukuda opposes visiting Yasukuni. And his father, former Japanese premier Takeo Fukuda, preached regional rapprochement during the late 1970s. On the other hand, Abe is far more pragmatic than his firebrand image suggests. "Japan is not a militarist society," says Joseph Nye. "This is not the 1930s." Still, the Chinese consider Yasukuni a wedge issue with which they can disturb U.S.-Japan relations and remind all Asians of dark parts of Japanese history.

However the shrine issue plays out in the future, argues Balbina Hwang, a Japan expert at the Heritage Foundation, the Bush-Koizumi era will prove to have marked the postwar apex of U.S.-Japan ties.

Post-Koizumi, America will still have to iron out the details of troop reshuffling on Okinawa. There will be renewed wrangling over beef exports. The White House will again squeeze Japan to curb its investments in Iranian oil fields—a squabble that could get serious if America pursues U.N. sanctions. And unless Tokyo revises Article 9 of its pacifist constitution, future efforts at "collective self-defense" may be hindered.

Three structural realities, meanwhile, should keep the alliance strong: the war on terrorism, the rise of China, and the North Korean missile threat. What cannot reasonably be expected is the kind of personal warmth between two heads of state that has flourished in the Bush-Koizumi years. ♦

A Clone by any Other Name

Missouri's deceptively worded ballot measure.

BY COLLEEN CARROLL CAMPBELL

MISSOURIANS WILL VOTE this November on an amendment to their state constitution that claims to ban human cloning. In a red state known for its pro-life movement, that would seem to be good news for those who believe that human embryos should not be created and destroyed for scientific research.

But political proposals are not always what they seem. The group sponsoring the amendment—the Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures—is bankrolled by the founders of a multibillion-dollar biomedical research institute and supported by outspoken proponents of research cloning. Opponents include Missouri Right to Life and an array of socially conservative religious leaders. And despite ballot language that says the amendment will ban human cloning but allow all stem cell research not prohibited by federal law, the fine print—which Missourians will not see in the voting booth—allows somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT), the scientific process used to clone human embryos.

This semantic sleight of hand is the core of the proponents' strategy. Normally "human cloning" is synonymous with somatic cell nuclear transfer, or SCNT—the fusing of the nucleus of a body cell and an egg that has had its nucleus removed to create a cloned embryo. Research cloning destroys the embryo, while reproductive cloning implants it in a uterus. The amendment defines "cloning" as implantation, thus banning reproductive cloning while making the cloning of embryos for research a constitutional right.

"They're redefining cloning . . . as embryo transfer [into a uterus]," said Dr. Robert Onder, an assistant professor of clinical medicine at Washington University School of Medicine. "They're trying to change the terminology to define away the moral controversy."

Onder helped found Missourians Against Human Cloning, which sued Missouri secretary of state Robin Carnahan last fall over the ballot language. Carnahan had adopted the language almost verbatim from the amendment's sponsor. Onder's group lost in court and on appeal, and the state Supreme Court refused to hear the case. Judges ruled that the language fairly and accurately summarized the amendment, though they declined to settle the dispute about the scientific definition of cloning.

Connie Farrow, spokesperson for the Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures, cites those rulings as proof that the ballot language is clear enough for voters. When asked how the initiative can be said to ban human cloning while allowing the cloning of human embryos for research, Farrow says, "Creating stem cells in a lab dish to cure disease and save life is not the same thing as cloning a human being." Pressed to identify the source of the embryonic stem cells in her hypothetical lab dish, she adds, "I believe it's a cloned organism. I don't believe it's the same thing as a baby. . . . And the majority of scientists agree with me."

The coalition does enjoy substantial support from Missouri's scientific community. James and Virginia Stowers, cofounders of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research in Kansas City, have committed nearly $10 million to the campaign and made it clear their institute will cancel a major expansion in Missouri if the amendment fails. Washington University in St. Louis also backs the initiative, as do 60 patient and medical groups, more than 2,000 doctors, nurses, and health care workers, and a host of prominent politicians, including biotech-friendly Gov. Matt Blunt, a Republican who counted health professionals among his largest donors in his 2004 campaign, and former Sen. John Danforth, whose family foundation is a major biotech funder in Missouri.

After paying more than $1 million to professional signature gatherers, the coalition has collected some 289,000 signatures for its petition—nearly twice the number the secretary of state will need to put the issue on the ballot. Farrow says the signatures demonstrate public support. But she acknowledges that the driving push behind the amendment came from research leaders like the Stowers, who were frustrated by attempts in Missouri's Republican legislature to ban research cloning. "Every year we face a new challenge," Farrow says. "If we put it in the constitution, it will settle this issue once and for all, and it will give Missouri voters a chance to have their voice heard on this issue."

That last point is debatable. Maureen Condic, a University of Utah embryologist who testified at trial against the ballot language, said the amendment is scientifically inaccurate and misleading to voters.

"That's not the scientific meaning of the term [cloning], and that's not how the term is used," said Condic, who noted that cloning occurs when an embryo is created, not when it is transferred into a uterus. "If you are in favor of allowing the voters of Missouri to decide on this question, then state it in unambiguous language that every human being can understand."

The trouble with plain language is that it scares voters. Polls show that most Americans disapprove of repro-

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ductive cloning, and their reaction to research cloning tends to be negative when pollsters tell them it entails the creation and destruction of human embryos. In May, for example, an International Communications Research poll commissioned by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops found that 81 percent of respondents said scientists should not be allowed to "use human cloning to create a supply of human embryos to be destroyed in medical research"—roughly the same percentage that disapproved of reproductive cloning.

Pollsters find more support for research cloning when they do not mention the destruction of human embryos but do mention that such research could lead to medical cures. A 2001 Gallup poll framed this way found only 41 percent disapproved of research cloning, while 54 percent approved.

Such confusion may spell success for the Missouri amendment. A poll commissioned in January by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and KMOV-TV found that 64 percent of likely voters agreed with the ballot proposal to allow all types of stem cell research, including embryonic research. But the pollsters did not mention that the amendment would allow the destruction of embryos, and it used the term "somatic cell nuclear transfer" instead of "cloning."

Proponents of research cloning are increasingly attuned to public ambivalence about the work they want to do. Some have lobbied their fellow scientists to stop using unpopular terms.

In a 2005 letter published in *Science* magazine, amendment supporters Dr. William Danforth and William Neaves laid out their arguments for dropping the terms "embryonic stem cell research," "cloned embryos," and "therapeutic cloning." Danforth, chancellor emeritus of Washington University and chairman of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, and Neaves, president and CEO of the Stowers Institute, noted that "embryo" tends to evoke images of a fetus rather than a blob of cells, and "clone" tends to make nonscientists think of "a living copy of another person."

The pair cited *Merriam-Webster's Medical Desk Dictionary* definition of an embryo as "the developing human individual from the time of implantation to the end of the eighth week after conception." But they failed to mention the first part of the entry, which defines an embryo as "an animal in the early stages of growth and differentiation that are characterized by cleavage, the laying down of fundamental tissues, and the formation of primitive organs and organ systems." That broader definition of "embryo" is commonly used in scientific and popular writing to describe the developing human individual in its zygote, morula, blastocyst, and embryo stages.

Danforth and Neaves also did not cite Merriam-Webster's definition of "clone" when urging *Science* to restrict the unpopular c-word to reproductive cloning and describe research cloning as SCNT. The medical dictionary defines a clone as "an individual grown from a single somatic cell of its parent and genetically identical to it"—precisely what is created in both research and reproductive cloning.

The editors of *Science* apparently rejected Danforth and Neaves's advice. Recent issues refer to the cloning of embryos, therapeutic cloning, and "somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT), or cloning." A recent MedLine search of medical science journals found "cloned embryos" mentioned in 111 articles since 2003, while 12 articles mentioned "pre-embryos," the preferred term of Danforth and Neaves. The *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Lancet*, publications that strongly support research cloning, have described nuclear transfer as the process that creates a "cloned embryo" and have used the term "therapeutic cloning." Even a coalition brochure promoting the Missouri amendment includes testimonials to the benefits of "therapeutic cloning."

Semantic arguments may not impress most scientists, but they do provide cover to Missouri politicians torn between their biotech donors and their pro-life base. Blunt, who backs the amendment, embraces the coalition's definition of cloning-as-implantation. Republican senator Kit Bond, who has taken no position on the amendment, opposes both "criminalizing research" and "the cloning of human beings," but has left unclear whether he opposes research cloning. Republican senator Jim Talent, facing reelection, has said he personally opposes the amendment, which his Democratic challenger and her party support. But he recently withdrew his sponsorship of a proposed federal cloning ban. As for the Missouri Republican party, it has taken no position on the amendment, though its 2004 platform opposed "all human cloning."

For their part, Missourians Against Human Cloning are working with pro-life groups and Catholic and evangelical leaders to educate voters, mobilize the grassroots, and counteract a multimillion-dollar advertising blitz and a funding imbalance of 17 to one. "It is truly a David-and-Goliath battle," said Pam Fichter, president of Missouri Right to Life. "But we have the truth on our side."

The battle has made Missouri a symbolic prize in the stem cell wars. If a conservative Midwestern state governed by pro-life Republicans amends its constitution to protect the cloning of human embryos for research—making it only the second state after California to do so—similar amendments could crop up anywhere. Bernard Siegel, executive director of the pro-research-cloning Genetics Policy Institute and leader of an effort to put a similar amendment before Florida voters in 2008, says he is watching closely because "Missouri is always a bellwether state." Carrie Gordon Earll, senior bioethics analyst at Focus on the Family, agrees. "We see this as pretty much ground zero right now. If something like the Stowers amendment can pass in Missouri, I think that's a sad indicator of what little people understand about cloning." ♦

High Noon in Michigan

The coming McCain-Romney shootout

By Mark Hemingway

When political handicappers start laying odds on a presidential election, the conversation inevitably turns to Iowa and New Hampshire. Their status as the first caucus and primary states remains critical, but as media scrutiny has amplified their importance, both have morphed into a kind of Heisenberg fishbowl. Otherwise humble locals, constantly harassed by marauding network TV crews to name their candidate, sometimes retort, "I don't know. I haven't met him yet."

It's no surprise political prognosticators are starting to look elsewhere for early clues about the race in 2008. Michigan's status as an important early primary state has been overlooked—until now. The Democratic National Committee is currently considering moving its Michigan primary to occur in between Iowa and New Hampshire.

And Republicans have taken notice of the battleground state as well. As Michigan State Republican Party chairman Saul Anuzis told the *Detroit Free Press* in February, "We're much more representative of the country than either Iowa or New Hampshire. Anyone emerging out of Michigan as a winner will have a clearer picture of how viable a candidate they are." Adds Michigan political consultant Craig Ruff, "It's the first state with a significant industrial base to vote, so a lot of the candidates view us as kind of a bellwether."

In fact, as Republican insiders and political consultants break out the laminated maps and dry erase markers, it's becoming clear that the entire Republican nomination strategy may come to hinge on the battle in Michigan.

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McCain vs. Romney

This view has a lot to do with the two frontrunners, Senator John McCain of Arizona and Governor Mitt Romney of Massachusetts. McCain, who has a rocky relationship with the Republican base dating back to 2000, has been vigorously mending fences with social conservatives. He's also rounding up old Bushies, such as 2004 national political director Terry Nelson and media adviser Mark McKinnon, for his campaign. So far it's working. McCain has emerged as the clear favorite among Bush's top fundraisers—the "Pioneers" and "Rangers"—who are lining up to "max out" their political action committee donations for him.

Romney, the Mormon from Massachusetts, has an equally interesting story. He's armed with movie star good looks and loads of charisma. He has a critically acclaimed health-care plan. And his appearances in early primary states are already drawing rave reviews. The great question mark on primary day? Romney's religion is slightly less popular among Christian conservatives than *Brokeback Mountain*. Luckily for him, he's drawn John McCain as his opponent. Those same Christian conservatives who make up the Republican base may dislike McCain even more than Mormonism.

Besides, in the political poker of presidential politics Romney has an ace in the hole. The fact that he is governor of Massachusetts may prove to be far less significant in electoral terms than the fact that, as the son of revered Michigan governor George Romney, he is seen by many as the state's prodigal son. According to Thomas Ginster, longtime aide to another revered Michigan governor, John Engler, "Anybody over forty years old here remembers his dad; one of the main state government buildings here is called the Romney building. It's just a household name. I think Romney will do better in Michigan than he would in Massachusetts."

Right now, the Michigan Republican party is charging hard to move up the date of its presidential primary.

If it has its way, the electoral powerhouse of Michigan will hold the first major primary after New Hampshire, the same day as South Carolina. If McCain can sweep New Hampshire and Michigan—states he won in 2000—and rack up South Carolina, the nomination is a lock.

But if Romney can pull off an upset either in New Hampshire, next door to his own Massachusetts, or in his home state of Michigan, he'll survive past South Carolina, where he's likely to get a thumbs down from Christian conservatives. The fight for the nomination could last all the way to Super Tuesday.

If Romney loses in New Hampshire, the media will pronounce his campaign on life-support. If McCain (who won the state by a hefty margin last time) loses in New Hampshire, we'll be reading all the same stories about a reeling frontrunner that we did about Bush in 2000, and the media will put the same heat on McCain to win Michigan.

Both candidates realize how important Michigan is, and they're acting accordingly. Romney's national campaign headquarters is currently under construction in Oakland County. McCain is also active on the ground; his PAC recently announced it was giving over $120,000 to county and local parties in Michigan.

And that's all well and good. Michigan's importance to the selection of the Republican candidate is not to be underestimated. However, political observers are pulling out the lawn chairs and popcorn for two additional reasons: One is that the Republican primary may be decided by an arcane rules battle in the next year that may determine the outcome of the election before the first vote is cast. The second reason is that a backroom brawl at the 1998 state party convention produced a schism so big that even eight years later the Michigan GOP is a hellbroth of shattered allegiances and personal rivalries involving nearly every major player in the party over the last twenty years—including the Romney family.

This schism has produced two factions warring for the heart and soul of the Michigan GOP. The 2008 presidential primary may well determine which faction wins—as well as which candidate moves closer to the national party's nomination.

The Yobs vs. the Sterling Corporation

In March, the *New Republic* reported that the senator from Arizona was already charging hard to secure support in Michigan for the primaries: "Local conservative poo-bahs who backed Bush in early primary states, such as Chuck Yob in Michigan, are now saying sweet things about McCain."

Chuck Yob, the longtime Republican national committeeman from Michigan and arguably the biggest political kingmaker in the state, is doing more than "saying sweet things" about McCain. He's been at McCain's side escorting him all over the state. McCain has even hired Chuck's son, John, to run his Michigan campaign. John Yob talks constantly with McCain and his team.

Naturally, Romney is active, too, in his home state. He has a formidable organization behind him; his Michigan campaign is being run by the Sterling Corporation, a political consulting firm in Lansing and the Yobs' chief competition as political consultants.

The Sterling Corporation is almost indistinguishable from the Republican party itself—the state party chair, Saul Anuzis, used to be a partner in the firm. Not surprisingly, the lion's share of business from the state GOP now goes to the Sterling Corporation.

It's no mystery how the two campaigns feel about each other. "Chuck Yob? Yeah, I don't know how to spell horse's patoot, but you could probably write that down," says Fred Wszolek, a partner at the Sterling Corporation.

While he is beloved by the state party's grassroots, this is not an uncommon reaction to the mention of Chuck Yob.

Why is Yob so controversial? To really get Michigan's political landscape, you have to go back eight years, to the 1998 race for Michigan attorney general. In one fell swoop Yob defeated Governor John Engler in a major political battle, screwed Mitt Romney's brother Scott out of an easy election to state office, and came to be blamed for costing Republicans the next governor's election.

Smietanka vs. Romney

In 1998, Michigan was a Republican success story. Though it's a swing state, the GOP controlled the legislature and John Engler was riding high as one of the most popular governors in America.

That year, Republicans held every statewide office save one. Frank "The Eternal General" Kelley, a Democrat, had been Michigan's attorney general for 37 years—so long he still holds the record as both the youngest and oldest attorney general in state history.

In 1994, Kelley had been opposed for reelection by John "The Tank" Smietanka, a former U.S. attorney and GOP party loyalist who'd gladly accepted his role as a sacrificial lamb against Kelley.

So when the indomitable Kelley's next election came around four years later, the Republicans were happy for Smietanka to take him on again—they weren't going to win anyway. Chuck Yob began talking to Gov. Engler

about working with representatives of various districts to secure The Tank's eventual nomination for attorney general at the state party convention.

As it happens, working the state convention is Yob's particular area of expertise. According to Ginster, the Engler aide, "He is like a god with a small-g there. You have to come in and kiss the ring if you want to be nominated. They have a machine when it comes to these conventions."

The convention itself is a throwback to the politics of yore. "A convention has a couple of thousand delegates. They're all party regulars, party faithful—it's literally the old smoke-filled room," says Bill Ballenger, editor of the newsletter *Inside Michigan Politics*.

Everything was going according to plan when the unthinkable happened. Two months before the state convention, the elderly Frank Kelley, facing the prospect of bypass surgery, dropped out of the race. All of a sudden the Republicans had a legitimate shot at winning the attorney general's office for the first time in four decades.

This cast Smietanka's nomination in a whole new light. As a loyal apparatchik, he was a fine standard-bearer for the party when he had no chance of winning. But if what was needed was a viable contender for the post of attorney general, "Tank" was more of a verb than a noun.

"The Tank is a good guy, he just had a difficult time as a candidate. He had a hard time on the stump, as well as raising funds," says Ginster, who may be being charitable. The story is often told about the time The Tank, campaigning against Kelley, hitched a ride across the state on a bus-stop tour with Engler. The Tax Cut Express had stopped at the Flapjack Shack somewhere in northwest Michigan for a tightly scheduled 15-minute breakfast meet-and-greet with the locals. Smietanka mistakenly thought it was his time to eat, so he sat down and ordered food. He ended up leaving behind an untouched double stack of pancakes. A dazed Smietanka, with a napkin still tucked into his shirt, was rushed to the parking lot as the bus was leaving—all while being filmed by a local TV crew.

As far as Engler was concerned, now that the race was winnable, nominating Smietanka would be political suicide. Governor Engler sprang into action and pulled a rabbit out of a hat. He convinced Scott Romney—successful lawyer and businessman, brother of Mitt and bearer of the Golden Political Name—to run for attorney general.

Engler had to scramble to put together an organization to support Romney on short notice. "It was *The West Wing*, season six," says Jordan Gehrke, a D.C.-based political consultant from Michigan who was at the '98 convention. Still, Engler managed to recruit Ginster and a number of key personnel to get Scott Romney's nomination off the ground.

Yob vs. Engler

Now, all of this maneuvering would have been entirely unnecessary if Chuck Yob had been on board with Romney's nomination; however, he had already publicly endorsed Smietanka, and Yob is nothing if not loyal.

The showdown between Yob and Engler at the '98 state convention is now the stuff of legend. Gehrke sums up the situation heading in:

> The story that's told today is that Smietanka's running early and there's nobody in the race and Chuck Yob says to Engler, "Governor, I'm going to run Smietanka unless you tell me different," and the Governor says, "No, go ahead." About three weeks or a month later Engler calls him and says, "Hey, you gotta dump Smietanka; we're going to go with Scott Romney. He's the guy, you gotta endorse him." Chuck says, "Governor, I can't do that; I just went out publicly with John Smietanka." Engler supposedly started screaming on the other end and effectively says, "You're going to do what I tell you." Yob basically told him, "Screw you, we're going to beat you," and it was on.

One day before the district caucuses at the convention, some suspiciously timed information emerged. Some years back, Smietanka had not paid his child support for a few months. In his defense, he was no deadbeat—he'd lost his job when President Clinton had unexpectedly fired U.S. attorneys en masse. He'd long since repaid his debt from being out of work. Unfortunately, Smietanka would be facing an attractive woman in the general; he couldn't have soccer moms thinking he was a loser dad.

Engler's men and Yob's machine worked the convention furiously for their respective candidates trying to secure the necessary votes. Engler operatives called in every favor and twisted every arm for Romney that they could. It was so stressful when it was announced that Smietanka had the votes, according to eyewitnesses, that Chuck Yob stood straight up out of his seat and crossed both his arms, clutching his chest as if he was having a heart attack. Then he tore across the room to rub it in to one of Romney's supporters.

"Yob took on a sitting governor and beat him in the convention. It made Yob a living legend," says Gehrke.

Smietanka vs. Granholm

Of course, Smietanka's victory at the convention is only half the story. Part of the reason Republicans were chomping at the bit to get back the attorney general's office was that the Democrats were fielding an unknown and beatable candidate from Wayne County. Some hot blonde named Jennifer Granholm.

But the child support allegations cast a pall over Smietanka for the rest of the race. Aside from his lackluster campaign skills, Smietanka grew increasingly embattled as the campaign progressed; he even refused to shake Granholm's hand during their only debate. Granholm won a tight race.

It's generally acknowledged that had Romney run against Granholm, his name recognition would have brought him an easy victory. But Smietanka's nomination launched one of the most meteoric political ascendancies in recent history. In four years, Granholm went from unknown attorney to state attorney general to governor.

For this Engler is owed some credit: He alone saw Granholm coming. "Basically, the governor saw Attorney General Granholm as the threat, and he was right—charismatic, feminine, and had everything going for her," says a former state Republican legislator who worked on the Scott Romney campaign. He asked not to be identified.

The state GOP still hasn't totally recovered from the '98 attorney general election. "I think in hindsight everybody will agree that Engler was right and Yob was wrong and the Republicans ended up with a weak nominee who then lost to Granholm, and now where are they?" says Ballenger.

Even eight years later, Yob is blamed for the loss in 1998, and the wounds are still tender in the Michigan GOP. Says Ballenger, "If McCain has hired John Yob, that might cause him some problems in Michigan because there're going to be a lot of people in the Republican organization who are just automatically going to not want to support McCain as much as they might otherwise, simply because they know the Yobs are working for him."

Michigan GOP vs. Michigan GOP

It's a little unfair to blame Yob for losing the governorship in 2002—Smietanka may have been a weak candidate, but it was a tight race that might have been won had Romney supporters not poisoned the well with the child support allegations. Regardless, Yob's willingness to take on the state party makes him a favorite punching bag for the state Republican establishment—the Sterling Corporation included.

The struggle between the two groups represents a battle between old and new. The Sterling Corporation is almost a modern full-service PR firm, albeit a very politically connected one. Chuck and John Yob are a family political machine who don't even have a website.

Observers seem to think that the Yobs' comparative lack of resources against Sterling will be a liability. The Yobs are primarily known in Michigan for their ability to win state party convention battles—not statewide primaries. "Remember, running a campaign in a state convention is much, much different than running a presidential primary," says Ballenger.

So why would McCain attach himself to Chuck Yob, a Bush supporter in 2000 and a man who's actively disliked by a sizable percentage of the state's Republican power brokers? Probably because in order to carry Michigan, McCain needs someone who can take on the entire state party—and win.

Going back to 2000, when McCain won the Michigan primary, there's been a raging debate about the state's primary rules. "The reason [McCain] won last time—it was an anomaly, and it was an anomaly because there was an open primary in Michigan, and the Democrats had their caucus on a different date, and the Republicans had an open primary," says Ginster. "Then Engler, who was a lightning rod conservative, came out and said Michigan was going to be the firewall for Dubya, and so all the independents and Oakland County women and Democrats came out."

In fact, the turnout was unprecedented for a Republican primary. "It was a lot more than the Republicans coming to vote, so that's what put McCain over the top. The teachers' unions just wanted to stick it to Engler. And that's why he [McCain] won," says Ginster. And this was in spite of the fact that McCain's effort in Michigan was lacking. "His organization at the time was a joke. . . . He had no endorsements, nothing going for him. It was just 'stick it to Engler,'" says Ginster.

The outcome of the 2000 primary incensed the state party. Engler's failure to deliver Michigan for Bush largely killed his chances at a prominent position in the Bush administration. "The way the Republicans had set up the rules in Michigan in 2000, it totally blew up in their face. . . . If you just looked at the people who were self-identified Republicans in the Republican primary, Bush won amongst those," says Ballenger.

Arguing that the primary results weren't representative of Michigan Republicans, Engler and the state party tried to rejigger the rules after the fact to send mainly Bush delegates to the national convention instead of mainly McCain delegates. Of course, this had to be approved by the district caucuses at the state convention in August.

"It didn't really make any difference because Bush won the nomination nationally and McCain had conceded. But McCain was very proud of his victory in Michigan, and he wanted the people that supported him to be rewarded with delegates. He protested, and he was quite bitter about it," says Ballenger.

McCain got a taste of Yob's power at the state conven-

tion firsthand in 2000. The senator made a personal phone call to Yob. Despite being a Bush supporter, Yob agreed with McCain and used his influence at the state convention to stop Engler's plan to usurp McCain's delegates.

Now, with the 2008 primary fast approaching, GOP chair Anuzis and the Sterling Corporation have been busy trying to batten down the hatches, closing the primary. "A presidential primary is Katie-bar-the-door, and the rules they've got in place in Michigan are incredible," says Ballenger. "Unless they're changed—and they might be—it's an open primary."

An open primary bodes very well for McCain, who demonstrated his appeal among the state's independents and Democrats in 2000. It would be especially bad for Romney, since the DNC is talking of moving up its Michigan primary. Once again, Republicans could end up with an open primary on a different date from the Democratic primary. Mitt Romney's association with the Republican party chair also makes him the establishment candidate—Democrats could show up in droves, this time not just to stick it to Engler but to stick it to the Republican party.

Still, with Anuzis at the head of the party, Romney is well positioned to get tighter primary rules in place before the election. Unfortunately, all rule changes are ultimately decided at a GOP state committee meeting. Committee members are elected at the state convention—the same place where Yob is a "god with a small g."

"That will play out over the next six to eight months—we're supposed to be paying attention to the governor's race and the senator's race, but there's a lot of jockeying over this rules thing, and it's the most fun the state committee has had in years," says Fred Wszolek. "This is actually something consequential, and state committee members love arcane rules fights."

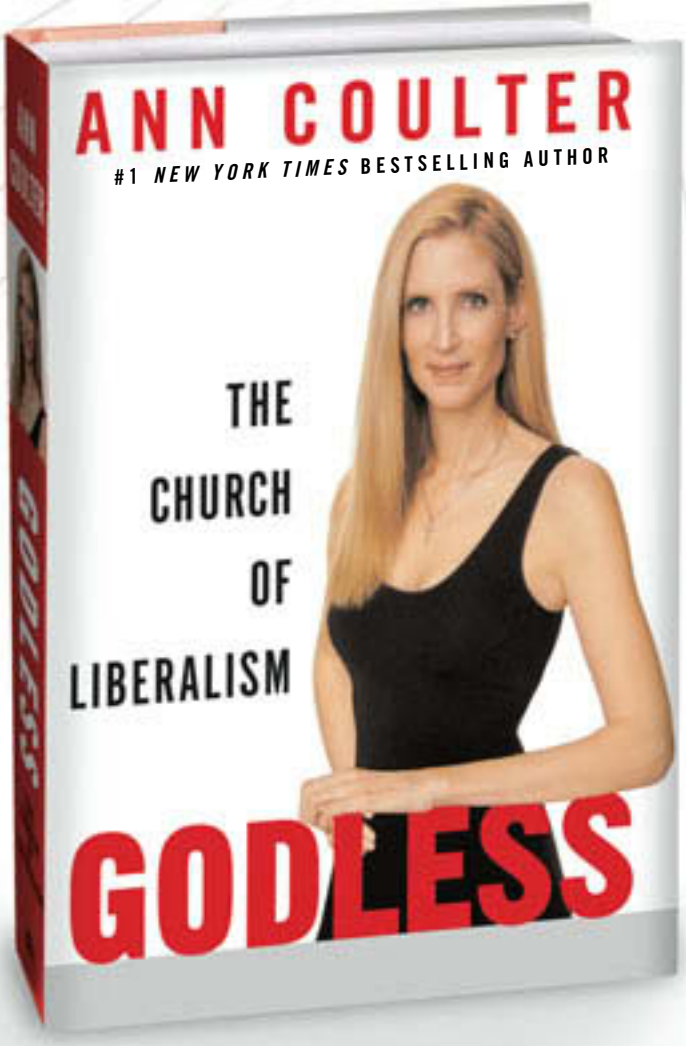
Given that the battle will be fought on the Yobs' turf, it's certain that this is the most fun Chuck and John Yob have had in years—perhaps since 1998.

So while camera crews descend on Iowa and New Hampshire in the next year, those interested in the 2008 presidential election might be better off keeping an eye trained on the Michigan GOP's smoke-filled rooms, where a handful of the party faithful will enter into an "arcane rules debate," the resolution of which will be driven by personal rivalries and allegiances. Given Michigan's significance in the next election, they may inadvertently decide the leader of the free world before a single vote is cast. ♦

Instant #1 *New York Times* Bestseller

ANN COULTER

On the seventh day God rested—and liberals schemed



In the gospel according to Ann, liberalism is finally exposed for what it is—a godless religion with its own churches (government schools, where prayer is banned but condoms are free), its own commandments ("Thou shalt not punish the perp"), its own holy writ (*Roe v. Wade*), and its own creation myth (Darwinian evolution). But now Ann Coulter is fighting back.

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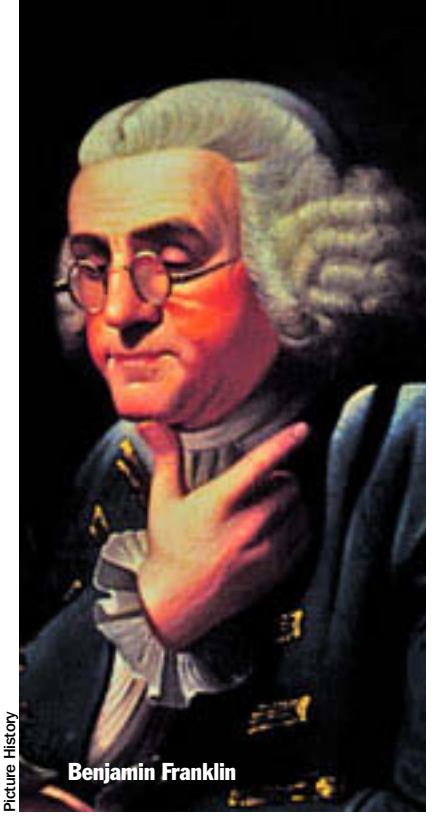
Picture History
Benjamin Franklin

The Spirits of '76

How the United States was invented

By Edwin M. Yoder Jr.

When historians wax nostalgic over golden ages it's often a sign that the present age is leaden. That may account for the attention that distinguished historians have recently lavished on the American founding generation, none more distinguished than the author of this study of "revolutionary characters."

The seven subjects of these gems of compression and fluency might once have been labeled "Founding Fathers." But patriarchal labels are gone with the wind, and Gordon S. Wood has chosen the double-edged term "characters": double-edged because the term connotes both integrity and eccentricity. All eight—Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, Hamilton, Madison, Burr, and Thomas Paine—were uncommon men, although with the exception of Burr, the son (and grandson) of a president of Princeton, all were self-made, an aristocracy of merit, the first of their families to enjoy advanced education and national and international prominence.

Revolutionary Characters
What Made the Founders Different
by Gordon S. Wood
Penguin, 336 pp., $25.95

Certainly, revolution was their lifelong preoccupation. The term acquired a grisly resonance when the French Jacobins bent it to their bloodier ends in the 1790s; but for Washington and Company, a quarter-century earlier, it was a sedate metaphor borrowed from astronomy: less an upheaval than a shifting of orbits and alignments. Edmund Burke may have been the first, as he was certainly the most eminent, to mark the crucial distinction.

There is a note of sadness here, for Wood seems to believe that our present political habits would appall his gentlemen revolutionists. In their view, if republicanism was to gain a foothold in a world hostile to it, the great danger was the tendency of a polity to gravitate toward the "fiscal/military state": a style familiar in that monarchical world. Such states made war to justify standing armies, maintained armies to excuse high taxation, and generated bloated public debts to attach influential creditors to them. Sound dangerously familiar?

This was certainly the Jeffersonian view, and of course, the important dissenter was Alexander Hamilton. Before he fell to Burr's bullet, Hamil-

Edwin M. Yoder Jr., a former Washington editor and columnist, was once, briefly, an assistant professor of American history.

ton, a stickler for honor, had survived 10 challenges, written 51 of the influential Federalist Papers, and, as Washington's secretary of the Treasury and "prime minister," fashioned four "reports" that would become blueprints for the military-industrial state with its public debt and dependent retainers. Hamilton's prescience has exposed him to caricature as an apologist for greed and proto-Wall Streeter, even as pop history has caricatured Jefferson as a racist child molester prowling the servants' quarters. But Gordon Wood is a student of nuances and complexities who has no truck with the distortions that are so prevalent in public discourse today.

If, for the sake of argument, one takes the Jeffersonian outlook as the norm of what republicanism meant to the revolutionists of 1776, the seven companion figures fall into place. John Adams, for instance, was a genuine eccentric with a chronic sense of being unappreciated, "the political scientist par excellence" who, as he went about his public errands raising funds for the Revolution, rarely ceased theorizing about government. The ultimate result was his clotted treatise, *A Defence of the Constitutions of . . . the United States of America*, which, according to Wood, misapprehended the new American system.

Adams was stubbornly committed to the ideals of 18th-century British constitutionalism, the "mixed" system in which parliament balanced royal prerogative. The new U.S. Constitution seemed to him, to his delight, to mirror this mixed system. But he failed to grasp a vital difference: Sovereignty had shifted from king to people. Wood's conceit is that he was a study in both "relevance and irrelevance." Adams was very nearly as irrelevant as a constitutional theorist as he was relevant as a practical revolutionary.

Adams's foil was the venerable Dr. Benjamin Franklin ("master of masquerade," Wood calls him), mythologist, long before Horatio Alger, of the rags-to-riches story, already a world figure of science, honorary Oxonian, and stubborn fan of the British imperial system when the others profiled here were in knee pants. During their joint mission to France, Adams felt, with his usual sense of neglect, that he did the work while the old stager Franklin, tricked out in Quaker garb and coonskin hat, slept or flirted.

Perhaps Wood's most brilliant piece explores the so-called "Madison problem." How, it has recently been asked, does one reconcile James Madison, the constitutional architect of 1787-89, with the Madison who almost immediately followed: fierce critic of two Federalist administrations and collaborator in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions?

Wood dismisses the "problem" as an academic mirage, born of excessive attention to (and misinterpretation of) Madison's writings, especially his Federalist 10, and inattention to the "historical Madison," statesman and president. The clue is what Madison sought in his Virginia Plan for constitutional revision: a central power to veto mischievous state laws, which he viewed as a menace. Hence his proposed Council of Revision, a body empowered to weigh the constitutionality of state laws before they took effect.

The idea fell by the wayside in Philadelphia, despite his passionate pleading. Thereafter, Wood suggests, the great note-taker of the convention was vitally interested in little else.

No book of this sort would be complete without portraits of Washington and Jefferson. Wood's Washington is the *pater patriae* as self-invented man, obsessively attentive to his roles (theatrical metaphors permeate these essays), internalizing the standard maxims and manuals of gentlemanly good form that would bring him the eminence he sought—and deserved. And, incidentally, dressing the part.

He became the Cincinnatus redux of whom George III himself said that if the victorious Washington voluntarily laid down his sword, he would be "the greatest man in the world." He did; he was. Jefferson, meanwhile, is for Gordon Wood "a virtual Polyanna . . . the pure American innocent . . . a confused secular humanist in the midst of real moral majorities." The labels, out of their context, sound skewed and patronizing. In context he makes them fit.

The anomalies here are Aaron Burr, the well-born rascal, and Thomas Paine, the pamphleteer as rabble-rouser. Burr's career was, we know, insouciant—dedicated to disunion, if not treason. Paine's forte was the mediation of revolutionary sentiment to the masses, in America and then in France. To his credit, he opposed the execution of Louis XVI, and was imprisoned by the Parisian red-hots he had earlier idealized. He fled back to America to die in obscurity. William Cobbett, his spiritual heir, later carried his forgotten bones back to England.

Wood calls Paine our first "public intellectual," but others might say that his passionate pamphleteering was longer on tinseled phrases than sober reflection. One senses that Paine was more modern in temperament and talent than the other ghosts of this lost world: He would be right at home nowadays as a ranting head on the cable spectrum, spewing instant opinions on a scale of one to ten. Wood is right, however, to declare him the most neglected of his seven "revolutionary characters." He is rarely named among the Founders.

Gordon Wood certainly makes the case his subtitle promises: What made the Founders *different*. The corollary, however, is an elegiac tone, a bass note of regret, a fear that the degeneration these revolutionists feared has already set in; that we have forgotten, to our peril, that virtue, in all its post-Renaissance senses (including self-denial), is the foundation of a republic.

But Wood is too fine a historian to seek ideological reinforcement in the fine meshes of the past. If we can't turn back the clock, we can at least enjoy a master historian's refreshing reassessment of seven men whose legacies live on. The book may be a quilt sewn of many patches, but it never reads that way. It has the integrity and, yes, the eccentricity of the Founders it celebrates. ♦

Man of Mystery

The case for the novels of Loren D. Estleman.

BY JON L. BREEN

Loren D. Estleman wrote most of his first novel in longhand during sessions of an Elizabethan poetry class at Eastern Michigan University. Some of that poetry must have sunk in subliminally, because he has become one of the great stylists in contemporary fiction, one of the few popular writers—Raymond Chandler was another—worth reading strictly for the beauty of their prose, their loving manipulation of language. The closest present-day comparison working similar ground may be Robert B. Parker, but Estleman is far superior in ambition and achievement.

Nicotine Kiss
by Loren D. Estleman
Forge, 256 pp., $23.95

Little Black Dress
by Loren D. Estleman
Forge, 240 pp., $23.95

The Undertaker's Wife
by Loren D. Estleman
Forge, 288 pp., $23.95

At least three barriers serve to deny (or delay) the serious literary reputation Estleman deserves: He is prolific; he is versatile; and he writes in popular genres.

That first book, *The Oklahoma Punk* (1976, reprinted as *Red Highway*), an unoriginal case study of a Prohibition-era bank robber, offers a first glimpse of preoccupations that would mark the 23-year-old author's future work: historical detail, western background, shifting in time (from 1933 to 1922 and back), and frequent film allusions. The name of the very first character introduced, special agent William Farnum, resonates with old movie buffs. Throughout his career, Estleman, who acknowledges the influences on his first novel of Elmore Leonard, Edward Anderson, and W.R. Burnett, has paid direct or indirect homage to the authors who have gone before, while probing the edges of the fiction, film, and legend they have created.

Estleman the literary chameleon can adopt whatever style suits his subject matter. While it's questionable that rewriting two Victorian horror classics as Sherlock Holmes novels was a project worth doing, *Sherlock Holmes Versus Dracula; or, The Adventure of the Sanguinary Count* (1978) and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Holmes* (1979) capture the Conan Doyle/Dr. Watson prose style as perfectly as any of the hordes of pastiche writers.

Most of Estleman's output of more than 50 novels can be grouped into four categories: The cases of private investigator Amos Walker, the saga of hired killer Peter Macklin, a series on the 20th-century history of Detroit, and westerns. Three of these product lines are represented in new books appearing within the last twelve months.

Walker, who first appeared in *Motor City Blue* (1980), is an old-fashioned loner private eye in a rapidly changing world. The first-person narrative approximates the style and voice of Chandler's Philip Marlowe as successfully as any of that simile master's imitators, while observing Detroit as acutely as Chandler captured Los Angeles. The sense of chronological displacement is stronger than ever in *Nicotine Kiss*. In a post-9/11 world of Homeland Security, eBay, and Harry Potter, Walker scatters allusions to Perry Como, Clifton Webb, radio quizzes, and movie cowboys. Defining his role, Walker seems to be channeling Carroll John Daly's pioneering 1920s private eye, Race Williams, who described himself as a halfway house between the cops and the crooks: "Chaos and order, black and white, the rock and the hard place. I'd built my business square between them. That makes me the only police force some people can turn to when they have a complaint. It's a definite niche."

In his latest case, Walker adheres to the private-eye code as surely as Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade. Jeff Starzek, a smuggler of cigarettes and other contraband across the Canadian border, has gone missing. Though Walker neither knew him well nor liked him much, it was Starzek who delivered him to the hospital when he was shot outside a Michigan bar on the first day of deer season. Hobbling around on a cane after a lengthy hospital stay, Walker takes the case, working out a satisfyingly twisty plot involving counterfeiting and murder.

The requisite mystery and hard action are present, but the quotable narrative and dialogue are the main attractions. Walker on babies: "I'd never paid them that much attention. They can't answer questions and don't hit very hard." On the continuing challenge to law enforcement: "The only sure way to stop a crime is to make it legal." On the Detroit winter: "The first snow of November is still there in April, covered by layers like lasagna, each dyed a different color by the soot and oxidized iron that has bled into it in varying amounts." A Homeland Security agent on an important distinction: "Islamics pray to Allah. Islamists only get on their knees to blow an arms dealer."

A doctor who has just admonished Walker for straining his bad leg to the edge of amputation isn't surprised the shamus doesn't have insurance: "From what I've seen, you couldn't get a group rate with the bullfighters' union. What are you, a crash dummy for Smith and Wesson?"

Walker replies, "Only on the side. The rest of the time I'm a detective."

Doctor: "I thought detectives were stealthy."

Walker: "I didn't say I was any good at it."

Jon L. Breen is the author, most recently, of Eye of God.

Little Black Dress features Peter Macklin, who was introduced as a killer for hire in *Kill Zone* (1984) and has returned four times since. From the beginning, Macklin has had domestic troubles, including an understandably alcoholic wife and a drug-taking son who wants to follow in his dad's hit-man footsteps. Now he has another wife, has given up assassination for hire, and is trying to escape the remnants of his bloody past. But you just know he won't bring it off. For me, the Macklin saga, a multivolume soap opera in which crooks off each other (or try to) like the principals in a Roadrunner cartoon, is the least rewarding part of Estleman's oeuvre.

Still, *Little Black Dress* has its benefits: a terrific final line, and some pointed satire on a jerk bestselling author who, enamored of the big bookstore chains, grouses about his present book-signing venue: "I don't like independents. They all smell like old magazines and they treat me like an idiot because I'm not starving."

There is no new title in Estleman's multivolume history of 20th-century Detroit, but the books are worth seeking out. *Jitterbug* (1998) gives a vivid sense of the World War II home front, with the Ford plant converted to defense uses, a migration of southern blacks and poor whites creating racial tensions, and a throat-slitting serial killer disguised as a soldier (and, in his own twisted mind, a patriot) who takes his victims' ration books and leaves the trademark message, KILROY WAS HERE. *Edsel* (1995), narrated by former newspaperman Connie Minor, now in advertising and assigned the top-secret job of promoting the titular car line, offers some great 1950s advertising history, including Winston's introduction of its filter-tip cigarette and the marketing success of Ivory Soap "because the careless way it was milled caused it to float in the bathtub."

A Ford executive admits, "The first car we ever made was the best. It climbed mountains and crossed deserts on a teaspoonful of gas and any kid with a pair of pliers could fix anything that went wrong with it. It's all been downhill since the Model T. We just add lights and horns and whistles so people won't notice."

Unlike his fellow writer of 20th-century historicals, Max Allan Collins, Estleman rarely includes a note separating fact from fiction, and *Edsel* could use one: I wondered how many of his Ford executives were real people.

The inevitable fading of the western in contemporary culture—from film, television, the bookshelves—may cause us to neglect some of our best

Forge / Deborah Morgan

Loren D. Estleman

American writing. Some of Estleman's westerns are fairly traditional. *Sudden Country* (1991), which transplants *Treasure Island* to the Texas Panhandle, includes the following classic shoot-'em-up dialogue: "'Why did you kill Peckler?' / 'Son of a bitch cheated at cards.' / 'You weren't playing cards.' / 'I recollected suddenlike.'"

His more recent works in the genre, though they include gunfights and colorful historical personages, are far more unusual and represent the pinnacle of his achievement as a novelist. Recognizing that many frontiersmen were better educated than today's college graduates, Estleman writes eloquent dialogue for his westerners, abjuring semiliterate cowboy dialect. He goes beyond the ranchers, cattle rustlers, and lawmen to feature people in other walks of life, while displaying a James M. Cain-like interest in how things work in particular jobs and industries.

The Rocky Mountain Moving Picture Association (1999) is a tribute to the pre-World War I pioneers who fought the Edison monopoly and invented movies as we know them. Its protagonist, wannabe writer Dmitri Pulski, takes the name Tom Boston in tribute to Jack London and leaves the family ice business, though not before it is delineated as vividly and knowledgeably as the movie business, *circa* 1913. *The Master Executioner* (2001) follows meticulous, scientific hangman Oscar Stone from the Civil War to 1897, describing his work in rich and unjudgmental detail. (It's remarkable that a novel on this subject should take no position for or against capital punishment.)

The similarly structured *The Undertaker's Wife* illuminates 19th-century mortuary practices. We first meet the famous restorer of corpses, Richard Connable, late in his career, near the turn of the 20th century. Elihu Warrick, "the well-known Chicago speculator, railroad investor, and meatpacking magnate," has committed suicide while en route from New York on the Michigan Central. Connable, though semiretired, at least in the mind of his wife Lucy, is summoned from Buffalo to Cleveland to prepare the deceased for an open-casket funeral, while concealing the bullet wound in Warrick's head lest the fact of his suicide cause a shareholders' panic.

The action flashes back to Civil War-era Monroe, Michigan, where Lucy is first attracted to Richard because of his remarkable job reconstructing the ravaged face of her twin brother, a Union infantryman killed in an explosion. Their personal and professional story continues in San Francisco and several other points along the way, including Hays City, Kansas, where the colorful sheriff, Wild Bill Hickok, sends Connable considerable business.

With the violence mostly offstage, the emphasis is on the characters. Neither a traditional Western nor a mystery nor even a crime story, *The Under-*

taker's Wife is more than anything a study of marriage.

Estleman's *Writing the Popular Novel* (2004), which can be recommended for its insights and entertainment value even to those who never intend to write a word for publication, reveals much about his outlook and methods. Though a language purist who spends a whole chapter called "Gears and Pulleys" on English mechanics, he is enough of a maverick to defend the use of *contact* as a verb on the reasonable ground that no single word does the same job.

In excerpts from a journal he kept while writing *Bloody Season* (1988), a novel of the OK Corral gunfight closely based on the historical record, he describes the process of making a credible fictional character from an extremely contradictory historical personage, Wyatt Earp. How could the same man have both Earp's positive attributes (solid friendships, devotion to duty, fidelity to second wife) and his negative ones (desertion of first wife, arrests for horse thievery, and a confidence game)? At first believing Earp was essentially a gambler, Estleman finally decided the key that explained the complex Earp was something he constantly reiterated to interviewers: He was a businessman.

For all the admiring reviews and steady sales his books have received, a great popular writer may be passing under the radar. When it was suggested that his writing manual should have "a subtitle promising lessons on how to write a best-selling novel," Estleman had to point out a hitch: "I explained that since I'd never written a best-selling novel, I wouldn't know where to begin. This confession surprised some editors, who assumed that because my name had been around since man learned to walk upright, I must have cracked the venerated *New York Times* list many times. My sales have always been respectable, although not spectacular."

Given that Estleman is as outstanding and as accessible a writer as any regular inhabitant of the lists—indeed, vastly better than most—I can only wonder why everyone isn't reading him. ♦

Life vs. Death

The religion of the 'Right to Choose.'

BY WESLEY J. SMITH

Ramesh Ponnuru's readers already know that he is a political writer of considerable intelligence and skill. Now, in his first book, he demonstrates the talent to become an author of considerable influence. His prose is clear and to the point, and the logic of his narrative compels the reader toward accepting the author's conclusions.

The Party of Death
The Democrats, the Media, the Courts, and the Disregard for Human Life
by Ramesh Ponnuru
Regnery, 320 pp., $27.95

At the same time, Ponnuru refrains from engaging in the kind of bitter vituperation and personal invective against those with whom he disagrees that fouls so much of contemporary political discourse. It is refreshing that, in a book that considers some of the most controversial and emotional issues of our time, the meanest thing about *The Party of Death* is its provocative title.

Ponnuru covers a broad swath of hot-potato cultural and political issues, ranging from abortion, to embryonic stem cell research, to assisted suicide, to the mainstream media's general incompetence and bias in covering these issues. And while he doesn't quite accuse the Democratic party as a whole of representing the "party of death," he comes very close. More precisely, Ponnuru effectively demonstrates that the *national* Democratic party (there are plenty of local pro-life Democrats) is the primary engine driving our country toward accepting killing as an answer to life's difficulties and a solution to the problems associated with human suffering.

The author's primary target is *Roe* v. *Wade*. And here, his thesis about Democrats is unassailable. Supporting the "right to choose" is an *uber* litmus test for any ambitious party member seeking national influence. Indeed, Ponnuru identifies nationally influential pro-choice Democrats who began their political careers in the pro-life camp: Bill Clinton, Al Gore, Dick Gephardt, and Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, who used to boast that he had five times served as master of ceremonies at Springfield pro-life rallies, but who now supports partial-birth abortion. Even Delaware senator Joe Biden, who is running for president, once voted to amend the Constitution to reverse *Roe*.

This is in stark contrast to the big tent Democratic Party of yore that took a far more ecumenical view of abortion. Indeed, some of the party's most esteemed leaders of the past were pro-life, including Hubert Humphrey and Edmund Muskie. The Democratic party "was the party of the little guy," Ponnuru quips. "Yet somehow, it turned its back on the littlest guy of all."

The first third of the book effectively deconstructs most, but not all, of the arguments in favor of abortion rights. Ponnuru quotes embryology textbooks to demonstrate unequivocally that, scientifically, human biological life begins with the completion of fertilization. This refutes Mario Cuomo's nonsensical assertion that only religious belief leads to the conclusion that life begins at conception. Then Ponnuru

Wesley J. Smith is the author, most recently, of a revised and updated Forced Exit: Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide, and the New Duty to Die.

AP Photo / Marcy Nighswander

smacks down Cuomo like a professional wrestling champion when he quotes the governor's 1984 Notre Dame speech, in which Cuomo made the stunning assertion that today's Roman Catholic Church should be as "realistic" about abortion as it was about slavery in the pre-Civil War era, an evil the Holy See apparently failed to condemn unequivocally.

"It is a mark of contemporary liberalism's commitment to abortion," Ponnuru writes, "that one of its leading lights should have been willing to support temporizing on slavery in order to defend it."

But Ponnuru doesn't confront as forcefully the primary reason abortion is legal up to and including the moment just prior to birth. This involves competing liberty interests: the right to life of the unborn human being versus the right to personal autonomy of the already-born woman.

Abortion is legal not because a fetus isn't really a human being, or even because it isn't deemed a "person," a philosophical and bioethical notion that attributes moral value to possessing minimal cognitive capacities. Rather, the real nexus of the debate is whether *or under what circumstances* society should be able to force a pregnant woman to do with her body that which she does not wish to do, namely gestate and give birth. Ponnuru does not sufficiently explain why (in his view) a woman's autonomy right should come second to the right to life of a fetus, particularly early in pregnancy.

He does, however, identify the right question to ask about this and other comparable issues: Does human life have intrinsic value simply because it is human? Answering in the affirmative is crucial to achieving universal human rights. Otherwise, who matters more and who matters less—who lives and who dies—depends on who has the power to decide. Moreover, Ponnuru demonstrates that the wrong answer is the key that opens the door to various killing practices beyond abortion. These include euthanasia, treating nascent and cognitively disabled humans as mere natural resources (embryonic stem cell research, cloned fetal farming, organ harvesting from patients in a persistent vegetative state, etc.), and resurrecting eugenics policies that would not only wipe out people with Down Syndrome, which is already happening, but also potentially lead to genetic engineering aimed at creating a "post-human" race of superbeings.

Ponnuru shows that the national Democratic party is either enthusiastically supportive of these other agendas, or at least more likely to be friendly to them. Indeed, while embryonic stem cell research divides Republicans, supporting embryonic stem cell research and human therapeutic cloning are now almost as much a litmus test for national Democrats as is supporting abortion. Ponnuru illustrates this point by ridiculing Ron Reagan's hyping of the curative potential of human cloning in his speech at the 2004 Democratic Convention. He also names some Republican supporters of cloning and embryonic stem cell research as adjunct members of the party of death. Anti-abortion senator Orrin Hatch of Utah apparently believes that the location of an embryo determines whether it is human, while Pennsylvania's Arlen Specter, who once said that he would never support creating embryos for research, now supports therapeutic cloning that would do just that.

Democrats are also more likely to support legalizing assisted suicide, although it must be said that the great sorting-out between the parties on this issue is not nearly as sharp as it was with abortion. Perhaps this is because one of the Democrats' primary constituencies is the disability rights movement, which also happens to implacably oppose assisted suicide.

Ponnuru closes by ruminating on the potential political impact of the demise of *Roe* v. *Wade*. While some believe it would hurt the Republican party, he is not so sure: In the end, he hopes, allowing the people actually to decide the extent to which abortion should be legal may eventually result in the demise of the cultural party of death:

> If abortion had not become the law of the land, we might not now be debating euthanasia or the killing of human embryos for research purposes. The same process might work in reverse. The more we reject abortion, the more we might come to reject other choices for death, too. . . . Most Americans already know that abortion is wrong. If *Roe* falls—when it falls—pro lifers will be able to demonstrate another truth about abortion: We can live without it.

Agree or disagree with Ramesh Ponnuru's measured, yet passionate, defense of the pro-life cause, *The Party of Death* is a book worthy of being read and pondered. ♦

Battling Babylon

Why Christians should be watching, not boycotting, movies. **BY S.T. KARNICK**

Christians and Hollywood have usually been at odds with each other, and given that the American movie and television industries turn a tidy, regular profit, it has become clear to many Christians that they will have to be the ones to mend the breach. *Behind the Screen* makes the practical, intellectual, and theological case for such an effort.

Behind the Screen
Hollywood Insiders On Faith, Film, and Culture
Edited by Spencer Lewerenz and Barbara Nicolosi
Baker, 216 pp., $14.99

Christians' well-known complaint is that Hollywood films and TV programs generally disparage Christianity and promote immorality. The authors here accept that premise but tend to blame Christians for the problem. On the whole, contributors say, Christians have been too negative, too philistine, and too unsophisticated in their approach to the entertainment industry.

The authors are largely correct in that assessment, though there is more to the story than that. Since the 1960s, Hollywood has frequently gone out of its way to characterize Christians and Christianity as narrow-minded, foolish, and dangerous. Even sympathetic treatments, such as NBC's recent series *The Book of Daniel*, seem to take pains to be as edgy and snide as possible in their depiction of all things Christian.

Christians' bashing and boycotts certainly haven't changed Hollywood's ways. As one contributor astutely notes, Christians' criticism of the film industry has been counterproductive, as executives "see Christians as negative people who . . . won't watch no matter what we make, so why bother making shows for them?"

The attempt to build a parallel Christian culture during the past couple of decades has only reinforced that impression. Moreover, it has failed aesthetically because the quality standards have been too low, and it has not succeeded in pulling Christians away from Hollywood fare. As another contributor notes, "In poll after poll, the esteemed sociologist George Barna reaffirms Christians go to the movies *at the exact same rate* as the rest of the country."

Clearly, Christian leaders' complaints about the industry are falling on deaf ears, even among their own followers. There is a good reason for this. Christians who criticize the media, a contributor notes, tend to count up the number of images they don't like in a film while failing to see the real meaning of the stories. "Sometimes," another writer observes, "it will serve the Truth to have the bad guys get away with murder." After all, Scripture itself depicts numerous horrible actions. The events depicted in a film are not all-important; what counts is what they mean.

Hence, as another contributor acknowledges, Christian art need not be explicitly religious in content—which should be an obvious point but has been largely underappreciated in contemporary believers' encounters with the arts:

> A television show doesn't need to have an angel in the cast to be about mercy. A film doesn't have to quote Scripture to put the Gospel in people's hearts. If the world will know us by our fruits, then by our cop shows and romantic comedies and thrillers they can know us too. I want to write so that the Good News is so entwined in the muscle of what I am writing that it can't be stripped away, can't be disregarded.

Of course, few Hollywood writers see that as their mission, because "the principal reason for the moral confusion that ends up on the screen is the paucity of happy, well-catechized believers in the entertainment industry. The world does not need a 'Christian cinema' so much as it needs more Christians in cinema," writes one contributor. Hence, another argues, "the only way to change the product coming out of Hollywood is to change the hearts of the people producing them"—by Christianizing them, as it were.

Given the attitudes prevalent among Hollywood's film industry, that seems an unlikely prospect. Concentrating such efforts on younger denizens of Hollywood, however, shows promise. Another long-term approach that seems likely to work is for more Christians to go to Hollywood and work hard to succeed there. Following this line of thought, several contributors (whose own careers show that Christians can make it in Hollywood without compromising their faith) provide invaluable insights into how those so inclined might follow that path.

For outsiders, however, gaining influence remains difficult. One astute contributor holds up GLAAD, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, as a model for how to engage Hollywood: Contact producers, studios, and programmers directly to call attention to gratuitous offenses, and then offer positive suggestions—"in a non-confrontational tone"—about how future media products could be made more authentic and more sensitive to Christians.

This is absolutely correct: Christians should become more attuned to the real, often subtle, meanings behind various works of art and should be far quicker to praise the persons responsible for these good works. In that regard, Christian media critics can be immensely valuable—and to increase

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Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert in 'It Happened One Night' (1934)

Everett Collection

their influence, they should make every effort to push themselves into mainstream media outlets.

Of course, the best way to influence Hollywood is the old-fashioned way: Buy your way in. Unfortunately, for a serious investor to gain a foothold in the entertainment industry would require a minimum of $10 billion, because a firm cannot survive in the modern international market unless it holds the same sort of vertically and horizontally integrated components as the current conglomerates.

In the meantime, there is something useful all believers can do to effect change in Hollywood. As the Christian public relations expert Jonathan Bock notes in his essay, the way to "change the culture for the betterment of everyone" is to "go to *more* movies. . . . No boycotts. No press conferences. No marches. . . . The conflict between Christians and Hollywood will be solved not with the pen or the sword, but with our seats."

Bock is certain that this is possible because, according to the Gallup Poll, 43 percent of Americans attend church every Sunday—over 120 million people: "Christians are a gigantic, if unreliable, market. If we begin attending more films, we will become the largest moviegoing market in the world." Given that Christians already go to films as regularly as the rest of the population, an increase in attendance—and greater sophistication in choosing which movies to support—would surely have an effect.

Bock points out the benefits Christians can expect from a better relationship with Hollywood: more respectful treatment in movies, as producers make sure not to offend a serious cash cow; "more of the movies we like and less of the ones we don't," as producers chase a large market; and "perhaps most significant, over several years our labors will reintroduce the church to mainstream culture."

Bock correctly notes that Christians are "of the lineage of Michelangelo, Raphael, Shakespeare, Lewis, Tolkien, and Caravaggio," and that "there was a time when Christians were the undisputed masters of art and literature." As many Christians have withdrawn into a "safe" religious subculture, "Mainstream culture has moved on without us, and the world of entertainment has coarsened in our absence."

That is the real tragedy of the war between Hollywood and Christianity, and although Christians have by no means been the worst offenders in the fight, the contributors to *Behind the Screen* are correct to suggest that there is much we can do to end it. That, as Bock notes, would be good for everybody. ♦

Little Big Books

The red and green guides to the wisdom of the ancient world. **BY TRACY LEE SIMMONS**

They do catch the eye, those handsome, pint-sized green and red books keeping their own elite company in the more recondite or otherwise up-market bookstores.

Their simple covers don't flash, though they fairly sing—*sotto voce*—their authority. They may look quaint, but these midget volumes have become the missals of the bookish classes. Generations have known them as "the Loebs," though they belong to what is properly called the Loeb Classical Library, and, within the English-speaking world, they are deemed an essential accouterment to the life of the mind. For within them we can find, in all their antiquated Greek and Latin glory, those exquisite feats of the ancient Greeks and Romans in poetry, drama, philosophy, and history—not to mention architecture, agriculture, geography, engineering, mathematics, botany, zoology, and even horsemanship and hunting.

A Loeb Classical Library Reader
Harvard, 240 pp., $9.95

Although they don't strike us as the stuff of bestsellers, their ubiquity surprises. One finds them equipping almost every public and institutional library in the land, as well as residing in not a few household libraries amassed by those with yearnings for intellectual nourishment of the genuine kind. They look far more erudite than a set of Penguins. They certify seriousness. Employing the royal "we" in a way only she could do, Virginia Woolf, a creditable amateur classicist herself, who once called Greek "the perfect language," said, "We shall never be independent of our Loeb." And she meant it.

The source of the Loeb Library's cachet may be shrouded from us in a trifling age, but that of their popularity isn't hard to discover: Along with the original Greek and Latin texts printed on the left-hand page as each book opens—texts, to say the least, of circumscribed value to most people—on the right-hand side we find crisp, unembellished English translations. The Loebs are the world's classiest crib, a trot for grownups. They are classics with a safety net. Here was an excellent innovation for those who have mentally mislaid the mastery of the classical languages they gained in schooldays. Here was also a perfect device for those who never learned them, and they make a somewhat larger crowd these days.

Despite the sense many of us have that the Loeb Classical Library has always been there, it has in fact existed for only just under a hundred years. The series was founded in 1911 by James Loeb, a gentleman of parts who was both a classicist and a successful businessman, and his goal was straightforwardly democratic in spirit: To make the finest, most consequential literature of the classical Greeks and Romans accessible, if not to the huddled masses exactly, then certainly to the hundreds of thousands of an emerging educated class whose schooling had not embraced the old classical curriculum when they opted for the applied sciences or an earlier form of Humanities Lite.

Loeb and the founding editors, the formidable classical scholars and teachers T.E. Page and W.H.D. Rouse, believed that this group sported as much need as any for the Good, the True, and the Beautiful—and, in the new age dawning of mechanical wonders, perhaps more.

That this grand inheritance might be conferred without forbidding labor, the new requisite for the educated man and woman was to be not a classical education (with all its numbing rigors and extravagant demands) but a curious, reasonably informed mind aspiring to know much more. The Loeb Classical Library wasn't only for them, as scholars were also to benefit from clean texts tricky to come by; but it served the nonprofessional aspirants best.

Matthew Arnold once wrote that the "power of the Latin classic is in character, that of the Greek is in beauty," which makes a tall order for translators of either language. Yet the scholars commissioned by the Loeb's editors for almost a century have produced splendid renderings of the best from each language that all readers of English can understand. Which is not to say that the language used in all volumes matches our own. The translations are inevitably unequal, not only because translators differ in skill, but also because some texts have neither been retranslated nor the editions revised.

The Loebs have their shortcomings. They lean towards the literal, which is why some translations of lyric poetry—poetry once defined as that which cannot be translated—are less than pleasing. They're also products of their time, which is why, depending on the date of publication, Plato can come off at times sounding like nothing so much as an Edwardian gentleman in tweeds, with Malacca cane and pince-nez ("But surely, my good sir . . . "). As they inevitably do, these translations have taken on the complexions of the eras from which they arose: The phrases, the idioms, and most certainly the reticences. But on the whole, the bargain has been sound.

The Loebs may err from time to time on the side of dull directness, but overseers of the series have always

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aimed for simplicity, precision, accuracy, and comprehensibility, and with minimal annotation. For all this, readers have been the richer.

From the publication of the first volume of the series in 1912 (the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius) the Loeb Library, which never published in any particular order of works, has always catered more to those unable or too unpracticed to read Greek: 322 of the current collection are greens (Greek), while only 177 are reds (Latin). The Top Ten Loeb Bestsellers are predictable: Homer (three volumes), Virgil (two volumes), Ovid, Hesiod, Caesar, Aristotle, and the All-Time Number One, the Plato volume containing the dialogues *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*, and the *Phaedrus*.

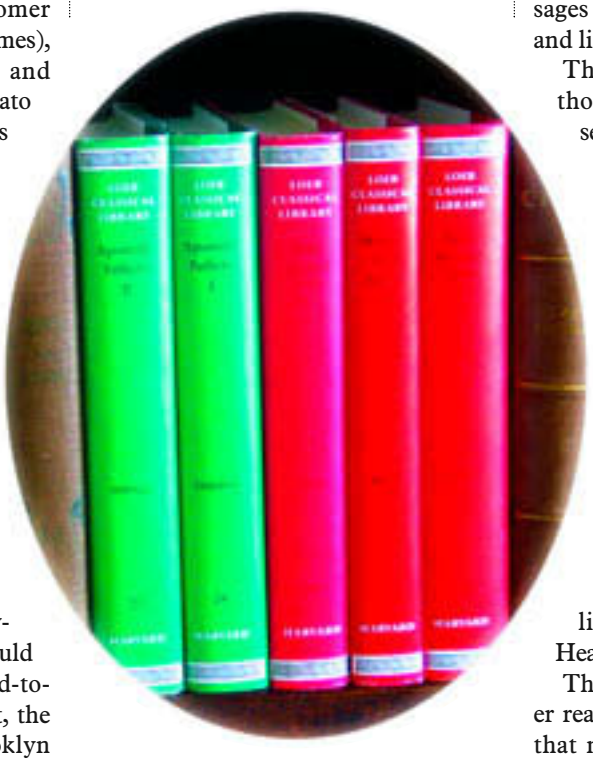
Not surprisingly, these volumes hew closely to those texts most often assigned in schools and universities.

When surveyed as a whole, the Loeb Classical Library does make an arrestingly imposing set of books, so much so that the Harvard University Press has broadcast some fun facts worthy of Trivial Pursuit. The Loebs take up precisely 43 feet of shelf space, weigh 372 pounds, and were anyone ever inspired to do this, he could stack the volumes vertically end-to-end to build a column of 276 feet, the height of each tower of the Brooklyn Bridge.

With statistics on offer like these, we know we're about to observe something big. Out to celebrate the release of the 500th volume (the Roman rhetorician Quintilian's *Lesser Declamations I*, expertly translated and edited by the distinguished classical scholar D.R. Shackleton Bailey), Harvard has also issued this *Loeb Classical Library Reader*, an appropriately diminutive collection of excerpts of the greatest hits from the series.

You might call practically anything published in the Loeb Classical Library one of the world's greatest hits, but this anthology provides a leisurely flat-rock skip across the wide, roistering seas of ancient experience. Nevertheless, while the current general editor, Jeffrey Henderson, claims that selecting passages for the *Reader* "occasioned no little debate" among those charged with the choosing, the result satisfies.

All choices, each strikingly brief, make eminent sense. Although few seem especially predestined for the collection, we might be astonished if some had been left out. Anything by Homer meets the gold standard, and the



choices are legion, but the editors settle here on the episode of Odysseus escaping from the Cyclops's cave. Antigone's struggle of conscience to defy the state that she might give proper burial rites to her brother still speaks down the centuries through the play of Sophocles. And within the pages of the *Phaedo*, Socrates bids farewell on the eve of his execution. Aeneas relates the fall of Troy to Dido in the *Aeneid*.

Not all the predictable selections are poetic or dramatic. All those who were made to read Xenophon in Greek class would recall that bit from the *Anabasis* where he joined the army of 10,000 mercenaries crouching before Babylon. The works of Herodotus, exploring as they did the cultural differences among ethnic groups and nation-states, take on timely urgency as he describes the triggers of war between the Greeks and the Persians. Thucydides, in his astringently dispassionate history, recounts how Nicias, the Athenian general, sought to turn his countrymen away from the foolhardiness of invading Sicily. And Plutarch, fascinated with the intersection of history and character, describes the nobility of Brutus. All of these short passages are monuments both to history and literature.

The *Reader* is nicely seasoned, though, with a few extracts whose selection few would have foreseen, and these make for wide-eyed perusal. The Jewish historian Josephus expands on Herod's palace at Masada. We find the Hymn to Demeter of Callimachus, Aristophanes, some Lucian, a spot of Terence, a dab of Propertius, the Elder and Younger Pliny, and (most surprising to me) a segment of the *Astronomica* of Manilius. The collection is topped off with a whimsical letter of St. Jerome, who muses on the pleasures of the bucolic life and their foreshadowings of Heaven.

These byway pieces most of us never read in school, and they remind us that more always waits to be discovered. And raising the curtain on the slightest portions of these treasures may be this anthology's greatest virtue. Wide gulfs still separate us from the ancients whenever we try to match their thoughts too cozily to ours. The persistent proximity of the eye to the original languages alongside their English renditions encourages all readers, whether scholars or laymen, to exercise humility, to beware of those blithe conclusions about what Homer or Virgil, Plato or Cicero, Herodotus or Tacitus, *really* meant—cocky declarations that always emerge most effortlessly from those who have never learned a speck of Greek or Latin, or even glanced over to see what they look like. ♦

Crazy Funny

Shedding light on the dark side of American life.

BY STEPHEN BARBARA

Charles D'Ambrosio

Portland Tribune / L.E. Basco

I first came across Charles D'Ambrosio's fiction when reviewing *The Best American Short Stories 2004*, a book that one excitable critic praised as featuring the "heavy hitters" of contemporary literature.

Well, the only heavy hitting I can recall was my chin falling to my chest as the generally humorless fiction collected there lulled me to sleep. But D'Ambrosio's contribution to the book, the marvelous story "Screenwriter," was different from the others: funny, engaging, superbly crafted. It is also one of the standout works of his new story collection, *The Dead Fish Museum*, which follows on his 1995 debut, *The Point*.

The Dead Fish Museum
Stories
by Charles D'Ambrosio
Knopf, 256 pp., $22

Eight stories make up *The Dead Fish Museum*, six of which originally appeared in the *New Yorker*. But "Screenwriter" is the most representative of D'Ambrosio's fiction: Its hilarity despite dark subject matter, its highly original prose style, and its treatment of a man struggling to maintain sanity (a theme of many of the stories collected here) are all typical of Charles D'Ambrosio.

"Screenwriter" begins with an irresistibly funny question: "How was I supposed to know that any mention of suicide to the phalanx of doctors making Friday rounds would warrant the loss of not only weekend-pass privileges but also the liberty to take a leak in private?" The question is asked by the unnamed narrator, who we learn is a rich and immensely successful Hollywood screenwriter. Yet something has gone very wrong in his life: His producer-wife has left him for the star of his latest film, and recent thoughts of suicide have obsessed him to the point where he's checked himself into the psychiatric ward of a New York hospital.

Many writers would make such a character gloomy, maybe even a bit pathetic. Not D'Ambrosio. Indeed, *his* screenwriter announces early on: "I'm not whining—I'm not one of those whiners," and treats us to a hilarious portrait of the psych ward. Asking an older patient named Carmen for a match, the screenwriter gets treated to a monologue on the woman's lifelong misfortunes. Remembering conversations with other patients, he observes: "Illness was our lingua franca. Patients announced their worst infirmities right off, but no one dared talk about normal life. Oh, no—that was shameful and embarrassing, a botch you didn't bring up in polite conversation."

It is just this concern with other characters and their problems that saves the story from looking inward and growing self-involved. The unreality of Hollywood life has given the screenwriter a deep need for the real and truthful, and he finds it in another resident of the psych ward, a ballerina who's obsessed with burning herself. D'Ambrosio's prose in describing her is among the best in the book, and shows his talent for surprising, imaginative turns of phrase:

> Her nose was fat and fruitlike, a nose for pratfalls and slapstick, not jetés and pirouettes and pliés and whatnot. But her lips were lovely, the color of cold meat, and her eyes sunk deep in their sockets, were clear blue. When you looked into them, you half-expected to see fish swimming around at the back of her head, shy ones.

"Screenwriter" is not the only first-rate work in this collection, however. It begins with the brilliant "The High Divide," which recounts a friendship between a troubled young orphan

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named Ignatius and his well-off counterpart, Donny. At first it seems the boys have nothing in common: Ignatius lives in a Catholic orphanage, his psychotic father wasting away in a nearby hospital, while Donny's wealthy family is a picture of happiness.

But when Donny's father invites the boys to go hiking in the Pacific Northwest, the illusion of happiness is shattered: Donny's father confesses that he's seeing another woman, has decided to divorce Donny's mother, is under immense psychological strain, and suddenly Donny is forced to live through the same painful emotions his orphan friend has endured.

The title story, "The Dead Fish Museum," is equally compelling. A carpenter named Ramage, who once had ambitions of being a filmmaker, is in need of cash and agrees to build the set of a porn movie with two other workers, one black and the other an immigrant from El Salvador. The story, rife with racial and sexual tension, introduces a third conflict when we learn that Ramage has been carrying a loaded handgun in his tool sack and has been planning to shoot himself ("The gun was his constant adversary, like a drug, a deep secret that he kept from others, but it was also his passion, a theater where he poured out his lonely ardor"). The story moves uneasily toward a resolution as the set is built and the movie shot.

Even more electric is "Up North," which tells of a Thanksgiving hunting trip in northern Michigan. The main character, Daly, makes the trip with his wife Caroline, who he knows has been cheating on him serially (he's been reading her diary). Daly is haunted by his wife's past confession that she was raped at the age of 18, but here D'Ambrosio ratchets up the stakes tenfold: The rapist was not a stranger but a friend of Caroline's father—one of the men who'll be at the lodge in Michigan. For the entirety of the trip, Daly will seek to discover the identity of the rapist and will grapple with questions of fidelity and familiarity.

"It was as if she were determined to revisit, over and over, that original moment of absolute strangeness," Daly reflects. "And yet she continued to need the scrim of familiarity I offered, so that the world would fill more sharply with the unfamiliar."

The other stories here do not live up to the high standard set by these four. "Drummond & Son," the tale of a father in Seattle caring for his unstable son, drags in places and does not feature the surprising, original prose we see elsewhere. "Blessing," the story of a young couple settling into a new home, is a bit of an earnest bore. Two others, "The Scheme of Things" and "The Bone Game," test the reader's patience by treating of largely unsympathetic, uninteresting characters.

Still, when D'Ambrosio is at his best, he is writing about troubled yet highly sympathetic characters in stories rife with tension and conflict. This he has done in the four absolutely first-class stories in this brilliant collection—"Screenwriter," "Up North," "The High Divide," "The Dead Fish Museum." That he gives us memorable characters with hilarity, mixing a high and low tone, makes him something of an American Baudelaire, and that's not faint praise. ♦

Devils and Tar Heels

How two college teams re-enact an age-old drama.

BY ALSTON B. RAMSAY

If ever someone devises a Pantheon of Hate, surely William Hazlitt, the 19th-century essayist, ought to have a place of honor. He made hatred a high art, spewing bile the way most people issue pieties. He hated his friends. He hated his lovers. He hated his family. And he even hated himself—but only for not hating the world enough.

His infamous treatise, "On The Pleasure Of Hating," is remarkable for many things, not least of which is Hazlitt's willingness to probe that dark secret harbored by all, yet discussed by few: Hating can be extremely pleasurable. It can, in fact, be the very elixir of life: "Without something to hate, we should lose the very spring and thought of action. Life would turn to a stagnant pool, were it not ruffled by the jarring interests, the unruly passions, of men."

Woe be upon Hazlitt if he were alive today to witness the vast maze of social proscriptions erected to combat hate in all its multitudinous forms. So what is a modern-day, unregenerate hater to do in these meek and mild times? Well, if you're Will Blythe, former literary editor of *Esquire*, there's an obvious solution: Embrace the hate, let it flow in all its glorious splendor, massage it with delicate fingers so it will fully blossom into a magnificent creature.

To Hate Like This Is to Be Happy Forever
A Thoroughly Obsessive, Intermittently Uplifting, and Occasionally Unbiased Account of the Duke-North Carolina Basketball Rivalry
by Will Blythe
HarperCollins, 368 pp., $24.95

That, at least, is the premise of *To Hate Like This Is to Be Happy Forever.* It would be a mistake to believe that this account of the Duke-North Carolina rivalry is little more than a provincial work. Though the noble purpose of Blythe's account is to explore his hatred, to plumb the very depths of his soul, what emerges, instead, is a meditation on the intricate, often tangled, web

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that ties college basketball to North Carolina, to Blythe's family, and ultimately to the homespun Southern values his father imparted to his family. (By the end of the book Blythe admits that his yearlong exploration was a "dialogue with a dead man." His father is not long in the ground when Blythe heads south from New York City at the beginning of the 2004 season.)

In that respect, *To Hate Like This* is more than just a snack to tide over college hoops fans facing the months-long purgatory before next season begins; it is a touching, hilarious, beautifully written portrait of a man and his obsession.

"I am a sick, sick man," Blythe intones in his opening. "Not only am I consumed by hatred, I am delighted by it." It's that self-effacing humor and cantankerous charm that carries the book through its vast, sprawling series of vignettes, anecdotes, game days, profiles, pathologies, and theories on hate—some tested, others rejected. The higgledy-piggledy fashion in which the essays are arranged may be the only flaw here, but Blythe's delicious language more than covers any rough spots. Instead of sports patois, he offers up gems like: "Wojo was the kind of guy who ran to every huddle like Nutty Buddies were being handed out there by the Good Humor ice cream man." And: "They played like longshoremen trying to fight their way to the bar for a drink on Saturday night." Every paragraph is gilded with a similar edge, especially the recurring inner dialogue between the "beast," the rabid UNC fan that erupts and curses and burns and boils, and the "journalist," the quiet persona he dons to *attempt* to give his subject a fair shake.

The language alone is worth the price, but Blythe possesses a rare knack for not only discovering the quirky, but for translating it into words. It's a nonfiction work that reads more like fiction: The author is consoled by Uma Thurman after a UNC loss; he witnesses Michael Jordan miss almost every shot at a UNC practice (blame it on the shoes); he watches a game with a man known as Crazy Towel Guy, a longtime Duke fan who, after four heart attacks, decided to retire from his job—to root for Duke full-time.

AP Photo / Gerry Broome

J.J. Redick, Reyshawn Terry, Sean Dockery, Feb. 7, 2006

These stories are hilarious, but the greatest strength of this book is Blythe's uncanny talent for profiles. He possesses the discerning power necessary to capture the essence of a man in only a few pages, those little things that are symbolic of greater values and virtues. His exposé of the Duke coach, Mike Krzyzewski—the Dark Lord himself, the living, breathing, physical manifestation of Duke—is typical of his craftsmanship. He uncovers a man with weaknesses, who savors time alone in his garden, and even gets weepy when discussing his mother. But he also captures Krzyzewski the ruthless competitor:

> If Krzyzewski was any indication, the rocket fuel of American achievement was resentment, the desire to show someone, someone who never noticed you or your family, never believed in you or your family or anyone from your neighborhood, that you were not to be ignored, not then, not now, not ever. The past could never be quite shirked and the future that would cauterize the stings of that past could never quite get close enough.

That's enough to make any Carolina fan respect Coach K, and that is no small feat.

To Hate Like This is undoubtedly (and ironically) a labor of love. But it is also an opportunity for Blythe to exorcise the ghost of his father. To Blythe's father, "loving one thing seemed to require that you hate another, that you divide the world into two disproportionate pieces: the inherently local and familial, that which was known and loved, and the unknown, the foreignness that threatened the gentle people behind the boxwood hedge in their Carolina yard. . . . There were always two places in the world: home and everyplace else."

Carolina was home, those traditional values like family and memory; Duke was everywhere else, a pit stop for students on the thoroughfare to high-paying jobs. Carolina was on Will's father's mind when he worked on his children's accents: "He wanted his children to be able to speak with the ghosts of our ancestors, to preserve through language a realm outside of time. . . . And in doing things in the old way, we would link ourselves to family members both dead and gone and yet to come."

Duke was the Leviathan of postmodernism invading Blythe *père*'s beloved North Carolina. "Memory emerged out of love," Blythe *fils* writes. "And it was these memories, the containers for the missing sacraments of scuppernongs and spring water and country hams, that were threatened by the new North Carolina, a place that seemed to be arriving first and foremost at Duke University."

Unfortunately, Blythe never chases that metaphorical Duke to its end, just as he never comes to a firm conclusion about the source of his (and thousands of others') hatred of Duke basketball. But ultimately, these concerns pale compared with the question that builds throughout, like black thunderheads on the horizon: What if Blythe's hatred proves evanescent under the withering power of cool, calm logic? Will Blythe wither away to a shadow of his former self, his life-sustaining hatred unceremoniously yanked away?

Thankfully, we'll never have to find out. All it takes to whip him out of his philosophical musings is a tightly contested Carolina game and—WHAM!—the clouds burst and the "beast" pounds that inner "journalist" into submission.

Hazlitt surely would applaud: "The wild beast resumes its sway within us, we feel like hunting animals, and as the hound starts in his sleep and rushes on the chase in fancy the heart rouses itself in its native lair, and utters a wild cry of joy, at being restored once more to freedom and lawless unrestrained impulses. Every one has his full swing, or goes to the Devil his own way." ♦

Natural Wonder

What John James Audubon didn't say in his art.

BY ROBERT FINCH

When the Audubon volume of the Library of America series appeared in 1999, I remember thinking that he was the only writer included in that official pantheon of American authors because of his achievement in another art form. John James Audubon is, of course, best known for the majestic and unsurpassed paintings in *The Birds of America* (1827-38), the work that secured his immortality and his status as the patron saint of conservation in this country. In the light of the latest anthology of Audubon's writings, *The Audubon Reader*, edited by his biographer Richard Rhodes, it seems fair to ask: How does the prose of America's premier painter of birds measure up to his art?

The Audubon Reader
Edited by Richard Rhodes
Everyman's Library, 656 pp., $27.50

It is, I would say, not easy to make an argument for Audubon as a major American *literary* figure, though the value of the *content* of his prose works is beyond question, especially his *Ornithological Biography* (1831-1839), the five-volume series of essays that Audubon published to accompany his double-elephant folio of lifesized prints of native birds. If nothing else, the *Ornithological Biography* was a groundbreaking contribution to the fledgling science of ornithology. It represented the first extensive and accurate accounts of the behavior and habits of living birds, as opposed to mere scientific description. As a work of natural history, written in a clear, lively, and personal style, it set a model for writing about birds for a general audience.

Throughout the essays in this work, there are wonderful observations, not only of birds, but also of the landscape, the characters, and the culture of young America in the early decades of the 19th century. In the "Episodes" that Audubon deliberately inserted among the strictly avian accounts to "avoid tedium" to his readers (would that contemporary nature writers all had such concern for their readers!), there are numerous colorful narratives of the Western frontier, often told in a rough, tall-tale style that prefigures Mark Twain. Audubon's writings also reveal his prescient attitudes towards wilderness, wildlife, and Native Americans—arguing, far ahead of his time, for the right of all creatures and cultures to exist, and for nature's "wise intentions even when her laws are far beyond our limited comprehension." On the other hand, they also present some remarkably unromantic descriptions of the violence and casual cruelty in "Nature's arrangements."

Audubon's literary style is always expansive and fresh. He writes smoothly and without the fustian that turns most modern readers away from such contemporaries as James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving. His accounts are peppered with winning personal details, such as his confession, in the journal of his trip up the Missouri River at the advanced age of 58, that he had trouble eating buffalo meat because "we had unfortunately lost our molars long ago." Some of the set pieces, such as his wonderful description of the nesting of thousands

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of chimney swifts in a massive hollow sycamore tree in Kentucky, can hold their own with those of Gilbert White or Henry David Thoreau.

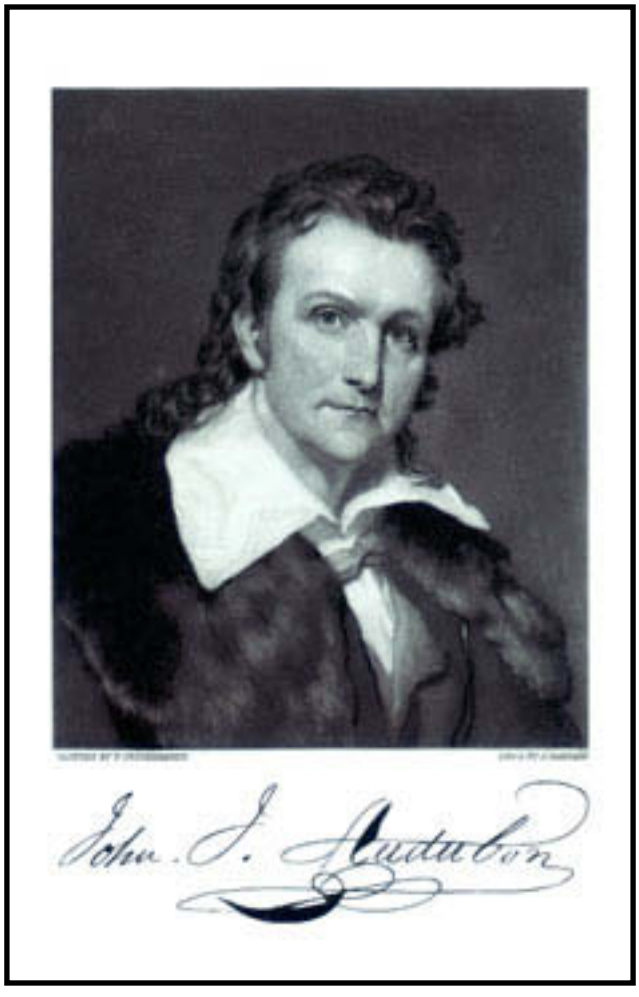
In other words, there is no question that Audubon was a valuable writer, a good writer, at times an exceptional writer, and numerous anthologies of his work have been issued over the years. Yet he is not included in most general anthologies of American literature, nor is he commonly taught in American literature courses. More to the point, it is hard to imagine anyone without a special interest in Audubon or his art sitting down and reading hundreds of pages of his prose for the pure literary enjoyment of it. Though he writes well, he rarely writes memorably, the way that even minor literary figures such as Jack London or Bret Harte do.

Compare, for instance, the following account of Audubon killing a wounded buffalo on the Great Plains in the 1840s with a contemporary one on the same subject by (of all people!) Washington Irving. Here is Audubon:

> We fired at [the buffalo] from our six-barreled revolving pistol which, however, seemed to have little other effect than to render him more savage and furious. His appearance was well calculated to appall the bravest had we not felt assured that his strength was fast diminishing. We ourselves were a little too confident and narrowly escaped being overtaken by him through our imprudence. We placed ourselves directly in his front and as he advanced fired at his head and ran back, not supposing that he could overtake us; but he soon got within a few feet of our rear with head lowered and every preparation made for giving us a hoist; the next instant, however, we jumped aside, and the animal was unable to alter his headlong course quick enough to avenge himself on us. Mr. Bell now put a ball directly through his lungs, and with a gush of blood from the mouth and nostrils, he fell upon his knees and gave up the ghost, falling (as usual) on the side, quite dead.

Now here is Irving:

> Dismounting, I now fettered my horse to prevent his straying, and advanced to contemplate my victim. I am nothing of a sportsman; I had been prompted to this unwonted exploit by the magnitude of the game, and the excitement of an adventurous chase. Now that the excitement was over, I could not but look with commiseration upon the poor animal that lay struggling and bleeding at my feet. His very size and importance, which had before inspired me with eagerness, now increased my compunction. . . . To add to these after-qualms of conscience, the poor animal lingered in his agony. . . . It became now an act of mercy to give him his quietus, and put him out of his misery. I primed one of the pistols, therefore, and advanced close up to the buffalo. To inflict a wound thus in cold blood, I found a totally different thing from firing in the heat of the chase. Taking aim, however, just behind the fore-shoulder, my pistol for once proved true; the ball must have passed through the heart, for the animal gave one convulsive throe and expired.



Both passages are vivid and dramatic, and Audubon is certainly willing to portray himself as anti-heroic, even foolish. But Irving's account contains an element lacking in Audubon's that I think is at the heart of why Audubon's writing, in general, falls short of being genuine literature. That element is self-discovery in contemplating the *meaning* of an experience. In Audubon's writings—at least those intended for publication—we miss a sense of self-reflection, of genuine interior life. Instead, one feels he was always writing for an audience, and gave them a more externalized, and therefore less memorable, version of his experience.

Curiously, it is precisely the presence of a subjective perspective that makes Audubon's painting great art. As with all great painters, there is a personal vision in his depictions of birds that surpasses their "veracity" or "life-likeness" and makes them instantly recognizable as the work of their creator and none other. But then, few if any artists (William Blake, perhaps) have achieved mastery in two totally different forms. As works of art, therefore, Audubon's writings are—like Michelangelo's poetry or D.H. Lawrence's paintings—at best, adjunct items of interest to his primary achievement, which was simply that, as Rhodes puts it, "no one has ever drawn birds better."

Adding to the problem of assessing Audubon's status as a writer is the fact that much of his published writing is not actually Audubon's own words, but those of his collaborators and editors. We know, for instance, that much of the *Ornithological Biography* was edited by his Scottish naturalist friend, William MacGillivray, who was responsible (as Audubon acknowledged) for "smoothing down the asperities" of his somewhat rough American diction and style, the way that Thomas Wentworth Higginson "regularized" the early editions of Emily Dickinson's poems. Audubon's other major published prose work, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* (1846-1854), was, in fact, largely written by his American friend John Bachman from Audubon's rough notes.

Even more problematic is the treatment of his personal journals at the hands of his granddaughter Maria R. Audubon. From some surviving original fragments, we know that these were much more personal, idiosyncratic, and "raw" in nature, yet we have only about one-fifth of the original text, and this only in a bowdlerized, Victorianized version edited and published by Maria in 1897. Her stated aim was to present Audubon as "a refined and cultured gentleman" rather than as the complex, contradictory, sensual, impulsive, often bawdy, vain, insecure, self-pitying, and occasionally malicious person he was. To insure that this enshrined image of her grandfather would go unchallenged, she burned most of the journal manuscripts.

If we want a full and accurate portrait of this multifaceted individual, we must go to his letters, for it is in his personal correspondence that we have the most extensive amount of unedited, authentic Audubon. It is also here, more than anywhere else in his writing, that we encounter that complexity of emotion and viewpoint— what Scott Sanders calls Audubon's "fierce interplay of identities"—that we find in his greatest paintings.

It is fair to say that Audubon was one of the great American letter-writers of the 19th century. Certainly he was one of the most prodigious, and often under conditions that seem anything but conducive to extensive correspondence. It is strange, then, that few anthologies of his writing have included much, if any, of his correspondence. The distinguishing virtue of Rhodes's collection is that the great bulk of its almost 700 pages are letters. Oddly enough, Rhodes himself presents this as a kind of default achievement, stating that in deciding what to include, "I tried to minimize overlap with selections in the Library of America *Audubon*," which contains only a few letters.

But, for this reader at least, it is the letters that make this collection most valuable. Often their viewpoint is that of an outsider, like Audubon's contemporary countryman, Alexis de Tocqueville—although, of course, Audubon lacks Tocqueville's penetrating insights and analysis of American democracy and character. One delights, for instance, in the irony and comic observation of his accounts of his time in England, being feted by sycophantic aristocrats as a backwoods Leatherstocking (an image Audubon encouraged by wearing his hair long, fringed leather breeches, and carrying a gun around London).

The letters are rife with fascinating details of the age—for instance, his description of shipping bird specimens in spirits as "swallows snoozing in rum," or the remarkable practice of "cross-writing," in which Audubon, to save postage on expensive overseas mail, would use only a single sheet of paper. Having used up the available space, he would turn it 90 degrees and write *over* the text to create a kind of epistolary palimpsest that the recipient had to decode.

There are also many moving moments, as when Audubon witnesses the removal in 1837 of several thousand Creeks from their homeland in Alabama along the "Trail of Tears" or, when holding his first granddaughter in his arms, he describes her as "just the weight of a Loon."

But the heart of the correspondence that Rhodes presents is the extraordinary exchange of letters between Audubon and his remarkable wife Lucy. As Rhodes demonstrated in his 2004 biography, theirs was one of the great American love stories. Their passions and correspondence rival those of John and Abigail Adams, and they endured longer separations and greater physical and financial hardship. Part of the sense of mutual affection comes from Audubon's use of the Quaker "Thee" and "Thou" (which he picked up in his early days in Philadelphia) in addressing Lucy, and her use of the nickname "La Forest" in writing to him.

Like the Adamses, the Audubons shared an exceptional candor and trust, valuing, above all, a "sincerity between us." Perhaps the most amazing example of this is a letter Audubon wrote to Lucy in May 1821, at the age of 36, when he had gone to New Orleans to seek work drawing portraits, leaving Lucy in Kentucky to raise their two young boys. In the letter Audubon describes a notorious episode that has come to be known as "The Fair Incognita." Walking the streets, Audubon is accosted by a "female of a fine form" wearing a veil, who turns out to be the young mistress of a French nobleman. She asks him to call on her at her house, where she makes him the extraordinary request to paint her portrait, full-figured and naked. Audubon is nonplussed: "Had I been shot with a forty-eight pounder through the heart my articulating powers could not have been more suddenly stopped." He accepts, although he confesses that "I could not well reconcile all the feelings that were necessary to draw well without mingling with them some of a very different nature.

"For ten days," he records, "I had the pleasure of this beautiful woman's company, about one hour naked and two talking on different subjects." When he finishes the portrait, the woman kisses him and says, "'Had you acted otherwise than you have, you would have received a very different recompense, go, take this ($125), be happy, think of me sometimes as you rest on your gun, keep forever my name a secret.' I begged to kiss her hand. She held it out freely. We parted, probably forever."

Certainly this is a remarkable letter to send to anyone, let alone to one's wife! Still, there are limits to acceptable spousal candor, however desirous of trust we may be, and Audubon in his naiveté may have overstepped them here. Although we do not have Lucy's response, it may be inferred from a subsequent letter he wrote her, in which Audubon appears surprised and hurt that "thou are so intent on my *not* returning to thee" and signs it, somewhat abashedly, "For life, your really devoted, Audubon."

The most moving and revealing correspondence between them is from 1826-29, when Lucy was in Louisiana, teaching school, and Audubon was in England, overseeing the production of (and peddling subscriptions to) his *magnum opus*, *The Birds of America*. Lucy was not the passive, long-suffering, self-sacrificing wife of the great artist portrayed in some of the earlier Audubon biographies, but a strong, independent, and highly talented woman, fiercely devoted to Audubon and his great enterprise, but proud, honest, and often vexed and critical of Audubon's lack of understanding and sympathy for her position. The long separation tested their marriage nearly to its breaking point, and few correspondences let the reader so deeply into the intimacy of a relationship, and to the challenges that external circumstances and conflicting personalities can pose to the strongest bonds.

Part of the difficulty stemmed from the nature of long-distance communication in those days. Letters usually took weeks, even months, to reach their recipients, if they reached them at all. They were survivors of uncertain and hazardous journeys, and even when they did arrive, they usually crossed in passage. Thus, in the Audubons' case, they were often read at cross-purposes: Lucy's or Audubon's situation or emotions might change drastically before the other's response was received, causing unintentional (though considerable) emotional and mental pain.

Added to this were Audubon's self-doubts and mercurial emotions, which often led him to accuse Lucy of being ambivalent and hesitant in her affections and desires to join him. Over and over he expresses his passionate longing for her and need of her physical presence, often in directly sexual ways: "I am tormented day & nights for the comforts thou art so well able to grant me." Or: "Can we not move together and feel and enjoy the natural need of each other?"

At the same time, despite repeated requests from Lucy for him to ask her directly and unequivocally to come to England, he always demurs, suggesting that he is not yet able to provide for her as he feels she would demand, suggesting that "what I conceive real comfort is misery to thee." He repeatedly complains about the insincerity of English society, protesting that he loathes the life there and wishes only to return to America and to her. Yet elsewhere, often in the same letter, he goes on at length about the high esteem in which the English hold him, boasting how "Lord Stanley . . . kneeled . . . down to my drawing," name-dropping like some social-climbing parson in a Jane Austen novel.

Lucy, understandably, is confused by Audubon's mixed messages. She fears that Audubon has been seduced by European flattery and fame and may not return to her. She confides her anxiety and exasperation in letters to her older son, Victor: "Your Papa's last letter . . . is a very severe and painful one," she writes. And in another: "What he really means, I cannot tell." Things get so bad at one point that Audubon issues Lucy an ultimatum, demanding an unequivocal answer as to whether she will join him and threatening that "If a 'no' comes, *I never will put the question again and we probably never will meet again.*" In a letter to William Swainson he even suggests (though, one feels, not seriously) that he is contemplating suicide.

Reading these letters, one's heart goes out to the separated couple. But at the same time there seems something wildly unnecessary in all the histrionics, for in spite of all the misunderstandings and doubts, their deep devotion and love for one another shine through. Though married for 20 years, they seem more like young lovers in some Restoration farce, willfully misunderstanding one another. One longs to shake them both and say, "Look, stop tormenting each other! It's going to be all right!" And of course, in the end, they do come through and are reunited. Audubon's great work comes to fruition to great acclaim in both Europe and America; and for a time, at least, they reap the rewards of Audubon's unyielding perseverance and Lucy's unwavering support.

Because these letters are so revealing and essential to understanding Audubon and his life, I wish Rhodes had taken more pains in providing an adequate context for them. There is a brief introduction, a generalized timeline of events, and occasionally a head note or bracketed identification for an essay or letter recipient. Still, a glossary identifying the major correspondents would have been welcome, as would more introductory material for each section, and footnotes explaining historical or biographical references, such as Audubon's use of "the Tormentor" when referring to Andrew Jackson. For a reader not familiar with his life, *The Audubon Reader* is probably best savored after reading Rhodes's biography.

Still, in making the authentic Audubon of his letters available in a readily accessible form, Rhodes has made a major contribution to our understanding of Audubon's mind and character. For in them we see that Audubon was not only, as Rhodes terms him, America's *rara avis*, but also a quintessential American as well: ambitious yet full of self-doubt, passionate yet calculating, vulnerable yet resilient, both a lover and exploiter of nature, a dedicated artist, and a practical businessman, at once cultivated and proudly "rough," often highly critical of his adopted country but believing it to be "ultimately good," and though at times deeply depressed, ultimately triumphant.

He was, as Robert Frost once described himself, "a unity of bursting opposites." ♦

"Give up, Bobby—surrender to futility."

May We Recommend . . .

Three new books on the Great War. ***Britain's Last Tommies: Final Memories From Soldiers of the 1914-18 War In Their Own Words*** **by Richard Van Emden (Pen & Sword, 256 pp., $36.97).** It has been 88 years since Armistice Day, and so veterans of the trenches and No Man's Land are all centenarians, and down to a handful in Britain. These interviews are not just poignant, but astonishing, sometimes shocking: The memories of glory and horror—even humor—remain vivid. ***Unknown Soldiers: The Story of the Missing of the First World War*** **by Neil Hanson (Knopf, 496 pp., $28.95).** It is worth remembering that, at the end of four years of war, some three million combatants remained unaccounted for. This is a fascinating chronicle of how a fraction of the lost dead of the Great War were found: the politics of their repatriation, reburial, and, in Britain and America, the commemoration of the Unknown Soldiers. And for the genuine military buff, there is ***Haig's Generals*** **edited by Ian F.W. Beckett and Steven J. Corvi (Pen & Sword, 224 pp., $45).** The prestige of Britain's victorious commander in chief, Sir Douglas Haig, quickly plummeted after his death in 1928: For two generations he has been seen as the archetypal, well-dressed general sending thousands to their death from the comfort of his chateau. Now, the wheel turns again, and this intriguing series of essays restores the reputation of Haig and nine of his army commanders.

Two volumes for the reference shelf. ***American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia*** **edited by Bruce Frohnen, Jeremy Beer, and Jeffrey O. Nelson (ISI, 997 pp., $55).** Not everyone will endorse the substance of every entry, and inclusions and omissions will always prompt debate. But this is a splendid, and comprehensive, gathering of the titles, ideas, people, trends, events, and organizations that comprise the history of American conservatism—no matter how you define it. ***Southern Writers: A New Biographical Dictionary*** **edited by Joseph M. Flora, Amber Vogel, and Bryan Giemza (LSU, 496 pp., $55)** takes an expansive view of the subject (Edward O. Wilson was born in Alabama, and Jimmy Carter in Georgia, but they are not what most people would consider 'southern writers') and is generous to marginal figures (Carl Hiaasen, Barbara Kingsolver, Rick Bragg), but it's a handy treat to have them all between two covers in a collection of impressive breadth and quality.

On the coffee table, three new titles deserve some space. ***Caspar David Friedrich*** **by Werner Hofmann (Thames & Hudson, 304 pp., $75)** is the first major study in a generation of Germany's greatest painter of the Romantic era. Friedrich's brooding landscapes and eerie light are enjoying a new vogue, and this is a landmark study with superb reproductions. ***Searching for Shakespeare*** **by Tarnya Cooper (Yale, 239 pp., $60).** In 1856, the new National Portrait Gallery in London was presented with its first bequest: A study of William Shakespeare, known as the 'Chandos portrait,' which has never been authenticated. Using the mystery of this founding portrait as a starting point, the NPG put on an exhibition this year about the elusive Will, featuring art, manuscripts, books, even Elizabethan clothing, for which this is the catalogue. ***A Wealth of Ideas: Revelations From the Hoover Institution Archives*** **edited by Bertrand M. Patenaude (Stanford, 303 pp., 49.95)** celebrates one of the great repositories of contemporary history, the Hoover Institution at Stanford. Here may be found the shiploads of documents, scattered across war-torn Europe, that Herbert Hoover carefully collected and sent home after 1918, as well as Czar Nicholas II's abdication letter, Joseph Goebbels's diary, posters from China's Cultural Revolution, and the first

draft of Milton Friedman's Nobel Prize lecture.

And finally, three miscellaneous volumes of note. In ***Mobility: America's Transportation Mess and How to Fix It*** **by Joseph M. Giglio (Hudson Institute, 301 pp., $18.95)** the world's least rewarding subject for light reading is transformed by a series of imaginative, sensible, and politically palatable proposals to deal with the intractable problems of financing the highway system, road improvement, bridges, mass transit, and public-private partnerships. For Civil War enthusiasts, ***Twin Halves of One August Event: Private Pinson and Colonel Shaw*** **by Hassell A. Simpson (Scotch Broom Press, 24 pp., $6.95)** is an intriguing pamphlet that examines the mythology, and solves the mystery, surrounding the death of Col. Robert Shaw, killed at the head of the 54th Massachusetts regiment in its assault on Fort Wagner, an event immortalized in Saint-Gaudens's famous bronze relief on Boston Common and in the 1989 film *Glory*. Hassel A. Simpson, a retired professor of English at Hampden-Sydney, writes with understated elegance.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. **by G. Edward White (Oxford, 144 pp., $17.95).** Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes's most distinguished biographer, Prof. G. Edward White of the University of Virginia Law School, has written a shorter version of Holmes's life for the Oxford Lives and Legacies series. It is difficult to compress the life, work, and influence of Holmes into a compact volume, and White's *Oliver Wendell Holmes: Law and the Inner Self* (1993) is the account for serious students and interested readers. But for anyone seeking a smart, trenchant, and enjoyable introduction to one of the greatest legal minds in American history, here it is.

—Philip Terzian

Books in Brief

News of Paris **by Ronald Weber (Ivan R. Dee 360 pp., $27.50).** Newspapering used to be a lot more fun than today, if a lot less healthy. And in few places was it more fun than in Paris between the world wars. What is particularly nice about this book is that while the famed American literati of the period—Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, et al.—make appearances, the real stars are the hacks: the reporters, the editors, the photographers, and the others who, fueled by oceans of alcohol and caffeine, and wreathed in tobacco smoke, put out the English-language newspapers in Paris, or sent copy by telegraph to papers back home, or fed the maw of the wire services. Many came with the idea of doing literature, a mission usually quickly eroded by the need to make a living and by the numerous sensual distractions of Paris. Almost all are long forgotten now, although a few—Janet Flanner, Waverley Root, A.J. Liebling, and Elliot Paul come to mind—are still read a bit.

They came to Paris seeking freedom (from, among other things, Prohibition), the luxuries provided by a wonderful (if you were American) exchange rate, and a purportedly energizing environment in which to create Art. A few were genuinely interested in international affairs. Most of them stayed only a few years and then went back to America to take up banal "adult lives," though a few stayed, up to when the Germans marched into the city in 1940. And some even made it back at the end of the war. I ran into a few myself in the 1970s and '80s.

That there were thousands of Americans in Paris in the twenties made it attractively self-enclosed. Years later, when I worked at the *International Herald Tribune* in Paris in the 1980s, the managing editor there, the sainted Walter Wells, noted, "You can go through a whole year in Paris and only speak French to your plumber." The American journalists who flooded Paris entertained an expatriate community that often seemed a separate nation within France. Many of them made little effort to learn the language. They were in Paris to serve an American audience and to drink with Americans. In sexual matters, they were more universalist.

It was, and still is, a journalistic community with a delightfully high tolerance for eccentric behavior, and, er, ingenuity, which Ronald Weber (a professor emeritus at Notre Dame) details with verve. Consider Spencer Bull, employed by the *Paris Tribune*, owned by the sometimes-lunatic Col. Robert McCormick, publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*. Bull, drunk and/or just desperate for a story, brought this tale out of a news release about the Prince of Wales reviewing a troop of British Boy Scouts of Paris:

> Stopping before one manly youth the Prince inquired: "What is your name, my lad?"
> "None of your goddamned business, sir," the youngster replied.
> At that, the Prince snatched a riding crop from his equerry and beat the boy's brains out.

This ran under a headline: "Prince of Wales Bashes Boy's Brains Out With Bludgeon."

Bull was, it is true, fired.

There are almost equally zany tales from this book—evocative of old-time journalism (seen as a sort of adjunct to show business and far from a "profession") and beautiful, maddening, melancholic, and crazy Paris. It was the most vivid chapter in the lives of many of the newspapermen (and a few women) who lived it. They never stopped talking about it. Now just about all of them are dead, and so I am very happy that Weber has brought a bunch of them back to life for us.

—Robert Whitcomb

In his office at CBS News, Dan Rather prepares to end a 44-year career after talks between his lawyers and the network broke down. 'It was like a standoff between a pair of slim-fit trousers and a 52-inch waist,' he said.

Rather Gone With the Wind

Leaving CBS Like a Tumbleweed on the Network Prairie

By PETROLEUM V. NASBY III

In a development that has the world of broadcast news shaking like a leaf on a fuzzy tree, CBS News and its veteran anchorman-reporter Dan Rather, 74, have agreed to split faster than a Methodist preacher running off with the organist.

"The names of Dan Rather and CBS are inseparable," said news and sports division president Sean McManus in a statement. "We're joined at the hip like a Snickers bar and my full-figured mother-in-law."

Rather's contract was not due to expire until November, but he and the network were no closer to agreement on renewal than a thrifty Scotsman and the town prostitute. Now, Rather will retire five months earlier than anticipated and, according to sources, offer his services to any organization with a taste for hard news, fast talk, true grit, and a spit shine.

At his office in the CBS News building on West 54th Street, now quieter than a game of checkers between deaf mutes, Rather reflected on the unexpected turn of events that had ended a career with more stories than the Empire State Building.

"I'm feeling like a Texas armadillo crossing Interstate 40," he told a reporter. "I'm as flat as the daily special at the International House of Pancakes."

Rather was especially disturbed that the network, which first hired him in 1963 when President John F. Kennedy hit the dirt like a clay pigeon in Dallas, had no more use for him than a fish needs a bicycle. Rather was effectively forced from his anchor position on the "CBS Evening News" in March 2005, and a new assignment as reporter on "60 Minutes" was as satisfying "as a weekend at the town [brothel] with your sister," he said.

"I'm hard news all the way," said Rather. "Get it right, get it fast, and give it good to the competition. That's my motto. Give me a story, and I'm on the scene faster than Louie Anderson chasing a bologna sandwich." Rather added that he had known rattlesnakes in Texas with more backbone than

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PLANS FOR IRAQ WAR REVEALED

Messages Hidden by Unnecessary Military Secrecy

By HILDY JOHNSON

WASHINGTON, JUNE 25—According to a series of needlessly classified messages between commanders in Iraq and chicken-[illegible]ks at the Department of [illegible] U.S. forces plan secretly [illegible] infantry battalions, [illegible] armored brigade [illegible] southwest

The troops are expected to advance along an unpaved route one kilometer east of Iraqi Highway 5, and stop for brief refreshment and refueling at approximately 0930 hours.

The ostensible purpose of the operation is to engage [illegible] concentration of [illegible]

on the U.S. devastation of once-peaceful Iraq. "This is not only a totally ill-advised action by the United States, but is likely to result in the death and mutilation of dozens, if not hundreds, of Iraqi resistance heroes."

The Times learned about the secret correspondence, and [illegible] attempts to suppress the [illegible] relentlessly on [illegible]