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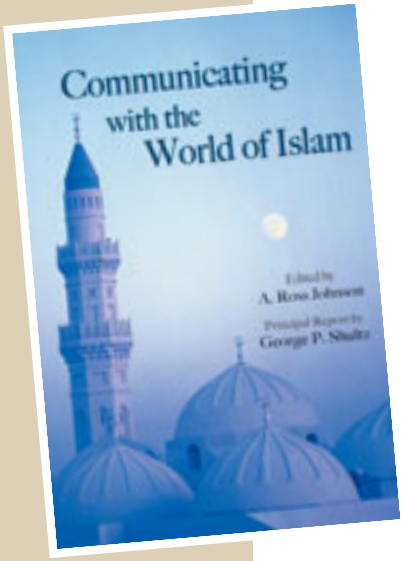
New from Hoover Press

Communicating with the World of Islam



Western broadcasts had a remarkable impact in the USSR and Eastern Europe during the cold war. *Communicating with the World of Islam* draws from the lessons learned in the cold war broadcasting experience to propose the best ways of organizing U.S. efforts to communicate with Islamic people around the globe. It examines the effect of Voice of America, Radio Liberty, the BBC, Radio Free Europe, and other broadcasting tools and suggests how the United States can use these instruments today to counter extremism and improve understanding of the United States in the Islamic world.

This report, drawn from discussions at a seminar sponsored by the Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands, details current broadcasting efforts into Islamic countries and the Muslim communities of Europe and explains each of the critical factors necessary to influence the world of Islam in a positive direction, such as stressing women's content programming, maintaining pressure on the rulers of Qatar over the content and programming of Al Jazeera, and keeping news content candid, tailored to local audiences, and unsparingly accurate.

Edited by A. Ross Johnson, a Hoover fellow and former director of Radio Free Europe.

Principal Report by George P. Shultz

Contributors: Fouad Ajami, A. Ross Johnson, Abbas Milani, Greg Mitrovich, R. Eugene Parta.

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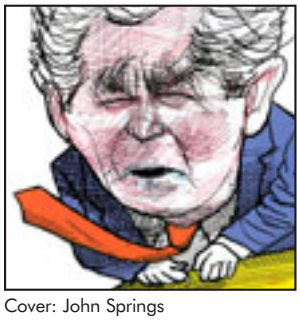

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Books & Arts

the weekly Standard

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Miró, Miró on the Wall

Delight doesn't begin to describe The Scrapbook's pleasure upon hearing that Linda Douglass, the former correspondent for ABC and CBS News will be joining the Barack Obama campaign as a strategist and spokesperson. "I have spent my lifetime sitting on the sidelines watching people attempt to make change. I just decided that I can't sit on the sidelines anymore," Douglass told her *National Journal* colleague Marc Ambinder, who broke the news in his blog for the *Atlantic*.

Douglass was being modest. She has sat on the sidelines the way Bobby Knight used to sit on the sidelines—hectoring the refs, sidling onto the floor, and throwing the occasional chair, metaphorically speaking of course. During the Clinton years, she had to navigate a minefield of conflicts in her TV reporting, because of her close friendships with Mickey Kantor, the Clintons' trade representative and then secretary of commerce, and with Webb Hubbell, the number three man in the Clinton Justice Department until he was found to have bilked clients of the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, where he and Hillary Clinton had both been partners.

Speaking of Hubbell, our delight at Douglass's new job has nothing to do with the undoubtedly excellent work she will do for Obama. It has rather to do with the fact that we now have an excuse to dredge up the story of Webb Hubbell's art collection and how it ended up in Douglass's hands—one of the most colorful episodes of the Clinton carnival that kept Washington entertained for a large part of the 1990s.

As recounted by Byron York in the May 1998 *American Spectator* ("Linda & John & Webb & Suzy"), Douglass and her husband, superlawyer John Phillips, were among the friends who came through for Hubbell when he was down and out, having resigned his job at the Justice Department in 1994 with legal bills mounting and under increasing scrutiny from independent counsel Kenneth Starr.

A foundation Phillips had helped to set up—the Consumer Support and Education Fund—named Hubbell "its first-ever Distinguished Public Service Fellow," York reported. For "an article or series of articles on the subject of public service," which would enhance "the image in which public service is held," Hubbell received $45,000 from the foundation. Between his conviction for fraud and tax evasion and his time in federal prison, though, Hubbell never completed the articles, which the chairman of the fund had hoped would help "dispel unfounded cynicism about public life." So Phillips paid back the $45,000 owed to the fund by its incarcerated public service fellow.

"Not long after that," York reported, "Suzy Hubbell pledged to repay Phillips. In January 1996, she wrote him a $10,000 check as a partial payment; she agreed to pay the rest by the end of March 1996. But according to Phillips's testimony, that agreement was thrown out when the Hubbells came up with a plan to repay the rest by turning over some works of art to Phillips.

"Hubbell had a fairly extensive collection. According to an appraisal sheet given to the [House Government Reform and Oversight Committee], it included twenty-one lithographs and paintings. The most valuable was a signed 1937 lithograph by American artist Grant Wood, valued at $5,000. The collection also included works by Alexander Calder, Joan Miró, and Thomas Hart Benton. The total value of the collection—as determined by Hubbell's appraiser—was $39,450. Suzy Hubbell and Phillips reached an agreement under which Phillips would hold a lien on the art. Much of it stayed in the Hubbells' possession, but Douglass and Phillips also visited the Hubbell home and picked out some of their favorites, which they took and hung in their own home."

How do you suppose that went? Would you unhang a Thomas Hart Benton over cocktails? Here's hoping that Douglass's public service is far more distinguished than Hubbell's. ♦

No Honor Among Earmarkers

Early in its career, The Scrapbook did some work for a "nonprofit" organization that shall remain nameless. To borrow a line from our friend Joseph Epstein, the work was dull but the pay was low. Years later, we came to find out that our hourly wage had been paid for out of the proceeds of a grant from a charitable foundation. Interestingly those wages—including benefits (like there were any) and retirement (ha!)—were substantially less than half of the grant. The "administrative overhead" retained by our employer was somewhere north of 60 percent. Thus we learned the valuable lesson that "nonprofit" is a term of art in the tax code and not a business strategy.

Thus also, our inability to summon any outrage at the news reported by the *New York Times* last week: "Not All Earmarks Are Paid in Full, and a Senator Wants to Know Why." Ben Nelson, the Nebraska senator in question, is exercised over the fact that the plunder . . . sorry, the appropriation he has secured for his clients . . . sorry, his constituents, was not paid in full. As the *Times*'s Ron Nixon reports:

(Classic Steiner, reprinted from our issue of August 13, 2001)

Officials from the University of Nebraska told him that they had not received all of a $1 million medical research earmark he had secured for them. The Department of Defense, the agency controlling the money, was withholding 12 percent of the total to oversee the project. . . . Mr. Nelson, a Democrat from Nebraska, later found out that the Department of Agriculture had also withheld about 10 percent of a $222,000 earmark to the university for drought research.

While many of his questions remain unanswered, Mr. Nelson says that federal agencies have been taking a cut from earmarked funds for years, some for unrelated purposes as varied as staff salaries and postage stamps. Mr. Nelson calls the practice "earmark skimming," and lately he has become increasingly vocal over what he describes as unaccountable federal bureaucrats diverting millions of dollars into agency "slush funds."

Okay, first of all, "earmarks" are what it's called when congressmen skim the taxpayers' money. Second, chances are extremely good that the University of Nebraska itself skims 10 to 15 percent before passing the money along to its researchers. The lead researcher no doubt skims some more, and somewhere all the work is being done by a grad student on a subsistence stipend. So as the old song goes, Senator Nelson, here's a dime, call someone who cares. ♦

Give Peace a Chance

The Institute for Economics and Peace released its 2008 Global Peace Index last week, in which it ranks 140 countries by their relative states of peace. Using 24 quasi-quantitative indicators—such as "estimated number of deaths from organized conflict," "military expenditures as a percentage of GDP," and "number of jailed population per 100,000 people"—the GPI produces a number of surprises.

It's not a surprise that Iceland leads the list as the most peaceful nation on the planet. And it's probably not even really a surprise that the United States ranks 97th—our "state of peace" is categorized as "low," the next-to-worst level. After all, what kind of a peace study would it be that didn't portray America as a bastion of war and conflict?

But what is surprising is who is rated as more pacific than us: Libya and Cuba are 61st and 62nd, respectively. Score two for the tin-pot dictators. The major-league dictators in China rank 67th. Syria and Rwanda clock in at 75th and 76th—not great, but still making them more peaceable kingdoms than AmeriKKKa. Iraq is ranked dead last—presumably because George W. Bush had the temerity to liberate it. Meanwhile Israel, a bustling, First World country, is rated 136th out of 140.

On second thought, there are no surprises here at all. The Cold War is over, but "peace" is still a Stalinist word. ♦

Casual

The Cliché Community

I've been wondering: Can you *push back* if you're *reaching out*? It seems impossible, doesn't it? How about if you're *going forward*? *Pushing back* while you're *going forward* would probably make it impossible to *reach out*, especially if you're *pivoting* at the same time. But that's how things are in this ever-changing world in which, as Paul McCartney famously sang, we live in.

Well, maybe you're not *comfortable with that*. Are you *comfortable with that*? I suppose it depends on your *takeaway*. If you're *comfortable* with your *takeaway*, I do hope you choose to *share it* with us. Whether you *share it* or not probably depends on what *community* you choose to be a member of. I hope it's a *nurturing community*. And *sustainable*. To be part of a *community* that wasn't *nurturing* or *sustainable* would be *inappropriate*. I'm sure we're on the *same page*.

But let's turn the page! Paul's right that the times are ever-changing, but I wish they'd change a little more quickly, so we could get a new set of insta-clichés and cant phrases for everybody to start using all at once—or better, so we could all return to using the perfectly fine words we were using before we popped these new verbal pacifiers into our mouths. Think how much simpler and straightforward the world was before people started *pushing back* against something and instead just *resisted it* or *responded to it* or *answered it*. Nobody *reached out* back then either. We *spoke to*, *consulted with*, *entreated*, *implored*, *included*, *gestured toward*, *negotiated with*—all those common, perfectly usable phrases, many of them with quite different meanings, that have been mothballed since *reached out* hit the scene. In the last week I've read that Barack Obama is *reaching out* to new constituencies in search of votes and that he hopes to *reach out* to the mullahs in Iran in search of God knows what. In just these two instances alone, the phrase can mean *pursue*, *meet with*, *cultivate*, *invite*, *persuade*, or *suck up to*. It can mean so many things it doesn't mean anything.

Reaching out has been imported (unconsciously, always unconsciously) from the world of therapy—not from the stern (if loopy) vocabulary of the Freudians, but the soft, sandalwood purr of the New Age. *Asking* for something sounds so confrontational; *reaching out* sounds so sweet. Most of our insta-clichés are wussy-friendly, meant to rub the blunt edges from language: *share with* instead of *tell*, for example. It's why every group of individuals, no matter how various or loosely tethered, is suddenly called a *community*. In the last couple days I've read not only of the *vegetarian community*, which would include both Gandhi and Hitler, but also of the *Catholic community* (actually, it's a church) and the *conservative community* (which lumps me with Richard Viguerie—no thanks). It goes without saying that the best of these *communities* are *nurturing* and *sustainable*, but, in our New Age purr, we say it anyway. And why tell a kid he's *doing wrong* when you can tell him he's *behaving inappropriately*? *Wrong* sounds *judgmental*. And if you wonder whether your colleague *likes* something or *approves of* it, better to ask instead if he's *comfortable with that*. Discomfort is bad—*inappropriate*, even.

I suppose it's our own insecurity that sets us off using such phrases so compulsively; we gain confidence repeating a new word that everybody else is repeating. Often they erupt as mere verbal hiccups, inserted into a sentence unconsciously (always unconsciously!). *Going forward*, like its variant *moving forward*, adds no meaning to a sentence, but here it comes, from a single evening's TV-viewing last week: "*Going forward*, the economy is on the minds of most voters . . . " "Alternative energy is very important *going forward* . . . " "Our challenge *going forward* is to see this globalized . . . " I'm not crazy about *globalized* either.

And when did everyone suddenly decide to use *issue* as a synonym for *difficulty* or *problem* or *failing*? I must have missed the memo—just as I missed the memo instructing every political reporter to begin saying *election cycle* instead of *campaign* or *election*. I could list dozens more, and not just because I'm grouchy as hell. If we suddenly banned each of them from our language, we might be forced into carefully considering what we're saying or writing, and who knows what Utopian dreams might be realized then? World peace, maybe! Out goes *granular*, *traction*, *takeaway* . . . and *pivot*. Watch for *pivot*—as both noun and verb, it's going to be big. Already, in the *Chicago Tribune* this month, Obama has *pivoted* five times at least. Even in this magazine, a writer recently described Obama "executing a rhetorical *pivot*." And what's the name of that exhausted wordslinger, that tapped-out hack who reached for the nearest cliché in hopes of sounding like everyone else? Here:

Andrew Ferguson

HAL MAYFORTH

Agenbites Again

As a young man, I fell in love with the English language and have never gotten over the crush. So, for me, Joseph Bottum's "Agenbites" (May 19) was like an aphrodisiac administered to a love-besotted man, increasing the ardor to a level I haven't felt in years. And it made me ponder a question I've puzzled over for years: Why do so many words that allude to the flawed or debased or problematic use of language begin with *bl*?

Why, for example, do we have bluster and blowhard, blurt and blarney, blather and bleat? Why do gossips blab and heretics blaspheme and windbags bloviate? Why do con men bluff and blandish and blindside us? Why does jabberwocky strike us as blah-blah-blah? Why are idiots always blithering? Why do bleeding-hearts blubber? Why is blankety-blank a euphemism for otherwise "unspeakable" words, and why, on TV, are such words bleeped? Why are our verbal gaffes bloopers? Why are our solecisms blunders?

Bottum's allusion to "Agenbite of Inwit" gives me hope that one of these days he'll grace us with an essay on dead English words—such long-buried gems as spuddle and widdershins and gundygut. For those of us who are head-over-heels in love, no aphrodisiac can be too strong.

Mannie Sherberg
Olivette, Mo.

Voting Under Fire

Challenges to absentee voting faced by uniformed service members and overseas citizens living abroad discussed in the article "Disenfranchised Over There" by Hans A. von Spakovsky & Roman Buhler (May 12) are issues of which the Department of Defense (DoD) is acutely aware. The Department has had many successes addressing these issues and continues to work diligently to mitigate remaining obstacles.

The authors infer high disenfranchisement rates from the number of absentee ballots determined "undeliverable." Under current federal law, once citizens covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act request an absentee ballot, their local election official must send ballots for the following two general elections to the address specified on the application form. Despite the Department's intensive education effort, many voters do not provide their local election officials with a current mailing address.

The article suggested using fax and email as an alternative to the mail. In fact, the Department provides for and encourages the use of fax and email for absentee voting, and has achieved great success advancing state legislation to allow electronic transmission of voting materials.

As in years past, the DoD will provide citizens with a variety of electronic and web-based mechanisms for accessing voting materials. In accordance with federal law, a full scale Internet based voting system for military and overseas citizens will be undertaken when the Election Assistance Commission in conjunction with the National Institute of Standards and Technology provides electronic voting guidelines.

The Department has worked for years with the U.S. Postal Service and Military Postal Service Agency to expedite movement of ballots destined for military addresses. Contract carriers, while theoretically appealing, cannot deliver to military addresses, or P.O. boxes which are used by many election officials. Further, some states may not accept voted ballots returned by contract carriers.

Our electoral process is complex, with each of the 55 states and territories individually responsible for their election laws and procedures which cover voter registration, ballot provision and acceptance. The Department works with all stakeholders to support the absentee voting rights for the nearly 6 million eligible U.S. citizens overseas and military serving worldwide. We will continue to innovate, collaborate with stakeholders, and educate our citizens about their absentee voting rights and opportunities.

Polli Brunelli
Director
Federal Voting Assistance Program
Washington, D.C.

Hans A. von Spakovsky and Roman Buhler respond: We appreciate the good intentions of the Federal Voting Assistance Program. However, the basic issue raised in Rep. McCarthy's Military Voting Protection Act and in our article is quite simple: Should delivery of ballots from overseas military voters home to U.S. election officials continue to take up to three weeks, as it does today?

Or through the use of the appropriate public and private express mail services, should that delivery time be shortened to four days?

Three weeks? Or four days? Hopefully the Department of Defense and Congress will answer that question correctly.

The Cabbage Crusade

Wesley J. Smith's report on the Swiss government's declaration of "plant rights" is actually very good news ("The Silent Scream of the Asparagus," May 12). If leftists adopt plant rights as their newest egalitarian crusade, there will be little—excepting, maybe, pocket lint—that they can eat without guilt. We can only hope that progressives will have the courage of their convictions to maintain their purity by avoiding the food chain entirely, for the benefit of Comrade Cabbage. Let the next self-descriptive radical rallying cry be: "Vegetables of the world, unite!"

Ronald Weissman
Menlo Park, Calif.

• • •

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Does the size of oil companies affect competition?

As high energy costs have an impact on American consumers and draw the attention of policymakers, focus once again turns to oil and natural gas companies. Some of this renewed scrutiny centers on the competitiveness of these very large companies and related effects on consumers.

Even after industry consolidation during decades of poor profitability, the domestic oil and natural gas industry is highly competitive. A 2007 study by Timothy Muris, Federal Trade Commission (FTC) chairman under President George H.W. Bush, and Richard Parker, director of the FTC's Bureau of Competition under President Bill Clinton, described the U.S. oil and natural gas industry as "intensely competitive."

A 2007 study describes the oil industry as 'intensely competitive'

Muris and Parker point to more than 100 investigations between 1973 and 2006 in which the FTC examined every facet of the oil industry, aggressively scrutinizing for anticompetitive practices and applying merger standards that are significantly more stringent than those applied to other industries.

Muris and Parker found the U.S. petroleum industry to be highly competitive and the retail gasoline market similarly unconcentrated, with most gas stations being independently owned small businesses that are facing stiff competition. In its investigations, the FTC has found no evidence of industry collusion or market manipulation, or any illegal industry-wide conduct to cause price anomalies.

The size of U.S.-based, investor-owned oil companies has changed over time so they can compete effectively in a massive, competitive global marketplace. Globally, foreign national oil companies control nearly 80 percent of the world's proven oil reserves while investor-owned companies – including all of the large U.S. oil and natural gas companies – control just six percent.

In an era of volatile energy costs, policymakers understandably look for answers. While oil and natural gas companies are an obvious target, research such as the Muris and Parker study shows these companies are scaled to compete globally against huge foreign national oil companies, as well as locally in a highly competitive U.S. marketplace.

Ensuring Americans enjoy reliable energy supplies is an interest we all share. Let's work together to craft long-term energy policies based on realities and facts, not rhetoric. Learn more at EnergyTomorrow.org.

THE *people* OF AMERICA'S
OIL AND NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY

the weekly Standard

Change That Matters

General David Petraeus was back in Washington last week. President Bush has promoted him to chief of Central Command (CENTCOM), which requires Senate confirmation. Under Petraeus's leadership, Iraq has changed dramatically. Why can't the Democrats change with it?

Bush announced the surge in January 2007. Iraq was a violent place. Al Qaeda in Iraq held large swaths of territory. Shiite death squads roamed much of Baghdad. The Iraqi political class seemed feckless. Hence Bush's decision to send more troops, replace General George Casey with Petraeus, and change the mission from force protection and search-and-destroy to population security. The new strategy's strongest proponent and supporter was Senator John McCain.

Democrats opposed the surge almost without exception. Barack Obama said that the new policy would neither "make a dent" in the violence plaguing Iraq nor "change the dynamics" there. A month after the president's announcement, Obama declared it was time to remove American combat troops from Iraq. In April, as the surge brigades were on their way to the combat zone, Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid proclaimed "this war is lost" and that U.S. troops should pack up and come home. In July, as surge operations were underway, the *New York Times* editorialized that "it is time for the United States to leave Iraq." The *Times*'s editorial writers recognized Iraq "could be even bloodier and more chaotic after Americans leave." But that didn't matter. "Keeping troops in Iraq will only make things worse."

Wrong. When Petraeus returned to Washington in September 2007, he reported that the numbers of violent incidents, civilian deaths, ethnosectarian killings, and car and suicide bombings had declined dramatically from the previous December. Why? The surge—and the broadening "Awakening" movement, which began when the sheikhs in Anbar province rebelled against al Qaeda in late 2006 and accelerated when the tribal leaders understood America would not abandon them in 2007.

How did Democrats respond? MoveOn.org bought a full-page in the *Times* suggesting Petraeus had betrayed the American people. Senator Hillary Clinton said that to accept Petraeus's report required the "willing suspension of disbelief." Those Democrats who did not question the facts moved the goal posts instead. They said the surge may have reduced violence, but had not led to the real goal: political reconciliation.

Petraeus returned again to Washington in April of this year. Violence had been reduced further. American casualties had declined significantly. Al Qaeda was virtually limited to the northern city of Mosul. There were more Iraqi Security Forces, and those forces were increasingly capable. The Iraqi government had passed a variety of laws promoting sectarian reconciliation. And the prime minister, Nuri al-Maliki, was demonstrating that he was a national leader by meeting with Sunnis and launching military operations against Shiite gangs and Iranian-backed "special groups" in the southern port city of Basra.

Democrats responded this time by saying the Basra operation was a failure and that any reduction in violence only meant Americans could come home sooner rather than later. Wrong again, because (a) despite early missteps the Iraqi army had control of Basra within a couple of weeks, and (b) any precipitous, politically calculated American withdrawal would clearly lead to more violence, not less. What is new is that Petraeus's strategy and tactics, his patience and expertise, have succeeded and now allow some of the surge brigades to return home without replacement—and without a spike in killing. There's every reason to continue his strategy, not abandon it and force a withdrawal.

On May 22, Petraeus was able to tell the Senate that "the number of security incidents in Iraq last week was the lowest in over four years, and it appears that the week that ends tomorrow will see an even lower number of incidents." On May 10, Maliki traveled to Mosul to oversee the launch of a campaign against al Qaeda. The number of attacks in Mosul has already been reduced by 85 percent. Acting CENTCOM commander Martin Dempsey says that Al Qaeda in Iraq is at its weakest state since 2003. Also last week, Iraqi soldiers entered radical Shiite cleric Moktada al-Sadr's Sadr City stronghold in Baghdad. They met no resistance.

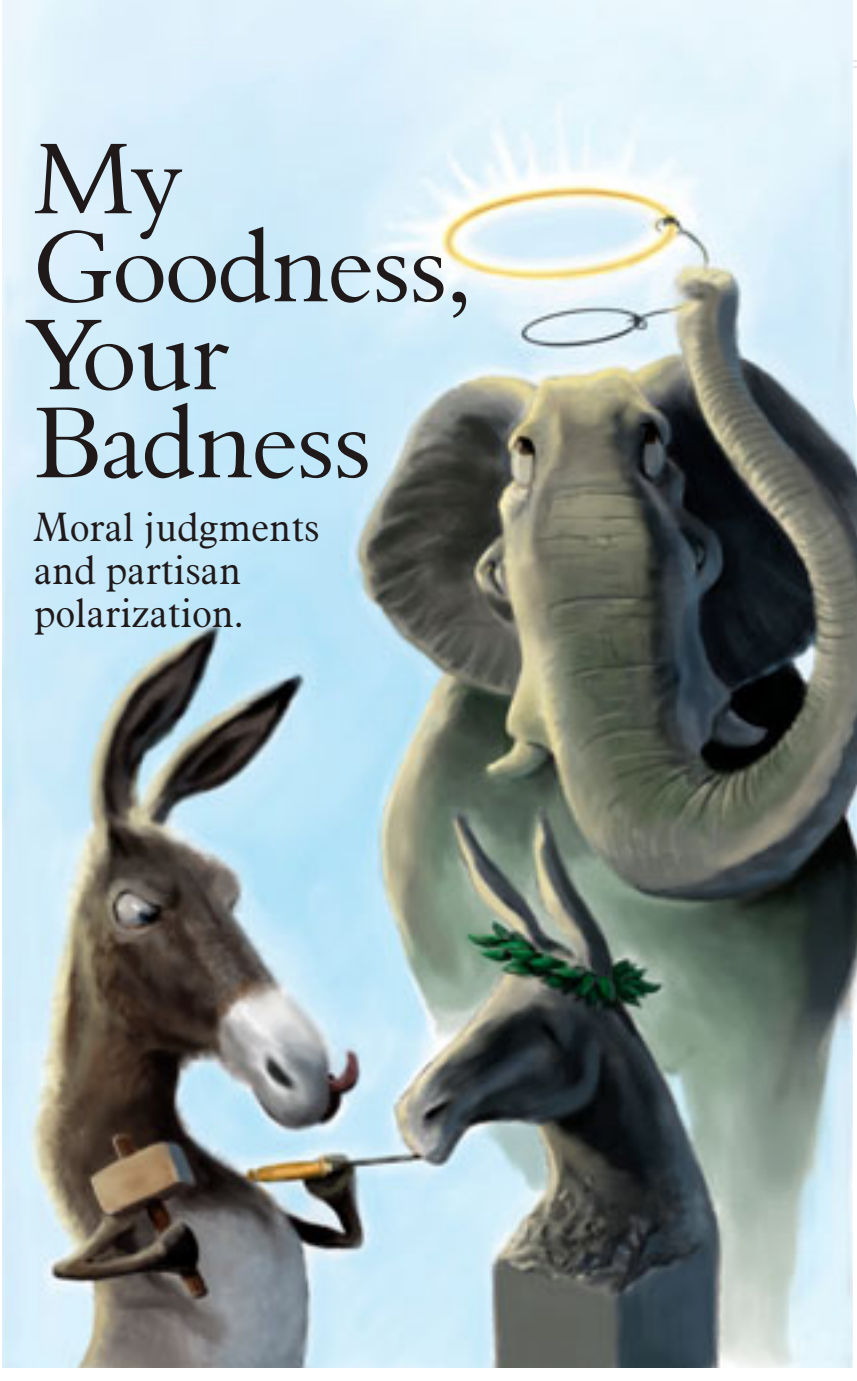
The Iraqi army and government have done exactly what Democrats have asked of it, and the Democrats remain hostile. Their disdain and animosity has not diminished one iota. Nor has their desire to abandon Iraq to a grim fate.

We keep hearing that this year's presidential election will be about judgment. If so: advantage McCain. For when it comes to the surge, not only have Obama and his party been in error; they have been inflexible in error. They have been so committed to a false narrative of American defeat that they cannot acknowledge the progress that has been made on the ground. That isn't judgment. It's inanity.

—Matthew Continetti, for the Editors

My Goodness, Your Badness

Moral judgments and partisan polarization.



PAUL MOYSE

BY JAMES W. CEASER

Social science has confirmed what political observers have been telling us for months: There is a clamor in America to dampen the spirit of intense partisanship that prevails in Washington. A recent survey sponsored by the Hoover Institution and the *Economist* showed that seven in ten Americans wish for party leaders who will "come together and compromise." This sentiment has found a special home among independents and moderates for whom the act of "reaching across the aisle" seems to have the status of a holy rite. Senator Barack Obama achieved great success early in his campaign by tapping into this feeling, promising to inaugurate what his supporters called a new era of "transpartisan" politics.

Yet for all the public pressure to embrace this ethos, some convinced partisans have expressed reservations. Over a third of the Democrats (35 percent) and almost half of the Republicans (46 percent) had the audacity to insist that their party leaders should "stick to their principles even if that means that nothing gets done." What many partisans want is not so much compromise itself as compromise on their terms, in which members of the other party break ranks and join the side of light in exchange for nothing more than praise for "taking the higher ground" and "acting responsibly."

Besides this fidelity to political principles, the Hoover/*Economist* survey provided evidence of another obstacle to any quick realization of the transpartisan dream. It is found in highly charged attitudes of Democrats and Republicans about the *moral* qualities of fellow partisans and opponents. Political conflict has spilled over into the realm of ethical assessment. Respondents in the Hoover/*Economist* poll were asked to select, from a list of nine basic human qualities, which ones described "people who are Republicans" and "people who are Democrats." (Respondents could check as many as they wished.) Three of these attributes were obvious virtues (open-mindedness, generosity, and honesty), and four were clear moral deficiencies (hypocrisy, closed-mindedness, meanness, and selfishness). The other two were intelligence, a positive quality but not a moral one, and patriotism, which most consider admirable but about which some probably have certain reservations.

One conclusion that jumps out from the data is just how highly each group of partisans regards fellow party members. Familiarity is supposed to breed contempt, but evidently not in this case. Thus, Democrats described other Democrats as possessing in good measure the three virtues: 73 percent of Democrats selected the term "open-minded" to apply to fellow party members, 49 percent "generous," and 37 percent "honest," for an average virtue response of 53 percent. More striking, few Democrats judged other Democrats as having any moral deficiencies. Are Democrats, for example, closed-

James W. Ceaser is a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution and professor of politics at the University of Virginia. He is the author, most recently, of Nature and History in American Political Development.

minded? Only 4 percent of Democrats think so. The same holds in the case of the other three flaws, with the average response for the moral deficiencies being a paltry 4.5 percent. If he who is without fault may cast the first stone, then Democrats—in the judgment of Democrats—should be ready to fire away.

Republicans are no different. They judged fellow Republicans just as positively, indeed slightly more so, awarding themselves an average virtue response score of 54. And they thought no more ill of themselves, either. Just 4 percent of Republicans described other Republicans as "mean," 5 percent "selfish," 6 percent "hypocritical," and 13 percent as closed-minded, yielding a moral deficiency average of 7 percent. (Oh yes, and both groups also described their fellow partisans as being intelligent and patriotic, with Republicans especially celebrating their love of country.)

If the same kind of characterization that is used for an individual person can be applied to a collectivity, both groups of partisans can safely be pronounced insufferable. And equally so. But the two groups are insufferable in slightly different ways. Democrats flatter themselves above all for being open-minded, while Republicans think that being honest is their hallmark.

Feeling good about members of one's own party, even in this excessive way, probably poses no direct challenge to "getting together to compromise." For what it is worth, psychologists in our hyper-therapeutic age generally insist that high self-esteem is a precondition for relating positively to others. The difficulty for achieving the transpartisan dream comes when this positive self-assessment is coupled with a dim view of one's opponents, which, unfortunately, is exactly what the data show.

Despite their self-descriptions as being generous, Democrats and Republicans both display very little charity in characterizing their fellow human beings from across the aisle. They see hardly a glimmer of virtue in their opponents and much moral deficiency. No more than 6 percent of Democrats could find it in their hearts to say that Republicans should be described as possessing any of the virtues. Republicans were a bit kinder, with an average 13 percent naming a virtue. But Republicans were more willing to ascribe moral deficiencies to Democrats than Democrats to Republicans (by an average rate of 50 percent to 47.5 percent). For both groups the bottom line is the same. Neither one thinks the other is going to heaven, or anywhere close to it.

Interestingly, large numbers of Democrats and Republicans were in full agreement on describing each other as possessing the same moral deficiency: hyprocrisy. This is not surprising. Those who boast so much of their moral perfection practically invite being charged with this vice. Republicans must have especially relished the opportunity to describe Democrats as "closed-minded," while many Democrats no doubt rejoiced at checking "mean."

Large numbers of Democrats and Republicans were in full agreement on describing each other as possessing the same moral deficiency: hyprocrisy. This is not surprising. Those who boast so much of their moral perfection practically invite being charged with this vice.

Advocates of transpartisanship tend to have a special place in their hearts—or at any rate in their rhetoric—for independents, whom they laud as honest brokers able to exercise impartial judgments. These accounts are usually no more than a form of pandering designed to cast partisanship in an unfavorable light, but in this case the independents do seem to hold a more balanced view of their fellow Americans. They think less well of each group of partisans than it thinks of itself and not as poorly as each group thinks of the other. Overall, independents describe partisans as having slightly more deficiencies than virtues, which is probably a fair assessment of humankind. As for their judgment of the relative merits of those in our two parties, independents pronounce a split decision. They describe Democrats as having greater virtue than Republicans, but also as having more moral deficiencies.

A shortcoming of the survey is that while it allowed independents to sit in judgment of partisans, it denied the same privilege to partisans. Independents were let off, as they usually are, scot-free. Could it be that Democrats and Republicans, despite their animosity, nevertheless have a grudging respect for each other for at least having the courage of their convictions? And might they not, if given the chance to judge independents, join in describing them as weak, vacillating, unfaithful, and supercilious?

Finally, the authors of the Hoover/*Economist* survey deserve the gratitude of all social scientists for venturing into hitherto forbidden territory, exploring the deepest fears and taboos of the partisan psyche. Respondents from each party were directly asked, without any soft pedaling, how they would feel if their son or daughter actually married one, meaning a partisan from the opposite party. In light of the previous findings, the importance of posing so frank a question can now be appreciated. For it is surely no small thing to introduce into one's household a son- or daughter-in-law who figures to be hypocritical, closed-minded, mean, and selfish.

Surprisingly, respondents did not object to partisan intermarriages in nearly the degree that one might expect. Less than a third of both Democrats and Republicans reported that they would be "upset" at this prospect. What can account for this relaxed attitude? Absent further data, we can only speculate on the reasons. One possibility, which is the least favorable to any comforting notions of tolerance, is that respondents thought that their

own children could be trusted to find that most rare of creatures: a decent Republican or Democrat.

A more plausible explanation, however, relies on sound anthropological research, which has shown that groups of human beings from very early on came to appreciate the importance of exogamy as a way to avoid the ill-effects of inbreeding. At issue here, of course, are highly sensitive matters relating to the genetic consequences of interpartisan breeding, about which little, unfortunately, is known at present. Is the progeny of mixed-partisan mating likely to be a pure independent? Or does one party carry a dominant and the other a recessive trait, such that miscegenation actually works to the partisan advantage of one party? And which party is that? If an unbiased answer is sought, it might be better not to poll the partisans themselves. ♦

From California with Love

Why same-sex marriage will inevitably become a national issue this fall.

BY JEFFREY BELL

In the guise of interpreting the California constitution, the state's Supreme Court on May 15 made certain that the issue of same-sex marriage will be a national one in the 2008 presidential race. The 4-3 decision ripped away the presumed middle ground on the issue and (assuming the court grants no stay of implementation before mid-June) all but issues an invitation to out-of-state same-sex couples to migrate to California to be married between now and Election Day, November 4. This in turn makes certain that the federal courts will have the option of reinvolving themselves within a matter of months, regardless of the outcome of California's referendum on a constitutional amendment restoring traditional marriage.

First, on the destruction of the middle ground: The majority opinion by Chief Justice Ronald George, a Pete Wilson appointee, ruled that decisions by the California legislature to give same-sex domestic partnerships every right enjoyed by married couples are not enough. These partnerships must also be given the name of marriage. Any decision to deny, not the benefits, but the word "marriage" is the equivalent of the "separate but equal" rationale used by racists of bygone days to uphold segregation in southern public schools.

For politicians trying to walk down the middle of the road, leaving supporters of traditional marriage the term "marriage" while awarding gay couples some or all of the benefits of marriage, there has to be a feeling of Catch-22. Give in to the gay rights movement on substance, and judges will still equate you with the Ku Klux Klan and find your willingness to compromise a decisive reason for finishing the job. At one point in his book-length opinion, Chief Justice George helpfully indicated that his opinion might have been more moderate if California legislators had *denied* some of the economic benefits of marriage to gay couples.

Second, on California's immediate future as a national Mecca and pilot project for same-sex marriage: When the Massachusetts Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage in 2003, the state already had a residency requirement on the books effectively prohibiting couples from coming to Massachusetts to marry. California puts up no such barrier.

The fact that a state constitutional amendment may end same-sex marriage in California if passed by state voters on November 4—the first polling since the decision indicates the amendment has roughly a 3-2 lead—makes couples more rather than less likely to jam into California's wedding venues in the weeks and months before the election. That is because passage of the amendment would bring an abrupt end to same-sex weddings in California without in any way invalidating the marriages performed during the four-month window between mid-June and early November. In these four-plus months, same-sex marriages performed in California will have the force of law thanks to the state's Supreme Court, and even after a voter reversal, should it occur, California officials may have no ground for regarding the couples married during the window as anything other than legally married.

This should in turn prompt the long-awaited challenge in federal courts to the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) of 1996, passed overwhelmingly by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton. The purpose of DOMA was to enable states favoring traditional marriage to avoid the consequences of the Full Faith and Credit provision in the Constitution. This provision allows beneficiaries of one state's laws to go to another state without forfeiting those benefits. Many legal observers believe DOMA is unlikely to survive court challenge, given the mind-set of the federal judiciary and the existence, thanks to the judges in California, of newly "married" couples in most other states with clear standing to sue.

As to the presidential race, neither John McCain nor Barack Obama will be able to campaign in California

Jeffrey Bell, a visiting fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, is writing a book on social conservatism to be published by Encounter Books in 2009.

without answering detailed questions on the court decision and (assuming it goes to ballot) the referendum to overturn it by amending the state constitution. In fact, McCain has prospectively endorsed the California amendment, whereas Obama has said he "respects" the decision of the court. While nominally in favor of marriage as being between a man and a woman, Obama will not favor a Yes vote on the ballot measure, which is California's only chance to restore the definition Obama says he favors.

But respecting the decision of one state's high court to ratify same-sex marriage does not commit Obama to spreading same-sex marriage everywhere else—does it?

In real terms, it does. The Defense of Marriage Act is now the only (very shaky) legal barrier standing in the path of nationally mandated recognition of same-sex marriage. What is Obama's stance on DOMA? He recently endorsed its repeal.

Needless to say, Obama also opposes amending the U.S. Constitution to protect traditional marriage, even though with DOMA overturned or repealed a federal amendment would become the only possible means of achieving that end. (McCain has also opposed the federal amendment, but he has indicated he will endorse it if the state-by-state decision-making he favors becomes impossible.)

Finally, the California decision brings front and center the two candidates' views of judicial appointments. McCain is committed to selecting advocates of judicial restraint, along the lines of recently confirmed justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito. Obama voted against both Roberts and Alito. His criteria for selection would be "what is in the judge's heart" and "one's deepest values, one's core concerns, one's broader perspectives on how the world works, and the depth and breadth of one's empathy."

Thanks in large part to four justices in California, the choices on November 4, in the nation as well as in California, could not be clearer or more consequential. ♦

AP Photo / Carlos Osorio

Motor Mouth City

Detroit's Democratic scandal spreads.

BY RICHARD BURR

Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick with his mother, Rep. Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick

The rest of the country may have dimly registered a flurry of scandal over romantic text messages involving Detroit's mayor four months ago. But the controversy has become a growing political cancer that threatens not only to get Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick turned out of office and even sent to jail, but also to unseat the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus and even damage Barack Obama's chances of carrying swing-state Michigan in the fall.

The ouster of the self-proclaimed hip-hop mayor is far from certain. But as court and removal proceedings bog down, the scandal remains an albatross for the Motor City and Kilpatrick's Democratic allies.

When Kilpatrick took office in 2002, he was only 31. A former minority leader of the Michigan House of Representatives, he lived large, sporting a posse of body guards. Eventually, rumors of a wild 2002 stripper party at the mayoral mansion and misbehavior by the bodyguards reached Gary Brown, Detroit's deputy police chief for internal affairs. The party was rumored to be connected to the murder of Tamara Greene, an exotic dancer.

Brown started investigating in 2003, and within two weeks he was fired. That led to a probe by Republican state attorney general Mike Cox, who found problems with

Richard Burr is associate editor of the Detroit News *editorial page.*

"extravagant payments of overtime" to the body guards, but declared the alleged party had "all the earmarks of an 'urban legend' and should be treated as such."

But four years later, a wrongful firing/whistle-blower lawsuit revived the issue. Both Kilpatrick and his chief of staff, Christine Beatty, testified in August 2007 they had not had Brown fired. When asked on the witness stand if they had been "romantic" or "intimate," Kilpatrick and Beatty denied it.

The jury didn't believe them and awarded Brown and another officer $6.5 million. Kilpatrick eventually settled this and an untried companion lawsuit for a total of $8.4 million. What the Detroit City Council didn't know when it approved the payment out of public coffers is that there was a secret deal to lock in a bank vault steamy text messages from city-issued pagers by Kilpatrick and Beatty.

Those came crashing into public view in late January when they were splashed across the front page of the *Detroit Free Press*. On October 3, 2002, Kilpatrick wrote, "I'm madly in love with you." Beatty answered, "I hope you feel that way for a long time. In case you haven't noticed, I am madly in love with you, too!" They shared other messages about missing each other and laughed about almost getting caught by the bodyguards at a hotel while in Washington for a Congressional Black Caucus legislative conference.

The messages also indicated Kilpatrick and Beatty had lied about Brown's ouster. On May 15, 2003, Beatty wrote, "I'm sorry that we are going through this mess because of a decision that we made to fire Gary Brown. I will make sure that the next decision is much more thought out." The mayor responded, "It had to happen though. I'm all the way with that!"

Kilpatrick initially did not deny writing the text messages. Instead, his office released a statement calling the messages "profoundly embarrassing." "My wife and I worked our way through these intensely personal issues years ago," he wrote. Beatty, who had already divorced, resigned.

Kilpatrick played all the cards at his disposal. He and his wife made a vague televised apology and vowed to fight. In his State of the City speech, Kilpatrick said his family had received death threats and he had been called the N-word more than at any other time in his life. It didn't work.

After a legal battle, a tiny portion of the text messages were released to the public. Wayne County prosecutor Kym Worthy in late March charged Kilpatrick with perjury, obstruction of justice, and misconduct in office. Beatty faces similar charges. "Even children know that lying is wrong," Worthy said at a press conference.

Since the Detroit City Council also thinks it was lied to, it voted 5-4 this month to start impeachment proceedings to remove the mayor. Because the city charter is vaguely worded, the council will face legal challengees, and its chances of success are slim. The Democratic governor is unlikely to fulfill the council's request that she remove Kilpatrick.

The criminal case is not a slam dunk, either. Proving perjury will be difficult because some questions weren't worded precisely, Wayne State University law professor Peter Henning wrote in the *Detroit News*. He asks: "Can anyone define what [romantically involved] means with any precision: candlelight dinners, walks along the beach, exchanging gifts, or just a physical relationship?"

Kilpatrick's defense lawyers also contend the text messages can't be admitted under the federal Stored Communications Act. Yale law professor Susan Crawford and Michigan State University law professor Adam Candeub disagree, with Candeub saying it will take a "legal miracle" for Kilpatrick to

prevail. Kilpatrick's attorneys say the prosecutor must prove that the mayor typed the messages himself. Worthy says she can prove it.

Because the mayor is part of a politically powerful Detroit family, his downfall might create a domino effect. A former state House Democratic floor leader, Mary Waters, and state senator Martha Scott are challenging the mayor's mother, six-term U.S. representative Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, in the August Democratic primary. Waters said the congresswoman's comment that "we will appeal no matter what it costs the city" reflects arrogance among the Kilpatricks.

"We must stop being victims of those who would be irresponsible," Waters says, a message that may resonate with Detroit and suburban voters in the 13th Congressional District. Waters, who is on leave from her government relations job with Prosecutor Worthy, is aided by political consultant Sam Riddle, who helped Mayor Kilpatrick's 2005 reelection but now is one of the mayor's most vocal critics.

Barack Obama might suffer collateral damage as well. The Kilpatrick scandal "has polarized the Michigan electorate to such an extent that there are very senior Michigan Democrats who think that there is no way any black candidate, let alone Barack Obama, could carry Michigan in the fall," *New York* magazine's John Heilemann told Chris Matthews on May 11.

That may overstate the case. "Obama is going to have serious problems in Michigan, but I don't think the Kilpatrick situation will be a big part of that," says Michigan GOP pollster Steve Mitchell of Mitchell Interactive. He sees the Rev. Jeremiah Wright as a bigger concern among ticket-splitting white voters.

The funny thing is that Kilpatrick's delaying tactics have pushed his preliminary criminal hearing into September, the beginning of the fall campaigns. The scandal will be like the text messages—perhaps easy to delete at first but difficult to erase from the voters' minds. ♦

Five Easy Pieces

Put the do-nothing Democratic Congress on the spot.

BY FRED BARNES

The story of the Democratic Congress is this: So much to do, so little done. Issues of importance are crying out for attention. The alarms are largely ignored. The list of big issues is long and includes immigration, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, health care and health insurance in general, and energy.

It might make sense for Republicans to demand these issues be brought up this year, as President Truman did in 1948 to embarrass the "do nothing 80th Congress." But political stunts seldom work the second time. Besides, these are especially complex issues.

There's an alternative, however, that might galvanize Republicans and lift the party's spirits. Republicans could—indeed, should—insist that five simple, one-idea proposals be voted on. They're designed to bring immediate (though partial) relief to serious problems facing the country.

Here are the one-click issues, easy to deal with in a single vote:

(1) Double or triple the number of foreigners given H-1B visas to work in America. We need more highly educated and skilled workers from abroad, but only 65,000 H-1B visas are handed out annually. This causes two problems: Jobs requiring special skill or training go unfilled, and those who might fill them migrate to other countries, which become more competitive at America's expense.

The lid on H-1B visas is one of the most counterproductive parts of our immigration policy. High tech companies, for example, need to hire foreign scientists, engineers, and programmers because there aren't enough qualified Americans. But the limit on H-1B visas makes it difficult. In 2007, Microsoft was unable to hire one-third of the foreign-born workers it had jobs for, Bill Gates told Congress in March.

Gates said it would be preferable if the American education system produced workers for these skilled positions, but it doesn't. Without more foreigners, "American companies simply will not have the talent they need to innovate and compete," he said. This problem could be solved by a single vote in the House and Senate boosting the number of visas to 130,000 or 195,000. One click.

(2) Allow nationwide purchase of health insurance. Today, you can buy auto insurance in any state, but you can buy health insurance only in your home state. This leads to great disparities. A single 25-year-old in New Jersey pays five times as much for a standard policy as he'd pay if he lived in Kentucky.

A nationwide market would spur competition among insurers, driving down prices and blunting the rising cost of health care generally. Republican congressman John Shadegg of Arizona has long championed this common sense reform. "People should be able to get the health insurance that suits their needs," he says. And they'd be able to buy it on the Internet, providing further savings.

(3) Reduce the corporate income tax from 35 percent to 25 percent. The United States has the second highest corporate tax rate in the world, putting American compa-

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

nies at a severe competitive disadvantage. The high rate also has the effect of causing companies to leave their overseas profits, well, overseas.

The average corporate rate for countries with significant economies happens to be 25 percent. Reducing the rate here can have a strikingly favorable impact. A few years ago, Ireland cut its corporate tax rate to 12.5 percent. The Irish economy boomed, and the Irish people are on their way to having the highest standard of living in Europe.

(4) Lift the moratorium on offshore oil drilling. How high does the price of gasoline have to go before America wakes up and demands we explore and then drill for oil off the Atlantic and Pacific shores? An unheard of $4 a gallon? Whoops, I forgot. We're already close to $4.

There's plenty of oil out there. Drilling wouldn't create unsightly views from beachfront homes of the wealthy. Perish the thought. Thanks to technological advances, drilling is now possible in the deep waters far offshore and is highly unlikely to produce spills. The moratorium bars drilling within 200 miles of the coast. That makes no sense. For both national security and economic reasons, tapping the offshore oil is a necessity.

(5) Let the private sector build highways. Increased use of mass transit has not alleviated the need for more highways. And there are hundreds of billions of dollars that private enterprises, some of them foreign, are eager to invest in fancy new roads all over America. Of course, these would be toll roads. That's how the companies would make a profit. But the new highways would be located mostly near clogged (free) highways, where drivers would benefit from having traffic siphoned off.

This is a no-brainer, particularly since revenues in the Highway Trust Fund are needed to repair and renovate the Interstate Highway System, once a wonder of the world but now rundown and unable to handle the traffic load.

The difficult part of pushing these five easy pieces is getting Democrats to hold votes. No doubt Democrats would balk. The media probably wouldn't give much coverage to them either. But who knows? Maybe the press would find a hook for the story, something like: Republicans aren't dead yet.

And a point could be made: Democrats have produced a do-nothing Congress, even spurning a series of potentially helpful, easy-to-understand proposals that wouldn't take much time to consider. It's a point worth making. ♦

Hartford (left) with Robert Moses in front of the Gallery of Modern Art, 1964

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He Came, He Pinched, He Ran

Huntington Hartford II, 1911-2008.

BY PHILIP TERZIAN

Once upon a time—which is to say, a generation or two before Sean Penn and Britney Spears—the popular gossip culture in America was preoccupied not with dysfunctional entertainers but with misbehaving millionaires. And not the men who made the millions, but their errant sons and grandsons, such as Tommy Manville (1894-1967), heir to the Johns-Manville asbestos fortune, who was married 13 times ("She cried, and the judge wiped her tears with my checkbook") or England's Lord Moynihan (1936-1991), who owned a brothel in Manila, played the bongos professionally, and married a succession of models and one "snake charmer and former fire-eater's assistant" named Shirin Quereshi.

Well, the granddaddy of them all, Huntington Hartford II, died last week at his home in Lyford Cay, Bahamas, age 97.

To readers of a certain age, the name of Huntington Hartford II must be synonymous with wasted resources, failed enterprise, and sad debauchery. An heir to the A&P grocery fortune, Hartford acquired an annual income of $1.5 million on his grandfather's death in 1917—that's when a million-and-a-half was the real thing—and by age 12 possessed something like $90 million, which must be close to a billion in today's money. Hartford had the benefit of an elite education—St. Paul's, Harvard ('34)—and seems not to have suffered losses in the Depression. In the late 1930s he was fired from an apprenticeship at the A&P when he skipped work to attend the Harvard-Yale football game, and in 1940 he invested $100,000 in the new left-wing newspaper *PM*, where he was briefly a reporter. It is said that he once traveled to an assignment on his yacht but missed the deadline when he returned to find its berth taken.

It would be nice to say that the experience of World War II—where he served in the Coast Guard and commanded a cargo vessel in the Pacific—awakened the feckless youth, but it didn't happen. In his earlier years Hartford was a full-time ladies' man—he ran a modeling agency, married showgirls, produced movies no one paid to see—but in his later years, influenced by the ex-cigarette girl who was his second wife, branched out to cultural entrepreneur. He developed an interest in the study of handwriting, founding a "handwriting institute" and writing a book on graphology, financed an artistic/literary/musical foundation and retreat in Los Angeles, and published an oversized and glossy, but inevitably short-lived, entertainment magazine called *Show*.

In 1964 he unveiled his most ambi-

Philip Terzian is literary editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Huntington Hartford with Elaine Kay, his fourth wife

tious project: an eponymous Gallery of Modern Art, on Columbus Circle in New York, designed by Edward Durrell Stone and containing the "realistic art" he preferred to what he called the "obscurity, confusion, immorality [and] violence" of cubism, abstract expressionism, and modernism in literature. He expanded on these themes in *Art or Anarchy?* (1964), a volume which brings to mind Frank Lloyd Wright's famous remark about Hartford that he was "the sort of man who [would] come up with an idea, pinch it in the fanny, and run."

The gallery, which consumed a fair portion of his assets, was a failure, and the building—called "a die-cut Venetian palazzo on lollipops" by one critic, and which Tom Wolfe, in a rare lapse of taste, seems to admire—still sits on Columbus Circle, awaiting renovation.

Along the way, Hartford switched to moneymaking ventures, and with equal success. He drilled for shale oil, which he didn't find, devised an automated parking garage system, which didn't work, and sought to build an artists' café in Central Park, which the city nixed.

In the late 1950s Hartford had purchased a two-mile strip of farmland off Nassau called Hog Island, christened it Paradise Island, and built a gigantic luxury resort called the Ocean Club, with casino, formal gardens, and a 12th-century French monastery building originally purchased and dismantled by William Randolph Hearst. At the other end of the island he constructed a palatial home for himself.

True to form, however, Hartford had failed to obtain a gambling license, and was forced to sell the enterprise to Resorts International for $1 million—a $30 million loss. By then even Hartford must have recognized his leaden touch, and retreated into the welcoming world of drugs, derelict visitors, Howard Hughes-style reclusiveness, increasingly younger girlfriends, and diminishing assets. In 1984 his fourth ex-wife and a friend were charged with tying up Hartford's teenaged secretary in his Manhattan home and shaving her head. In 2001 his daughter found him living in a squalid rental house in Brooklyn, and put him in a nursing home before shipping him off to the Bahamas.

"I had a lot of money," he told *Vanity Fair* four years ago, "and now I have enough."

The lessons of Huntington Hartford II's life seem obvious enough: Wealth can't buy happiness, quit while you're ahead, don't throw good money after bad, you can always tell a Harvard man, but you can't tell him much. Somehow, though, they miss the point. If Hartford had been a little more self-aware, and somewhat less ambitious, he might have been content to live quietly in comfort, paying someone to manage his money, collecting art and manuscripts, subsidizing scholarship, marrying twice, serving on the boards of foundations and museums. But that would have made him indistinguishable from innumerable civic patrons—no doubt, several of his St. Paul's classmates—and would not have yielded the long, entertaining obituaries in America's leading newspapers.

What Huntington Hartford II achieved, in the end, was what he probably sought all along: celebrity, at least for a time. Not the kind of celebrity he must have had in mind, but fame and notoriety—and in our world, where Bono is a statesman and Barack Obama is a rock star, who could ask for anything more? ♦

Tim Boxer / Getty Images

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Rockets Over Sderot

What should Israel do to stop this outrage?

Three years ago, Israel abandoned the Gaza strip and evicted the over 8,000 Jewish residents who had lived there for generations and who had created an island of civility, industry and prosperity. What has been Israel's reward for its generosity?

What are the facts?

Israel's many mistakes. In its six decades of history, clouded by almost uninterrupted warfare against it, Israel has made many mistakes. Relinquishing the Sinai to Egypt, Southern Lebanon to Hezbollah, and Gaza to the Palestinians were the most egregious. One lesson to be learned was that one cannot make peace with one's enemies by giving away pieces of one's country.

The greatest folly, of course, was the abandonment of Gaza. Virtually since the first day of Israel's disengagement from the area, the Gazans have launched daily rocket attacks on the city of Sderot. So far "only" about twenty Israelis have been killed. Many more have been wounded.

> "...the bitter experience with Gaza will make Israel quite unresponsive to our government's desire to achieve a 'two-state final solution'..."

But it is only a matter of time that one of these rockets is going to hit a school, a hospital or an apartment building, causing unacceptable casualties. Then Israel's forbearance and patience are likely to snap.

These Qassam rockets, however, are only the beginning. Large quantities of explosives and more advanced weapons systems – presents from Syria and mostly from Iran – are supplied daily through sophisticated tunnels from the Sinai into the Gaza territory. That happens under the "watchful eyes" of the Egyptians, who have foolishly been allowed to be the guardians of the border between Egypt and Gaza.

There is no question what any other country would do if it found itself in a position similar to that of Israel. What would we do if bombs or rockets launched from Mexico landed in San Diego? Obviously, we would obliterate the source of such attack and inflict sufficient additional damage to totally discourage such behavior in the future. But what does Israel do? Does it use its powerful army or its superb air force to destroy the areas from which these rockets are launched? Surprisingly not. Guided by its own moral compass and always concerned about "world opinion," Israel attempts to pinpoint the source of attacks, taking enormous care not to hurt "innocent civilians." But the concept of "innocent civilians" is nonsense, of course. Anybody who allows his backyard to be used as a launching pad for rockets should expect his home to become a target for counterattack and for casualties to ensue.

Lessons to be learned. For reasons that are not at all clear, Israel finds itself in the thankless role of being responsible for Gaza's welfare, adequate supply of food, fuel and electricity. Occasionally, in feeble retaliation, Israel will slow the supply of fuel and electricity, though it never curtails the supply of food and medicine and routinely allows seriously ill Gazans access to its superb medical facilities. When it occasionally does curtail fuel and electricity, the world complains about Israel's "siege of Gaza."

Some questions: 1) Who appointed Israel to be the guardian of Gaza and responsible for its welfare and comfort? 2) Why don't the Gazans and their Iranian and Syrian friends use the sophisticated tunnels leading from Sinai to Gaza to import fuel, food, and medicine instead of explosives and weapons? 3) Why, in sixty years and in the decades before, when Egypt was in charge of Gaza, have the Palestinians been unable to build a functioning power plant that would make them independent in that respect? Surely their Arab cousins, could supply some of their abundant petroleum for that purpose.

Israel's attempt to stop the shelling of Sderot has so far been a failure. But what *should* Israel do? The answer is obvious: Israel should openly declare to Gaza and to the world at large that every rocket that falls on Sderot or on any place in Israel will immediately be responded to by a rocket aimed at where it came from. Since Gaza is packed with humanity, it is clear that such a tit-for-tat approach would cause many civilian casualties. That would be a tragedy, of course. But, it is pretty clear that the rockets would stop in short order. Sure, "the world" would object. But a country's first duty is to protect its citizens from attack. That is what *we* would do. That is the very least any country would do.

The real tragedy is that the bitter experience with Gaza will make Israel quite unresponsive to our government's desire to achieve a "two-state final solution" before the end of the year. No such solution is possible in this or in any other year unless Israelis are convinced that the Palestinians wish to live in peace and friendship with them. If, under the pressure of our government and of many other countries, Israel would commit the folly of giving up control of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), not only the Palestinians, but also Syrians and Iranians – with heavy armament, planes and tanks – would pour in and would dominate the Judean ridges and the heartland of Israel. That would finally achieve the long-hoped-for end of the Jewish state. It would bring about what many wars and "intifidas" were unable to accomplish.

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P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President

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In the Driver's Seat

Condoleezza Rice and the jettisoning of the Bush Doctrine

By Stephen F. Hayes

Shortly before 10 A.M. on October 9, 2006, George W. Bush read a statement from the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. He fixed his face to look resolute. The previous day, in spite of its many promises over many years to discontinue its nuclear program, North Korea had tested a nuclear weapon.

"The United States condemns this provocative act," Bush declared. "Once again North Korea has defied the will of the international community, and the international community will respond."

The American response came three weeks later, on October 31, when Christopher Hill, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the government's chief negotiator on North Korea's nuclear program, met privately in Beijing with Kim Gye Gwan, North Korea's deputy foreign minister. The meeting itself was a major concession. Although Hill's boss, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, had given him wide latitude for his negotiations she had not authorized a one-on-one meeting. The North Koreans had been pushing for bilateral negotiations with the United States since the beginning of the Bush administration. The president had repeatedly and categorically rejected any direct talks with the North Koreans.

In fact, he had reiterated this position at a press conference on October 11:

> And my point to you is, in order to solve this diplomatically, the United States and our partners must have a strong diplomatic hand, and you have a better diplomatic hand with others sending the message than you do when you're alone. And so, obviously, I made the decision that the bilateral negotiations wouldn't work, and the reason I made that decision is because they didn't.

In order to facilitate discussions with the North Koreans Bush had agreed in 2003 to participate in multilateral negotiations, the so-called "six-party talks." Administration officials say the president was as clear in private White House conversations as he had been at his press conference: The United States would deal with this problem multilaterally. There would be no bilateral talks with North Korea.

Christopher Hill didn't care. He had been authorized to meet with the North Koreans on the condition that the Chinese representative was also present. But when the Chinese diplomat conveniently left for an extended period of time, Hill continued the talks. The North Koreans wanted the United States to ease the financial pressures resulting from year-old sanctions on a bank in Macau involved in shady North Korean transactions. Hill gave them his word.

"The [North Koreans were] especially concerned that we address the situation of the financial measures that has, in their view, held up the talks for about a year now," Hill said following his meetings. "We agreed that we could—that we will find a mechanism within the six-party process to address these financial measures, that we would—it would probably be some kind of a working group to deal with this, and that we would try to address it that way."

Hill did not receive—indeed, did not ask for—any assurances that North Korea would refrain from conducting further tests. He did, however, get the North Koreans to return to the six-party talks. Hill characterized the meetings as "positive" and "very constructive." He seemed to be particularly encouraged that the North Koreans had reaffirmed their commitment "to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." But in a passing acknowledgment that the nuclear test three weeks earlier might have undermined the claim, Hill conceded that he was not yet ready to celebrate. "I have not broken out the cigars and champagne quite yet, believe me."

While the North Koreans did return to the six-party talks in December, they were not willing to cut any deals. From the outset they made clear that they were interested only in talking about easing the financial pressure that Hill had promised to address.

In January, Hill quietly set up another informal bilateral meeting with the North Koreans, this time with the blessing of his boss. Planning for the meeting, and for

Stephen F. Hayes, a senior writer at The Weekly Standard, *is the author of* Cheney: The Untold Story of America's Most Powerful and Controversial Vice President.

The new national security adviser briefs the press, February 2001.

AP PHOTO / JOE MARQUETTE

other aspects of North Korea policymaking, was limited to a small number of officials sympathetic to the softer line favored by Hill and Rice. Vice President Dick Cheney opposed the bilateral talks. He was joined by several key staffers on the National Security Council, at the Pentagon, and at the State Department. But "the North Korea process has been run outside the normal interagency," says a senior Bush administration official involved in the issue. Compared to other national security issues, this official says, the North Korea "policy does not get subjected to the same level of questioning in front of the president."

In a May 9, 2008, interview, Rice denied to me that she deliberately closed the circle of presidential advisers on North Korea. "I don't cut out people of my team," she said. "Anything that I've done with the president, I've done with [national security adviser] Steve Hadley, the vice president, and now, Bob Gates. So this has been very much an administration effort."

But confirmation of this gambit came from a reliable—if unexpected—source: Chris Hill. The busy diplomat made time to talk to Mike Chinoy, a former CNN reporter, for *Meltdown: The Inside Story of the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*, a book to be published in August. Chinoy had access to many of the key characters in the drama that has unfolded over more than a decade. Despite his consistent condemnations of the U.S. government for its failure to be more conciliatory and his attempts to rationalize North Korean irrationality, Chinoy's book is very well sourced and impeccably reported. And though Hill is portrayed sympathetically, the narrative is unintentionally damning.

"To Hill, the Bush administration was still full of people who were opposed to negotiations, and who felt the mere act of speaking with foreigners displayed weakness," writes Chinoy. "So the leading hardliners—Vice President Cheney's office, the office of the secretary of defense, Robert Joseph, the outgoing undersecretary for arms control—were kept in the dark." According to Hill, documentation of the policy deliberations was discouraged, and in some cases the demands for secrecy originated with Rice. "Some of the minimal paperwork business is coming directly from the secretary," Hill told Chinoy. "She said, 'Bring it only to me.'"

But Rice did more than just approve Hill's proposal for another bilateral meeting with his North Korean counterparts. She took it directly to George W. Bush and sought

to persuade him to reverse his unequivocal and very public rejection of such direct talks just three months earlier.

It worked. The president changed his mind. So three months after Bush threatened serious consequences for North Korea's continued intransigence, Hill and his team feted their North Korean counterparts with "friendly toasts" at a dinner in a private room at the Hilton Hotel in Berlin. "We pulled out all of the stops," a member of Hill's team told Chinoy, "because we wanted to demonstrate we were serious and sincere."

In many ways, George W. Bush's reluctant acceptance of bilateral talks with the North Koreans is the story of the latter half of his presidency.

Bush began his second term with the kind of bold, uncompromising vision that had characterized his first four years in office. The ultimate goal of U.S. policy, he proclaimed in his second inaugural address, is "ending tyranny in our world." Bush said: "My most solemn duty is to protect this nation and its people against further attacks and emerging threats. Some have unwisely chosen to test America's resolve, and have found it firm."

But that speech is better understood in retrospect as a coda to his first term than a bridge to the current one. In the second term, those who have chosen to test America's resolve—the Iranians, the Syrians, the North Koreans—have often found it less than firm.

Bush's second inaugural address is better understood in retrospect as a coda to his first term than a bridge to the current one. In the second term, those who have chosen to test America's resolve—the Iranians, the Syrians, the North Koreans—have often found it less than firm.

There are several reasons for this. Most obviously, the effects of the war in Iraq. At first, the ripple effects from that intervention seemed to have been what the Bush team predicted. Just as the fall of Baghdad after three weeks demonstrated the dominance of American military power, the decision to remove Saddam Hussein indicated the willingness of George W. Bush to make good on his threats. Syria's Bashar al-Assad, worried that he would be next, authorized his intelligence services to increase their assistance to the CIA. Libya's Muammar Qaddafi voluntarily gave up his own WMD programs, telling Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi that he did not want to be the next Saddam Hussein. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak hinted at more open elections, and there were municipal elections in Saudi Arabia. But the troubles in Iraq mounted—from the intelligence failures on weapons of mass destruction to the continued presence of more than 100,000 U.S. troops—and seemed to limit the Bush administration's options.

So Bush has lowered his expectations and, more than three years later, has mostly abandoned the tough-guy rhetoric that characterized his first term. No one has played a larger role in this shift than Condoleezza Rice, who has been the most influential member of Bush's foreign policy and national security team since her promotion to the post of chief diplomat. "Her influence on the president is total," says one senior Bush administration official.

In a *Foreign Affairs* article she authored back in 2000 as a representative of the Bush presidential campaign, Rice criticized the Clinton administration for a foreign policy so obsessed with diplomacy that it seemed to disregard U.S. national interests. "Multilateral agreements and institutions should not be ends in themselves," she warned. Today, her critics claim that Rice has lost sight of her own admonition. "We have gone from a policy of preemption to a policy of preemptive capitulation," says a disillusioned State Department official.

Rice began the first term at a disadvantage among the members of Bush's national security team. Cheney, Colin Powell, and Donald Rumsfeld each brought decades of foreign policy and national security experience at the highest levels of U.S. government. Rice, a Russia specialist, came to the administration from Stanford University, where she was provost. She was a distinguished academic, but her highest level of government service came when she served on the staff of the National Security Council under George H.W. Bush.

But September 11, 2001, blurred such distinctions. After the service at the National Cathedral on September 14, 2001, Rice flew by helicopter to Camp David with Rumsfeld to join Powell and Cheney. Bush had suggested that this group—Cheney, Powell, Rumsfeld, and Rice—spend the evening discussing the coming war and the challenges they would face together. They started over buffalo steak and continued for hours.

"We had dinner together, and there was a kind of, you know, it was a kind of sense that these were people who had been together before, you know, they'd seen a lot together before, but they hadn't seen this," Rice recalled to me in an interview in August 2006.

At Camp David, June 2006: Rice has been the most influential member of Bush's national security team since her promotion.

JASON REED / REUTERS

> This was different, and it was palpable in the room, in the conversation. It wasn't so much anything was spoken, because it was sharing stories about the Gulf War, sharing stories—but you could just . . . I think I could sense there was . . . I'm trying to find the right word. Tension isn't the right word, but anxiety. Anxiety."

I asked about her place in the group, and whether she felt left out because Cheney, Powell, and Rumsfeld knew each other well. She cut me off before I could finish the question.

> I'd been through the collapse of the Soviet Union. You know, that's not bad. No, in fact, remember that I had—he had—the vice president had been secretary of defense when I was a special assistant to Bush 41 and Colin Powell had been chairman. Don and I have known each other for years, going back to Republican politics in Chicago and some corporate work. So, no. Not at all. But I was—you know, I'm a generation younger and so I was sort of standing out—well, maybe not a full generation [she laughed and corrected herself], half a generation, half a generation. So yeah, I stood back a little bit from it to kind of observe it.

Rice was not a bystander in the administration deliberations in the weeks and months after 9/11, but she did little to shape the major decisions that came in response. She was, in effect, a referee mediating the now-legendary disputes that featured on one side Powell, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and the State bureaucracy, and, on the other, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, and the Pentagon bureaucracy. (In reality, of course, the sides did not always line up quite as neatly as the early narrative histories would suggest. There were plenty of times when, say, Cheney and Rumsfeld disagreed, and many more when Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz found themselves on opposite sides of one strategic decision or another. Rice, though, was almost always the referee.)

Part of this was a function of her job; the national security adviser runs the process. But according to several officials who worked with her, Rice had a deep insecurity about her own views. Several current and former colleagues criticized her management, accusing her of trying to find agreement among senior officials where there was none. "One day there would be a fight about something and the next day she would say there was an 'emerging consensus.' But it was a false consensus. She tried to protect the president by keeping him from making hard decisions and overruling his advisers. That's what a president does."

Rice, though, grew increasingly close to Bush. Their professional relationship blossomed into a warm personal friendship. Unmarried and without close family, Rice often spends holidays and weekends with George and Laura Bush. No one in the Bush administration has socialized with the president as much as Rice. "She was at Camp David nearly every weekend they were there," says an administration official.

Bush is comfortable around Rice. He will raise his voice to her in a way that he would never consider with Robert Gates or Cheney. "It's almost like a platonic boyfriend-girlfriend relationship," says one close observer. "It's very emotional." Rice showed a knack for anticipating where Bush would end up on an issue and getting there first, in effect advising him to do what he was almost certain to do. "She was a mirror," says an official who worked closely with her.

On January 18, 2005, Rice sat calm and poised at a long table before more than a dozen U.S. senators arrayed in a semicircle in front of her. Two months earlier, the president had nominated her to be secretary of state. The crowd in the hearing room—216 of the Hart Senate office building—was standing room only. After a brief introduction from then-Senate Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Richard Lugar, a much longer series of extemporaneous remarks from Joseph Biden, and an effusive endorsement from Democratic senator Dianne Feinstein from California, it was finally Rice's turn to talk.

It was a difficult balance. She had to defend President Bush, and most especially his decision to remove Saddam Hussein—a decision that was increasingly unpopular. She needed to demonstrate an understanding that the war was not going well but, as a member of the national security team responsible, be careful about giving ammunition to critics of the president. She gave a masterful performance, displaying a strong grasp of the issues she was likely to face and offering a spirited defense of the Bush administration and her role in it.

"The time for diplomacy is now," she declared, articulating each word carefully for emphasis. (It was not the only time she would use the phrase.) It was a clever message, open to different interpretations. One thing, however, was not ambiguous: Rice intended to signal a new American attitude toward the world and coming changes in the way the Bush administration would conduct foreign policy. She had added the words to her opening statement herself, and it is clear that she meant them.

When asked about the accomplishments of her time as secretary, Rice demurs, saying it's too early for judgments. "I think we'll wait until we're done to see where we end up," she says.

Pressed for three areas of improvement, Rice begins with the big picture and moves to specifics. "I think we have changed dramatically both the alignment in the Middle East and the expectations of what the Middle East should be and will be," she says. "I would be the first to say that we won't be able to deliver the fully formed, different Middle East. But I think what's expected of it and where it's headed is fundamentally different than when we came. And it's been turbulent and it's been difficult. But when I hear people talking about the stable Middle East that we've disrupted, I have to ask them, 'What stability was that?'"

She goes on,

> I think we have stronger relations with Japan, South Korea than we've ever had, and yet a working relationship with China despite differences, and through the six-party talks, a mechanism for cooperation on what could have been an area of conflict between the powers. I just think we're at a very strong position in Northeast Asia.
>
> And finally, I think that the administration's work on—I'll give you two more—Africa. I think it's extraordinary, the transformation of the relationship there. And finally, NATO. I think this is just a different alliance. Our European—our relations with our European allies are—traditional allies, are very good. And I think they weren't in 2005. And—but as importantly, I think we've—through the continuous policy of enlargement of NATO, now 12 of the 26 NATO members are former captive nations, and it has fundamentally transformed the nature of the alliance.

Is the improvement in our relations with our European allies due to the fact that we have pursued more conciliatory—some might say, more European—diplomatic policies since the beginning of her tenure? Rice sees more continuity than change. "The first term set up what we've been able to do in the second term."

Among the first challenges for the new secretary of state and her new diplomacy in the second term was an old problem: Iraq. "I know people didn't like the fact that we liberated Iraq," she said to me in May. "It was the right thing to do. But in 2005, we weren't dealing with questions of whether we should have liberated Iraq; we were dealing with questions of how to help the political transition in Iraq and reintegrate Iraq into the international system."

Getting support from erstwhile U.S. allies on Iraq proved difficult. And although the Iraqis held three successful elections in 2005 and began to stumble their way towards democracy, the worsening security problems there meant that the State Department necessarily played a secondary role to the Pentagon. While State was

South lawn of the White House, September 2006: No one in the Bush administration has socialized with the president as much as Rice.

in the process of establishing a huge presence in Baghdad, across Iraq the uniformed military were America's de facto diplomats.

In 2006, faced with mounting security problems and increasing ethnic violence among Iraqis, President Bush began to consider a wholesale change of strategy in Iraq. Proposals ranged from a reduction and redeployment of troops mostly outside of Iraq (not unlike the plan pushed by several Democrats) to a "surge" of troops to Iraq and significant changes in the mission. Cheney favored the surge; Rice did not.

Several current and former Bush administration officials say that Rice opposed the surge and favored a reduction in U.S. troops in Iraq. In interagency deliberations Rice frequently suggested the surge would do little more than antagonize Bush's allies—domestic and foreign—and result in higher casualties. Philip Zelikow, a top aide to Rice and former State Department counselor, circulated a strategy paper that proposed among other things reducing U.S. troop presence and pulling back from urban areas.

I recently asked Rice if she opposed the surge and advocated a pullback of American troops.

> First of all—look, I have never been in favor of pulling back any—pulling ourselves back from Iraq. Look, I am fundamentally a believer in what we did in Iraq. I believe we did the right thing. I believe we have to win. I believe we are winning. The question that I've had—that I had at the time when we were looking at different options, because what we were doing in Iraq was not working, was if we were going to have more forces, what were they going to do?
>
> If there was going to be a surge, what were they going to do? And, could we define our national interest clearly enough that we knew that additional American forces would be successful? Because I did believe that if we surged forces and it didn't make an effect—didn't have an effect, that that was a very, very bad thing.

Pressed on whether it was inaccurate to say that she was opposed to the surge, she responded:

> I had a lot of questions about the surge. I was initially skeptical as to whether or not we could surge American forces and what would it mean to deliver population security. I'll have to say that when . . . when, you know, Ray Odierno, who I knew well—he had worked with me—and Dave Petraeus were . . . believed that we could do it that was very affirming to me. And I then spent most of my time trying to figure out how we could surge civilians and turn this building around to actually support on the civil-

MANDEL NGAN / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley (left) and Christopher Hill, chief negotiator on North Korea's nuclear program, confer with Rice.

PAUL J. RICHARDS / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

ian side. But yeah, I had a lot of questions about whether we should surge forces. A lot.

On January 10, 2007, in a national address from the White House library, Bush announced the surge. The failure to secure Baghdad, he said, came because there were not enough U.S. troops and too many restrictions on the ones there. Bush told the nation that he would be sending 20,000 additional troops—five brigades—to Iraq. It is one of the few major policy battles Rice has lost during the second term. But by then Rice had other equally pressing priorities: resolving the nuclear standoffs with North Korea and Iran and pushing forward on the creation of a Palestinian state.

Trying to broker Middle East peace is of course something that secretaries of state do almost as a matter of course as their time in office comes to an end. But by taking on the diplomatic challenges presented by North Korea and Iran, Rice was revisiting issues that had generated some of George W. Bush's most uncompromising positions of the first term, expressed in some of his most aggressive rhetoric. It took a war to eliminate the threat presented by the first member of the "axis of evil," and five years later American troops are still fighting to allow Iraqis to consolidate that victory. Rice's ambitious objective was to handle the remaining two-thirds of that ignominious group with words.

Bush had accompanied his warning about the "axis of evil" with a solemn pledge. "The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons," he vowed. "Time is not on our side," he cautioned.

In the race to prevent Iran and North Korea from going nuclear, nothing is more important than time. And six years is a lot of time. In the period since Bush made those comments there has been a seemingly endless series of multilateral negotiations aimed at retarding these programs or ending them altogether. There has been the EU-3, the P-5+1, the six-party talks, and numerous other *ad hoc* negotiating partnerships. And while these have undeniably made efforts more difficult for both rogue states, the fact is that six years after Bush's speech, North Korea is a nuclear power and Iran is either on the brink, if you believe the Israelis and the French, or making substantial progress, if you believe the CIA.

In both cases, despite our increasingly desperate attempts to convince them to take these negotiations seriously, their behavior became more provocative. And in each case, the State Department has gone out of its way to avoid dealing with these provocations lest they jeopardize our diplomacy.

Iran has been arming, equipping, and training insurgents in Iraq. Their support for anti-coalition forces began before the war, when they allowed foreign fighters to transit freely between Iran and northern Iraq. For the last two years, the U.S. military has been laying out evidence of Iranian terrorist activity in Iraq. The State Department, too, has accused Iran of supporting terrorism that is killing American soldiers. "The Iranians are supplying very sophisticated IED technology to Shia insurgent and Shia terrorist groups that has, in turn, been used against American and British soldiers, and has led to the death of some of our soldiers over the last six to eight months," said Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, the department's third-ranking official, back in October 2006.

These are, of course, acts of war. But, while State Department officials have joined the rest of the Bush administration in publicizing the Iranian activity, there have been few signs that the Iranians are paying a price for killing our soldiers. For the most part, the Bush administration has been content to decouple Iran's support for terror—in Iraq and more broadly—from its pursuit of nuclear weapons, to make a "distinction between terrorists and those who knowingly harbor or provide aid to them" that the president said in 2002 we would never make.

At a speech in Davos in January 2008, Rice made sharp distinctions.

> We have no conflict with Iran's people, but we have real differences with Iran's government—from its support for terrorism, to its destabilizing policies in Iraq, to its pursuit of technologies that could lead to a nuclear weapon.

Although she listed three "real differences" with the Iranian regime, she suggested such differences might be manageable and offered the prospect of a "new, more normal relationship" if Iran would address just one of them.

> Should Iran suspend its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities—which is an international demand, not just an American one—we could begin negotiations, and we could work over time to build a new, more normal relationship—one defined not by fear and mistrust, but growing cooperation, expanding trade and exchange, and the peaceful management of our differences.

In our recent interview, I asked her directly if we would negotiate with Iran even while they are killing American soldiers in Iraq.

> THE WEEKLY STANDARD: President Bush said in September of 2001, we will not negotiate with terrorists, you're either with us or against us. And we are now negotiating with the state that you called the central banker of terror?
>
> SECRETARY RICE: Yeah, and they are. And the good thing is we're doing something about it. Because by designating Bank Sepah and Bank Melli and the Quds Force and the IRGC and looking at what their central bank is doing, not only did we declare them the central bank for terrorism, we're treating them like it. And we have been really tough on designating their banks and it's causing them enormous problems in the international financial system.
>
> So one of the lead elements of our policy that Treasury and State worked out together is that they will not use the international financial system for ill-gotten gains of terrorism. We're not actually negotiating with them. You know, we have a minimal contact between Ryan Crocker and his counterpart in Iraq, where we let them know exactly what we think about what they're doing and where we've delivered the message on a number of occasions that their people will not be safe in Iraq if they're trying to kill our soldiers. And we've acted on it, which is why the Quds Force commander, for instance, who was picked up in Irbil, is a real victory for that policy. And . . .
>
> TWS: What other ways have we acted on that, would you say?
>
> RICE: Well, those are two very major ways. But we have gotten three Security Council resolutions against them, which doesn't permit the Iranian—you know, part of this is that you don't want the Iranian people to feel like this is aimed at them. And so the fact that there are three Security Council resolutions, deprives the Iranian government, the Iranian regime, of the argument that this is just the United States hostile toward Iran and its great culture. And we say, no, this is the world, not against Iran and the Iranian people, but against that horrible regime that's oppressing its own people. And so we're not negotiating with them. We're acting. We will negotiate with them if they suspend their enrichment and reprocessing activities and start down a different road. But—
>
> TWS: That's irrespective of whether they're continuing to support insurgents in Iraq?
>
> RICE: Well, we've said we would talk about everything, all right. But talking about—
>
> TWS: But if they're killing—sorry to interrupt.
>
> RICE: Yes.
>
> TWS: If they're killing our soldiers? I mean, you know, when I was listening to the president in September of 2001, the last thing I thought—not to minimize the importance of what we're doing financially—huge—but the last thing I thought was that we'd be sitting across the table from them saying, "Please don't kill our soldiers."
>
> RICE: We're not saying, "Please don't kill our soldiers." We're saying, "Don't kill our soldiers or your people won't be safe in Iraq." That's a slightly different message. And not only are we saying that, we're doing it.

TWS: Are there other examples besides the capture in Irbil where we are saying to Iran not only don't do this, but, "Here are the consequences. Look, you can see the consequences"?

RICE: Well, there are lots of consequences, I mean, many of which, of course, happen in military operations that I'm not going to talk about. But we're on the hunt for them all the time.

Iran was not the only rogue state eager to test the Bush administration. For more than a decade, North Korea has been developing nuclear weapons and lying to the world about it. Each new supposed "deal" with the North Koreans results in real concessions from the West—fuel oil, food aid, and the like—and phony concessions from the regime of Kim Jong Il. The Clinton administration worked under "The Agreed Framework," a deal that delivered generous assistance in exchange for North Korea shutting down its plutonium efforts at a nuclear reactor at Yongbyon and submitting to monitoring and verification from the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Agreed Framework fell apart in 2002 when the U.S. confronted North Korea about the fact that it had launched a clandestine effort to enrich uranium, a program that had existed for years without detection. It was not North Korea's only clandestine operation.

In April 2007, the director of national intelligence called the ranking members of congressional intelligence and foreign affairs committees in for a meeting. They were not told what was on the agenda—a fact that suggested it was serious. It was.

Despite strong warnings from the United States in the past, the North Koreans had provided assistance to Syria in its efforts to build a nuclear reactor. Information was sketchy, but the facility looked to be modeled after the North Korean reactor at Yongbyon and construction appeared to be in advanced stages. There was no question that the North Koreans were at least sharing nuclear technology with the Syrians. The congressional leaders were told to keep the information "close hold" and forbidden from sharing it with their colleagues on the intelligence and foreign affairs committees. They agreed, and over the course of the summer attended additional briefings.

Bush administration officials were divided about what, if anything, to do in response. The Israelis communicated a strong inclination to take out the Syrian facility that heightened the disagreements on Bush's national security team. Rice was concerned about the diplomatic consequences of approving a preemptive strike. Cheney, who once signed a photograph to Israeli general David Ivri thanking him for taking out Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981, favored it.

On September 6, 2007, Israeli jets bombed the Syrian facility. The initial news reports were maddeningly vague and very few people understood what had happened and why. Inside the U.S. government, the debate intensified. The congressional leaders who had been briefed on the program wanted to learn more about the strikes and wanted to be able to share what they knew with their colleagues. Bush administration officials, however, continued to insist that the information be restricted to the small group that had been previously briefed.

In internal deliberations, Hill and Rice, concerned that public disclosure of North Korea's involvement could derail the six-party talks, argued for keeping the information secret. Stephen Hadley, Rice's former deputy and current national security adviser, broke the news to the lawmakers.

Two of the Republicans who had been briefed, Representatives Peter Hoekstra and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, took the unprecedented step of venting their frustrations in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. They opened the article by noting that the State Department had been publicly touting its diplomatic progress with North Korea. Then they wrote:

> Early last month, Israel conducted an airstrike against a facility in northern Syria that press reports have linked to nuclear programs by North Korea, Iran or other rogue states. If this event proves that Syria acquired nuclear expertise or material from North Korea, Iran or other rogue states, it would constitute a grave threat to international security for which Syria and any other involved parties must be held accountable.

Their language tracked closely with the warning Bush had given the North Koreans immediately after their nuclear test in 2006. "The transfer of nuclear weapons or material by North Korea to states or nonstate entities would be considered a grave threat to the United States," Bush had said, "and we would hold North Korea fully accountable."

When I asked Rice about this on May 9, I started by making the simple observation that we're in the middle of some pretty intense times with North Korea. The previous day, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page had criticized Rice on North Korea. She jumped in before I could ask a question.

> Let me—let me just start by saying I have not lost my understanding of the North Korean regime. Okay? Nobody believes that this is a regime that you can believe. The question is: Is this a regime that, under the right set of incentives and disincentives, is prepared to make some fundamental choices about its nuclear program that would ultimately put the United States and the rest of the world in a safer position vis-à-vis the Korean Peninsula and, most importantly, vis-à-vis proliferation? That's the question.

The U.S. continues to ship massive amounts of fuel oil to North Korea, under the agreement that shut down the Yongbyon reactor, while the State Department attempts to coax further cooperation by raising the possibility that sanctions on North Korea imposed through the "Trading with the Enemy Act" might be lifted and that North Korea could be taken off the list of countries that sponsor terror, a move that would open the doors to billions in aid and loans with the potential to breathe life into the anemic North Korean economy.

We are sending other conciliatory messages, too. Earlier this year, the State Department helped make arrangements for the New York Philharmonic to perform in Pyongyang, an unprecedented bit of cultural diplomacy with Kim Jong Il's regime. And just last week, the United States announced 500 metric tons of food aid to North Korea.

But what about proliferation and the full accountability President Bush threatened after North Korea's nuclear test? Will they be punished? Rice says that while they've been worried for a long time about North Korea's nuclear proliferation, she is looking forward.

> The issue there is what kind of mechanism are we going to use to prevent further circumstances like that or to learn whether there might be other circumstances like that. And, frankly, I would rather have the Chinese and the South Koreans in the room on a verification mechanism. And so my trip to Beijing, my last trip to Beijing, was actually to say to the Chinese we have a problem because the North Koreans have been doing something very bad; and if we're going to move forward in the six-party framework, you, China, are going to have to work with us on verification of proliferation activities, monitoring of verification—monitoring, and, presumably, acting if something is wrong. And that's why we're setting up a monitoring and verification working group for the six-party talks, in addition to the other things we've done like the PSI, Proliferation Security Initiatives.

While these issues are not insignificant, to many analysts they reflect the myopia of diplomats so eager for a deal that they are missing the big picture. "In the six-party talks we are ready to declare preemptive victory without any serious change in North Korea's direction, including on nuclear weapons and programs, proliferation, and human rights or wrongs," says David Asher, former coordinator of the State Department's North Korea Working Group. "A declaration that only tells us what we already know—perhaps because someone has coached them on what to say—is worthless, as is a deal that looks past the existential threats that matter most to our security—weapons, proliferation, and clandestine production."

And Pete Hoekstra, the vice chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, still has lots of questions. "If they're proliferating to Syria, who else? Where else could there be a North Korea-designed reactor that we don't know about? What else might North Korea be doing?"

A senior Republican in the House says the Bush administration is too focused on getting a deal and offers this blunt assessment: "We've been down this road before—Clinton did it, now Bush is doing it. It doesn't seem to matter for the State Department. These are legacy deals, and legacy deals are bad deals."

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There are times that the president seems to understand this. One of those moments came back on October 11, 2006, at a press conference after the North Korean nuclear test. Bush was defending his commitment to diplomacy and spoke of the need to work with allies. When "dangerous regimes" fail to honor their prior commitments or serially reject generous offers to strike new ones, he said, "It ought to say to all the world that we're dealing with people that maybe don't want peace."

Rice believes we are now in the early stages of a new, important historical moment, not unlike the one that came with the end of the Cold War. "I was lucky enough the last time around to be here at the end of a big, historical transformation," she says. "And of course, it's very heartening, and heady even, to complete the liberation of Eastern Europe or complete the unification of Germany or, ultimately, complete the collapse of the Soviet Union. But you recognize the foundation for that was laid in the 1940s."

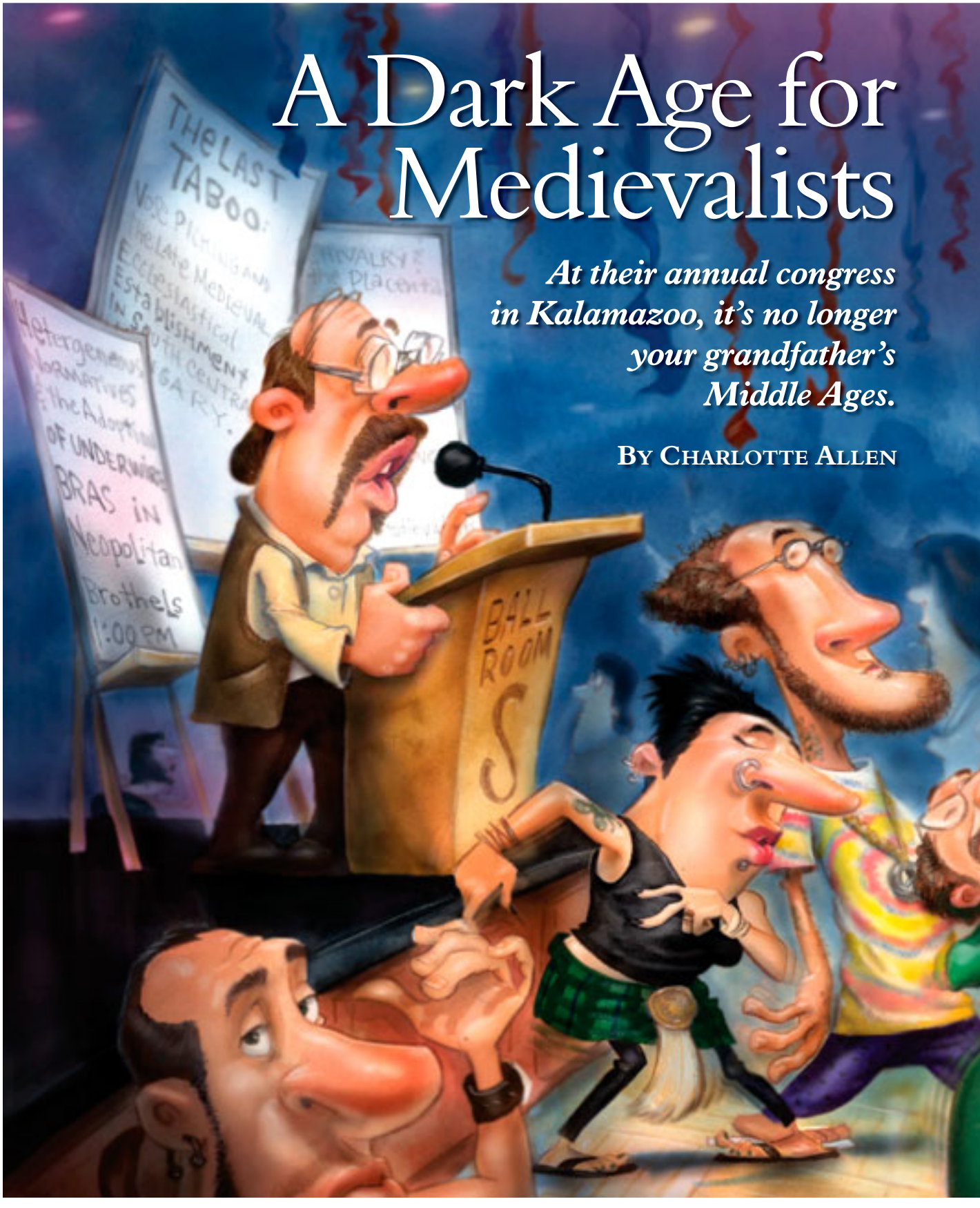
The Bush administration is pursuing policies now, she says, that will lay the groundwork for big things to come. "I tend to think of foreign policy, particularly when you're at the beginning of a big, historical transformation, as being something" where you try to lay "a foundation rather than trying to complete."

The question remains, with Iran's nuclear ambitions unchecked, with North Korea a successful nuclear blackmailer, with Hezbollah's success in Lebanon and Hamas's in Gaza, with authoritarians like Chávez and Putin and Hu Jintao flourishing, with mass murder unchecked in Sudan and democracy thwarted in Zimbabwe: a foundation for what? ♦

A Dark Age for Medievalists

At their annual congress in Kalamazoo, it's no longer your grandfather's Middle Ages.

By Charlotte Allen



Kalamazoo

Standing before an audience of about 25 academics, all professors and graduate students specializing in the Middle Ages, in a chilly classroom on the vast campus of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Jeff Persels, a lanky associate professor of French and director of European studies at the University of South Carolina, was reading aloud a scholarly paper at the 43rd International Congress on Medieval Studies. The paper's title was "The Wine in the Urine: Managing Human Waste in French Farce." The paper was about, well, the wine in the urine, or perhaps the urine in the wine. Its topic is a 15th-century farce, or lowlife comic drama, about an adulterous wife who uses a wine bottle as an impromptu chamber pot, with predictably gross results involving her husband and her lover.

Persels's paper didn't discuss the play simply as an example of Rabelaisian-style scatology, however. The perspective he used was the postmodernist discipline of "cultural studies," which means pushing works of literature (or movies or television shows or ad campaigns or whatever) through a Marxist cheesegrater as examples of the way society conditions its members to accept the views of a dominant class. In Persels's view, the wine-bottle farce marked a stage in the development of what he called the "bourgeois fecal habitus." Translated out of postmodern-ese into plain English, that means the tendency of uptight middle-class people not to want to talk in public about matters pertaining to the bathroom and to assume that those who do are kind of crude. "The excretory experience

Charlotte Allen, a contributing editor to the Manhattan Institute's Minding the Campus website, is writing her doctoral dissertation in medieval and Byzantine studies.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GARY LOCKE

became associated with the proletariat," Persels explained. Although he seemed eager to demonstrate that he personally didn't share those uptight middle-class views, at least one of the academics in his audience remained unconvinced that a secret bourgeois habitus didn't lurk underneath his antinomian veneer. "Excretory?" she whispered to a fellow medievalist sitting next to her. "Why doesn't he just say shit?"

And you thought that the Middle Ages was all about jousting knights and damsels in distress. That's because you have never attended the medievalists' congress, the annual first-weekend-in-May ritual at Western Michigan where Persels read his wine-bottle theorizing and where it is definitely not your grandfather's Middle Ages. Persels's paper was part of a Thursday morning panel titled "Waste Studies: Excrement in the Middle Ages" and devoting a full hour and a half to human effluvia. The other two scholars that morning read papers dealing with excrement in Icelandic sagas and the theology of latrines.

> There turned out to be more papers at the congress about the forgettable 2001 movie 'A Knight's Tale' (three) than about Chaucer's 'Knight's Tale' (one).

Waste studies is a brand new academic discipline invented by Susan Signe Morrison, a dark-haired, extroverted 49-year-old professor of English at Texas State University's San Marcos campus and mother of two (her husband is also an English professor) who organized the session and admitted with good-humored candor in an email that her new field's disgust-provoking subject matter might be a "challenge" to scholars thinking about specializing in it. Morrison's own specialty as a medievalist used to be women on pilgrimages, but then she got the idea for her latest book, *Excrement in the Late Middle Ages: Sacred Filth and Chaucer's Fecopoetics*, forthcoming this September. In her email she explained that the idea for the fecal book came to her partly because she noticed that dung and privies played a role in the works of Chaucer, Dante, and other medieval authors, and partly because her "son was potty-training." And so a new scholarly industry was born.

The guru of waste studies seems to be David Inglis, a sociologist at the University of Aberdeen who coined the phrase "fecal habitus" and whose 2001 book, *A Sociological History of Excretory Experience*, argued that avoiding scatological topics in polite conversation is a repressive Western bourgeois hang-up. Inglis's theories fit right in with other concepts dear to the postmodernist heart of academia—"discourse," the "Other," matters "transgressive," "bodies" (in the world of postmodernism there are hardly any people, just "bodies"), etc.—so professors of literature, religious studies, and other branches of the humanities eagerly expropriated Inglis's ideas and applied them in their own endeavors. As one of the panelists, University of Oregon English professor Martha Bayless, put it with the opacity that is de rigueur in postmodernist theory, "The body is not a neutral site."

The one thing in which waste-studies scholars seem not to be interested is medieval history. The idea isn't so much how people disposed of waste as what they thought about it—or if you're a cultural-studies type, what "society" thought about it. When an audience member at the session pointed out that fertilizer, whether its source was human or bovine, couldn't have been too despised by the medieval middle classes because it was a valuable commodity that generated lucrative bourgeois fortunes for the merchants who traded in the stuff, Morrison countered, "It was still considered lowly."

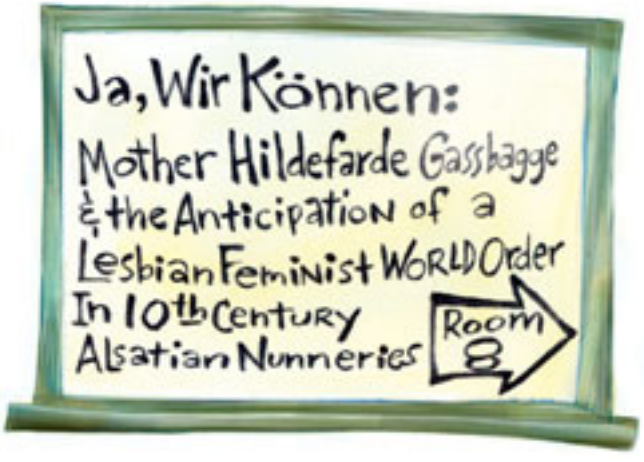
When the session was over, Morrison invited the attendees to a second hour and a half of waste studies. "We'll be dealing with sewage," she announced cheerfully. Alas, my own bourgeois habitus (I'm lace-curtain Irish) started to kick in, and I decided I needed a breath of fresh air, so to speak, so I opted for a different session among the 602 featured at this year's congress. Not that the postmodernist *modus operandi* was likely to be any different elsewhere. Down the hall from waste studies that morning was Session 5: "(Ab)normal Societies: Disability as a Sociocultural Concept in Medieval Society." The parentheses bracketing the "Ab" are examples of a favorite postmodernist punctuation strategy, signaling to readers in the know that putatively neutral words such as "abnormal" actually convey oppressive, often sexist, hidden agendas. My own take-the-cake award for the po-mo parenthetical among the 1,500 papers presented this year went to this double-parentheses doozy, attached to a paper read in Session 251, a panel about animal symbolism in Old French literature: "Becoming (m)Others, Becoming (hu)Men: Engendering Hybrids and Monsters in Two Medieval Romances."

"Disability studies" is another hot new field in the humanities these days, and as with waste studies, it has little to do with historical or economic facts on the ground, such as, say, the manufacture of medieval crutches or how blind people eked out an existence in 13th-century Perugia. Instead, like waste studies, disability studies is all about presumed attitudes toward the disabled: how medieval folks, perhaps like folks of today, supposedly classified those who were different from them as disabled. One of the Session 5 papers was "Two Sides of the Same Coin: Defining the Mentally Ill in Plantagenet England," read by Gregory Carrier,

a graduate student in history at the University of Alberta. Carrier's conclusion, after a great deal of postmodernist rambling: "The mentally ill were inherently indefinable."

The next three days featured more of the same: scholarly papers that alternated between the incomprehensible and the vaguely revolting. On Thursday afternoon I heard a paper delivered on "Menstruating Male Mystics and the Sin of Pride." Then I took myself to "Googling the Grail," at which Elizabeth Sklar, an English professor at Wayne State University in Detroit, announced that she had typed "Holy Grail" into Google and gotten nine million hits. From there it was off to "Saint Margaret: General Practitioner, not only an OB-GYN." Who knew that there were medical specialties in the Middle Ages?

A Friday morning session featured a paper titled "Alisoun's Aging Body: Gazing at the Wife of Bath in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*." Hmm, Chaucer, something solid and recognizable. The paper, however, read by Mikee Delony, an English professor at Abilene Christian University, turned out not to be about Chaucer at all but about a BBC television production a few years ago that turned the Wife of Bath into a modern-day plastic-surgery junkie. There turned out to be more papers at the congress about the forgettable 2001 movie *A Knight's Tale* (three) than about Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* (one). In one of those papers, delivered with much help from PowerPoint and titled "Knights, Dykes, Damsels and Fags: Gender Roles and Normative Pressures in Neomedieval Films," Wayne Elliott , a graduate student at Kent State University, argued that the film *Knight's Tale* had a homoerotic subtext because it starred Heath Ledger. Poor Ledger. He made the double career mistake of (a) playing a gay cowboy in *Brokeback Mountain* and (b) dying before he had a chance to live it down.



There were numerous other papers with either "normative" ("heteronormativity" is bad because it implies that heterosexuals are more normal than homosexuals) or "masculinity" (like femininity, a social construct, not an inherent characteristic) in their titles, and sometimes both, as in this bilingual tonguetwister: "*Nach der Mannesnamen Site*? Amazons and Their Challenge to Normative Masculinity in Medieval German Literature." Other buzzwords among the medievalists at Kalamazoo were "hybridity" (borrowed from "postcolonial" studies), "heterosyncrasies" (I never could figure out what that meant), and that hardy perennial "patriarchy."

Speaking of patriarchy, six female professors gathered on the first full day of the congress for a roundtable discussion sponsored by the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship. The topic was a book titled *History Matters* by Judith Bennett, a professor of medieval history at USC, whose theme, judging from the discussion, is that feminists ought to redouble their efforts to fight patriarchy. The discussion, however, soon turned into a lament by some of the feminist professors that they had trouble persuading students of either sex to sign up for their courses. "One young woman told me that she wasn't taking my course on gender and experience because, she said, 'I don't want to take another feminist class,'" explained Wendy Marie Hoofnagle, a professor of medieval studies at the University of Connecticut. This complaint was echoed the next day by Audrey DeLong, a literature professor at Long Island's Suffolk County Community College, at a session devoted to strategies for sneaking postmodernist theory into the heads of reluctant undergraduates who might rather be elsewhere. "In my students' demographic, they hear the word 'feminist' and they shut down," said DeLong.

The International Congress on Medieval Studies bills itself as the largest gathering of medieval specialists in the country—and it probably is. Because it is timed to coincide with the end of the school year on most college campuses, including Western Michigan's, some 3,000 professors, graduate students, and amateur and professional experts on any subject that can be loosely defined as medieval ("loosely" can and does include J.R.R. Tolkien, Harry Potter, Xena the warrior princess, and even *The Da Vinci Code*) fly or drive to Kalamazoo, often taking along sheaves of their students' papers to grade during spare moments.

There they spend up to four days delivering or listening to some of the 1,500 scholarly papers presented at the congress, roughly one paper for every two attendees, but mostly (because the 600-odd sessions featuring those papers are crammed into only 12 hour-and-a-half time slots, which means no single person can hear more than a handful of them) socializing, in relationships that range from the strictly professional to—or at least I am told—the uninhibitedly erotic. The high point of the congress is the Sat-

urday night dance, a not-to-be-missed spectacle of more than a thousand medievalists cramming themselves into a ballroom in the Western Michigan student center, fueling themselves with rail booze, and dancing the way you might expect scholars of the Middle Ages to dance. It doesn't help that most of the Kalamazoo medievalists look and dress the way you might expect scholars of the Middle Ages to look and dress. Some, of course, present themselves as the professionals they are—suits and ties on men, pulled-together ensembles on women—but they are likely as not to belong to a contingent of visiting Romanians. The best way to describe the attire of many attendees, which runs heavily to ethnic textiles, unusual body ornaments, sweaters of indeterminate age, shoes resembling those favored by medieval peasants, and unintentionally amusing hats, is the reply I overheard one medievalist give to a query by a nonmedievalist sharing our airport limo as to whether congress attendees wore costumes: "A lot of them wear costumes, but they don't know it."

The overblown size of the event—who knew that there were even 3,000 medievalists in the entire world?—illustrates the law of diminishing returns. When 1,500 scholarly papers appear on a single agenda, it is reasonable to expect that a large number of them will not represent lasting contributions to the store of human knowledge. Persels's wine-bottle paper, although dealing with subject-matter you wouldn't want brought up at the dinner table, was actually one of the better, in terms of overall learning, of the two dozen or so papers I heard (and his French accent was excellent). But besides the law of diminishing returns, the congress also illustrates all too faithfully various aspects of the law of supply and demand, one of which is that the total number of medievalists probably exceeds the total number of college undergraduates these days who have the slightest interest in learning the smallest thing about the Middle Ages. That dismal fact lies at the core of all other observations to be made about the congress.

The International Congress on Medieval Studies is the affordable medieval conference, centrally located in the Midwest (despite its "international" moniker, most attendees hail from the United States and Canada), and because of its low cost appealing to even the most underpaid and underemployed of academics in the field. The congress seems to have been designed that way from the beginning. Western Michigan, occupying 1,200 hilly acres on the far western outskirts of Kalamazoo, is one of those state normal schools that during the mid-1950s decided to switch identities overnight from poky teachers' college to populous state research university via a massive building campaign entailing awe-inspiring quantities of cinderblock. Today the student population totals 26,000, and its enormous campus is dotted with midcentury structures of an architectural style that can be described as "nondescript but sturdy."

Engineering, science, and business are Western Michigan's strong suits, along with Division 1A football—not exactly promising soil for nurturing study of the Middle Ages. Still, the campus houses a Medieval Institute that sponsored the first congress in 1962 and continues to do so to this day, as well as an Institute of Cistercian Studies (complete with an impressive rare-books library) that started sponsoring theological sessions at the congress during the early 1970s. The congress, with its lingering overtones of 1960s hippie culture, was designed as a gathering of the tribes in all things medieval: history, literature, theology, philosophy, drama, art, and music. The idea was that Western Michigan's student dormitories, vacated for the summer, would house the participants, and the sessions would take place in the now-vacant classrooms. For its first two decades, the congress remained relatively small and collegial, featuring perhaps a hundred sessions. Then it began to balloon to its present size of more than 600.

And why not? After all, the law of supply and demand says that low prices mean more customers. The Western Michigan dorms still cost only $35 a night ($28 if you double up with a roommate), there's a free airport shuttle, you can eat cheap at the cafeteria (or for nothing if you crash the receptions that serve hors d'oeuvres), and anybody with a credential and entrepreneurial energy can organize a session or read a paper. If you don't mind sleeping on a thin mattress in a cinderblock-walled, linoleum-floored, underlit, and virtually unfurnished 1960s-era dorm room that looks like Cellblock No. 9 and features an erratic heating system that alternately broils and chills, sharing a bathroom with up to three strangers (fecopoetics alert: cinderblock transmits sound with startling efficiency), and eating Midwestern student-cafeteria versions of your favorite dishes (such as the "Mediterranean" salad consisting of skewers of coconut shrimp atop a plateau of limp lettuce) while sharing

your board with still more strangers whose immersion in medieval arcana is likely to have impaired their table manners, the International Congress on Medieval Studies is the academic conference for you. Oh, and you must also enjoy trudging up and down hills to and from sessions widely scattered across the campus.

Should you wish to trek into downtown Kalamazoo for a change of scene or cuisine—forget it, unless you've got a lot of time on your hands for a lot of walking along traffic-clogged highways. Besides, there's not much to see or do in this onetime Midwestern industrial hub on the railroad line between Detroit and Chicago now noticeably deindustrialized and depopulated. Kalamazoo doesn't quite look like the famously rundown Flint, Michigan, of Michael Moore movies, but gentrification still has a way to go. A warning to juicers: The vast Western Michigan campus, where you will be more or less confined as if on the county honor farm if you are too poor to rent wheels, is entirely dry, unless you bring your own bottle (which many do) or frequent the cash bars briefly open at the receptions and the dance.

> When 1,500 scholarly papers appear on a single agenda, it is reasonable to expect that a large number of them will not represent lasting contributions to the store of human knowledge.

Not surprisingly, then, the congress is generally shunned by the superstars of medieval academia: the senior professors and well-known scholars who occupy endowed chairs or draw generous compensation packages from Ivy League and top state universities. Those fortunate scholars, whose trips to academic get-togethers are typically fueled by hefty travel allowances from their affluent home universities, tend to prefer the classy get-togethers of the Medieval Academy of America, founded in 1925 by the famous Harvard historian Charles Homer Haskins and usually holding its annual meetings each March at big-city hotels or on the campuses of prestigious colleges with plenty of nearby cultural and entertainment amenities. The Medieval Academy does sponsor sessions at Kalamazoo, and some big medieval names do show up—this year's congress featured a stellar plenary address on medieval bestiaries by Christopher de Hamel, manuscript librarian at Cambridge University's Corpus Christi College, as well as appearances by the veteran Chaucerian scholar Derek Pearsall of the University of York, well-known medieval historians Brenda Bolton and Barbara Hanawalt, and Seth Lerer, dean of postmodernist medievalism at Stanford.

But most of the worthies who come to Kalamazoo do so as "presiders" whose sole job is to lend the gravitas of their names to sessions and introduce the worker-bee scholars who will actually read papers, thus being spared the drudgery of either writing a paper or doing the organizing. (You won't find them sleeping in the dorms, either; most book accommodations well off campus, preferably at the Radisson Plaza, Kalamazoo's best hotel.) The pecking-order realities of academic life, even among otherworldly medievalists, leave a vast army of poorly paid, overworked lower-echelon professors at not-so-big-name universities and, of course, legions of strapped graduate students for whom a trip to Western Michigan and the dorms of "the Zoo," as they call it, may well be the high point of the academic year.

Many state schools and smaller colleges on tight budgets pay for at most one or two trips to academic conferences per professor per year, and often at the rate of just $500 or even $300 per conference—hardly enough to cover air fare—and usually only if the recipient delivers a paper. You scarcely need to put two and two together to figure out why this year's congress featured 1,500 papers and why so many of them, delivered by graduate students afraid to venture outside the postmodernist box in which their theory-laden seminars have confined them, or professors who seemed to have hastily thrown their notes together in order to qualify for a free plane trip, were, to put it kindly, not so hot.

There are oases of excellence in the pomo desert at Kalamazoo. Many sessions, especially those dealing with medieval theology and philosophy, which are typically sponsored by specialty organizations such as the Cistercian Institute or the Aquinas Society, offered papers that were rigorously researched and argued. The congress also features first-rate performances of medieval drama and music as well as a giant book fair. Still, many scholars, especially historians, feeling choked by the miasma of mediocrity, have stopped coming to Kalamazoo. Thus the overwhelming majority of the sessions nowadays are in the field of literature, especially English literature, which is notorious for its vulnerability to theoretical hoo-hah and for the large numbers of bottom-feeding assistant professors and at-sea graduate students needed to staff the required freshman composition classes that are run out of many universities' English departments.

Another reality of academic life draws bodies to Kalamazoo: professional loneliness in remote settings where hardly anyone else on campus cares about the Middle Ages. Over lunch in the cafeteria, Ellen Friedrich, an associate professor of Romance languages at Valdosta State University in Georgia, explained the facts of life for her: teaching four different courses per semester (in

the Ivy League the norm is two) mostly way outside of her specialty, which is medieval French romances (not high on the list of academic interests for Valdosta undergrads), leaving almost no time for scholarly research. For her as for many in her position, the congress and other academic conferences offer their only chance to visit with professional confreres. "We're Kalamazoo junkies," Friedrich explained.

The difficulties of being a medievalist in an era in which few universities require their undergraduates to learn anything about the Middle Ages (mandatory courses in the history of Western civilization being a thing of the past), and in which undergrads increasingly shun the humanities because they can't take all the theory, accounts for another odd aspect of the Kalamazoo congress: the ever-growing number of sessions that don't deal at all with matters medieval but rather with modern books, movies, television shows, magazine ads, and even video games featuring either medieval or pseudo-medieval themes. Tolkien, Harry Potter, and "Googling the Holy Grail" were only the tip of the iceberg. There were countless papers purporting to highlight medieval themes in D.C. comics, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and the 1990s *Xena: Warrior Princess* television series. One session was entirely devoted to medieval blogs, including a paper comparing the works of Geoffrey Chaucer to the blog "Geoffrey Chaucer Hath a Blog." The blowout, or perhaps the *reductio ad absurdum*, of these scholarly endeavors was Session 531 on Sunday morning, "Medieval Masculinities on Film." That session featured four separate papers: yet another examination of *A Knight's Tale*, an effort to prove that the 1961 movie *El Cid*, starring Charlton Heston, was a piece of Franco-engineered propaganda, a cinematic look at the story of Tristan and Isolde, and "Medieval Masculinity as Modern Monstrosity," a postmodernist analysis of Hannibal Lecter.

Such presentations proved to be among the better attended, and at least some of the individual papers (although maybe not those read in Session 531) displayed more literary depth and passion than many of the papers dealing with "real" medieval literature run through the postmodernist meat-grinder. "Teaching Tolkien" drew more than 70 attendees. One of the *Da Vinci Code* panels featured a paper that got my personal vote for best in the entire weekend: "Queering the Code: Jesus and Mary or Jesus and John?" a deadpan spoof by Madeline Caviness, an art history professor at Tufts University, arguing that Dan Brown's potboiler about Jesus' supposed marriage to Mary Magdalene was actually part of a Vatican cover-up of the savior's gay relationship with one of his apostles. Caviness managed to drag out and send up every cliché in the postmodernist dictionary that had been invoked with deadly earnestness elsewhere at the congress: "essentializing discourse," "destabilize the heterosexual imperative," "the heteronormativity of Jesus."

It's pretty clear that in an era in which undergraduates at many colleges can as readily fulfill their humanities core requirements by selecting a course on *The Lord of the Rings* from the academic smorgasbord as, say, selecting a course on *The Canterbury Tales*, medievalists make themselves useful on campus (and fill their classrooms and make their department heads happy) by teaching the former. But there may be something else at work, too, in the obvious enthusiasm with which highly trained experts in arcane specialties devoured sessions devoted to Tolkien and J.K. Rowling: There they could drop their postmodernist cynicism about "society" and simply drink in the elaborate cosmology, spiritual depth, literary beauty, and shared meaning that used to be what scholars looked for in real medieval literature, before the cultural-studies people got hold of it. Larry Caldwell, an English professor at the University of Evansville whose specialty is Anglo-Saxon literature but who read a thoughtful paper titled "Stern Vision, Earnest Evasion: Neomedieval Catholicism, Peter Jackson, and the Limitations of Popular Cinema," wrote to me in an email about Jackson's blockbuster movies of the Tolkien trilogy: "[W]e are looking at . . . a sort of universally shared text that non-specialists embrace with as much enjoyment as do members of the emerging specialist community of formal Tolkien scholars." Quite a difference from the "bourgeois habitus."

But on to the dance! In medieval times every story had a moral. The moral of the Saturday night dance at the 43rd International Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo is that no scholar of the Middle Ages is too old, too graceless, too bulging of derrière, too gray of beard or ponytail, or too tattooed to get up on that parquet floor and gyrate spasmodically to vintage Bon Jovi amplified to jet-engine decibels. I'm told that the dances of today are no match in noise and lasciviousness for those of the mid-1990s, when flocks of leather-clad gays took to the floor to celebrate their academic coming-out in a congress session on "Queer Iberia." Still, I spent two hours there nursing a beer and mesmerized by the bobbing fauxhawks, the shaking bare flesh (and plenty of it), the hip-hopper in the Blondie T-shirt, the fellow in the full kilt and sporran who had been wandering through the congress as though in search of the set for *Brigadoon*, the nose-rings, the Birkenstocks, the Pashtun caps, the bare feet of the learned professors of the Middle Ages and their grad-student acolytes. Maybe it's not a pretty sight, but as the swaying sardine-packed academics on the dance floor sang along in unison: "We've got to hold on to what we've got."♦

His Master's Voice

Edmund Wilson in the Library of America

BY JAMES SEATON

The Library of America's publication of Edmund Wilson's literary criticism from the 1920s through the '40s, in two volumes, edited ably and unobtrusively by Lewis Dabney, marks a welcome instance of fidelity to the original purposes of the Library, as envisioned by Wilson himself.

Condemning the scholarly editions sanctioned by the Modern Language Association as unreadable, Wilson for years called (without success) for the publication of American classics in volumes intended for the general reader, with texts established according to the highest scholarly standards but with a minimum of scholarly apparatus. The first publications of the Library of America answered Wilson's call, but over the years, the Library's notion of a classic seems to have diverged from what Wilson had in mind. A current "Featured Offer" on the Library's website is a three-volume edition of the works of John Steinbeck—about whose work the Library does not, apparently, share the reservations that led Wilson to offer "the novels of John Steinbeck, for example," as books "that seem to mark precisely the borderline between work that is definitely superior and work that is definitely bad."

Literary Essays and Reviews of the 1920s & 30s
The Shores of Light, Axel's Castle, Uncollected Reviews
by Edmund Wilson
Edited by Lewis Dabney
Library of America, 1,025 pp., $40

Literary Essays and Reviews of the 1930s and 40s
The Triple Thinkers, The Wound and the Bow, Classics and Commercials, Uncollected Reviews
by Edmund Wilson
Edited by Lewis Dabney
Library of America, 1,000 pp., $40

BETTMANN / CORBIS

Wilson 'believed in the human significance of literature.'

H.P. Lovecraft's *Tales* is Volume 156 in the Library of America, though Wilson considered Lovecraft's stories "hackwork contributed to such publications as *Weird Tales* and *Amazing Stories*, where, in my opinion, they ought to have been left." In three famous *New Yorker* articles reprinted in *Classics and Commercials*, Wilson decried attempts to give literary standing to mystery and crime fiction, asking "how can you care who committed a murder which has never really been made to take place, because the writer hasn't any ability of even the most ordinary kind to persuade you to see it or feel it?"

Of all the genre writers he considered, only Raymond Chandler seemed to Wilson to have any real literary ability, and even he was "a long way below Graham Greene." The Library of America, meanwhile, has so far published two volumes of Raymond Chandler, two of Dashiell Hammett, and two volumes of *Crime Novels* of the 1930s, '40s, and '50s.

The Library's willingness to relax literary standards—sometimes because of popularity, sometimes for political reasons (the two volumes of reporting on the Vietnam war come to mind)—is worth emphasizing because Edmund Wilson's own refusal to do so is one of the chief reasons for the continuing importance of his criticism. If literature is to have any value for us as a commentary on political and social life, it

James Seaton is professor of English at Michigan State.

is essential that our evaluation of literary works themselves not be ruled by the very political opinions complicated or challenged by those works. It was because Wilson believed in the human significance of literature that he insisted on judging literary works by strictly literary standards. And though Wilson changed his political views several times throughout his career, he always believed that a literary critic had an obligation to judge the excellence of a poem or novel by strictly literary criteria, and only after that judgment to assess its implications for politics or society.

Thus, in one of his previously uncollected reviews (a prescient 1922 consideration of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*), Wilson, addressing readers who might prefer a self-proclaimed poet of the common man like Carl Sandburg to an Eliot who characterized the common man as "Apeneck Sweeney," commented that "Mr. Eliot's detestation of Sweeney is more precious than Mr. Sandburg's sympathy for him." All the objections one could make to Eliot's views were "outweighed by one major fact—that fact that Mr. Eliot is a poet . . . that is, he feels intensely and with distinction and speaks naturally in beautiful verse."

Today, Lionel Trilling and Edmund Wilson stand out as the most impressive critics of the past century in the humanistic tradition. Both insisted on writing for the general educated public beyond the campus, and more important, both saw themselves as representatives of that public. They presented themselves not as theorists or specialists writing down to middlebrow intellectual wannabes but, rather, people who happened to have had the time and inclination to read more widely and think more circumspectly, but whose tastes and principles were not otherwise radically different from those of their readers.

Both Trilling and Wilson made free use of "we" and "us" in describing their responses to literary works, and their ability to do so convincingly is not only testimony to a lost cultural unity, now seemingly fragmented beyond repair, but to their common rejection of any romantic pretensions to spiritual superiority. The difference in their eras, and perhaps in their personalities is expressed, however, in the different use each makes of the plural subject. Trilling typically uses "we" to implicate himself and his readers in some questionable moral or intellectual assumption, as when, in defending "the quality in Wordsworth that now makes him unacceptable"—Wordsworth's "concern for the life of humbleness and quiet"—he notes ruefully that "with us the basis of spiritual prestige is some form of aggressive action."

Wilson, on the other hand, assumes that his reader, like himself, approaches each work with an open mind, ready to be persuaded, and perhaps even seduced, by literary manipulation but ultimately able to tell the difference between the truly "first-rate" and "a piece of pure rubbish"—his characterization of Kay Boyle's World War II novel *Avalanche*. Reviewing the Soviet novelist Leonid Leonov's *Road to the Ocean* in *Classics and Commercials*, he asserts that "We are conscious from the beginning that the characters are types, but we do not at first sight take them for the conventional types of Soviet fiction. . . . We give [the author] the benefit of the doubt." The ending, however, is twisted to conform to Soviet propaganda: "It is not till we come to the end that we are definitely let down by Leonov, but then we are badly let down. . . . Looking back, we become aware that these people have never been real in the first place, and that we have simply been distracted from minding it by the technical agility of the author."

Just as Wilson assumes that the reader, like himself, is capable of distinguishing between the stick figures of propaganda and true literary creations, he takes it for granted that the general reader, if willing to make the effort, can understand and appreciate aesthetic revolutionaries like Eliot and Proust. In that 1922 review, one of the first and still one of the most perceptive considerations of *The Waste Land*, Wilson insisted that "for all its complicated correspondences and its recondite references and quotations, *The Waste Land* is intelligible at first reading." Wilson points to the human meaning of Eliot's images, convincing us that Eliot is "speaking not only for a personal distress, but for the starvation of a whole civilization . . . our whole world of strained nerves and shattered institutions."

In *Axel's Castle*, Wilson made the literature of high modernism available to the general reader not by slighting its complexity but by refusing to accept its technical innovations as ends in themselves and, instead, pointing to their human meaning as responses to modern life. Perhaps the highpoint of *Axel's Castle* is the chapter on Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. Without obfuscation or oversimplification, Wilson succeeds in bringing out the significance of Proust's masterpiece and its main character for the general reader, who is also Edmund Wilson:

> We acquire a curious affection for even the most objectionable characters in Proust: Morel, for example, is certainly one of the most odious characters in fiction, yet we are never really made to hate him or to wish that we did not have to hear about him, and we feel a genuine regret when Mme. Verdurin, with her false teeth and her monocle, finally vanishes from our sight. This generous sympathy and understanding for even the monstrosities which humanity produces, and Proust's capacity for galvanizing these monstrosities into energetic life, are at the bottom of the extraordinary success of the tragic-comic hero of Proust's Sodom, M. de Charlus.

Although the chapters in *Axel's Castle* on such major figures as Eliot, Proust, Yeats, and Joyce have not only retained their value but have acquired a new significance as reminders of the human meaning of works buried under mountains of academic commentary, Wilson is at his best on lesser-known writers. Though he gives the impression of having read everybody, he had little to say in his prolific career about Shakespeare, Homer, Dante, Tolstoy, or Mann, and his "Dissenting Opinion on Kafka," challenging Kafka's stature as one of the great writers of the 20th century, made almost no impact.

On the other hand, Wilson's treatment of minor figures is unexcelled. His criticism offers a gallery of portraits in which writers, if only they write

well, are presented with respect and sympathetic understanding, no matter how slight or anomalous their work might be. A representative essay in *The Shores of Light* makes a strong case for Lewis Carroll, arguing that "as studies in dream psychology, the Alice books are most remarkable: They do not suffer by comparison with the best serious performances in this field—with Strindberg or Joyce or Flaubert's *Tentation de Saint Antoine*."

Wilson goes on to evoke the world of Alice as

> the world of teachers, family and pets, as it appears to a little girl, and also the little girl who is looking at this world. The creatures are always snapping at her and chiding her, saying brusque and rude and blighting things (as if their creator himself were snapping back at the authorities and pieties he served); and she in turn has a child's primitive cruelty.

And yet Alice is "always a sensible and self-possessed little upper-class English girl, who never fails in the last resort to face down the outlandish creatures that plague her."

T.S. Eliot: 'He feels intensely and with distinction.'

Wilson is unparalleled in evoking the atmosphere and spirit of writers like Thomas Love Peacock, the friend of Shelley whose novels feature "the conversation in a country house, with much passing of port and claret, among highly intellectual guests, each of whom appears as the exponent of some current tendency or doctrine reduced to its simplest terms and carried to its most absurd lengths." The various doctrines "more or less cancel one another out," leaving the reader with Peacock's own "classical common sense"—a quality, Wilson notes, still relevant "today, at a time when extreme ideas are being violently put into practice."

Christian Gauss and Edna St. Vincent Millay are no longer major literary figures, and Mr. Rolfe, Wilson's Greek teacher at the Hill School, was never widely known, but Wilson's essays on them are among his best. For Wilson, Mr. Rolfe "represented both the American individualistic tradition which has cultivated the readiness to think and act for oneself . . . and the older humanistic tradition: the belief in the nobility and beauty of what man as man has accomplished, and the reverence for literature as the record of this." Wilson acknowledges this tradition as his own: "I realize that I myself have been trying to follow and feed it at a time when it has been running low." He expresses his hope that it will survive not only traditional religion but, more urgently, "the political creeds, with their secular evangelism, that are taking the Church's place."

Over his lifetime, Wilson's politics changed radically, from fairly conventional liberalism in the twenties to Marxist radicalism in the thirties and then to a disillusionment with politics in general epitomized in the introduction to *Patriotic Gore* (not included in these two volumes) where the Soviet Union and the United States are compared to "sea slugs," each attempting to "ingurgitate" the other.

In contrast, Wilson remained loyal throughout his career to the view "that every valid work of art owes its power to giving expression to some specific human experience and connecting it with some human ideal." Attributing this view to the neglected critic Paul Rosenfeld in the closing essay of *Classics and Commercials*, Wilson comments that he and Rosenfeld "had in common a fundamental attitude and invoked a common cultural tradition, which it is easiest to call humanistic."

Characteristically, Wilson's essay on "Marxism and Literature" in *The Triple Thinkers* says nothing about the various "laws" of social development that Marx thought he had discovered. Instead, rejecting the Marxist demand that writers avoid merely personal issues and deal instead with the class struggle, he calls the reader's attention to the importance in literature of "a sort of law of moral interchangeability" that allows us to "transpose the action and the sentiments that move us into terms of whatever we do or are ourselves." In illustrating his point by a reference to Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, Wilson moves far beyond Marxism to the moral core of the humanistic tradition his criticism exemplifies:

> When Proust, in his wonderful chapter on the death of the novelist Bergotte, speaks of those moral obligations which impose themselves in spite of everything and which seem to come through to humanity from some source outside its wretched self (obligations 'invisible only to fools—and are they really to them?'), he is describing a kind of duty which he felt only in connection with the literary work which he performed in his dark and fetid room; yet he speaks of every moral, esthetic, or intellectual passion which holds the expediencies of the world in contempt.

Edmund Wilson's personal life was often in disarray, and his political opinions were questionable. Yet these two volumes provide powerful testimony to the fidelity and continuing fruitfulness of his passion for literature. ♦

TIME & LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

Epistolary Marriage

An intimate glimpse of the Adams household.

BY EDWARD ACHORN

As their letters make clear even to the most cynical of readers, John and Abigail Adams tenderly loved and needed each other, and yearned to be together. It is one of the keen ironies of history that they were apart for most of the 27 years of John's public service: from August 1774, when he set off to serve in the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, to 1801, when he returned to Quincy from Washington, after one tempestuous term as president that ended with a painful defeat for reelection.

My Dearest Friend
Letters of Abigail and John Adams
Edited by Margaret A. Hogan and C. James Taylor
Harvard/Belknap, 528 pp., $35

The cannon blasts, bloody wounds, and frostbitten feet that we associate with the Revolution make it easy to overlook the sacrifice that the Adamses made to the cause. But it was immense. They faced, without the sustaining presence of a partner nearby, loneliness, constant financial worry, political backstabbing, hard work, illnesses, and the difficult tasks of raising their young. They lived with the dread that British soldiers might apprehend Abigail and the children, or crush the rebellion and hang John as a rebel. For a number of years, they were separated by an ocean.

"Posterity! You will never know, how much it cost the present Generation, to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make good use of it," John Adams wrote in April 1777, adding wryly, "If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it."

In helping to found a country where their children (and ours) could grow up free, John and Abigail Adams bestowed an extraordinary blessing on all of us. Yet one of their greatest legacies was an unintended one, a consequence of their long separation and constant need for one another. They left behind marvelously detailed, literate, and loving letters to each other—1,016 survive—that add immeasurably to our understanding of this remarkable couple and their tumultuous times. Some 289 of them have been gathered into this new and fascinating collection, compiled by the editors of the Adams Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Adams, an ambitious man with an eggshell ego, fretted that history would give him short shrift. "Statues and monuments will never be erected to me, nor flattering orations spoken, to transmit me to posterity in brilliant colors," he lamented. He knew full well that he was too short and round, too vain, too quick to anger, and too eager to speak out—incurable bluntness was his besetting political weakness—to seem very impressive in marble or bronze. And for most of the past two centuries, his glum prediction held true.

In recent years, though, Adams's star has risen prodigiously, thanks largely to the prose of David McCullough, author of the celebrated biography *John Adams* (2001), recently given the lavish treatment of a seven-part television series. Yet poor John can never quite shake the tendency to come off as rather ridiculous. Critics have variously compared the actor Paul Giamatti, playing a grouchy Adams with shaved head and powdered wig, to Shrek and Ebenezer Scrooge.

All the same, Adams's writings—particularly the letters—have preserved his greatness, perhaps better than any statue or solemn tome could do. With all his foibles there in full view, he seems more like us, angry and self-pitying and confused, than any of his fellow Founders. When those austere and iconic men wrote letters, not unlike most educated people of the 18th century, they tended to keep their emotions well under wraps. John and Abigail were entirely different: They pour their hearts onto the page, revealing awkward details that proved costly to him, both in their day and ours. British newspapers published some of Adams's intercepted letters, including information about his feelings and family, causing him great embarrassment. (He and Abigail took to writing under assumed names.) In our day, some historians have just as aggressively used Adams's heartfelt prose against him, mining the letters for evidence of his flaws. His contemporaries, who seemed to display godlike restraint by comparison, had the good sense to neglect to record their failings for posterity with such incredible persistence.

Still, the letters also reveal a man who, for all his flaws, showed stupendous courage, creativity, stubborn devotion to duty, and keen insight into the nature of power.

As great as he is, Abigail is easily his match. It is clear from these letters that, in addition to keeping the family's farm going in his absence (a difficult task calling for hard-headed business savvy), she often shows shrewder political instincts. Intensely curious about politics, she clamors for details and advises her husband about what steps to take. As he put it himself, she was his ballast, steadying the ship and keeping him moving forward, and he would not have become the great man he did without her. A flavor of that can be found in her very last surviving letter to him, as he mulls over judicial appointments before leaving office as president: "Adieu my dear Friend. I wish you well through the remainder of your political journey. I want to see the list of judges."

The crude stuff of life is here, illuminated with the lightning flashes

Edward Achorn is deputy editor of the editorial pages at the Providence Journal.

of history. The letters remind us that these were two people who were groping in the darkness, unsure what would become of their lives and their new country. The loneliness and boredom, particularly in Abigail's life, seem palpable: With almost animal intensity, she craves John's letters and writes of them as "a feast to me" that "cheerd me in my most painfull Moments." They write back and forth about letters they have and have not received, thanks to the vagaries of war and 18th-century communications. Sickness and death are always lurking, ready to strike a family member without warning. Abigail writes about getting seaweed hauled up from the beach after storms to fertilize the fields. (The search for an ideal manure was an obsession with John Adams.) We learn of the dangers and headaches of travel, in jostling carriages over rutted roads or in ships prone to sink and drown all aboard. Their letters open a window to their age like few other documents. That alone makes them invaluable.

But they are also fun reading, bubbling with the charm, intelligence, pungency, and passion of these two, who were compelling and entertaining writers, one as good as the other. Many of the passages are well known. In the earliest surviving letter to Abigail, two years before their marriage, John playfully submits to her a "bill" requiring "as many Kisses, and as many Hours of your Company after 9 OClock as he shall please to Demand."

As John sets about crafting new laws, Abigail famously advises him to "Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could." John responds: "We know better than to repeal our Masculine systems. Altho they are in full Force, you know they are little more than Theory. We dare not exert our Power in full Latitude. We are obliged to go fair, and softly, and in Practice you know we are the subjects."

As the first president to stay in the White House, still unfinished in November 1800, he writes: "I pray Heaven to bestow the best of Blessings on this House and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise Men ever rule under this roof."

This is the third edition of the letters of John and Abigail transcribed from the original manuscripts. Their grandson Charles Francis Adams, Henry Adams's father and Lincoln's ambassador in London during the Civil War, produced a bowdlerized edition in 1876, leaving out some of the more mundane and unpleasant facts about their lives. In 1975 *The Book of John and Abigail* appeared, a fine edition of 201 letters with modernized spelling and punctuation. This new, lengthier edition leaves the reader mostly on his own, for better or worse. Spelling and punctuation are left as they were, and the editors generally eschew footnotes and do little to help the reader identify exactly what and whom John and Abigail are talking about.

"It is our belief that Abigail and John said it best," the editors write. Maybe. But this nonspecialist could have used a little more hand-holding during the long journey. Still, even the general reader cannot fail to be intrigued by the Adamses and their complicated lives. One of the great comic moments comes in 1783 after Abigail, treading on tiptoe, informs John as gingerly as possible about one Royall Tyler, a potential suitor for their daughter Nabby's hand. She notes that he has lost much of his fortune in a dissolute youth, but has worked hard to reform, is studying law, and loves poetry. You can almost hear the top of Adams's head explode in response, posted from Paris where a preliminary peace agreement has just been signed.

"I don't like your Word 'Dissipation' at all," he sputters, working himself into an Adams lather. "My Child . . . is not to be the Prise, I hope of any, even reformed Rake. A Lawyer would be my Choice, but it must be a Lawyer who spends his Midnights as well as Evenings at his Age over his Books not at any Ladys Fire side. . . . A Youth who has been giddy enough to Spend his Fortune or half his Fortune in Gaieties, is not the Youth for me, Let his Person Family, Connections and Taste for Poetry be what they will. I am not looking for a Poet, nor a Professor of belle Letters." Poor Abigail, too, comes under fire: "I dont like this Method of Courting Mothers," John grumbles.

Many of their letters are suffused with a darker mood. "Stern Winter is making hasty strides towards me," Abigail writes, "and chills the warm fountain of my Blood by the Gloomy prospect of passing it alone, for what is the rest of the World to me?" They suffered this way because they wanted to preserve freedom, something that can only be earned through sacrifice. I wonder if Adams, looking down on the America of 2008, ever does "repent . . . the Pains" that he and his dearest friend took? ♦

Abigail and John Adams

Lenny Bruce

Jerry Seinfeld

Robert Klein

He Who Laughs

Are comedians jesters, or harbingers of social change?

BY ZACK MUNSON

What do four Jewish comedians, three goyish comedians, and one black comedian have in common? Well, according to *Comedy at the Edge* they—Robert Klein, Albert Brooks, Andy Kaufman, Jerry Seinfeld, Steve Martin, Robin Williams, George Carlin, Richard Pryor, and others—"changed America." At least that is what *Time*'s television critic, Richard Zoglin, believes.

All attempts to explain social change through the narrow prism of short-lived pop culture phenomena aside, Zoglin's work is quite informative, and not entirely unpleasant reading. He describes, in a largely chronological though sometimes too-serious way, the development of what today is called stand-up comedy.

Zoglin has conducted extensive interviews with comics, club owners, managers, producers, and hangers-on. And his subjects rarely bore. They are, for the most part, carousing, drug addicted, and emotionally unstable (there's no business like show business!), and Zoglin captures their plentiful highs and lows. He offers little insight into the more sordid gossip and better-traveled stories, such as Richard Pryor setting himself on fire; but he does give some details that bring these strange characters to life.

Comedy at the Edge
How Stand-up in the 1970s Changed America
by Richard Zoglin
Bloomsbury, 256 pp., $24.95

Pryor, in response to an unimpressed audience member, "suddenly unzipped his fly and peed in her direction." When David Brenner catches Robin Williams using his material on television, Brenner warns Williams's agent, "If he ever takes one more line from me, I'll rip off his leg and shove it up his ass." After a concert one night in the mid-1970's, legendary manager Jack Rollins issues a "rueful assessment" of his client Robert Klein, then at the height of his success: "Effective, but not winning."

Zoglin also does a good job telling the story of the rise of the comedy club, from its humble beginnings in a seedy New York dive called the Improv, to its growing influence in supplying talent for TV and film and the boom that filled American towns and cities with Seinfeld wannabes. This story is worth a book in itself, and takes up a sizable part of Zoglin's, and is populated with yet another group of familiar names and characters. Some succeeded: Billy Crystal, Richard Lewis, Richard Belzer, Garry Shandling. Some skyrocketed: Jay Leno, David Letterman. And some—well, some aren't so familiar, but apparently did do standup comedy in the 1970s (Argus Hamilton, anyone?).

This is an engaging and informative book, but it has a serious flaw. Zoglin begins with the obligatory tribute to Lenny Bruce; e.g., Bruce was a genius among other, lesser geniuses (including comedy lightweights such as Mort Sahl, Bill Cosby, Bob Newhart, Jonathan Winters, and Woody Allen). But of course, Zoglin admits, "Bruce was hardly (to get this heresy out of the way first) the funniest of the lot." Heresy offstage, breathless sycophancy resumes:

> His battles against the protectors of public decency, to be sure, helped knock down barriers to free speech and led the way to a more open popular culture. . . . No other comedian (or any American entertainer, for that matter) again faced anything close to the legal harassment that Bruce did. But even that does not get at the core of Bruce's

Zack Munson is a comedian and writer in Washington.

TIME & LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES; CARLOS J. ORTIZ / RAPPORT / NEWSCOM; NANCY KASZERMAN, NEWSCOM

impact—the reason why he was the indispensable comedian for a new generation of stand-up comics.

Five hyperventilating pages later, Zoglin finally gets at what he was getting at, the real thrust of Bruce's influence: "[Bruce's] vibrant, manic, free-associating mind games could be dazzling, almost intoxicating. Bruce showed that stand-up comedy could be the expression of an engaged, thinking, neurotic, impassioned human being in his raw, crazy complexity."

The sad truth is that Lenny Bruce was not "complex." He was a drug addict. His career was always on the brink. He was unstable, and often incomprehensible. Zoglin admits that this was a detriment to Bruce's *comedic* abilities but insists that it helped change American society.

Zoglin elevates Bruce's outlandishness and confuses it with creative radicalism. And that confusion informs Zoglin's attitude to the whole subject. For him, the stand-up comic is, or should be, an artist forever pushing the boundaries of taste, decency, social norms, our perception of truth. He is some kind of social critic. Not merely *some* kind; he is probably the most important social critic on earth. Again and again Zoglin returns to this theme.

Of George Carlin's send-up of self-contradictory terms such as "jumbo shrimp" or "mobile homes," Zoglin insists that "as a social satirist, he was more penetrating than ever." Andy Kaufman's obnoxious lounge singer/alter ego Tony Clifton was a "corrosive satire of the sadomasochistic underbelly of show business." Carlin's bit on Roman Catholic sin is "a masterpiece of autobiographical vaudeville" (plausible) "and theological criticism" (what?) while Robin Williams's comedy "(intentionally or not) showed how [our media-saturated] culture was turning into mindless cacophony, making us crazy."

Intentionally or not? Maybe Williams was just trying to be funny. The fact is that the rapid transformation in American social mores during this period had a much greater effect on what was considered acceptable than Lenny Bruce's outlandishness. And it was far more responsible for opening the doors for Carlin, Pryor, and the comics who followed. The countercultural upswing began in the 1950s, in which Bruce played just a minor role, and blossomed in the 1960s, shaping what the new comics had to say as well as creating audiences who wanted to hear it. This is the point that Zoglin doesn't seem to grasp: Comedians don't tell us where we should be and why; they show us where we are, and why it's such a funny place to be. The great stand-ups of the last four decades have excelled at this.

Comedy at the Edge is full of messy people retelling their messy lives, with memories obscured by age, drugs, alcohol, ego, envy, regret, and (sometimes) success. These characters are not easy to categorize. Zoglin manages to string them together with some coherence, but his fixation on social criticism is forced, ill-placed, and ultimately unpersuasive. Imputing social, moral, or political significance to comic talent suggests that comedy has to have a *point*. To which anyone who has ever laughed at anything can only respond: Some people are just funny; isn't that enough? ♦

BCA

Art in Pursuit

Hounds, nature, God, and medieval man.

BY MAUREEN MULLARKEY

"Illuminating the Medieval Hunt" at New York's Morgan Library is a seductive window into the difference in temper between the Middle Ages and our own, more complacent, era. On exhibit are some 50 illuminated pages from the Morgan's manuscript by Gaston Phoebus (1331-91), *Le Livre de la chasse*, the most famous hunting manual of all time. It was a bestseller in its day, prompting multiple copies, and translated into various languages, first in commissioned manuscripts, later in printed editions.

Illuminating the Medieval Hunt
The Morgan Library
Through August 10

The feudal epoch was one of wide accomplishment, ranging from technological advance to the arts of governance. Among these last was warcraft, the agent and protector of statecraft. Feudal nobles were landed rulers but, above all, they were mounted warriors: cavalry. Prowess in close-quarters combat, an occupational requirement, found ritualized expression in the hunt. The blood sport of princes, hunting was proxy for the arts of war; it kept men in trim for battle. (A modern analogy might be George S. Patton's 1941 Louisiana maneuvers, in which his 2nd Armored Division attacked, not an enraged boar, but Shreveport.)

Surnamed Phoebus—Latin for Apollo—in tribute to his manly beauty, Gaston III, count of Foix and viscount of Béarn in southwestern France, was one of the most powerful French feudal nobles. A man of arms, he was also a talented naturalist whose expertise in the hunt was sharpened by expeditions north during lulls in the Hundred Years War. He pursued game across Sweden, Norway, and East Prussia, and read every available manual on hunting. He dedicated his own manual to his friend and fellow warrior-huntsman Philip the Bold, who first saw battle at age 14.

Disbound for conservation reasons and the preparation of a facsimile (hap-

Maureen Mullarkey writes about art for the New York Sun, *the* New Criterion, *and other publications.*

'Hunting and Slaying the Wild Boar' from Le Livre de la chasse

pily on hand to be leafed through), the Phoebus manuscript is uniquely accessible just now. Two dozen additional rare volumes on the hunt, dating from the 11th century, to later Persian and Mughal works, complete the display. The Morgan Library's copy was most likely commissioned by Philip's son from a Parisian workshop around 1407.

The Phoebus manuscript is a jewel of medieval illumination. The hand of the calligrapher is as subtle and measured as the painter's: Undulating, chiseled script, no less beautiful than the coloration, knits text and imagery together. The architecture of each vellum page has a harmonic integrity that testifies to the vitality of medieval aesthetic sensibility.

Here are more than antiquarian *objets d'art*. The charm of the exhibition is incidental to what it portrays of a chivalric culture that spread across Europe, even to Syria and the edge of the Arabian desert. The loveliness of the manuscript holds lessons of its own. The medieval imagination transformed aesthetic pleasure into a mystical *joie de vivre*, inextricable from contemplation of the Good, beauty's transcendent source. Art for art's sake would have been an unintelligible creed.

Phoebus describes the habits of wild animals; the nature of dogs and their care; the elaborate techniques of hunting with dogs; and the less laudable ones of hunting with traps, snares, and crossbow. He begins by invoking the Trinity and the Mother of God before praising the virtues of the chase.

Starting in the wild before daybreak, and lasting until prey was run to exhaustion, the hunt was a rigorous campaign. It banished idleness, thereby causing men "to eschew the seven deadly sins." (The author himself dropped dead at the end of a grueling bear hunt.) Phoebus thought seven or eight a proper age to begin a boy's training in the hunt. Stamina and resourcefulness were best acquired early because "a craft requires all a man's life ere he be perfect thereof" and it is never too soon to learn to dread failure. Physical and moral courage were of a piece.

Like the fabric of medieval life itself, the rubrics of the hunt were intertwined with the liturgical calendar, the cult of the saints, and codes of courtesy. The great stag was strong, swift, cunning, and bellicose ("wonderfully perilous")—hence, the worthiest prey. Stag hunting began and ended on two different feast days of the Holy Cross. In between, around Mary Magdalene Day, when deer polished their antlers on trees, was the optimal time for tracking them. A tree "frayed well high" indicated a tall, hale specimen. So did the size of hoofprints and the quality of his bellow. One miniature shows scouts returning to camp with droppings, another indicator of size, displayed for noble inspection.

Boar hunting began on Michaelmas, when the animal was fleshiest. The polar opposite of the stag, the boar was the original *bête noire*, a menacing symbol of evil and a fierce, dangerous opponent. A pair of boars is depicted copulating, the artist's way of indicating their base nature. Badgers, on the other hand, were not fair game; besides being inedible, they slept too much and had few defenses. Phoebus's sporting dismissal of them, portrayed close to their burrows, is analogous to the chivalric refusal to kill an unarmed man. Otters, foxes, rabbits, hinds, wild goats, reindeer, bears, wild cats ("their falseness and malice are well known"), and the hated wolf are treated in turn.

THE MORGAN LIBRARY

Running with hounds was the favorite and most respected form of the chase. Phoebus, whose kennel numbered 1,600 dogs, lavishes attention on "the best knowing of any beast God ever made." In what is almost a canticle to hounds, the author describes them in terms befitting the ideal Christian knight. No attention to their well-being was too minor: They appear in almost every miniature, on the chase or in the hands of groomsmen who examine their ears, trim and bathe their paws, tend their wounds.

The strategies and risks in selecting prey, tracking, ambushing, and killing it are described with precision and illustrated with verve. (Not always accurately, since Parisian illuminators did not get into the woods much.) So are the protocols for ritual dismembering of the stag. Since women practiced falconry, hawking was preferred for May, Mary's month. Hunting hawks, like dogs, were deemed capable of fealty, and their self-sacrificial acts of loyalty, real or mythical, are sweetly illustrated.

The Phoebus manuscript ends, as it began, with prayer. The extended display closes with a 17th-century Mughal scene of a female hunter holding a gun, the weapon that finished hunting as Phoebus knew it. *Le Livre de la chasse* is an exquisite emblem of chivalric culture, one that marked Western civilization with unique characteristics the future will be lucky to sustain. An exhibition that breathes life into even a single part of it is a welcome event.

A postscript: Edward of Norwich, Duke of York, later to die at Agincourt, translated Phoebus's manual into English, under the title *The Master of Game*. Theodore Roosevelt, writing from the White House, introduced a 1909 reprint with praise for the great medieval lords as "mighty men with their hands and terrible in battle" as well as cultivated statesmen. At the same time, he lamented the eventual deterioration of the hunt into destructive obsession and a riskless "parody of the stern hunting life." Roosevelt reserved his highest admiration for the roving hunter who penetrates the wilderness with simple equipment and shifts for himself. ♦

TIME & LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

Francophilia

The French, après tout, *are a lot like you and me.*

BY CHARLES MURRAY

So there I am in Avignon, lost, and I go into a shop and ask, "*Où est le bistro La Fourchette, s'il vous plaît*?" in my best Iowa accent.

The woman behind the counter comes out onto the sidewalk and gives me instructions, pointing and speaking slowly, asking solicitously at intervals whether I understand. I say "*Oui*," lying, figuring at least I know how to get started. Several blocks on, I go into a shoe store to get a new set of instructions. The lady there hasn't heard of La Fourchette, so she gets out a phone directory, finds the address, and draws me a map so I can finish my journey.

We're talking about the French here, those people who pretend they can't understand foreigners who fracture their language and who make no effort to be nice to tourists.

It was the same everywhere. The night before, I had been in Lyon with my wife and friends having dinner at a local *bouchon*. We were the only non-French people in the place. The proprietor patiently helped us through our order (lots more fractured French), mimed what he couldn't get us to understand otherwise, and was charmingly funny. Those stuck-up French.

We were in the provinces, you say? Parisians are not like that? During the five days my wife and I were in Paris, we encountered one surly young waiter. Otherwise, we met a parade of helpful Parisians of several ethnicities. Some were merely pleasant and efficient; others seemed to find clueless Americans kind of cute.

As time went on, something struck me (besides realizing what a good time I was having). I have loved Europe everywhere I've been, but there was something oddly different about the French,

and I finally figured it out: The French are Europe's Americans. Describe the French, and you're usually describing Americans.

Take the notorious French attachment to their own language. The French aren't like the Germans, Dutch, and Scandinavians, whose English is often so perfect that their corporate executives can (and sometimes do) conduct their work in English even among themselves. The French think that the French language is special and helps define who they are, and want to hear French spoken in their own country. As an American who goes silently berserk whenever I hear "Press one for English," I have no problem with that. Do you?

We complain that the French are

Charles Murray, the W.H. Brady scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of the forthcoming Real Education: Four Simple Truths for Bringing America's Schools Back to Reality.

infuriatingly certain of the superiority of things French. True—and it is a kind of pride that is rare in today's Europe. A few years ago I published a book called *Human Accomplishment* that was largely a paean to the brilliance of the European legacy. When I lectured on the book before European audiences, I discovered that my listeners did not enjoy hearing me recite their story; but were embarrassed. They had bought into the notion that Western civilization—i.e., European civilization—has been a source of evil rather than a font of the greatest achievements in human history. I have never given that lecture in France, but I bet you wouldn't catch a French audience reacting that way (except, perhaps, for an audience of intellectuals). The French are just as chauvinistically proud of their artists, scientists, and inventors as the stereotype has it. And as the stereotype of Americans has us.

We complain that, in foreign affairs, the French go their own way, ignoring the interests of everyone else when it suits their purposes. Well, yes. Like us.

I probably shouldn't have mentioned geopolitics, because I'm talking about French people and American people, not about the policies of de Gaulle or Chirac. But after reading non-French accounts saying that French counterterrorism units are the best in the world, and seeing the scarily kick-ass troops who patrol the grounds of the Louvre, I am no longer laughing at jokes about French fecklessness in the war on terror. And after seeing a few of the World War I cenotaphs that may be found in almost any French town, and having counted the names of the dead and estimated just what proportion of the town's male population they must have represented, I am no longer laughing at jokes about French courage.

So, much to my surprise—for I did laugh at those jokes before—I've become a Francophile. But it's not as if I've fallen in love with some exotic foreign culture. The French are stubbornly independent, think theirs is the world's greatest culture, do the things they do best better than anyone else, are irritatingly proud as a people but warm and helpful as individuals.

Remind you of anyone we know? ♦

BCA

The 500th Indy

Steven Spielberg and George Lucas prove they can make money. **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

The movie is called *Indiana Jones and the Whatever of the Doohickey*. The title character is a quarter century older than he was in his first adventure, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but he's still at it. By "at it," I mean that he gets involved with an incomprehensible plot involving a mystical artifact, and for most of the movie he keeps leading the bad guys to the artifact and endangering the world in the process.

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull
Directed by Steven Spielberg

In *Raiders*, he found a Torah Holder of Infinite Power and, fortunately for him, lost it to a Nazi who tried to access its supernatural elements and had his face melted off as a result. In the second Indiana Jones movie, something happened, which for the life of me I can't remember, but it was bad, and he turned into a bad guy who beat up a kid, and everybody had to eat monkey brains. In the third, Sean Connery was Harrison Ford's annoying father, and there was a Nazi blonde played by an actress with the unfortunate name of Alison Doody, and if she had succeeded the Nazis would have won the war, but Miss Doody doodn't, and I'm pretty sure it wasn't thanks to Indiana Jones.

He doesn't exactly exhibit conventional behavior for a hero, and that is part of the reason Indiana Jones has become a worldwide icon. By making him into something of a stumblebum, an improvising schlep who gets beaten up and tied up and double-crossed and outplayed by the bad guys, director Steven Spielberg and producer George Lucas made him a character the world roots for. He might have seemed intolerably perfect otherwise, this sterling example of human achievement, a conceit as delirious as his name—a bespectacled scholar one minute and a dashing international daredevil the next, who breaks hearts from Kathmandu to Shanghai. It's said that the wondrous moment in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* when an eye-rolling Indiana takes out a gun and simply shoots a turbaned Egyptian fancily threatening him with a scimitar came about because Harrison Ford was desperately sick on the day of filming and couldn't remain standing long enough to conduct the planned knife fight.

Of such serendipities are classic movie moments made. It is an understatement to say that *Indiana Jones and the Thingummy of the Yada-Yada* could use a few of them. Or one, even. The year is 1957. Evil Soviet agents *and* evil Red-baiting FBI agents roam the American countryside. "These are dark days," a character says. He doesn't mean they're dark days because of the Russkies; they're dark days because of the McCarthyites. Indiana Jones taunts a Russian colonel by declaring, "I like Ike." Then he nearly gets blown up in a nuclear bomb test, which serves him right.

Soon, he ends up in South America on a quest for El Dorado. So does his old girlfriend, Marion Ravenswood (Karen Allen), the one who bested every grizzled Sherpa in Tibet in a drinking contest at that glorious

John Podhoretz, editorial director of Commentary, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

Himalayan bar way back in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. They are accompanied by a teen greaser (Shia LaBeouf) who dresses like Brando in *The Wild One* and gets into a rumble in a sweet shoppe straight out of an Archie comic.

Given the fact that these movies are supposed to be evocations of 1930s serials, the overarching concept is actually quite clever. It brings together the lunatic conspiracy theories about aliens crash-landing in New Mexico in 1947 with the once-popular charlatan notions of Erich von Däniken, whose bestselling 1960s tract *Chariots of the Gods* provided false proof that extraterrestrials had landed in Peru and taught the Incas everything they knew.

But that is where the cleverness ends. There is not a moment in this movie we haven't seen before and done better elsewhere: Fights on the hoods of moving trucks, journeys through hidden passageways, confrontations with pesky natives, a boat going over a waterfall. There isn't a scene to compare with the Himalayan bar, or the shooting of the Egyptian, or even the wild Chinese-language production number with which the second in the series, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, begins. The best bit—a showdown with a menacing army of red ants—isn't remotely original. Instead, it's a clear homage to one of the original disaster movies, 1954's *The Naked Jungle*, in which a cruel Peruvian plantation owner played by Charlton Heston (yes, you read that right) loses his crop to an ant army.

Even more notable in the homage department is the way Spielberg lifts an entire scene whole from Mel Gibson's *Apocalypto*—the 2006 movie about how evil the Mayan civilization was. *Apocalypto* is a remarkable and punishing piece of filmmaking, but isn't Spielberg, founder of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, supposed to be a Lion of Judah? What is he doing stealing unabashedly from Malibu's Most Wanted Anti-Semite?

Spielberg isn't the only one doing imitations around here. Fresh off her Oscar-winning impersonation of Katharine Hepburn in *The Aviator* and her Oscar-nominated impersonation of Bob Dylan in *I'm Not There*, the Australian actress Cate Blanchett goes for the hat trick with a dead-on impression of . . . Natasha Fatale, the sidekick of Boris Badenov, the Soviet agents in the *Rocky and Bullwinkle* cartoons. Her character, Col. Irina Spalko, is described as "Stalin's favorite," and she is supposed to be both savage and psychic; but she never actually tortures anybody and she never manages to read a single thought. There is nothing menacing about her. She seems more inclined to kiss Indiana Jones than to drag information out of him.

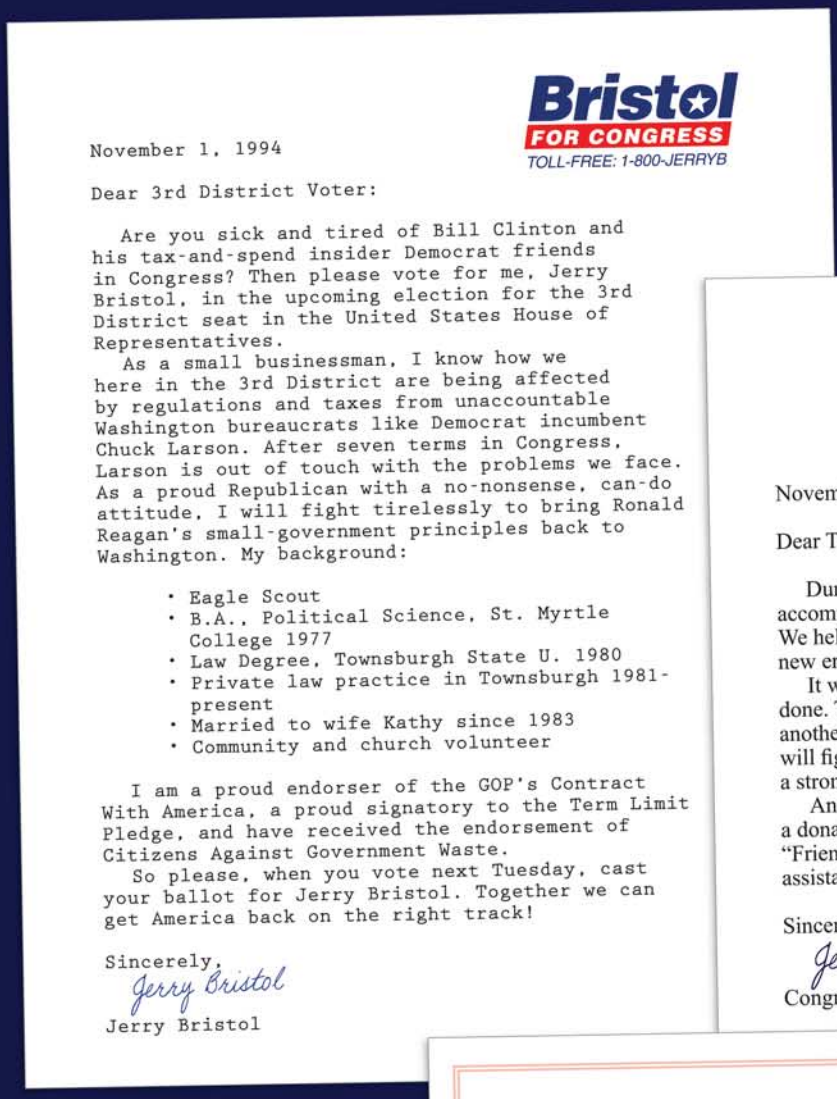
Harrison Ford

There are thousands of movies worse than *Indiana Jones and the Skull of the Crystal Kingdom* (or *the Crystal Kingdom of the Skull*, or *the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, or whatever it is). But its existence is a bit of a mystery. Steven Spielberg, the most famous director in the history of the cinema, can make any movie he wants to make; why a third sequel that offers him not a moment's visual or storytelling challenge? George Lucas, the most financially successful moviemaker in history, has nothing to prove; why indulge in this kind of mediocrity? Harrison Ford hasn't had a hit in a long time; maybe they wanted to help him out. Of all possible theories, this is the most pleasant.

But there are less pleasant ones. Such as: For men like Spielberg and Lucas, there is no such thing as being too successful. It is not enough to have made movies that earned in the billions. To remain a cinematic power, to continue to provoke respect and fear and awe, they must continue to generate box office, box office, box office. They may talk about making experimental films no one will want to see (Lucas) or dedicating themselves to cinematic versions of literary works (Spielberg), but that is all just talk. They are both billionaires, but they are not going to leave money on the table if they can figure out a way to pick it up and put it in their pockets.

Hollywood is as competitive as Wall Street. With this project, so mercenary in conception that it should have been called *Indiana Jones and the Triumph of the Box Office*, Spielberg and Lucas are making it clear they are going to cling to their predominant positions and not allow anyone to supersede them. And should anyone dare to try—well, there is always *Indiana Jones and the Shark from "Jaws,"* or *Obi-Wan Kenobi and the Temple of Doom.* ♦

Parody "Return to Sender"



Bristol
FOR CONGRESS
TOLL-FREE: 1-800-JERRYB

November 1, 1994

Dear 3rd District Voter:

Are you sick and tired of Bill Clinton and his tax-and-spend insider Democrat friends in Congress? Then please vote for me, Jerry Bristol, in the upcoming election for the 3rd District seat in the United States House of Representatives.

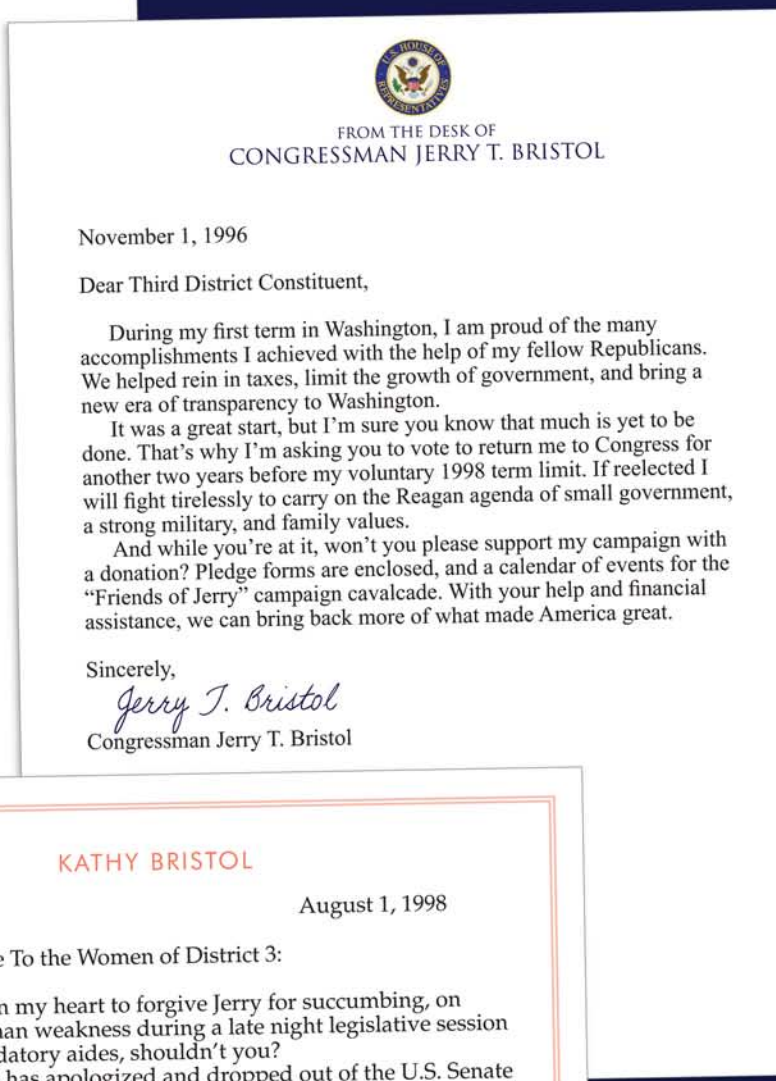
As a small businessman, I know how we here in the 3rd District are being affected by regulations and taxes from unaccountable Washington bureaucrats like Democrat incumbent Chuck Larson. After seven terms in Congress, Larson is out of touch with the problems we face. As a proud Republican with a no-nonsense, can-do attitude, I will fight tirelessly to bring Ronald Reagan's small-government principles back to Washington. My background:

- Eagle Scout
- B.A., Political Science, St. Myrtle College 1977
- Law Degree, Townsburgh State U. 1980
- Private law practice in Townsburgh 1981-present
- Married to wife Kathy since 1983
- Community and church volunteer

I am a proud endorser of the GOP's Contract With America, a proud signatory to the Term Limit Pledge, and have received the endorsement of Citizens Against Government Waste.

So please, when you vote next Tuesday, cast your ballot for Jerry Bristol. Together we can get America back on the right track!

Sincerely,
Jerry Bristol
Jerry Bristol



FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSMAN JERRY T. BRISTOL

November 1, 1996

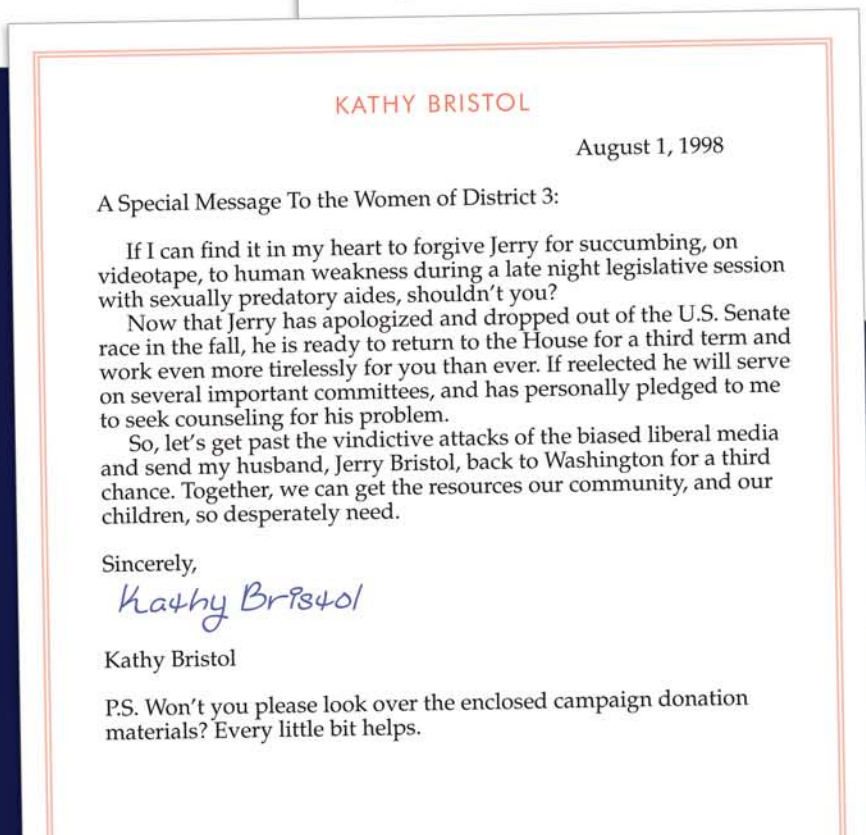
Dear Third District Constituent,

During my first term in Washington, I am proud of the many accomplishments I achieved with the help of my fellow Republicans. We helped rein in taxes, limit the growth of government, and bring a new era of transparency to Washington.

It was a great start, but I'm sure you know that much is yet to be done. That's why I'm asking you to vote to return me to Congress for another two years before my voluntary 1998 term limit. If reelected I will fight tirelessly to carry on the Reagan agenda of small government, a strong military, and family values.

And while you're at it, won't you please support my campaign with a donation? Pledge forms are enclosed, and a calendar of events for the "Friends of Jerry" campaign cavalcade. With your help and financial assistance, we can bring back more of what made America great.

Sincerely,
Jerry T. Bristol
Congressman Jerry T. Bristol



KATHY BRISTOL

August 1, 1998

A Special Message To the Women of District 3:

If I can find it in my heart to forgive Jerry for succumbing, on videotape, to human weakness during a late night legislative session with sexually predatory aides, shouldn't you?

Now that Jerry has apologized and dropped out of the U.S. Senate race in the fall, he is ready to return to the House for a third term and work even more tirelessly for you than ever. If reelected he will serve on several important committees, and has personally pledged to me to seek counseling for his problem.

So, let's get past the vindictive attacks of the biased liberal media and send my husband, Jerry Bristol, back to Washington for a third chance. Together, we can get the resources our community, and our children, so desperately need.

Sincerely,
Kathy Bristol

Kathy Bristol

P.S. Won't you please look over the enclosed campaign donation materials? Every little bit helps.

the weekly Standard
June 2, 2008

FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSMAN JERRY T. BRISTOL

November 1, 2000

Dear 3rd District Voter:

If I've learned anything in my six years in Congress, it's that leadership and experience counts. Experienced leadership that leads to important committee leadership positions, like Chairman of the Select Subcommittee on Education Reform. It's a position I'm proud to have earned through my tireless work for you, the people of the 3rd District.

If you elect me to another term, I will work even harder to implement tough-love, compassionate conservatism for our children—principles like multicultural algebra testing and the universal prenatal Mozart program. It's the kind of dedicated, experienced leadership that has earned me the endorsement of the national and state education association, the National Textbook Sellers Association, and the Government Check Printers Union.

When you cast your ballot in 2000, remember that experience counts—vote to reelect Bristol. Together we can make Washington work for all of us!

Sincerely,

Jerry Bristol

Jerry Bristol
"The Third District's Voice in Congress"

FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSMAN JERRY T. BRISTOL

November 1, 2002

Dear 3rd District Voter:

The craven terrorist strikes of September 11 last year showed that we live in a dangerous world, with a bloodthirsty enemy who will stop at nothing to kill innocent Americans. This is no time to show weakness to that enemy. I support President Bush and his strategy of taking the fight directly to the terrorists throughout the Mideast. I also support keeping the American homeland safe by toughened security and safe borders.

As proof of that commitment, I have secured funding for Townsburgh's new Homeland Security Department Multicultural Sensitivity Training Center. This exciting new $300 million facility will provide over 200 permanent jobs in our district, and will provide teaching opportunities for professors from the new Prince bin al-Talweed Mideast Studies Center at Townsburgh State.

So when you pull that lever in 2002, vote Bristol. Together we can stop the terrorists in their tracks!

Sincerely,

Jerry T. Bristol

Jerry T. Bristol
American Patriot

DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL CONGRESISTA
CONGRESISTA GERALDO BRISTOL

1 noviembre 2004

Hola amigos! Bienvenidos al tercer distrito del Congreso. Espero que ustedes están disfrutando de nuevos puestos de trabajo en los Estados Unidos, gracias a la Bristol programa de trabajadores invitados.

Si usted vota por mí en noviembre de 2004 voy a trabajar incansablemente para asegurarse de que usted será pronto reunirse con su familia. Además, la atención médica gratuita. Y Univision en la televisión por cable!

Así que recuerde: Voto Bristol! Viva Bristol! Viva La Raza!

Su amigo legislativas,

Geraldo Bristol

Jerry Bristol

(Please note: This week's Parody begins on page 46)

FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSMAN JERRY T. BRISTOL

November 1, 2006

Dear 3rd District Voter:

In a scandal-driven, 24-7 media world all too often distracted by poorly sourced rumors of rest-stop hook-ups and Bangkok orgies, it's easy to forget the things that really matter. Things like working tirelessly for the people, which I continue to do, in my many committee chairmanships. And responsiveness to constituents.

For example, the latest 2006 Townsburgh Gazette Poll indicates that many of you are dissatisfied with the war in Iraq. As a longtime voice of opposition to the Bush administration on the war, especially the parts that aren't going well, I have organized a special select committee to investigate and fix blame, and set a timetable for withdrawal tied to tracking-poll benchmarks.

That's the kind of leadership you will continue to get with me, Jerry Bristol. Like you're really going to vote for that Kos lunatic the Democrats nominated.

Sincerely,

Jerry Bristol

Congressman Jerry Bristol

★ BRISTOL FOR CONGRESS ★
jerrybristolforcongress.com

April 1, 2008

Dear Fellow Voter,

Stopping Global Warming. Universal health care for our children. A new ethanol-powered monorail to the Bristol Convention Center. Insuring the fragile success of the Iraq surge. On the issues that really matter to the 3rd District, Congressman Jerry Bristol has been building bipartisan bridges of cooperation and compromise across the ideological aisle. Working tirelessly to get things done. For you.

And the bridge building doesn't stop there. There's Townsburgh's shiny new Bristol Viaduct, the Jerry Bristol Causeway, and now, Townsburgh State's new Bristol Center for Government Excellence. In total, over 4,000 permanent bridge-building jobs in Townsburgh alone. All due to the tireless work of Jerry Bristol, ranking minority member of the House Transportation Subcommittee for Bridges.

It's that proud 14-year record of rock-solid, principled bipartisanship that has made Jerry Bristol a legend in Congress, and earned the endorsements of the National Bridge Contractors Association and Tollbooth Workers Local 601. It's a can-do spirit that figures out how to get things done, for you, even when that spirit is confined to home in an ankle monitor. With a record like that, can the 3rd District really afford sending an untested newcomer like Chuck Larson Jr. to represent us?

When you go into the voting booth this November remember to look beyond the party labels.

Vote Bristol—***"The Change You Know."***

Sincerely,

Nancy Worthman

Nancy Worthman
Acting Chairwoman
Bristol for Congress

GRUNDRICK & BOSTON, LLP
1007 K STREET NE, WASHINGTON, DC

January 1, 2009

Dear Client:

With a new incoming Congress, it will take a knowledgeable and seasoned lobbying organization to insure that the legislative issues important to you get the attention they deserve. That's why we at Grundrick & Boston are proud to announce the appointment of Jerry Bristol as Chairman of our Congressional Affairs staff.

A former 7-term congressman, Jerry will help you navigate Washington's confusing legislative maze, and will fight tirelessly to make sure you get entree to D.C.'s top "movers and shakers."

As a select member of our MVP Client list, you are cordially invited to a reception at the Ballroom of Washington's Excelsior Montebanque Hotel to welcome Jerry and his wife Nancy to our team and celebrate the recent removal of his ankle monitoring device.

A formal invitation is enclosed. Remember to bring your checkbook.

Sincerely,

Chuck Larson

Chuck Larson
Managing Partner