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In the new issue of *Policy Review*

Islam, the Law, and the Sovereignty of God

Accomodating Koranic principles to the civil religion

Where Muslims cannot expect to enforce Shari'a they will, hopefully, work to accommodate Islam to the civil religion we find, for example, in the United States. In this civil religion, moral precepts from many denominations are found, but they are abstracted from the denominational precepts that may be in force for believers, precepts that are not enforced politically. The resources for such an accommodation can be found in Islam, in its concern for equality and social justice. If this accommodation occurs in the United States, perhaps it will have an effect on the larger *umma*, spurring an understanding of Islam that will enable its development so as to facilitate the construction of viable constitutional states in Muslim majority countries.

—Mark Gould

A Better Approach to Foreign Aid

Private development finance is vital

Rather than providing aid according to the wishes of foreign governments, the United States should provide incentives to encourage corporations and individuals to distribute development dollars. In 2006, $380 billion of foreign direct investment flowed to developing countries and $220 billion in remittances was sent home by developing-country migrants. . . . Government policy can act to shape the direction of these dynamic flows of private development capital rather than solely relying on the old model of government-to-government transfers. One simple way to provide incentives for private development finance is to give tax credits to American companies that invest in developing countries.

—Justin Muzinich & Eric Werker

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the weekly Standard

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Tim Russert, 1950-2008

I knew Tim Russert for over three decades. I liked and admired him very much.

I first met Tim when Pat Moynihan was running for the Senate in 1976, in New York's Democratic primary. I was 23 years old, working for the campaign as deputy issues director. (This sounds more important than it was. Pat didn't need much help on issues, and there were only two of us in the issues shop.) Tim, as I recall, was working in some capacity, formal or informal, for the Democratic boss in Buffalo, Joe Crangle, on the upstate campaign, and he came to the headquarters in Manhattan to coordinate with us. We hit it off in a casual way—and then, after Pat won the primary in September (by a little less than 10,000 votes out of close to a million cast), I went back to grad school to get my Ph.D., while Tim came to Washington with Pat after he won in November as a top aide.

He served Pat very well—while developing a fantastic ability to mimic Pat's distinctive manner of speaking. Then he moved over to work for Mario Cuomo when he became governor of New York, served him equally well—and then went to NBC, where he of course became a star in his own right.

Tim gave the commencement address at the 2007 Washington University graduation in St. Louis. My wife and I were there because one of my daughters was in the graduating class. I called to congratulate him on the speech—it was a good one, especially given the difficulties and limitations of the genre—and we had lunch. I remember thinking afterwards that he was remarkably unchanged from the guy I'd met 30 years before. He was intellectually curious and personally kind, a patriot and a family man, with a lively personality and a great and communicable interest in politics and life.

Tim Russert was an impressive and admirable man, and while Washington can be an insincere town, the almost universal expressions of grief at his passing are genuine and, if I can put it this way, completely deserved.

—William Kristol

The Washington pundit world divides into roughly two kinds of people: those interested in themselves first, issues second, and other people, if at all, a distant third. The second, much smaller group is made up of people like Tim Russert, who reversed that order.

I don't typically get nervous before doing a television show, but I was quite anxious about my first appearance on *Meet the Press*. I had long admired Russert and, like virtually everyone who watched the show, found him incredibly intimidating. I told this to Tim's executive producer, Betsy Fischer. When I arrived, Tim greeted me warmly and engaged me in a 20-minute conversation, mostly about football and family. I assumed that Betsy had told him about my nerves, and that he had gone out of his way to make me comfortable, so I asked her about it. She had said nothing. It was just Tim being Tim.

After each show that features a political roundtable, Russert would sit with his guests for a catered breakfast. We chatted briefly about the show and politics, but spent most of the time talking about things that matter more—football and family.

Four years later, this past January, I was traveling with the McCain campaign in Florida when Betsy called last-minute to see if I could do Tim's cable show. I was on my way to the studio when I realized I didn't have a tie. I called one of the other panelists, *Politico*'s Jonathan Martin, to see if he had an extra. He only had one. Not a big deal, I thought, it's cable.

Martin arrived in something of a panic. He had dropped his tie as he was exiting the cab that had brought him to the studio. I told him not to worry—"It's cable."

"It's Tim Russert," he responded. "You wear a tie for Russert."

NBC's political director, Chuck Todd, walked in as we were getting makeup. Tim followed moments later. I explained that I didn't have a tie because I was irresponsible and Martin didn't have a tie because of bad luck. Russert, who has made a living making guests on his show uncomfortable, went out of his way to make us feel comfortable.

"None of us will wear one," he said. "It's cable."

—Stephen F. Hayes

Dictator Love

Sometimes stories appear in newspapers that seem to have slipped in through a hidden entrance, or floated downstairs from the publisher's office, or bubbled up from the cauldron of the past. The Scrapbook thinks some bubbling took place at the *Washington Post* last week when it printed a story by Milton Coleman headlined "Hugo Chávez: Portrait of a Man With Many Faces."

Coleman is the deputy managing editor of the *Post*, and his name shouldn't mean anything to readers except those with long, and very detailed, memories, who will recall his tenure in the early 1980s as city editor and mentor to a rising young reporter named Janet Cooke. Well, Ms. Cooke and her mythical eight-year-old heroin addict, Pulitzer Prize triumph, and subsequent scandal are very nearly ancient history now, and everyone has moved on. But Coleman's brief encounter with the Venezuelan dictator at a press junket in Caracas, and the fawning profile it yielded, took

(Classic Steiner, reprinted from our issue of April 1, 2002)

us back to the thrilling *Washington Post* of yesteryear, when Sally Quinn would write rapturously about Fidel Castro, and Karen DeYoung (now associate editor) would grow weak in the knees at the thought of Sandinistas.

"He worked the crowd like a master politician," wrote Coleman of Chávez, "shaking hands, gazing into women's eyes, glad-handing the American visitors who'd just heard him fulminate against his enemies du jour." When the journalists stood in line to shake the president's hand, "Something about me caught his attention. He looked me up and down, taking full measure of this tall, dark-skinned American before him."

Evidently, the experience of meeting Milton Coleman was nearly as important to Hugo Chávez as the chance to flatter Chávez was welcome to Coleman: "He squared his shoulders. Then, a sheepish grin spread across his face as if he weren't sure he could get away with the greeting he wanted to give me. But he did it anyway, saying 'Black power' and extending his hand for a shake."

Somehow The Scrapbook doesn't imagine Milton Coleman being charmed by George W. Bush, or John McCain, greeting him with a sheepish grin and "Black power!" But perhaps we underestimate Coleman. The balance of his story was a combination of old-fashioned moral equivalency—"It was a remarkable defense, certainly unlike anything to be expected at the White House"—euphemism—"Chávez first tried to be president . . . by masterminding a military coup d'etat"—and tactical employment of the passive voice. In one brief paragraph, when Coleman acknowledged that Chávez has his detractors, their status and identity were reduced to "they say."

Of course, dictators have been seducing credulous journalists since the days when Mussolini was running the trains on time, and Stalin told visiting Quakers that the death penalty had been abolished in the Soviet Union. But the cheering sections for Hugo Chávez and his "Main Man" (Coleman's words) Fidel Castro are now largely confined to the likes of Pacifica Radio and celebrities of the Sean Penn/Harry Belafonte school.

In one sense, it is not surprising that Janet Cooke's editor should have his head turned by a Latin tyrant, but The Scrapbook is surprised that the *Post* would broadcast the evidence. "Hugo Chávez may be many things," wrote Coleman, "and the United States believes he's a danger to stability in Latin America. But one thing he is not: a joke." Well—not Chávez, anyway. ♦

Sentences We Didn't Finish

'So not only has America tried to ruin the rest of the world with its wars, its financial meltdown and its stupid stupid food, it has allowed its own literary culture to implode. Jazz and patchwork quilts are still doing OK, but books have descended . . ."

—Lucy Ellmann,
New York Times Book Review, *June 8*

Casual

Ol' White Hair

A former colleague dropped into my Washington office to talk shop, which in our case is the exciting subject of regulatory policy. He had just come back from a visit to New York, and reported that the city is now so clean, so crime-free, so graffiti-free, its residents so full of "Hello, can I help you?" that he felt he was in Orlando—the antiseptic suburb of Disney World. Cruel.

But true enough. Perhaps Rudy Giuliani's legacy is a city that is more "livable" by the standards of the gentrifiers who have descended on it, the diners on the output of the latest hot chef. But everything has a cost, and New York City has paid a price for becoming a town in which the bland lead the bland.

It is no longer the town whose streets Frank Sinatra once prowled at night after a liquid dinner at Jilly's. Now we have Michael Feinstein, an adequate singer, but not exactly an eccentric. We expatriates who have yet to exercise the right of return can remember when Casey Stengel was presiding over the woebegone Mets; Billy Martin was brawling with the Yankees' boss while "The Bronx Is Burning"; and Clyde Frazier was dazzling Knicks fans with hands so quick they could swipe the hubcaps off a moving car. Now we have the dull but possibly competent Willie Randolph, unable to compensate for the Mets' bumbling with Stengelese, as Casey's mangling of the language came to be known; a colorless Yankee squad that is no fun and barely able to win as many games as it loses; and Stephon Marbury, selling cheap sneakers and proclaiming himself the second coming of Clyde, which he certainly is not.

Nor is the Big Apple now anything like the place where Ed Koch and Bess Myerson once affected a prenuptial affair, and Koch would ask all and sundry "How'm I doing?" while Governor Hugh Carey downed booze with Reggie Jackson at McMullen's and had his then-main squeeze, Dinah Shore, sing "Happy Birthday" to his friends at "21" (on my tab). Now we have Michael Bloomberg, a relatively colorless bureaucrat, stylish in his tuxedo when out on the town at some tame charity affair, but not known for any particular eccentricity, and have had George Pataki, not known for much of anything.

DARREN GYGI

The death of grit, of eccentricity, of individuality, is not only a New York City phenomenon. Which brings me to John McCain. The senator's problem is not his age—witness the schedule he keeps and the recent clean bill of health from his doctors. It is that he is an anachronism, brought to political maturity when emollience was not yet a virtue. On the national level Lyndon Johnson was using a combination of profanity and muscle to have his way in the Senate, Jack Kennedy was proving his manhood with a bevy of Peter Lawford's recruits (and failing to do so with Nikita Khrushchev at a no-preconditions summit), Bill Clinton was working on a dictionary with a precise definition of the word "is." Now we have Harry Reid and George W. Bush, both with personal lives beyond reproach but, er, dull—neither will ever make it onto Page 6 of the *New York Post*.

The point of all of this is not to take you on a nostalgia trip, although such looks-back are good and harmless fun. Rather, it is to suggest that the main reason McCain looks older than Barack Obama has nothing to do with his white hair. It is that Obama is a modern, gentrifying, kids-at-ballet-class product of polling and focus groups. Become a community organizer and join a large black church if that is what advisers say is the way to move ahead; oppose free trade when polls show it is unpopular; find an uncle who liberated Auschwitz when you need Jewish votes. Expedience and other-directedness might not be all, but they are not to be ignored by a modern politician. That's just the way it is these days. Except for McCain, who charmingly believes there is a place at the summit of political life for an old-fashioned eccentric—maverick is the word of choice.

McCain might not have literally hung out with Sinatra, whose Palm Beach retreat was no "ranch." But the record shows he took the blows, faced it all, and stood tall, as Sinatra would say. He opposes corn-to-ethanol subsidies in Iowa, protectionism in Midwest states hard hit by foreign competition, and promises to continue waging a highly unpopular war until we win. He continues to do it his way.

Irwin M. Stelzer

ENERGY SECURITY? THE ANSWER JUST MIGHT BE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK.

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Rice's Leadership

I want to correct several major factual errors in Stephen F. Hayes's June 2 piece on Secretary Rice's role in formulating and executing foreign policy in President Bush's second term ("In the Driver's Seat"). I'll limit my comments to areas where Hayes's facts about key moments strayed from the record; I'll leave differences over historical interpretation and philosophy for another day.

Let's start with the fall of 2006 as senior policymakers discussed policy options for Iraq, with the central question eventually becoming one over the numbers of American troops in Iraq and their role. After much discussion, President Bush made the decision to surge our armed forces, as well as numbers of our diplomats, and changed our strategy on the ground. We have all witnessed the return on success from the performance of our armed forces and diplomats in Iraq that started with the president's decision. As for the process that led to this singular decision, much will be written by historians in years to come. One thing historians will not find, however, will be any evidence Secretary Rice personally supported a pulling back from Iraq. What she did was to ask tough questions about strategy and the role additional forces would play in carrying out that strategy. After deliberation, she supported the president's decision on the troop surge. That's a far cry from writing that she favored a pullback from Iraq.

On the North Korean-Syrian nuclear reactor, Hayes argues that we stayed silent to protect the Six Party Talks. In fact, we stayed silent in order to prevent a regional war in the Middle East. Far from wanting to conceal from the world information about the facility, Secretary Rice favored public disclosure of information concerning the reactor prior to its destruction. Immediately after the reactor was destroyed, Secretary Rice was part of a consensus among the National Security Council principals that the U.S. government not discuss in public what we knew about the reactor for fear of sparking a regional conflict in the Middle East. It was only after all agreed that public discussion of what we knew would not begin a war in the Middle East that the president gave the green light to public discussion of the matter.

On the Six Party Talks, Secretary Rice did not cut out members of her team from the policy. Hayes's article quotes from galleys of an upcoming book by Mike Chinoy, *Meltdown: The Inside Story of the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*, to support the assertion that Secretary Rice acted to cut out members of her team from North Korea policy. The *Washington Post* reported

in its "Corrections" section that the published version of Chinoy's book does not contain the quotes attributed to Chris Hill about cutting out State Department officials, thus the basis for Hayes's assertion has disappeared. As Hayes correctly reports, there is no dispute that all the key principals of the National Security Council have discussed together with the president at every step our North Korea policy.

Finally, I'll close by noting that my boss is proud of the administration's record during both the first and second terms of this president, and she views any accomplishments we are able to record now as in large part a product of work we did in the first term. As you are well aware, today's headlines are seldom the same as history's judgments, with examples of that truism extending back through the founding of our great country. So while the headlines today, including some of those in The Weekly Standard, may be dour or accusatory, we are confident that the strategic course pursued throughout both terms of the administration is strong and consistent and has laid the foundation for our country to achieve the goals of President Bush's second inaugural speech.

Sean McCormack
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Stephen F. Hayes responds: Sean McCormack complains about "several major factual errors" and cites three. None of his examples withstands scrutiny. Let's take them in order.

On the surge, my piece contained one sentence reporting that several senior Bush administration officials told me Rice opposed the surge and three full paragraphs of Rice's response to those claims. Hardly unfair. It's worth noting that this isn't the first time someone has reported that Rice opposed the surge. In February, Fred Barnes wrote: "Inside his own administration, Bush had few allies on a surge in Iraq aside from the vice president and a coterie of National Security Council (NSC) staffers. . . . Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice favored a troop pullback." No one at the State Department objected to the report.

On the Syrian-Korean nuclear reactor, officials inside the administration and on Capitol Hill understood that the cause of the delay was the Six Party Talks. Not only did Bush administration officials tell me that Secretary Rice and Chris Hill wanted to keep the information secret to save the Six Party Talks, two of the congressional leaders who had been briefed on the issue made the same claim in public. In a May 1 op-ed in the *Washington Times*, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Peter Hoekstra questioned the national security rationale that they were given by the Bush administration, writing that the delay was "unfortunately influenced by the desire of some within the administration to create a 'legacy' of denuclearizing North Korea before the end of President Bush's term."

And finally, on the question whether Rice and Chris Hill excluded those

skeptical of deals with North Korea, McCormack claims that "the basis of Hayes's assertion has disappeared." He's wrong. As McCormack knows, I quoted a senior Bush administration official making the same claim. The Chris Hill quote was, as I reported, merely "confirmation" of this point.

The Chris Hill quote McCormack refers to is this one, in which Hill claims that Rice discouraged the written documentation of policy deliberations: "Some of the minimal paperwork business is coming directly from the secretary. . . . She said, 'Bring it only to me.'"

I emailed Mike Chinoy with a simple question. "Did Chris Hill say this to you?"

Chinoy responded: "As you correctly noted in your article, Hill and Rice sought to cut their bureaucratic adversaries out at various critical points as they seized control of the process and orchestrated a major turnaround in administration policy toward North Korea. This development is also reflected in many of the episodes recounted in my book and was confirmed by interviews with multiple sources.

"As for the quote in question, the version of *Meltdown* that you and some others have seen is the 'advance uncorrected proofs,' as noted on the cover. In the final version of the book which goes on sale in several weeks there is no such quote from Christopher Hill, but on the bigger picture of what was going on, you're right on the mark."

Polling Muslims

In the article "Just Like Us! Really?" (May 12) Robert Satloff reviews findings from the Gallup Press book *Who Speaks for Islam?* by Dr. John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed.

Satloff states that comments in his piece attributed to Mogahed were transcribed from an event hosted by his own Washington Institute for Near East Policy. When one listens to the audio from the event (posted on his website), it becomes apparent that he either: (a) failed to check the quote against the actual audio recording, or (b) purposely fabricated a quote to suit his needs.

Satloff writes in his piece, supposedly quoting Mogahed:

> "Yes, we can say that a Four is not that moderate . . . I don't know . . . You are writing a book, you are trying to come up with terminology people can understand. . . . *You know, maybe it wasn't the most technically accurate way of doing this, but this is how we made our cluster-based analysis*." [emphasis added].
>
> So, there it is—the smoking gun. Mogahed publicly admitted they knew certain people weren't moderates but they still termed them so. She and Esposito cooked the books and dumbed down the text.

Listening to the audio recording, her actual response is this:

> Now terming a Four moderate, yes, we can certainly agree that probably, they're not very moderate if they're saying four to that question. It was, I mean, I don't know, you're writing a book, you're trying to use terminology people understand, *you know, it wasn't maybe the most technically perfect word, I will admit, but that's how we broke the two groups apart. It was really data-driven based on this cluster analysis.* [emphasis added].

Clearly, Mogahed's actual statement critiques the choice of one word, saying the word "moderate" may not have been "technically perfect." Satloff's false attribution claims she called the entire data analysis inaccurate. The decision to break out the groups was driven by the data analysis and the distinct differences that the analyses showed between groups. Satloff is welcome to disagree with the analysis, but manufacturing a quote to make one's point has no place in a reasoned and scholarly discussion.

Eric Nielsen
Senior Director, Media Strategies
Gallup
Washington, D.C.

Robert Satloff responds: Eric Nielsen must have pulled the short straw when it came to deciding who at Gallup would defend *Who Speaks for Islam?* in print. The authors, John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, clearly preferred not to do the job themselves, and Gallup didn't send up to the plate anyone with actual responsibility for publishing a book riddled with mistakes and laced with sleight-of-hand. Instead, they sent in the media spinmeister.

I welcome Nielsen's suggestion that readers listen to the full account of the exchange with Mogahed (at http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC07.php?CID=376). When they do, they will hear Mogahed say of the term "moderate" that it "wasn't maybe the most technically perfect word" to describe poll respondents who somewhat justified 9/11. I thank him for fixing the trivial errors in the transcription.

In so doing, I thank him too for underscoring a central critique of the book, i.e., that Gallup's coauthors defined poll respondents who somewhat justified 9/11 as "radicals" in their 2006 *Foreign Policy* article and then redefined them—all 200 million of them—as "moderates" for their book. This is not a case of analytical disagreement among scholars; this is a case of "I-was-for-it before-I-was-against-it" chicanery.

There's one more reason to thank Nielsen for urging readers to listen to the original exchange with Mogahed: When they do, they will first have the opportunity to hear my Washington Institute colleague Dr. David Pollock summarizing his aptly titled new study, "Slippery Polls: Uses and Abuses of Opinion Surveys from Arab States."

• • •

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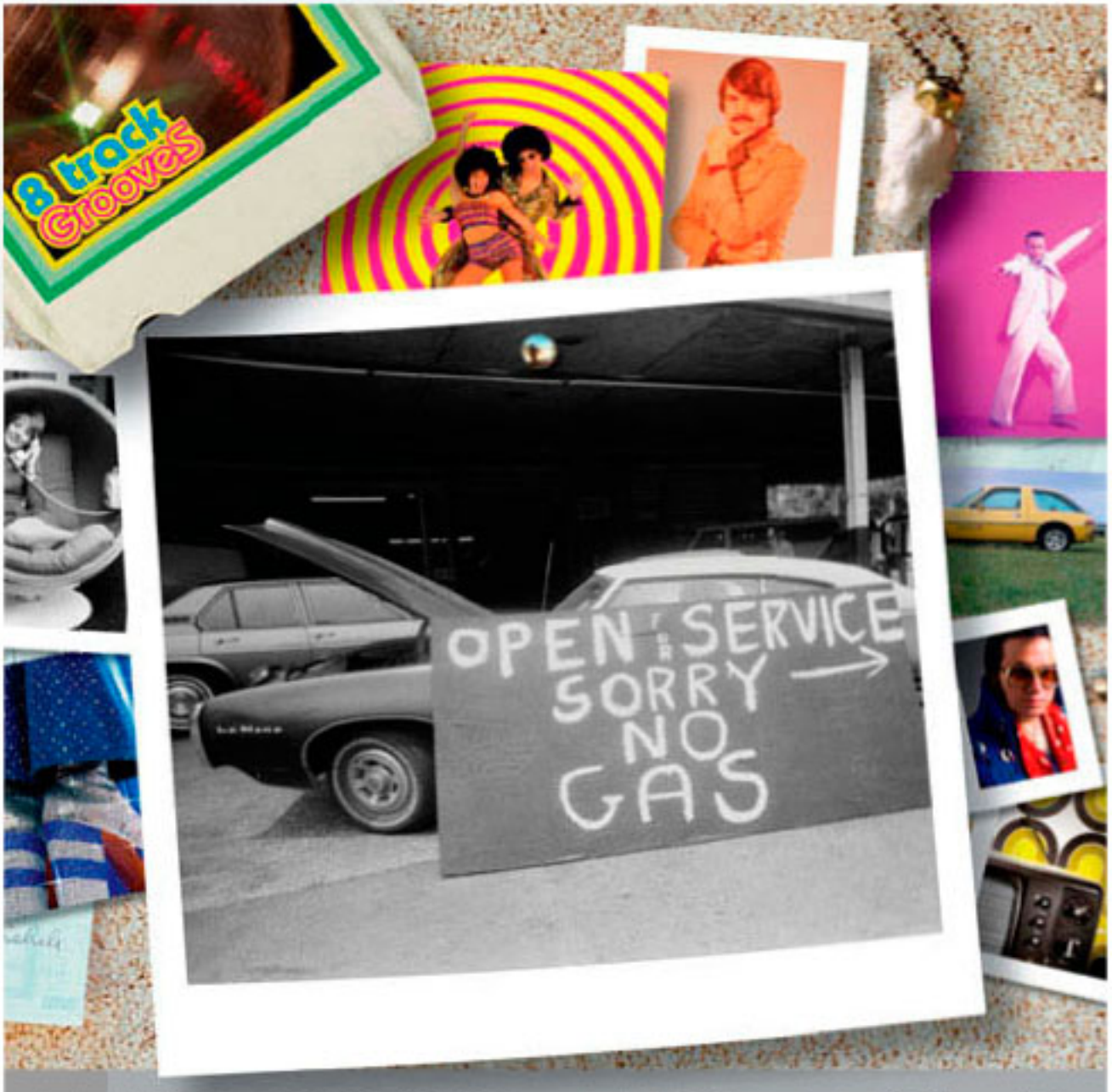

IT'S 2008, NOT 1978

Congress is playing '70s-style energy politics. What about America's energy future?

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The Gitmo Nightmare

It's hard to summarize a decision as long and complicated as the Supreme Court's 5-4 ruling last week in *Boumediene* v. *Bush*. But we can try. Unprecedented. Reckless. Harmful. Breathtakingly condescending.

The Court, in an opinion written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, ruled that non-citizens captured abroad and held in a military installation overseas—the remaining 270 or so inmates at the terrorist prison in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba—have the same constitutional right as U.S. citizens to challenge their detention in court. Furthermore, the current procedures by which a detainee's status is reviewed—procedures fashioned in good faith and at the Court's behest by a bipartisan congressional majority in consultation with the commander in chief during a time of war—are unconstitutional.

The upshot is the prisoners at Camp Delta can now file *habeas corpus* petitions in U.S. district courts seeking reprieve. Hence lawyers, judges, and leftwing interest groups will have real influence over the conduct of the war on terror. Call it the Gitmo nightmare.

As it happens, some of the most effective arguments against *Boumediene* come from the decision itself. For example, Justice Kennedy wrote that in cases involving terrorist detention, "proper deference must be accorded to the political branches." Then he overrode them.

Kennedy further noted that "unlike the President and some designated Members of Congress, neither the Members of this Court nor most federal judges begin the day with briefings that may describe new and serious threats to our Nation and its people." They had better start, because the courts are about to be flooded with petitions to release terrorists sworn to America's destruction.

He also wrote that now the "political branches . . . can engage in a genuine debate about how best to preserve constitutional values while protecting the Nation from terrorism." But that is precisely what Congress and the president were doing when they passed legislation laying out a process for detainee review, one that in fact addressed concerns previously raised by the Court. The Court now says this process is inadequate. What would be adequate? Kennedy's answer: I'll get back to you on that.

In his opinion, Kennedy conceded that "before today the Court has never held that non-citizens detained by our Government in territory over which another country maintains *de jure* sovereignty have any rights under our Constitution." Inventing rights seems to be what some of today's Supreme Court justices do best. In 1950 the Court ruled in *Johnson* v. *Eisentrager* that foreign nationals held in a military prison on foreign soil (in that case, Germany) had no *habeas* rights. But, without overruling *Eisentrager*, Kennedy said the Guantánamo detainees are different from the German prisoners 58 years ago.

Why? Kennedy wrote that *Eisentrager* had a unique set of "practical considerations," and the United States did not have "de facto" sovereignty over Germany as it does over Guantánamo Bay. That territory, "while technically not part of the United States, is under the complete and total control of our Government." But these slippery distinctions only raise more questions. Doesn't the United States government exercise "complete and total control" over its military and intelligence facilities worldwide? If so, what's to stop foreign combatants held in those locations from asserting their *habeas* rights?

And what precise form will these *habeas* hearings take? What standards of judgment are the courts to apply? Will plaintiffs' attorneys be allowed to go venue shopping and file their petitions in the most liberal courts in the nation? Will they conduct discovery? Will they recall soldiers and intelligence agents from the field to testify? What happens when the available evidence does not satisfy judges who are used to adjudicating under the exclusionary rule? Will the cases be thrown out? Will the detainees be freed, able to return to the battlefield? That, after all, is what some 30 released detainees seem already to have done.

The Supreme Court does not worry about such things. Instead it piously reminded the people that "the laws and Constitution are designed to survive, and remain in force, in extraordinary times." No kidding. Has anyone ever argued otherwise?

Kennedy's sanctimony points to the ultimate tragedy of the *Boumediene* mess. In their visceral, myopic hatred of President Bush, liberals will see the ruling as a blow to the president and not the broad, foolish, and dangerous judicial power grab it is. The *New York Times*'s editorialists wrote that "compliant Republicans and frightened Democrats" allowed Bush to deny foreign enemy combatants during wartime "the protections of justice, democracy and plain human decency."

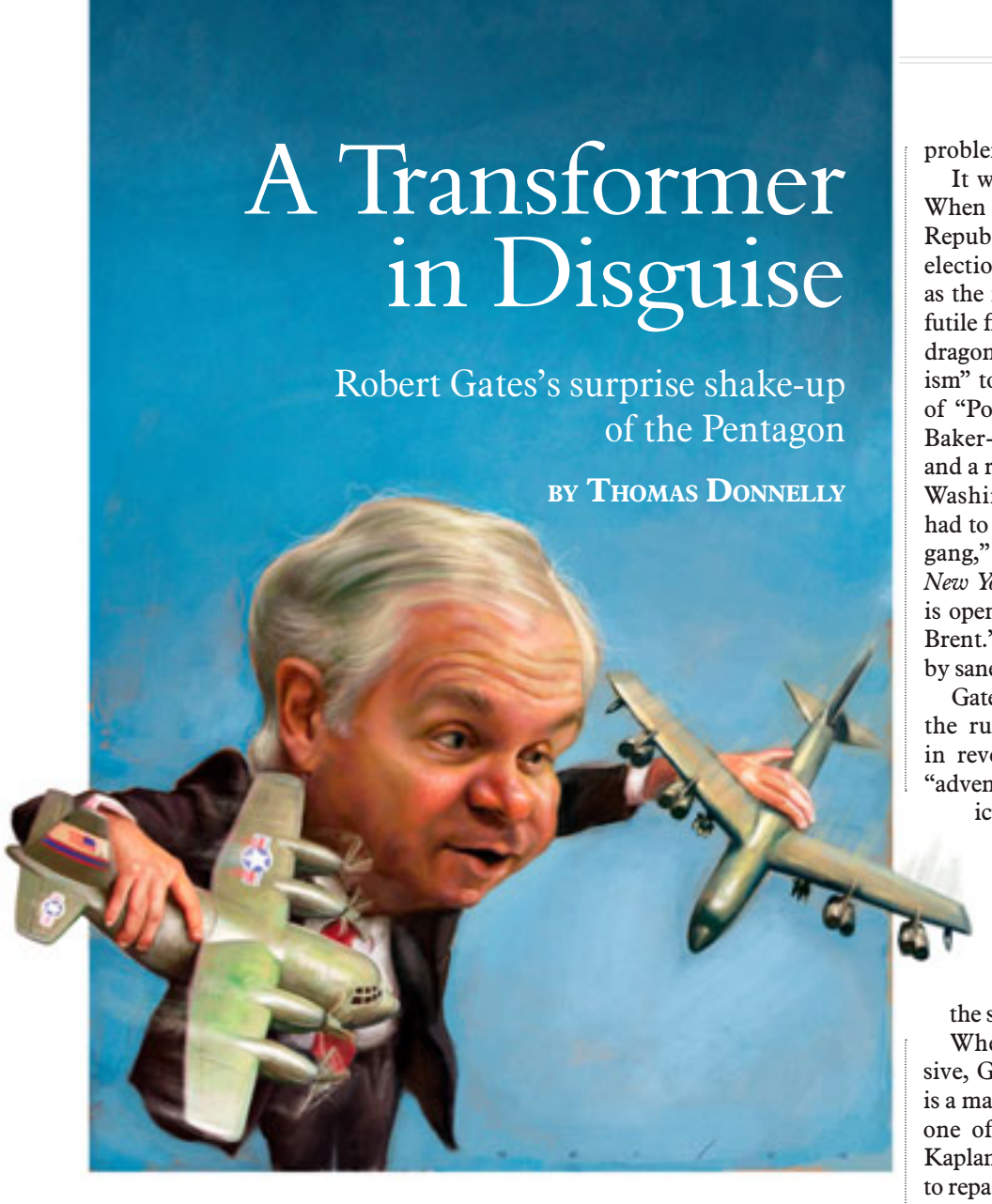
Give us a break. One day soon Bush will be gone. But thanks to the Court, we'll still all be living the Gitmo nightmare.

—Matthew Continetti, for the Editors

A Transformer in Disguise

Robert Gates's surprise shake-up of the Pentagon

BY THOMAS DONNELLY



Donald Rumsfeld's primary mission when he returned to the Pentagon as secretary of defense in 2001 was to transform the U.S. military to meet the missions of the new century. Today it seems more likely that it is his successor, Robert Gates, who will leave the lasting legacy.

It's not just the high-profile firings—Air Force secretary Michael Wynne and Chief of Staff Michael Moseley recently joined former Army secretary Francis Harvey, CENTCOM chief Admiral William Fallon, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Peter Pace on the list of senior defense officials Gates has pushed out. Nor is it simply the critical promotions of General David Petraeus to replace Fallon and General Raymond Odierno to take Petraeus's place in Iraq.

What these decisions reflect is Gates's larger purpose: to make the U.S. military focus on the war they've got rather than the war they'd like to have. Though he's only been in the job for 18 months and will presumably be gone with the rest of the Bush administration next January, Gates has managed to push aside what he calls the "next-war-itis" that metastasized during Rumsfeld's reign and became almost as intractable a problem as al Qaeda or the Taliban.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. When he replaced Rumsfeld after the Republican "thumping" in the 2006 elections, Gates was widely viewed as the man who was going to end the futile fighting in Iraq, slay the neocon dragons, and return a sensible "realism" to the land. He was an intimate of "Poppy" Bush, a member of the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group, and a representative of the permanent Washington establishment. "They had to bring in someone from the old gang," wrote Maureen Dowd in the *New York Times*. "With Bob, the door is opened again to 41 and Baker and Brent." The republic would be saved by saner men.

Gates was also supposed to soothe the ruffled feathers of the generals in revolt against Rumsfeld and the "adventurism" of Bush's foreign policy. He was, in the words of William Webster, the former head of the CIA and FBI, a "consensus builder." His agenda was to restore "a whole series of relationships—with [Capitol] Hill, with other agencies and with the senior military leadership."

Where Rumsfeld has been abrasive, Gates would be smooth. "Gates is a man who believes in institutions," one of his early advisers told Fred Kaplan of *Slate*. "And he saw the need to repair the institution of the Defense Department."

Gates certainly promoted this image: "I saw too many instances, when I was very junior in the C.I.A. and elsewhere," he recalled in an interview, "where somebody would come in and try to impose change from the top and not listen to people. And even if they were able to implement that change in the short term, it ended the day they left office. . . . It's really important, if you want lasting change, to involve the professionals in the institution."

But now Gates seems to be on a mission to impose change, and in a hurry. In a series of recent speeches he's taken on "the professionals" at almost every turn. Gates, as civilians who run the military ought to do, seems to be

JASON SEILER

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evaluating and judging the conflicting professional advice. He's listening to one set of professional voices—not just Petraeus and Odierno, but the collective voice of the younger generation of officers who have learned the hard way how to fight and win in Iraq and Afghanistan—pushing back against the other.

The "Gates Transformation" is, in many ways, a simple recognition of reality. It's been very difficult for the Pentagon, and indeed the whole of the U.S. government, to come to grips with the realities of a long war. The Rumsfeld version of transformation—a transparent battlefield, long-range precision strikes, and "rapid, decisive operations"—had a narcotic effect. And not without justification: The initial invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were unprecedented triumphs. But, though they were remarkable, they were not decisive. The enemy was different than we thought, not Saddam's "elite" Republican Guard tank divisions and Taliban militias but Al Qaeda in Iraq, Jaish al Mahdi and Iranian-backed "Special Groups," and the Taliban in "Pashtunistan." Counterinsurgency is more than counterterrorism, and irregular war is long and protracted rather than rapid and decisive.

The Gates Transformation is not just, as the media have cast it, about breaking the grip of the "fighter mafia" on the Air Force or holding service leadership to account and rewarding combat performance more than seniority, though those all matter. It's about reorienting the current American way of war, making the generals understand that irregular warfare is not only the most likely form of conflict but, as our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan strongly suggest, the most complex form of fighting and the highest priority in building our forces.

So while the firings and departures hog the headlines, it's the wrestling behind the curtains that matters the most. In particular, watch the debate over the soon to be released National Defense Strategy and National Military Strategy documents. The first, prepared by defense civilians, reflects the Gates Transformation. The Joint Chiefs of Staff prepared the second. They are worried by other challenges—and have already said that the defense strategy is too risky.

What matters is the manner in which the debate is conducted, and here too Gates departs from Rumsfeld. Gates is less confrontational but more decisive. And so far, despite the firings, better received for it. There are no signs yet of another "revolt of the generals." Notably, Admiral Fallon has refused to complain about his need to resign. In interviews he has reaffirmed the importance of the military's "confidence . . . in the chain of command" and that any "perceptions" of "disloyalty" were "unsettling" to him. A civilian secretary of defense who can help generals digest bitter pills marks a true transformation in recent American military affairs. ♦

There's Votes in Them Thar Hills

Drill, McCain, drill.

BY FRED BARNES

Republicans have seized on public anger over $4 per gallon gasoline and are calling for domestic oil production in federal lands and offshore areas now closed to exploration and drilling. Indeed, it may be their only good domestic issue.

GARY LOCKE

For years now, John McCain has warned of the peril to America in sending $400 billion a year to foreign countries in return for oil. He's been loud and relentless on the subject—and wise. "It's a national security issue," he declared last week at a town hall meeting in New York City. Much of the money goes to countries that "do not like us very much," he noted. That was McCain's understated way of saying the beneficiaries include Iran, Venezuela, and Saudi Arabia, countries in which anti-American forces find aid and comfort.

So you'd think McCain would favor an unbridled effort to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. But he doesn't. There's an intellectual and political hole in McCain's position, a lack of coherence that hurts both his presidential campaign and that of Republican congressional candidates.

Republicans have seized on public anger over $4 per gallon gasoline and are calling for domestic oil production in federal lands and offshore areas now closed to exploration and drilling. Since polls show the public agrees with them, Republicans believe "drilling"—the one-word capsulation of the issue—is their strongest political talking point in 2008. Indeed, it may be their only good domestic issue.

But they desperately need a champion to carry their message, someone whom the national media cannot ignore. And that should be McCain, the Republican presidential candidate. Except for one thing: He doesn't go along with their approach in important ways. He sounds, sometimes anyway, like a liberal Democrat or a lobbyist for the environmental movement.

McCain favors increased domestic oil production, but not drilling in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), the barren area with large (and recoverable) oil reserves. President Bush and most Republicans want to open ANWR for drilling and have for years. But McCain is adamant. His aides insist it's a waste of time trying to persuade him to change his mind. He wouldn't want oil companies to drill in ANWR, McCain says, "any more than I would

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want them to drill in the Grand Canyon or the Everglades."

As for exploration and drilling off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and in the Gulf of Mexico off Florida, McCain says that's fine. Only there's a catch: States must decide. "I would like to give them incentives and increased revenues from oil that was recovered off the shores of Florida and California, et cetera, but being a federalist, I am not going to force them to do that," he told Glenn Beck last month.

A federalist on what he regards as a grave *national* security threat? That's an odd stance. It seems more like a dodge—a very un-McCain-like tactic—than a logical position. Nor does he take into account the new technology that allows drilling for oil and gas in deep waters far offshore with little risk of spillage or pollution of beaches.

In McCain's defense, he acquired his environmental leanings honestly, not opportunistically. He adopted the conservationist strain of his Arizona predecessor, Barry Goldwater, and was influenced on ANWR when he served in the House with Morris Udall, the Arizona Democrat who was something of a mentor to McCain.

But his 2000 race for the Republican presidential nomination also played a role. In town hall meetings, he was repeatedly asked about global warming. His answer was that he'd look into it. He did and, unlike many Republicans, began to view it as a serious problem.

McCain is also a fierce critic of oil companies, again putting him at odds with congressional Republicans. "I am very angry, frankly, at the oil companies, not only because of the obscene profits they have made, but their failure to invest in alternative energy to help us eliminate our dependence on foreign oil," he said at the town hall session in New York City. A recent Gallup poll found the percentage of Americans who blame the oil companies for the spike in gasoline prices has declined dramatically.

Like Bush and most Republicans, McCain is a strong proponent of nuclear energy, and he often cites France's use of nuclear power for 80 percent of its electricity as a model for America. He wants to make oil independence "the nation's priority." But he'd achieve it with nuclear power and by developing alternative sources of energy that may not come on line for decades. More domestic oil production is not a priority.

Republicans in Congress, however, see expanded oil production as a far safer bet for the foreseeable future, though they back development of other sources of energy too. Democrats, in contrast, oppose increased domestic oil production and sought last week (unsuccessfully) to impose a windfall profits tax on oil companies. McCain opposed that idea.

House Republican leaders John Boehner and Roy Blunt have done an extremely effective job of connecting limits on domestic production with high gasoline prices. In the Senate, minority leader Mitch McConnell has jumped on the bandwagon. But congressional Republicans can attract only so much attention.

They have, in effect, teed up the issue for McCain. They're willing to forgive him his apostasy on ANWR. According to Blunt, "ANWR is part of the solution, but it's not the only part. There's plenty of evidence [of other oil reserves] for him to move toward more production even if he doesn't on ANWR." The offshore oil reserves and the untapped oil shale in the west have even more potential and wouldn't require a McCain flip-flop.

On this issue, Republicans need McCain, and he needs them. With gasoline at four bucks a gallon and more and money flowing to America's adversaries, McCain has a legitimate excuse for becoming a strong promoter of greater energy production at home. In fact, he's laid out the national security rationale for it and persuaded nearly everyone but himself. ♦

Warring Campaigns

McCain and Obama trade blows over Iraq.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

Matt Lauer was in the middle of paying John McCain a tremendous compliment last Wednesday when the Republican nominee interrupted him.

"You showed enormous political courage when you backed President Bush's surge policy in Iraq at a time when—"

"May I correct that statement?"

"Go ahead."

"I advocated the surge policy before President Bush."

"Early on," prompted Lauer.

"Yes."

"Early on. You actually called for more troops way before the president."

"Yes, yes, and said the past strategy was going to fail."

This was more than McCain being boastful. His advisers believe it's a distinction that will help determine whether McCain wins or loses in November.

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McCain was an early and forceful advocate of a policy that has helped turn around the Iraq war. The fact that McCain led on Iraq and did not simply support the president is one of the central rationales of his candidacy. It was his commander-in-chief moment. McCain emphasized this throughout the Republican primaries, when he scored his opponents (particularly Mitt Romney) for being insufficiently supportive of the surge, and it helped him win.

Now things get more complicated. The contrast between McCain and Barack Obama is greater than it was with any of his primary opponents, which, paradoxically, makes McCain's task more difficult. The broader electorate is much more skeptical about Iraq than those who voted in Republican primaries. A majority believes the war was a mistake, and most want to get troops home soon, if not immediately.

This is McCain's dilemma: What do you do when your best issue is one on which most voters have a different view?

"He's going to do what he's consistently done," says Steve Schmidt, a senior adviser to McCain. "He's going to talk straight to the voters who are frustrated and angry that the war was mismanaged for many years and cost the country a great deal in blood and treasure."

"Senator McCain's prescription to correct a failed policy was right. Senator Obama's was wrong," Schmidt continues. "They're not deliberating abstractions. This was a real event that shows whose judgment was right and whose judgment was wrong."

In other words, criticize Bush and criticize Obama. To some extent, the debate about Iraq is not a debate about Iraq. It's about leadership, wisdom, and judgment.

"Iraq," says Schmidt, "is a character issue."

The Obama campaign thinks so, too, and last week they seized on another part of McCain's interview on *The Today Show* to suggest, rather audaciously, that McCain is indifferent to the concerns of American troops and their families. Matt Lauer asked McCain whether the success of the surge means that U.S. troops might be returning earlier than expected. "If it's working, Senator, do you now have a better estimate of when American forces can come home from Iraq?"

McCain responded: "No, but that's not too important. What's important is the casualties in Iraq. Americans are in South Korea. Americans are in Japan. American troops are in Germany. That's all fine."

Within hours, Senator John Kerry opened an Obama campaign conference call with a sharp attack, accusing McCain of a lack of compassion for those serving during wartime. "It is unbelievably out of touch and inconsistent with the needs and concerns of

MICHAEL RAMIREZ

Americans, particularly the families of the troops who are over there," he lectured in a tone that was a mix of mock outrage and feigned disappointment.

Convincing voters that a man who spent five years as a POW in Vietnam is indifferent to the hardships of those serving during a war is going to be difficult. Understanding this, Kerry and the other advisers quickly shifted their criticism, casting McCain as "confused" about the situation in Iraq. (Between Kerry and Susan Rice, Obama advisers used that word nearly a dozen times to describe McCain, in attacks some believe were meant to call attention to his age.)

Kerry said: "It is really becoming more crystal clear to a lot of us that John McCain simply doesn't understand it. He confuses who Iran is training. He confuses what the makeup of what al Qaeda is. He confuses the history going back to 682 of what has happened between Sunni and Shia and how deep that current runs."

But this, too, is a risky line of attack for Obama, whose campaign staff often discuss Iraq in a manner that suggests they are utterly unaware of the changes that have taken place there over the last 18 months. Last week, on the same conference call, Obama military adviser Richard Danzig, a well-spoken former secretary of the Navy, spoke of "increasing sectarian violence" in Iraq. And Obama's website makes claims about the surge that are both misleading and false. Judging by the "Iraq" section of the site, Obama seems to believe that Iraq is still in the midst of a "civil war," a talking point even the most ardent war critics have dropped, and that the reductions in violence "do not get us below the unsustainable levels of violence of mid-2006." They do.

All of which brought this response from McCain adviser Mark Salter. "It's sort of comical for Barack Obama and his foreign policy team to falsely accuse John McCain of confusion when they all seem to be suffering under some kind of mass delusion."

One fact emerges from all of this carrying on: Iraq will remain a major issue through the fall. ♦

A Swinging Election

The 2008 campaign is already more volatile than 2004. BY DEAN BARNETT

On the night after John Kerry won the 2004 New Hampshire primary and became the Democratic party's presumptive nominee, the dour senator trailed George W. Bush in a Rasmussen Reports poll by three points. Roughly nine months later on Election Day, in the only poll that mattered, Kerry still lagged three points behind Bush as the president won reelection.

Since it became apparent that Barack Obama would be the Democratic nominee, the Rasmussen polls have swung like 1970s suburbanites. McCain's biggest lead has been 5 points, Obama's 8. That's more than double the drama that Kerry/Bush could manage in nine months.

Though the contest ended precisely where it began, the race was even *less* dramatic than that measure would indicate. The Bush/Kerry matchup was the exact opposite of a political roller coaster. Neither candidate ever managed to open a large lead.

Intuitively, one would have predicted a more volatile race. Prior to his nomination, John Kerry was relatively obscure. Theoretically, the challenger's numbers should have bounced around as America got to better know the haughty, windsurfing, multiple millionaire-marrying senator. And yet throughout the uncomfortable getting-to-know-you process that America went through with Kerry, his numbers remained constant.

More volatility might also have been expected from President Bush's end. The situations the president presided over were fluid—fluid in a bad way. Throughout the 2004 election cycle, the news from Iraq consistently got worse. Growing doubts about the president's aptitude accompanied that deteriorating situation. For additional measure, Bush tossed in one of the most inept televised debate performances in the history of modern presidential campaigning. Yet still, Bush's numbers remained constant.

For political junkies, it was rather dull. Going by the weekly averages of the Rasmussen Reports tracking poll, the largest lead held by either candidate at any point in the race was a paltry 2.8 percentage points. That means the total oscillation between the two combatants was 5.6 percentage points. No matter what happened, the race remained static. Even Dan Rather's clumsy effort to fabricate a controversy over Bush's Texas Air National Guard service from three decades earlier couldn't move the political needle.

This year, it's different. Since it became apparent that Barack Obama would be the Democratic nominee several weeks ago, the Rasmussen polls have swung like 1970s suburbanites. McCain's biggest lead has been 5 points, Obama's 8. That's more than double the drama that Kerry/Bush could manage in nine months.

As we head off into the general

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election season, the question becomes whether Obama/McCain will settle into political trench warfare as Bush/Kerry did or whether the 2008 race will continue to show the volatility it has in its opening days. Scott Rasmussen, he of the all-knowing Rasmussen Reports polls, thinks we're in for a bumpy ride. "In 2004," he told me, "you had an incumbent president who was very well defined. You also had an issue that was front and center in the administration's mind, the opposition's mind and the public's mind—the war on terror. That became the single defining issue." This year, Rasmussen sees no issue similarly dominating the political landscape.

Indeed, the issue that inflamed lefty passions for the past five years—Iraq—has receded. The issue that has inflamed lefties even more is receding still more dramatically: George W. Bush. While it would be unrealistic for the McCain campaign to even hope that Bush becomes an irrelevancy before November, new issues like an unstable economy and $4 a gallon gas are pushing aside the old ones.

And then there's the nature of the two candidates themselves. The public's perception of the 2008 candidates is still a fluid thing. It wasn't that way in 2004. Even though John Kerry was new to the national stage, it turned out that he was such a familiar stock figure from our political theater that the public's perception of him remained stuck in mud. America had seen haughty, doctrinaire liberals from Massachusetts before. Kerry fit in rather well with the public's preexisting notions of this particular political animal. As for George W. Bush, after four years of serving as president, the public had become accustomed to his ways.

Again, this year it's different. The country has never seen a race featuring two candidates like Barack Obama and John McCain. Obama obviously represents something brand new. He certainly doesn't look like any previous presidential finalist, and he's also the most dynamic political personality America has seen in at least a generation.

More relevant to the race's potential volatility, he's also remarkably undefined. Unlike John Kerry, Obama doesn't neatly slip into an existing political category. His scant time in politics makes him something of a cipher. By the time someone becomes a presidential nominee, he typically has spent several years (if not decades) invading America's homes on the Sunday morning talk show circuit and explaining himself on an array of issues. To date, all America knows about Obama regarding specific issues is that he's very much in favor of hope and change and votes liberal down the line.

As America gets to know Obama better, the race will have its share of swings. Every time he gives one of his stellar speeches, he'll win new fans. Every time he commits one of his frequent gaffes, he'll raise doubts. And every time a Jeremiah Wright or William Ayers slinks out from his past into the national spotlight, Obama will lose ground.

As for John McCain, while it sometimes seems like he's been a political fixture since the powdered wig era, he also represents something new. Most people thought a guy who had spent much of the previous seven years sticking his thumb into his party's eye wouldn't have a chance of getting its presidential nomination. Now that McCain has the nomination, he's a different kind of candidate—one who has a less enthusiastic base in his party than any of his modern predecessors, but also one who's much closer to the middle where presidential elections are typically won.

Rasmussen foresees an extremely volatile race. Where 2004 offered only 5 points of variance, Rasmussen thinks we may see up to 25 points this time around. While it may be exciting for the campaigns to compete in such a fluid environment, the nature of the race presents not only opportunity but risk. No matter how badly Bush or Kerry messed up, his numbers held steady. This year's gaffe-prone finalists will have no such luck. ♦

Exploiting Anne Frank

The most tasteless T-shirt ever.

BY ALVIN H. ROSENFELD

I want to go on living even after my death.

—Anne Frank

In January, a stenciled image of a smiling Anne Frank wearing a red and white kaffiyeh appeared on the walls of buildings in Amsterdam. Soon after, an enterprising Dutch business firm called Boomerang transferred this image to designer T-shirts and postcards. The cards were distributed free throughout the Netherlands, no doubt to boost sales for Boomerang's politically chic new line of shirts. But it was a risky marketing move to promote a product featuring the face of Amsterdam's most famous martyr made over to look like Yasser Arafat's daughter.

The Israeli ambassador to the Netherlands expressed outrage. So did Dutch Jewish organizations. But that response was not universal. Some were drawn to the new-fangled Palestinian Anne Frank and endorsed the artist's political point, which one blogger interpreted to be that "the Zionists, in the name of Jewry, [were] doing to the Palestinians what was done to Jews in Europe." This simplistic formula has become a staple in the rhetoric of contemporary anti-Zionism. The charge it makes is baseless, but it is rhetorically catchy and now routinely employed to tar Israel with the Nazi brush.

What plays well in certain political circles may not play well in business, however. Sensing, perhaps, that their company's image was at risk, Boomerang executives quickly switched to damage control mode. Their aggressively revisionist T-shirt version of Anne Frank now was said to present "an idyllic image of peace."

According to a company spokesman, it was meant, improbably, "to encourage people to reflect on a peaceful solution for Israel and the Palestinians." But Boomerang's spin doctors never explained just how aligning the Holocaust's best known Jewish victim with the symbol of militant Palestinian nationalism could possibly create "an idealistic image in which both states exist alongside one another in peace." The image is not only incongruous but also offensive.

Yet contemporary political iconography has matched it with another image of Anne that is equally obscene: A drawing featured in a 2006 Holocaust cartoon contest sponsored by the Iranian newspaper *Hamshahri* shows a wasted-looking young girl sinking desolately under the bed sheets, while propped up next to her, a bare-chested, swastika-laden Hitler crows, "Write this one in your diary, Anne!" Above the head of the Führer's victim, a wordless bubble registers the grief of the devastated girl.

The fact that this graphic is vile has not kept it from being widely distributed by, among others, the Arab European League, a Belgian-Dutch

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Islamic political organization headed by the popular leader Dyab Abou Jahjah. In the wake of the Danish cartoon controversy, Jahjah was offering payback, declaring, "Europe too has its sacred cows."

Indeed it does, but Europe's murdered Jews are not among them. Anne Frank, dead before she had turned 16, was no saint but rather one more addition to the mounds of anonymous corpses at Bergen-Belsen. One need not sacralize her memory in order to pay it a decent respect. Until recently, most people have found it proper to do so, but in an age of resurgent anti-Semitism, respect for even the Jewish dead has become a dwindling commodity.

It gets worse. A few years ago, a writer quoted on the website aljazeerah.info presented the following scheme to copycat Anne Frank's story for partisan purposes:

> Consider. A propaganda book [Anne Frank's diary] that is designed to elicit sympathy for the Jewish people, via the mechanism of a young girl who is hiding from bad men, is required reading in many USA schools. . . .That got me thinking. If it works for Jewish people, why will it not work for someone else. . . ? If a Palestinian writer were to take the story [of a Palestinian girl] and give it the same treatment and the same style as *The Diary of Anne Frank*, maybe the book would become as popular as *The Diary of Anne Frank*. . . . It would not hurt to try.

Actually, there are writers who have been trying all along, appropriating the memory of Anne Frank and turning Jews into Nazis and Palestinians into Jews. The equation is fraudulent—one more instance of applying the symbols of Jewish suffering to anti-Jewish ends—but repeated often enough, it begins to catch on. And so we now have a plethora of Anne Frank lookalikes.

"Meet today's Anne Frank," wrote Yusuf Agha in an article entitled "The Anne Franks of Palestine" on YellowTimes.org a few years ago. Agha quoted one Suad Ghazal declaring, "I am the Palestinian Anne Frank, and Israeli Hitlers who are all around me take pleasure in torturing me." Others write in this same self-pitying, self-deluded vein.

What does it all signify? Anti-Semitism is back, sometimes packaged anew. One especially cruel innovation is to convert the victims of Nazi slaughter into advocates for causes they had nothing to do with and never would have condoned. These Anne Frank makeovers exemplify this trend and also point up its morally corrosive side.

To bed Anne Frank with Hitler and drape her in Yasser Arafat's trademark headscarf is tantamount to killing her a second time. And to substitute made-in-the-Middle East counterfeits for the real Amsterdam diary is to lie against history itself. ♦

MICHAEL RAMIREZ

Why some people think Walt Whitman makes chocolate candy.

Whitman satisfied his sweet tooth with rich, wave-like verse. Every kid should make poetry a part of his diet.

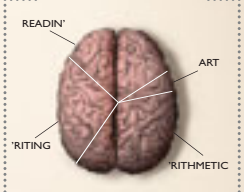
KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH ART THESE DAYS. So it's no wonder that some of them mistake America's most revolutionary poet for a box of chocolates.

The son of a Quaker carpenter, Walt Whitman grew up with an affinity for nature. This, along with his love for New York City, inspired him to write a truly original kind of poetry, the likes of which America had never seen. His collection of poems became known as *Leaves of Grass*. Due to its hedonistic, sensual, even narcissistic subject matter, the poems were often banned. This guy pushed the envelope all right, before most folks even knew there was an envelope to push.

Too much of Whitman's art won't give you a stomachache.

Throughout his career, Whitman rewrote and reinvented *Leaves of Grass*, expanding and editing it in an effort to publish his quintessential collection. In essence, *Leaves of Grass* was Walt himself in verse form. Walt Whitman changed poetry. His life's work was ahead of its time. And though he lived long before the Summer of Love, he was the original beatnik — an inspiring example for writers like Ginsberg and Kerouac.

Whitman can influence your child, too. That's what art does. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. So they become more well-rounded adults. For *Ten Simple Ways* to get more art in kids' lives, visit AmericansForTheArts.org.



Give your kids a chance to succeed. Up their daily dose of art.

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Parallel Lives

Frederick Douglass, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and the flight to freedom

By Claudia Anderson

Seeing Europe for the first time, a young Somali woman was dazzled by its order and cleanliness and its ingenious efficiency. It was "like a movie." Düsseldorf "looked like geometry class, or physics, where everything was in straight lines and had to be perfect and precise."

The buses in Holland were "sleek and clean; their doors opened by themselves." She was spooked by their "eerie punctuality." Policemen were courteous and helpful, not ominous. Garbage collection was an elaborate minuet performed by citizens—"you had to put the garbage containers out at the proper time, in the proper way. Brown was for organic waste; green was for plastic; and newspapers were something else entirely, some other time"—and government, which, if you did your part, "came the next morning and whisked it all away for recycling."

Her first weekend in the Netherlands, this newcomer, who had lived in Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, stayed with the cousin of a friend. Her hostess walked her around the neighborhood.

> All the houses were alike, and all the same color, laid out in rows like neat little cakes warm from the oven. They were all new homes with flouncy white lace curtains, and the grass in front was all green and mown evenly, to the same height, like a neat haircut. In Nairobi, except in the rich estates, colors were garish and houses were completely anarchic—a mansion, a half-built shanty hut, a vacant lot all jumbled together—so this, too, was new to me.

It was 1992, and this young woman, transiting Europe en route to Canada and a forced marriage to a distant cousin, had bolted to Holland almost on the spur of the moment after hearing of its lenient policies toward asylum seekers. Her wide-eyed wonder at her surroundings calls to mind a passage from a much earlier memoir in which a young man recounted his own experience of stepping into a new world.

In September 1838, a newly escaped slave walked the streets of New Bedford, Massachusetts. A product of the plantations of Talbot County, Maryland, and the shipyards of Baltimore, this young man marveled at the display of wealth and industry, at the mighty ships and granite warehouses. He noticed, too, that

> almost every body seemed to be at work, but noiselessly so, compared with what I had been accustomed to in Baltimore. There were no loud songs heard from those engaged in loading and unloading ships. I heard no deep oaths or horrid curses on the laborer. I saw no whipping of men; but all seemed to go smoothly on. Every man appeared to understand his work, and went at it with a sober, yet cheerful earnestness, which betokened the deep interest which he felt in what he was doing, as well as a sense of his own dignity as a man. To me this looked exceedingly strange.

Proceeding from the wharves to explore the town, he would remember,

> Every thing looked clean, new, and beautiful. I saw few or no dilapidated houses, with poverty-stricken inmates; no half-naked children and bare-footed women, such as I had been accustomed to see in Hillsborough, Easton, St. Michael's, and Baltimore. The people looked more able, stronger, healthier, and happier, than those of Maryland. I was for once made glad by a view of extreme wealth, without being saddened by seeing extreme poverty. But the most astonishing as well as the most interesting thing to me was the condition of the colored people, a great many of whom, like myself, had escaped thither as a refuge from the hunters of men. I found many, who had not been seven years out of their chains, living in finer houses, and evidently enjoying more of the comforts of life, than the average of slaveholders in Maryland.

Born a little over 150 years apart, Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) and Ayaan Hirsi Ali (born 1969) both had the experience, on the threshold of adulthood—he was 20, she 22—of fleeing the culture they'd grown up in and entering another. For both, it was a run toward freedom. In each case, a short train ride and a name change to foil pursuers were the fateful turning points in a remarkable life they would recount in bestselling memoirs.

Both, growing up, were subjected to various forms of violence and family disruption, and frequently witnessed the

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Ayaan Hirsi Ali with her sister, Haweya, who joined her for a time in Holland. This picture was taken in the office of a refugee center in the fall of 1994.

AYAAN HIRSI ALI

degrading treatment of others. Both found in books intimations of a different way of life. Both claimed their inner freedom in a climactic act of self-assertion. For Douglass, this came several years before his escape, when, in a two-hour struggle, he fought off an attempt by the "Negro breaker" Edward Covey to tie him up and flog him. For Hirsi Ali, it came months after her flight, when she quietly faced down a council of ten Somali tribal elders who had found her in Holland and had come to return her to the fold.

Both were eventually thrust onto a wider stage when they spoke up extemporaneously in a public meeting. Gifted with intelligence and unusually handsome physique, each would become a sought-after speaker—he a leading abolitionist and one of the great orators of the 19th century, she an agitator for the rights of Muslim women in Europe and a sharp critic of Islam. Yet however prominent, both would long remain in physical danger—she in mortal danger—and would more than once cross the Atlantic in search of safety.

Reading

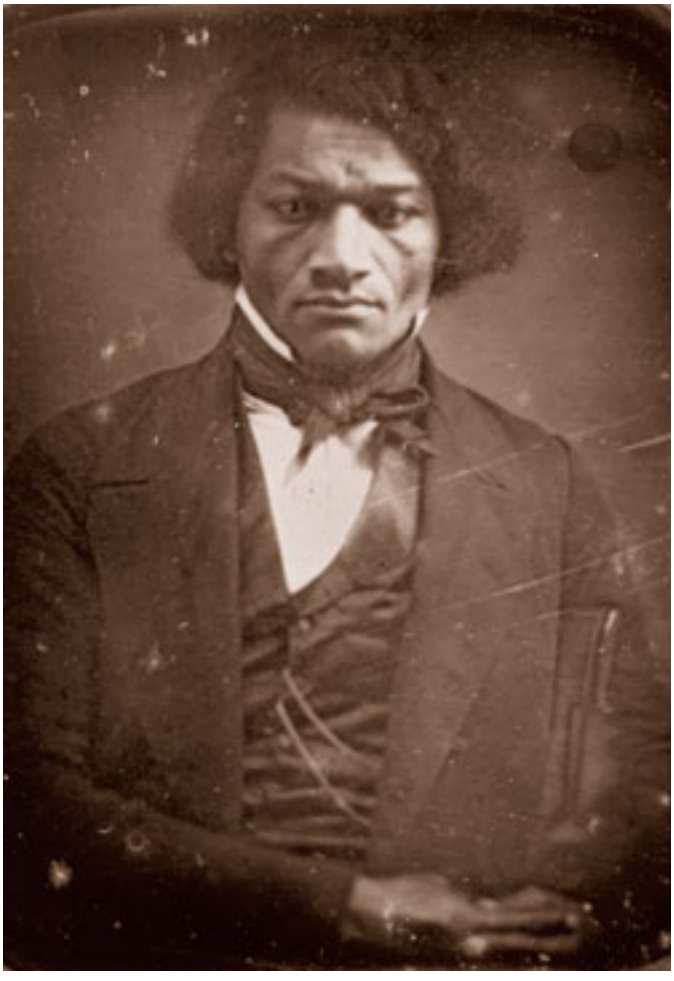
Books, of course, were not supposed to play a part in the life of any slave. But the young Frederick Bailey—the name he carried until his escape from slavery—learned to read. Sent from the plantation to Baltimore when he was eight to live with relatives of his owner and look after their young son, he was welcomed by his new mistress, Sophia Auld, who had never before had a slave. She treated him kindly, read him Bible stories, and taught him hymns. When he asked her to teach him to read, she did. Proudly showing off Frederick's accomplishment to her husband, she was smartly informed of the error of her ways.

In phrases that became a touchstone for Frederick, Hugh Auld explained to his wife that to teach a slave to read would "unfit him for slavery." The formal lessons ended, but the child already had the rudiments. Over the ensuing years, unobserved in his loft above the kitchen, he practiced reading and taught himself to write, studying Webster's

speller and copying between the lines of his young charge's old exercise notebooks from school.

When he was 12, with 50 cents saved from polishing shoes, Frederick bought a copy of one of the most widely used school anthologies of the day, *The Columbian Orator*, first published in 1797. This book became his entire curriculum. He studied it, he later recalled, every chance he got. It could hardly have been better designed to prepare him for his calling.

An anthology of speeches, poems, sermons, and dramatic excerpts from eminent authors and now-forgotten contemporaries, *The Columbian Orator* exposed Frederick to Socrates, Cicero, Milton, Sheridan, Franklin, Washington, Napoleon, William Pitt, and more. It was compiled by Caleb Bingham, a Boston abolitionist and pious Congregationalist, who interspersed among the selections numerous dialogues and short articles of his own devising, the whole intended, Bingham wrote, to "inspire the pupil with the ardour of eloquence, and the love of virtue."



Frederick Douglass in his 20s

One of the first items to catch Frederick's eye was Bingham's "Dialogue Between a Master and Slave," in which a master confronts a slave who has been caught making his second attempt to run away. With his answers, the slave exposes slavery as an institution resting purely on force: the coercion required to steal from a man the freedom for which his "soul pants" and to reduce him to a beast. If a theme can be said to arise from Bingham's anthology it is the nobility of upholding above any other loyalty God's wisdom and justice and the natural rights of men.

The young Frederick was just as deeply influenced by the Bible, which he said fueled his hunger for knowledge. Converted at 13, he found a spiritual mentor in an old black man named Lawson, who told the young man that God had great plans for him and would put his talents to use. They prayed and read scripture together, and Frederick "saw the world in a new light." He wrote that he "loved all mankind—slaveholders not excepted; though I abhorred slavery more than ever." He does not say when he owned his first Bible, but a hymnal was among the few possessions he carried with him on his train ride north.

Between them, *The Columbian Orator* and the Bible armed Frederick with fundamental principles contrary to slavery, as well as with models of reasoned argument, vivid narrative, and powerful use of rhetoric that would nourish his mind for years to come.

For Ayaan Hirsi Ali, it was not one book, but rather a kind of book—Western fiction, both high and low—that stirred her aspirations beyond the horizons of a typical Somali woman. At school, she read *1984*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Cry, the Beloved Country*. She read Jane Austen and Charlotte Brönte and "Russian novels with their strange patronymics and snowy vistas." And after hours, there were "the sexy books" that circulated among her school friends, by Barbara Cartland and Danielle Steele. Both the classics and the romances, as she tells in her memoir, exposed her to a world of "freedom, struggle, and adventure." In these books, individuals wrestled with moral dilemmas, women were independent actors, mutual attraction preceded union, and the man and woman who chose each other often were shown achieving shared satisfaction in love and in partnership for life.

During these teenage years, Ayaan's peers were dropping out of school one by one, to be married to men chosen by their fathers—sometimes men whom they had never met. The Somali girls, who had undergone the customary clitoral excision, described to her wedding nights that were scenes of fear and pain, as their new husbands forced open

their scars. Somali women were taught that submission to their husbands, as to Allah, and unquestioning service to family and clan were their lot in life.

Ayaan, though, had observed some alternatives. An aunt became a nurse and rose to the post of director of the Mogadishu hospital where Ayaan was born. Her own mother left her first marriage, then met Ayaan's father and married him for love. But the marriage soured. Her father, who had studied at Columbia University, had a modern outlook in some things. He insisted that his daughters go to high school, and it was against his express wish that their grandmother had them circumcised. Yet he took a second wife without so much as informing the first and, in due course, would force Ayaan to marry against her will.

For much of Ayaan's childhood, her father was in prison for opposing the Somali dictatorship of Siad Barre. After he escaped (and a clansman who helped him was caught and executed), he was often in hiding or away organizing. Ayaan's mother was embittered by her struggle to manage three children without their father, scraping by on handouts from the clan. The family fled from Somalia to Saudi Arabia when Ayaan was eight, and moved twice more, first to Ethiopia and then to Kenya, both countries where Muslims were a minority. Ayaan's mother loathed living among non-Muslims. She became tyrannical and increasingly violent towards her children, frequently tying them up and beating them. Finally, Ayaan's father stopped coming back and married the third of his eventual four wives.

Amid this familial and relational chaos, Ayaan was drawn to an Islamist teacher, Sister Aziza, who projected serenity and confidence. She took to wearing a headscarf and a loose black gown over her clothes. She read Muslim Brotherhood literature and joined an Islamic discussion group, admiring the universality of a faith open to people of every tribe. She knew young men who left for Egypt or Saudi Arabia to study the Koran and advance the cause of Islam against the godless West. But she was torn. She kept asking impertinent questions about the equality of the sexes. She was uneasy witnessing a book burning after the Ayatollah Khomeini issued his fatwa condemning Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in 1989. What's more, she had boyfriends in secret, and she kept devouring those novels that were a window on a world where women were as free as men.

Speaking Up

By his late teens, Frederick, after a stint as a fieldhand, was back in Baltimore, working as a caulker in the shipyards, though forced to turn over his wages to his master. A group of free black caulkers befriended him and let him join their debating club, the East Baltimore Mental Improvement Society. He met a free black woman working as a domestic, Anna Murray, and courted her. And he plotted his escape.

For the getaway, he dressed as a sailor, in keeping with the identification papers he carried, obtained from a free seaman. He took the train to New York, where Anna joined him and they were married, before pushing on to New Bedford. The black man who took in the young couple there helped Frederick select a new last name, which they chose from the poem he happened to be reading, Scott's "The Lady of the Lake." The newly minted Douglasses found work, she as a household servant, he sawing wood, digging cellars, rolling oil casks on the wharves, and working in a candle factory and a brass foundry. They rented a two-room apartment and joined a small black Methodist church, where Douglass was soon teaching Sunday school and preaching. And they found something else: abolitionist agitation.

Within months of his escape, Douglass had become an avid reader of the *Liberator*, edited by William Lloyd Garrison, the leading abolitionist of the day. "I not only liked—I *loved* this paper, and its editor," he wrote. He "never felt happier than when in an anti-slavery meeting" among his friends, and for his first vacation he decided to attend a large convention of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society on the island of Nantucket.

Walking into Nantucket Town from the ferry, Douglass was spotted by a Quaker who had heard him speak in New Bedford. This man greeted him warmly and urged him, if he felt so moved, to speak up and share his experiences at the convention that night. Douglass did. Mastering his acute embarrassment at addressing a large, and mostly white, crowd for the first time, he electrified the audience. Garrison, clearly inspired, followed with a speech Douglass would remember as a "very tornado." The young runaway was a sensation, and before the night was out an agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society had persuaded him to sign up as a speaker with the society. The initial agreement was for three months, but Douglass would never again earn his living with his hands. His career as an orator "pleading the cause of [his] brethren" had begun.

It was August 1841, not three years after Douglass's escape. By contrast, Ayaan Hirsi Ali's apprenticeship in Holland would last nine long years.

After her flight by train from Bonn to Amsterdam, Ayaan Hirsi Magan applied to stay in the Netherlands using her grandfather's last name, Ali, and lying to the immigration service to establish the requisite fear of persecution (which would come back to haunt her). Within three weeks she was granted permanent residence.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Refugee Aid gave her a secondhand bicycle and one Dutch lesson a week; a volunteer lent her the money for three more lessons. She worked as a cleaner at an orange juice factory and packed cookies at a biscuit factory.

And all the while, first informally, then as a certified employee of the state, she worked as an interpreter. Even before she knew Dutch, her knowledge of English enabled her to assist speakers of Somali, Arabic, Swahili, and Amharic. Over the next six years, she translated at refugee intake centers, women's shelters, prisons, abortion clinics, police stations, and courts of law. Even as she was riding her bicycle between jobs and lessons, making new friends and soaking in Dutch ways, she was continually being exposed to the struggles and pathologies plaguing Holland's rapidly growing population of Muslim immigrants. And the more she saw, the more intrigued she became by the contrast between orderly, generous Holland and the other countries she had known.

Slowly, an ambition formed in her mind: to go to university and study political science. "I wanted to understand why life in Holland was so different from life in Africa," she would write. "Why there was so much peace, security, and wealth in Europe."

> What was wrong with us? Why should infidels have peace, and Muslims be killing each other, when we were the ones who worshipped the true God? If I studied political science, I thought, I would understand that.

She proceeded one step at a time. Once her Dutch was adequate, she took a two-year course in social work in order to obtain the *propadeuse* degree required for university admission. This introduced her to subjects like psychology, "a story with no religious roots," and child development, with its novel idea that children needed explanations, not just blows. She was admitted to Leiden University and with energy and joy threw herself into the study of European history and political philosophy. She discovered empiricism and the beauty of rational argument and fell in love with the Enlightenment. She still thought of herself as a Muslim. Yet she had long since abandoned the head scarf, put on jeans, and moved in with a boyfriend. Half-consciously, she postponed the reckoning she knew would be needed to reconcile her new views with the old.

Hirsi Ali was awarded a master's degree in political science in September 2000. She had just become a researcher on immigration issues for the Labor party's think tank when 9/11 occurred. She was riveted by the commentary on the attacks and dismayed by the general unwillingness of the Dutch, especially in Labor party circles, to admit the role of religious belief in the motivations of Osama bin Laden and his ilk—"a little like analyzing Lenin and Stalin without looking at the works of Karl Marx." She was confident "that a vast mass of Muslims would see the attacks as justified retaliation against the infidel enemies of Islam." But she also felt personally challenged. Listening to bin Laden quoting the Koran in reruns of old interviews, she dreaded to ask herself: "Did the 9/11 attacks stem from true belief in true Islam? And if so, what did *I* think about Islam?"

That November, she attended a public debate on the subject "The West or Islam: Who Needs a Voltaire?" The first three speakers called for a new Voltaire in the West, a rational reformer to counter Western arrogance and neocolonialism and consumerist decadence. Only the last speaker, a refugee from Iran who taught law at Amsterdam University, spoke up for the "critical renewal" of Islam.

During the question and answer period, comment was heavily supportive of the first view. Finally Hirsi Ali raised her hand. Here is what she said as she recalled it in her 2007 memoir, *Infidel*:

> Look at how many Voltaires the West has. Don't deny us the right to have our Voltaire, too. Look at our women, and look at our countries. Look at how we are all fleeing and asking for refuge here, and how people are now flying planes into buildings in their madness. Allow us a Voltaire, because we are truly living in the Dark Ages.

Heads turned. Who was the well-spoken exotic beauty so passionately out of step with correct opinion? After the discussion, an editor of the newspaper that had sponsored the panel invited Hirsi Ali to write for his pages. The process of obtaining clearance from her think tank superiors for a piece critical of Islam was an education in itself, but the article ran. Letters poured in, and so did invitations to speak and write and participate in conferences. Each such opportunity forced Hirsi Ali to further define her position. There was no turning back. She was launched on the journey that would lead to her embrace of atheism in the spring of 2002, to death threats from Islamic extremists, and within 14 months to her election to the Dutch parliament.

Living with Danger

All his long life as a free man, Frederick Douglass was subject to an endless succession of slights, humiliations, and exclusions. In tolerant New Bedford in 1838 with its integrated schools, the white caulkers in the shipyard where he sought employment refused to work with a black man, and so Douglass took unskilled jobs at half the pay. In 1865, after attending Lincoln's second inauguration, he walked down to the Executive Mansion—as the White House was know in those days—and waited with the crowd for admission. The only

black man in line, Douglass was barred entry; practiced at such confrontations, however, he managed to make his way in to congratulate the president. Decades later, as an old man addressing the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, he was so provoked by jeers and insults from race-baiters in the audience that he threw down his prepared text and spoke extemporaneously out of his fury for over an hour—by the end, to thunderous applause.

Sometimes hostility rose to the level of violence. A mob attacked an outdoor abolition meeting in Pendleton, Indiana, in 1843. Douglass was nearly killed in the melee; his right hand was broken and never fully recovered. In 1850, in New York City, he was dragged off and beaten by a white gang for escorting two white women. More than two decades later, the house in Rochester, New York, where the Douglasses had raised their five children and had lived for nearly 25 years, was burned to the ground. The authorities attributed the fire to arson, though no perpetrator was ever identified.

And twice, danger caused Douglass to seek safety abroad. In 1845 and again in 1859, he found a haven in Britain.

Hirsi Ali in parliament, 2004

AP PHOTO / BAS CZERWINSKI

In his early days as an antislavery speaker, Douglass withheld his real name and that of his owner. But increasingly, he found his bona fides challenged. People said he was too articulate for an escaped slave. So when he put his story into writing to reach a wider audience, he sought to enhance its credibility by revealing many particulars for the first time. In doing so, he opened himself to greater danger of pursuit.

His associates in the abolition movement deemed this a good time for Douglass to leave the country. They had long wanted him to make contact with the vibrant antislavery movement in Britain, so in 1845, just as his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* was appearing, he embarked for Liverpool. His 21-month speaking tour of the British Isles was a blessed reprieve from danger and discrimination. And it was more. The friends and supporters he discovered there raised £150 to buy his freedom, laying to rest the fear of capture. And they supported him, too, in his new ambition: to have a newspaper of his own. When he returned to the United States, British friends helped him buy a press.

Fourteen years later, in one of the stranger-than-fiction episodes in his eventful life, Douglass sailed again for Liverpool to avoid arrest. He was wanted in connection with John Brown's raid on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry on October 16, 1859. Intended to touch off a slave rebellion and the founding of a free black state in the Appalachian mountains, the raid had ended in Brown's capture and the capture or death of all 22 of his confederates. A note from Douglass was found among his possessions.

Like many in abolitionist circles, Douglass knew John Brown. Just the year before, Brown had drafted a constitution for his imagined state while staying at Douglass's house. Most damning of all, Douglass had traveled to a clandestine meeting with Brown at a quarry on the edge of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, shortly before the Harper's Ferry raid. That Douglass had tried strenuously to dissuade Brown from a suicidal venture did not deter the governor of Virginia from pursuing him for "inciting servile insurrection." Douglass sailed in November, and on December 2, John Brown was hanged.

Again, Douglass was warmly received in Britain, though this second stay was briefer, cut short by word of the death of his 11-year-old daughter, Annie. By the time he reached home in April 1860, the threat of charges against him had dissipated.

How mild the danger to Douglass seems by comparison with the threats that have forced Ayaan Hirsi Ali to live with bodyguards and occasionally in hiding for over five years. Ever since she began pointedly criticizing Islam in public, extremists have been promising to kill her. By October 2002, the threats were sufficiently oppressive that she flew from the Netherlands to California for a few months to remove herself from the public eye.

It was while she was there that a prominent figure in the Dutch Liberal party persuaded her not only to switch allegiances—trading Labor for a party more in tune with her emphasis on personal freedom and individual rights—but to run for parliament on the Liberal slate. She did, and won. The new parliament was seated on January 30, 2003.

Hirsi Ali calls herself a single-issue politician, and her issue is the rights of Muslim women. But the more outspoken she became about this—urging, for instance, that "honor killings" of wayward females by their families or clans be registered as such by the police so that the extent of the problem could be determined—the more virulent became the threats against her. Then on November 2, 2004, the danger level sharply rose.

Seeking to use the visual media to advance her cause, Hirsi Ali wrote the screenplay for a short art film called *Submission: Part I*. She aimed to dramatize the bind in which pious Muslim women found themselves when they were abused, yet were called to submission by their faith. The film, which aired on television, showed verses of the Koran, such as one ordaining the physical chastisement of disobedient wives, written on women's bodies. When an Islamist fanatic murdered the film's director, Theo van Gogh, in broad daylight on an Amsterdam street, he stabbed into the corpse a letter warning that the next victim would be Hirsi Ali.

At once, security agents of the Dutch government sequestered her at a succession of undisclosed locations—the most surreal, a forlorn motel on the outskirts of Portland, Maine. She was incommunicado for 75 days. After her return—even after her resignation from parliament amid a controversy over her (long-since disclosed) false statements to immigration authorities, then her decision to accept a position with the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.—the need persisted for constant precautions to ensure her safety.

A Man in Full

Frederick Douglass has been dead for over a century. Not only are the 77 years of his life complete, but we bring to them the perspective made possible by time. After surprising neglect in the first half of the 20th century, his papers are receiving due attention from scholars, and biographers have combed over his life. His three memoirs are in print, and some of his speeches are a click away on the Internet. He belongs to history, and we are free to make of him what we will.

There is about his life's work an impressive coherence, a unity. Mobilized by his experience of slavery, he devoted his chief energies to overturning that institution and fighting its hateful legacy. Even his secondary interests—temperance, women's rights—are traceable to that same source. His relationship with his hearers was straightforward: He was an American addressing (mostly) Americans, in his native language, appealing to his audience on the basis of religious and political principles the majority already claimed to share. His method was to insist that black and white, created equal, already stood on common ground.

From childhood, Douglass saw that slavery was wrong and that it was incompatible with true Christianity. From his earliest writings, he excoriated the fraudulent religion of the outwardly pious, privately heartless masters he had known. The offense, though, went deeper than cruelty. He chose as the epigraph to his second memoir, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), a quotation from Coleridge:

> By a principle essential to Christianity, a PERSON is eternally differenced from a thing; so that the idea of a HUMAN BEING, necessarily excludes the idea of PROPERTY IN THAT BEING.

Not just slavery, moreover, but any form of racial differentiation in the church or in political and social life he understood to be at odds with human beings' equality in God's sight. He scandalized many when, after the death of Anna, his wife of 44 years, he married a woman who was white.

Douglass traced his commitment to temperance to his revulsion at the use of alcohol to keep slaves stupefied in their rare leisure, especially at Christmas, and so diverted from improving themselves or organizing against their masters. His interest in women's rights grew naturally out of his alliance with women abolitionists. The motto he chose for his newspaper, the *North Star*, was: "Right is of no Sex—Truth is of no Color—God is Father to us all, and we are all Brethren." In 1848, Douglass attended the seminal women's rights convention held at Seneca Falls, 50 miles from his home in Rochester, and the *North Star* published its proceedings. The only one of the convention's resolutions that was controversial—women's suffrage, still a radical idea—passed by a narrow margin thanks to the leadership of Frederick Douglass.

Douglass was slower to recognize the value of American political institutions. As a young runaway under the wing of the Garrisonians, he went along with their view that the Constitution was hopelessly compromised by slavery. But after he struck out on his own as an editor, he reconsidered.

Forced to do the continual "reading and thinking" of journalism, as he put it, working week after week to respond to events and answer the arguments of his critics, he changed his mind. In 1851, he broke with the American Anti-Slavery Society and embraced the Constitution as capable of being made consistent with "the noble purposes avowed in its preamble." He called the Constitution, when properly interpreted, "a Glorious Liberty Document"—Lincoln would call it the "great charter of liberty"—and demanded that it "be wielded on behalf of emancipation." Douglass campaigned for Abraham Lincoln in 1860 and from then on never wavered in his active support for the Republican party.


MEN OF COLOR
To Arms! To Arms!
NOW OR NEVER
THREE YEARS' SERVICE!
BATTLES OF LIBERTY AND THE UNION
FAIL NOW, & OUR RACE IS DOOMED
SILENCE THE TONGUE OF CALUMNY
VALOR AND HEROISM
PORT HUDSON AND MILLIKEN'S BEND,
ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVES
OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY HAS COME
MEN OF COLOR, BROTHERS AND FATHERS!
WE APPEAL TO YOU!
STRIKE NOW!

KEAN COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

Douglass's rhetorical vigor was matched by an instinct for action. In surely the finest illustration of this, he early urged the necessity of black men's participation in the struggle for their freedom. When in 1863 the government finally permitted blacks to enlist in the Union army, Douglass called it a "golden opportunity" and instantly threw himself into recruiting for the 54th Massachusetts Infantry. He personally signed up 100 men in the first six weeks—starting with his own sons Lewis and Charles—and his speech "Men of Color, to Arms!" was widely reprinted. Later Douglass went to Washington to press Lincoln to push through equal pay for black recruits and equal chance for promotion. (Equal pay would be granted retroactively in 1864.) In the end, 180,000 black soldiers served—immeasurably strengthening the case for full black citizenship after the war.

To be sure, Douglass's career was not all heroic. Some have observed that in the decades after the Civil War—when the freedmen faced overwhelming difficulties, and segregationist governments were coming to power in state after state, welcoming Jim Crow and tolerating new forms of violence against blacks—Douglass, distant from working men, concentrated not on combating these evils but on securing political equality. The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments were added to the Constitution, but the equal citizenship they promised did not ensue. Douglass moved his family to Washington after the Rochester fire and held a succession of sinecures with the federal government. In his last job, as U.S. minister to Haiti, his biographer William S. McFeely suggests, Douglass may have allowed his partiality for a nation born of a successful slave revolt to blind him to atrocities committed by a black tyrant.

Yet Douglass never really left the trenches. A year before he died, he delivered a great oration on the subject of lynching, then at its height, at the Metropolitan AME Church in Washington, five blocks from the White House. The very morning of his fatal heart attack, he attended a women's rights rally and was escorted to the podium by his old friend Susan B. Anthony. He and his wife expected to go to a meeting at a black church in Anacostia that night.

At the time of his death, he was planning to retire to a house on the Chesapeake Bay, with a view across the water to the Eastern Shore where he was born. Instead, closure took another form. There was a public funeral in Washington; the black schools of the District of Columbia were shut in his honor. Then his widow and children took his body, by train, to Rochester. It lay in state at City Hall—where 30 years before citizens had gathered spontaneously after news arrived of Lincoln's assassination, and Douglass, stunned and bereft, had been prevailed upon to speak. Now, another memorial service was held, before the family buried Douglass beside Annie and Anna.

The Outsider

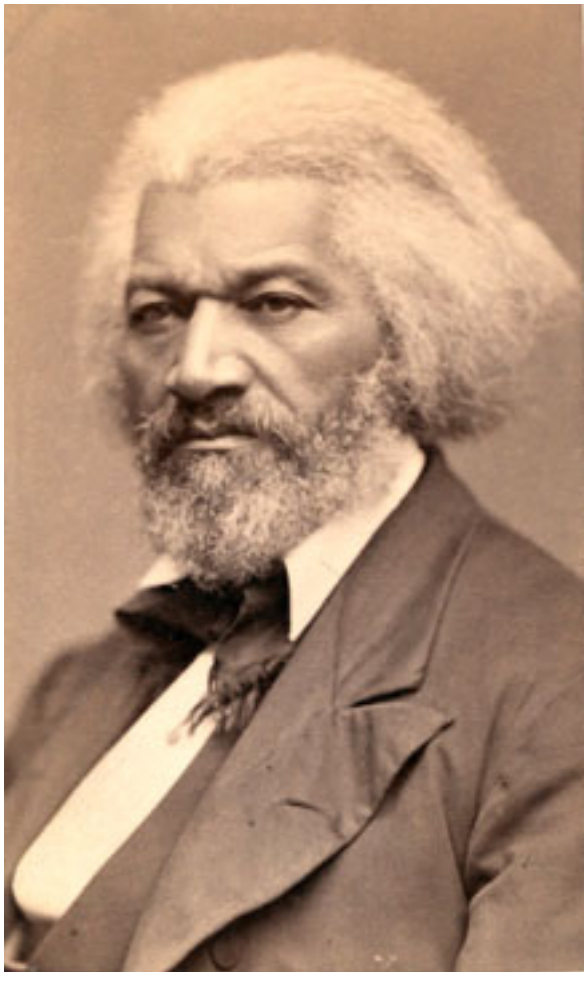
All the physical and spiritual ills that scarred Douglass's formative years—ignorance of his (white) father and almost total deprivation of his mother; hunger and cold and filth; exposure to scenes of sadistic cruelty; deprivation of education; the experience at the age of nine of being examined and assessed as chattel, along with horses and cattle and swine, as part of an estate being divided among three heirs; his mental suffering as a teenager from the knowledge that he was unfree *for life*—all these flowed from one cause: slavery. There is no comparable single source of trouble in Ayaan Hirsi Ali's early life.

Who can trace all the reasons a family falls apart, or explain why it is cursed with a woe like the mental breakdown and early death of Hirsi Ali's sister? If those are

imponderables, the cultural ground on which her family's disintegration played out was patently a minefield—of tribalism dislocated by modernity, folk Islam, postcolonial misrule, civil war, and Islamist agitation. As a child, Hirsi Ali was taught by her grandmother to recite her ancestry back 800 years and to defend at all costs the clan that controlled her destiny. As an adult, now 38, she is a free agent, unmarried and self-supporting; indeed, sending money to her mother. When she leapt continents and cultures, she leapt centuries as well.

An expatriate three times over growing up, she put down roots in the friendly soil of Holland, where she lived and grew and assimilated for 14 years—only to exile herself again, with her open-ended move to the United States in the fall of 2006. Her rejection of Islam sealed her separation from her origins, even as death threats encumbered her with notoriety and bodyguards, and robbed her of the normal enjoyment of everyday life.

Notoriety, however, also handed her a megaphone. Hirsi Ali has used it deliberately. A strong believer in the power of individuals to influence the course of history, she has sought to use such power as has been given her to combat coercion and violence in the lives of Muslim women, and more generally to press for a critical reevaluation of Islam. As an apostate, she cannot command a Muslim audience. She has placed herself outside any intra-Muslim discussion of renewal. Yet she can be a provocateur at the margins. By addressing Western audiences—giving her European and American readers and hearers an insider's view of Islam, coupled with her unsparing indictment of it—she can not only inform the ignorant but also prod Islam's apologists to respond.



Douglass later in life

Hirsi Ali has chosen not to shield sensitivities, but to shock consciences—as Douglass did with his gripping memoirs. In the essays collected in *The Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam* (2006), she described the Islam she was taught. There was the conviction, for instance, that non-Muslims were "antisocial, impure, barbaric, not circumcised, immoral, unscrupulous, and above all, obscene." There was her family's prayer five times a day for the extermination of the Jews. The Prophet Mohammed was held up as the preeminent moral example. Why, she asked, was it forbidden to rationally examine his life? In particular, she pointed to the consummation of his marriage to Aisha, his favorite among his many wives and concubines, when he was 54 and she was 9. In Holland, she pleaded for public policies to protect females against forms of abuse, including genital mutilation, regarded as private family matters in the communities that practice them. She is no less forthright about her own atheism and libertarianism. Honesty is to her the hard-won prize: It is what liberty is *for*.

Not least, Hirsi Ali has used her platform to challenge Westerners about their own inconsistencies. Having come late to the political culture of individual rights and the rule of law, she was astonished by the willingness of many in the West to cast a blind eye to gross violations of rights so long as they occurred among foreigners. The multiculturalism that guided Dutch policy in the 1990s sprang from a desire to respect difference, but in practice it meant tolerance for what, if undertaken by native Dutchmen, would be crimes.

"People in the West swallow this sort of thing because they have learned not to examine the religions or cultures of minorities too critically, for fear of being called racist," she wrote. "It fascinates them that I am not afraid to do so."

"Human beings are equal, cultures are not," she told a New York audience last year:

> A culture that celebrates femininity is not equal to a culture that trims the genitals of her girls. A culture that holds the door open to her women is not equal to one that confines them behind walls and veils. . . . A culture that encourages dating between young men and young women is not equal to a culture that flogs or stones a girl for falling in love. A culture where monogamy is an aspiration is not equal to a culture where a man can lawfully have four wives all at once.

If her outsider's perspective equips Hirsi Ali to expose the abdication of judgment that is cultural relativism, it also heightens her gratitude for the opportunities opened up to her by life in the West. Among the most memorable passages of *Infidel* are those where she expresses this gratitude to the many people who helped her, above all her "Dutch family."

Responding to a notice on a church bulletin board, a young couple named Johanna and Maarten volunteered to give Hirsi Ali an hour of conversation a week when she'd been in Holland just a year. They gave her much more. They were the first husband and wife she ever saw consulting each other and helping each other with chores. While they provided for their two children "a very structured life," she says, they disciplined them without hitting and listened to their opinions. Johanna became "like a mother" to Hirsi Ali, teaching her to be Dutch—how to economize and look people in the eye and deal with problems squarely. "Most important," she writes, this couple took her in and showed her "openness and love." They are no doubt partly the basis for Hirsi Ali's most striking conclusion: that "life is better in the West because human relations are better."

Now, Hirsi Ali has come to America. It is a country less tidy and orderly than Holland, with cruder manners, perhaps, though no less warm, and equally dedicated to the open society. She may find us more conscious than our secular European cousins of the pre-Enlightenment roots of our liberty, in the rights of Englishmen and the Puritans' intoxication with the Bible. Still, she should fit right in. She can take inspiration from her curious points of kinship with Frederick Douglass, a quintessential American. In him as in her, Africa, Europe, and America met. He was born a stepchild of Western civilization, she an outsider to it, yet both made that civilization their own. Both are notable less as original thinkers than as moralists and reformers. Both grappled with the meaning of human equality in difference, whether difference of race or difference of sex. His life story, like hers, was in itself a creative accomplishment compelling to others. His history vindicates Hirsi Ali's conviction that individuals can sway events. And it may encourage her in another way.

Douglass lived to see his chief goal realized: slavery abolished. Yet in the decade of his death, there were over 1,000 lynchings. Blacks were mostly frozen out of politics, and their educational and economic advance was glacial, hindered on all sides. A generation and more would pass before the tempo of progress picked up, after World War II, with the Civil Rights revolution. Even today, our reality falls short of the ideal—as Douglass put it, "a solid nation, entirely delivered from all contradictions and social antagonisms, based upon loyalty, liberty, and equality." Yet the country of Oprah Winfrey, Condoleezza Rice, and Barack Obama has come far.

No one knows what lies ahead 50 or 100 years hence for the Muslim communities of Europe—whether Islamist convulsions, increasing assimilation and secularization, a comfortable pluralism with rights mutually respected, or, as some fear and others intend, Eurabia. But Douglass's story may reinforce Hirsi Ali in her willingness to take the long view.

If "human relations are better" in America, it is partly because, before our grandparents were born, Douglass and others risked all to remove an institution that was an absolute obstacle to sound human relations—and because in doing so they held onto their humanity. Douglass's religious views evolved in a liberal direction in the course of his life, but he never lost the basic orientation he adopted at 13. The same principles that caused him to abhor slavery also disposed him toward forbearance and charity.

In a gesture that Hirsi Ali will appreciate—she considers the date of her escape to freedom her "real birthday"—Frederick Douglass marked the tenth anniversary of his escape in a special way. He published in the *North Star* an open letter to his former owner, Thomas Auld, one of the slaveholders whose religious profession he deemed a travesty. It is a most unusual and highly charged communication, and this is how it ends:

> I will now bring this letter to a close; you shall hear from me again unless you let me hear from you. I intend to make use of you as a weapon with which to assail the system of slavery—as a means of concentrating public attention on the system, and deepening the horror of trafficking in the souls and bodies of men. I shall make use of you as a means of exposing the character of the American church and clergy—and as a means of bringing this guilty nation, with yourself, to repentance. In doing this, I entertain no malice toward you personally. There is no roof under which you would be more safe than mine, and there is nothing in my house which you might need for your comfort, which I would not readily grant. Indeed, I should esteem it a privilege to set you an example as to how mankind ought to treat each other.
>
> I am your fellow-man, but not your slave.

There is a postscript that cannot be omitted. Twenty-nine years after writing this, Douglass was invited to return to Talbot County, Maryland, for the first time since he had been a slave there. Thomas Auld, over 80 and dying, heard of his presence in the neighborhood and sent for him. Douglass records that he was ushered straight into the bedroom, and the two old men were overcome with emotion. Neither showed malice. Each acknowledged ways he had wronged the other. They "conversed freely about the past" and parted reconciled. ♦

GARY LOCKE

It's Not Race, It's Arugula

Obama's real electoral challenge

By Noemie Emery

On the way to his rendezvous with destiny, Barack Obama consistently lost white voters, especially of the middle and working classes, to Hillary Clinton—voters variously known as Appalachians or Reagan Democrats, rural voters and white ethnics in the industrial states. Because of this, he lost most of the big swing states that a Democrat needs—Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia (which would have made Gore president in 2000 had he won there), that last by a staggering 41 points. Heading into the general election, in which the weight of the black vote will shrink as compared to its importance in the Democratic primaries, this weakness emerged as the prime threat to his promising candidacy and gave birth to two schools of thought on its cause.

School number one thinks it reflects racial hostility that Obama's opponents—first Hillary Clinton and now John McCain and the Republican party—are doing their best to rub raw. This is a case that Democrats have been making for the past 30-plus years, and its most recent airing came in a long piece in the May 19 *Newsweek* by Evan Thomas and Richard Wolffe. "The real test is yet to come," they warned. "The Republican Party has been successfully scaring voters since 1968, when Richard Nixon built a Silent Majority out of lower-and-middle-class folks frightened or disturbed by hippies and student radicals and blacks rioting. . . . The 2008 race may turn on which party will win the lower and middle-class whites in industrial and border states—the Democrats' base from the New Deal to the 1960s, but 'Reagan Democrats' in most presidential elections since then. It is a sure bet that the GOP will try to paint Obama as 'the other'—as a haughty black intellectual who has Muslim roots."

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In this view—let us call it the *Newsweek* Doctrine—race is the issue, and the big years in history were 1964 and 1965, when Lyndon B. Johnson did the Right Thing, signing the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, and consigning his party to electoral darkness by losing the South for the next several eons. By these lights, bigotry and fear are the main factors, and all the others are thinly masked surrogates for them. If Obama loses, this will be the excuse of the campaign and of the press that supports it.

The second school of thought admits the presence of bias as a contributing factor, but not the most important one. The real cause, it thinks, is a cultural divide among whites that splits them on matters of worldview and attitude into hostile and competing camps. Let us call this rival approach the Barone Manifesto, after its author, political analyst Michael Barone, who crunched the poll numbers for Obama's primary battles with Hillary Clinton and discovered that while the former did exceedingly well with white voters in university towns and state capitals, he did poorly almost everywhere else. From this, Barone broke the electorate down into two large divisions—academics and state employees who live in these places, whom he calls Academicians, and Jacksonians, who live elsewhere, especially in the regions close to the Appalachian mountains.

While the term Academician explains itself, Jacksonian comes from Andrew Jackson, the first of the Democrats' warrior heroes (with an echo perhaps of Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, who seems now to have been one of the last). The Barone view is a close cousin to that of political reporter Ronald Brownstein, who identified a split in the Democratic party's candidates between those he described as "warriors" and "priests." In this reading of history, the critical year would be 1968, when the Democrats splintered on crime and security issues, and afterwards became the party of peace (and/or appeasement), of moral equivalence, and of aversion to force. In this reading, the Jacksonians or warriors reject Obama less because he is black than because he is a priest or academician, and they see him as "the other" not because of his name or his background but because of

his ideas. "Academics and public employees . . . love the arts of peace and hate the demands of war," Barone tells us. "Jacksonians, in contrast, place a high value on the virtues of the warrior, and little value on the work of academics and public employees. They have, in historian David Hackett Fischer's phrase, a notion of natural liberty: People should be allowed to do what they want, subject to the demands of honor. If someone infringes on that liberty, beware."

The divisions between these two classes tend to be deep. Academicians traffic in words and abstractions, and admire those who do likewise. Jacksonians prefer men of action, whose achievements are tangible. Academicians love nuance, Jacksonians clarity; academicians love fairness, Jacksonians justice; academicians dislike force and think it is vulgar; Jacksonians admire it, when justly applied. Each side tends to look down on the other, though academicians do it with much more intensity: Jacksonians think academicians are inconsequential, while academicians think that Jacksonians are beneath their contempt. The academicians' theme songs are "Kumbaya" and "Imagine," while Jacksonians prefer Toby Keith:

Well, a man come on the 6 o'clock news
Said somebody's been shot, somebody's been abused
Somebody blew up a building,
Somebody stole a car,
Somebody got away,
Somebody didn't get too far,
Yeah, they didn't get too far . . .
Justice is the one thing you should always find.
You got to saddle up your boys,
You got to draw a hard line.
When the gun smoke settles, we'll sing a victory tune,
We'll all meet back at the local saloon.
We'll raise up our glasses against evil forces,
Singing "Whiskey for my men, beer for my horses."

Academicians don't think "evil forces" exist, and if they did, they would want to talk to them. This, and not color, seems to be the divide.

In their glory days (i.e., when they had a semi-permanent lease on the White House), the Democrats frequently sported a veneer of priesthood, but it covered a Jacksonian heart. In the beginning, Woodrow Wilson was "too proud to fight," a stance that enraged Franklin (and Theodore) Roosevelt, but in the end Wilson led his country into world leadership, and into the "war to end wars." FDR in his turn was a relentless hot warrior. Harry S. Truman—a Jacksonian, if ever there was one—bombed Japan back into the Stone Age and later drew two lines in the sand (in Berlin and Korea) against Communist powers, moves fervently backed by Congressman Kennedy, who later became JFK. Kennedy, a millionaire's son who took to the great country houses of England like a duck takes to water, scored his breakthrough primary win in, yes, West Virginia, when he sent Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr. into the state to contrast his war record—and that of his brother, who died on a suicide mission—with Hubert Humphrey's draft deferment during World War II. Kennedy had no trouble in winning Jacksonians. Roosevelt and Kennedy were children of privilege who had passed through prep schools and Harvard but stayed in touch with their warrior side. In fact, so completely were Democrats linked to saber-rattling and assertion of power that as late as the 1976 election Bob Dole, a wounded World War II combat veteran, was still complaining of "Democrat wars."

It was when they lost their warrior edge that Democrats started losing the White House, winning only in unusual circumstances such as the Watergate scandal or in that brief window in history (from the fall of the Berlin Wall through September 11) when foreign threats had faded out of the picture. Reagan Democrats did resent post-1968 liberal activism—and racial preferences and busing much more than the original Civil Rights measures—but they also were drawn to the muscular foreign policy, democracy promotion, and unabashed patriotism of the FDR-HST-JFK line. When these were picked up by Ronald Reagan—who was himself an FDR fan and the very prototype of the Reagan Democrat—they quite willingly followed his lead into his new political bailiwick. When academicians insist that Republicans use fears about race and other cultural flashpoints to blind middle and lower class voters to what they call their "real interests," they forget that to most voters defense and security are often the most "real" issue of them all.

This neglect often leads to a reading of history that aligns rather poorly with the facts. It is true that Johnson lost the South in 1964 to the Civil Rights issue, but he also won almost everything else on the table. And when the Democrats fell apart in the 1968 cycle, it owed more to Vietnam and rioting students than anything else. They lost again four years later on "acid, amnesty, and abortion," but also through an isolationist nominee who ran on a platform of nonintervention and retreat in foreign affairs. Democrats won both the South and the White House in 1976 with a southern governor known as an integrationist but also as a social conservative and an ex-naval officer—a résumé that later looked misleading after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, and Iran took over the American Embassy with shockingly little resistance on his part. After 1968, Democrats would win and lose for a number of reasons, none of which seemed to touch on their civil rights stances, which did not seem to vary. On the other hand, it appears indisputable that, both before and after the Civil Rights battles, Democrats lost when they put up an anti-

Jacksonian, who seemed both weak and too wordy in foreign affairs.

Adlai Stevenson, the Democrats' first major anti-Jacksonian, lost twice by large margins to General Eisenhower, the man who freed Europe. Following him, academicians such as Gary Hart, Bill Bradley, and "Clean Gene" McCarthy couldn't even get nominated, and the Massachusetts duo of Michael Dukakis and John Kerry—who in 1983 ran and served on the same ticket—lost to two Texans named Bush. Kerry, a decorated veteran of the Vietnam war, lost partly because other vets ran ads that showed him testifying before Congress as a shaggy-haired antiwar activist. Dukakis sealed his fate in the second presidential debate when, asked if he would support the death penalty if his own wife had been raped and murdered, he bloodlessly said no, and talked about his antidrug program. No less Jacksonian answer has ever been uttered.

The one we are waiting for is Colonel Obama—an Iraq war vet who has never met Bill Ayers, and if he did he would flatten him, thinks arugula is a town near Bogota, and has Toby Keith on his favorites list.

As a political type, Barack Obama is not Middle America's idea of a "black" candidate, wholly unlike Al Sharpton (who ran briefly in 2004) or a demagogue such as Jesse Jackson, who put the fear of God into Democratic leaders when he won the Michigan caucuses in 1988. But he is beyond doubt the Academician Incarnate, heir to all of the (white) priests before him. Even some of his more notable missteps recall the gaffes that they made in the past. His complaint in Iowa about the high price of arugula at Whole Foods (an expensive grocery chain much favored by trendies) recalled Michael Dukakis's advice to Iowa farmers that they grow Belgian endive; his faux pas at a fundraiser at a millionaire's pad in San Francisco about small town residents of Pennsylvania who cling to God and guns out of sheer desperation recalled the "joke" told by Gary Hart in the 1984 cycle about toxic wastes in New Jersey while at a millionaire's pad in L.A. "Priests . . . write books and sometimes verse," according to Brownstein, and indeed, Obama wrote two of them. "They observe the campaign's hurly-burly through a filter of cool, witty detachment. Their campaigns become crusades, fueled as much by an inchoate longing for a 'new politics' as tangible demands for new policies," and indeed, Obama's main theme, which has listeners swooning, is an inchoate though inspiring mantra of "change." "Obama is not at all a warrior, and is something of an academic," writes Barone:

> He is all college campus and not at all boot camp. . . . He has campaigned consistently as an opponent of military action in Iraq. . . . His standard campaign statements on Iraq seem to suggest that all honor should go to the opponents of the war and none to the brave men and women who have waged it. . . . He clearly lacks the military expertise of John McCain or Hillary Clinton, both diligent members of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Like another eloquent little-known Illinois politician who emerged suddenly as an attractive presidential candidate, Adlai Stevenson, he seems more comfortable with the language of diplomacy and negotiation than with the words of war. Like Stevenson, he speaks fluently and often eloquently but does not exude a sense of command. He is an interlocutor, not a fighter. His habit of stating his opponents' arguments fairly and sometimes more persuasively than they do themselves has been a political asset among his peers and press but not among Jacksonians, who are more interested in defeating than in understanding their enemies.

And he is up against John McCain, a true Jacksonian if ever there was one. Of course, he dispatched another Jacksonian in Hillary Clinton, who, against all expectations, emerged as a lower-to-middle-class spokesman, and all-purpose warrior queen. As a feminist and graduate of Wellesley and Yale, she was an unlikely choice to appeal to Jacksonians, but she won them over by her grit and tenacity and her stubborn refusal to give in to pressure. Like McCain, she gave the impression that she would never stop fighting, while Obama, as Barone puts it, gave "the impression, through his demeanor and through his statements . . . that he would never start." Obama may be the first nonwhite with a serious chance of reaching the White House, but he is also the latest in a long line of anti-Jacksonians who have tried, and have

failed, to win the office of president. The second obstacle may prove more formidable than the first.

In 1984 and 1988, Jesse Jackson, the first black candidate to compete seriously in the national primaries, won the black vote in them by huge nine-to-one margins, but carried virtually nobody else. Historically, priest-like white candidates win the upscale white vote and the students, but tend to do poorly elsewhere. As the first black candidate to run on the wine track, Barack Obama combines these two demographics, though to his credit his appeal is nonracial, and he did not begin to win large tracts of black voters until after taking lily-white Iowa almost by storm. Nonetheless, it is the addition of the blacks to the students and upper-scale whites that allowed him to run better than the Harts and the Bradleys, and his share of the white vote—and his failings within it—tracked largely with theirs. Does this mean that Jacksonian voters are holding Obama's race and his background against him? It's hard to say that, as his problems among them are no worse than those of other, white, academicians in the past. Priests such as Hart, Tsongas, and Bradley, Brownstein notes, "run better among voters with college degrees . . . run well in the Northwest, the West Coast, and portions of the upper Midwest where wine track voters congregate. . . . Warriors usually thrive in interior states such as Ohio, Missouri, or Tennessee, where college graduates constitute 40 percent or less of the Democratic electorate."

This is the pattern Barone found in Obama's battles with Clinton. "When I first noticed Obama's weak showings among Appalachians, I chalked them up, as many in the press will be inclined to do, to an antipathy to blacks," Barone allowed. But then he went back and compared the results from the Virginia primary race on February 12, with those in the gubernatorial election of 1989, in which Democrat Douglas Wilder defeated Republican Marshall Coleman to become the country's first black governor since Reconstruction. In the Appalachian precincts of western Virginia—which border both Kentucky and West Virginia—Wilder, a moderate Democrat with an air of authority, greatly outpolled Obama everywhere in the region. "Jacksonians in southwest Virginia showed no aversion to Wilder. . . . Take Buchanan County, which runs along both West Virginia and Kentucky. In 1989, it voted 59 percent to 41 percent for Wilder." In February 2008, it voted for Clinton over Obama by 90 to 9. "Wilder lost what is now the Ninth Congressional District (long known as the Fighting Ninth) by a 53-percent-to-47-percent margin. But that is far less than the 59-percent-to-39-percent margin by which George W. Bush beat John Kerry in the district in November 2004 or the 65-percent-to-33-percent margin by which Clinton beat Obama there in February 2008. Jacksonians may reject certain kinds of candidates, but not because they're black," Barone concluded. "A black candidate who will join them in fighting against attacks on their family or their country is all right with them." And these results in general elections included Republicans and independents, who are more likely to vote against liberals, which makes the anti-Obama results from the Democratic primary voters—who were presumably not moved by the putative attack machine of conservative bigots—all the more striking. Obama's problem may be less that he is running while black than that he is running to be the first Academician elected as president, a category that is zero for eight in national contests thus far. He is peering into an abyss not of bias, but a large Jackson Hole of rejection by warrior voters. And this problem is more than skin deep.

Complicating all this are the disparate facts that the voters most imbued with warrior instincts—southerners, rural voters, and many white ethnics—are those most suspected (by *Newsweek*) of harboring deep racial bias, and that the first credible black candidate to be running for president of the world's greatest power is also one of the least Jacksonian candidates who ever drew breath. The interesting counterexample of course would be to see a black Jacksonian run against a white Academician, and if Colin Powell had chosen to challenge Bill Clinton in 1996, we might have seen this take place. (Whether the black warrior could have been nominated is another whole story, as the centrism that would have made him electable would have given rise to hysterics in the party's activist base.) The charming, war-tested moderate Powell would have presented a fair test of whether an ultra-acceptable black candidate could have been undermined by prejudice. The charming, untested, and left wing Obama will not.

Now let us imagine a different candidate, one who looks like Barack Obama, with the same mixed-race, international background, even the same middle name. But this time, he is Colonel Obama, a veteran of the war in Iraq, a kick-ass Marine with a "take no prisoners" attitude, who vows to follow Osama bin Laden to the outskirts of Hell. He comes from the culture of the military (the most color blind and merit-based in the country), and not the rarefied air of Hyde Park. He goes to a church with a mixed-race congregation and a rational preacher. He has never met Bill Ayers, and if he did he would flatten him. He thinks arugula is a town near Bogota and has Toby Keith on his favorites list. Would he strike no chords at all in Jacksonian country? Does anyone think he would lose 90 to 9 in Buchanan County? Or lose West Virginia by 41 points? For those Jacksonians who would be fine with a black man in the White House (not as tiny a group as *Newsweek* thinks), Colonel Obama is the one we are waiting for. When we will get him is anyone's guess. ♦

Khrushchev sizes up Kennedy—and not too favorably. Vienna, June 1961

TIME & LIFE PICTURES / GETTY IMAGES

The Talking Cure

Sometimes it makes things worse BY MAX BOOT

Question: "In 1982 [sic], Anwar Sadat traveled to Israel, a trip that resulted in a peace agreement that has lasted ever since. In the spirit of that type of bold leadership, would you be willing to meet separately, without precondition, during the first year of your administration, in Washington or anywhere else, with the leaders of Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, and North Korea, in order to bridge the gap that divides our countries?"

Barack Obama: "I would."

With that off-the-cuff answer, given at a Democratic presidential debate last July, Barack Obama unwittingly launched a controversy that, almost a year later, shows no sign of dissipating. He might have responded differently—and spared himself a lot of agonized backtracking on the part of his aides and supporters—if he had been able to read beforehand David Reynolds's *Summits*.

Summits
Six Meetings that Shaped the Twentieth Century
by David Reynolds
Basic Books, 576 pp., $35

Nixon and Mao
The Week that Changed the World
by Margaret Macmillan
Random House, 432 pp., $27.95

Reynolds is a professor of international history at Cambridge whose previous book, *In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War*, was a fascinating account of how Winston Churchill wrote his World War II memoirs. He is, to judge by *Summits*, a man of the moderate left, or so I gather from his use of stock phrases such as "rush to war" when discussing the diplomacy that led up to the invasion of Iraq. There is no reason to think that he intended this book to be an indictment of the Obama mindset. But that is how it reads.

To be sure, he presents the advantages of summits: "Face to face across the conference table, statesmen can sense each other's needs and objectives in a way that no amount of letters, phone calls, or emails can deliver. Summitry can also cut through bureaucratic obstacles that block progress lower down." But he

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also warns that "the potential dangers are . . . immense." Those dangers loom especially large, at least to this reader, in his discussion of six major 20th-century summits, most of which did not have a very happy outcome.

In his introduction, Reynolds notes that the term "summit" was coined by Churchill in 1950 when he called for "another talk with the Soviet Union at the highest level"—or a "parley at the summit." The metaphor was inspired, Reynolds believes, by news accounts of the British expeditions to scale Mount Everest. While the term is of recent vintage, the practice of leaders meeting with one another is, of course, ancient. In centuries past, kings or emperors would meet, usually on the boundary of their domains, so as to avoid the submission implicit in one monarch visiting another's court. (A famous get-together of this sort occurred in 1807 between Napoleon and Czar Alexander I on a raft on the Niemen River. The result was the Treaty of Tilsit, which created a short-lived Franco-Russian alliance.)

Reynolds argues that a qualitative change in summitry occurred in the early years of the 20th century—"made possible by air travel, made necessary by weapons of mass destruction and made into household news by the mass media or newsreels and television." The first summit of this sort, he writes, was Munich—hardly a propitious beginning.

The Munich conference of September 29-30, 1938, was the third in a series of meetings held over the course of that month between the British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, and German chancellor, Adolf Hitler. The impetus was Hitler's bullying of Czechoslovakia over the alleged mistreatment of ethnic Germans living in its Sudetenland region. Paris was allied with Prague, and Chamberlain feared that if Germany invaded Czechoslovakia, the result would be a general European war. This he was determined to avoid at all costs, not least because he, along with the rest of the British government, was in the grip of exaggerated estimates of the potential havoc that German bombers could wreak on London.

Writes Reynolds:

> In 1938 Nazi bombers lacked sufficient range to reach London from Germany: this only became possible in 1940 when Hitler controlled the coasts of Belgium and France. Here was a massive intelligence failure about weapons of mass destruction. It skewed defense policy toward airpower and diplomacy toward isolationism.

While fear was an important impetus for appeasement, Reynolds highlights another, less-known motivation: arrogance. The hubristic Chamberlain thought that, through force of personality, he could bring Herr Hitler around and change the course of history: "I have only to raise a finger & the whole face of Europe is changed," he wrote to his spinster sisters.

As it happens, it was Hitler who raised his finger and Chamberlain who changed. In their meetings, the Nazi dictator escalated his demands from "autonomy for the Sudeten Germans to a transfer of territory." Chamberlain caved in. In order to make his surrender more palatable to domestic opinion, he got Hitler's assent to a vague statement about the importance of harmonious Anglo-German relations in the future and "the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again." It was this "piece of paper" that Chamberlain claimed, on his return to 10 Downing Street, would usher in "peace with honor . . . peace for our time."

Some revisionist historians have suggested that Chamberlain was a realist who wisely acted to postpone a war for which his country was unprepared. This ignores the fact, Reynolds notes, that in 1938 Germany was not ready for war, either, and that if Hitler had insisted on taking the plunge there was a high-level conspiracy among military and government officials to depose him. Chamberlain's appeasement took the pressure off and gave the Führer new confidence on the path of conquest.

"Our enemies are small worms," he told his generals in August 1939. "I saw them in Munich."

The prime "worm," for his part, genuinely and pathetically believed in Hitler's assurances of goodwill. Chamberlain told the cabinet, "When Herr Hitler announced that he meant to do something it was certain that he would do it." That kind of credulity is one of the great dangers of summitry. It is all too easy to conclude that the person across the table is being open and honest when he is actually faking sincerity—a skill cultivated by many politicians in both democratic and despotic systems.

Even Churchill, the leading critic of appeasement, was susceptible to this failing in his dealings with another dictator. In January 1944 he remarked that "if only I could dine with Stalin once a week, there would be no trouble at all. We get on like a house on fire." Later that year, after his second visit to Moscow, he wrote to his wife: "I have had [very] nice talks with the Old Bear. I like him the more I see him. Now they respect us here & I am sure they wish to work [with] us."

Churchill's transatlantic partner, Franklin Roosevelt, labored under similar illusions about "Uncle Joe." He wrote to Churchill in March 1942: "I think I can personally handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department. Stalin hates the guts of all your top people. He thinks he likes me better, and I hope he will continue to do so." (Interestingly, FDR had a better measure of Hitler, whom he never met. In January 1939 he described him accurately—more accurately than Chamberlain, who had met him three times—as a "wild man" and a "nut.")

Churchill and Roosevelt were to be sorely disappointed at Yalta in 1945, the second summit that Reynolds dissects. He argues that Yalta gets a bit of a bum rap because it has often been associated with the Anglo-American "sellout" of Eastern Europe. Actually, Soviet domination was dictated by events on the ground: "By February 1945, when the Big Three convened at Yalta, the Soviets were in control of much of Eastern Europe. They could not be evicted except by force, and it was politically impossible for Britain or America to turn on their ally in this way."

Even so, Yalta was a failure because Churchill and Roosevelt did not succeed in drawing Stalin into a cooperative long-term relationship, as they had hoped. The Soviet dictator skillfully manipulated them to give the impres-

sion that he was making concessions even when he wasn't.

Roosevelt, for instance, offered territorial incentives in the Far East for the Soviet Union to join the war against Japan. FDR thought he had scored quite a coup when Stalin agreed—little realizing that "Stalin, as we now know, was desperately anxious to get into the Pacific war as soon as he could extricate his combat troops from Europe." Roosevelt was also "much gratified" by how the Soviets came around on the proposed United Nations Organization: After initially demanding 16 votes (one for each Soviet republic), Stalin scaled down his demand to "only" two to three votes. In fact, Reynolds writes, this was probably his bottom line all along; he only pushed the larger demand "to gain credit for use on other issues."

One of those issues was Poland, where Stalin was determined to assure future Soviet domination. The Western leaders knew they could not stop him, but they wanted to at least "ameliorate" the situation, as Churchill put it. They didn't achieve even that much, since Stalin never had any intention of holding "free and unfettered" elections of the kind they demanded.

Both Churchill and Roosevelt oversold the "spirit" of Yalta when they got home, leaving their publics and successors unprepared for the descent of what Churchill in the following year would call an "Iron Curtain" across Europe.

It was an attempt to lower the resulting superpower tensions that created the conditions for what, after Munich, was surely the most disastrous summit of modern times. This was the meeting in Vienna on June 3-4, 1961, between Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy—a meeting that Barack Obama has, inexplicably, cited as evidence of the advantages of meeting your foes. Quite the opposite: It showed the dangers of rushing ill-prepared into a meeting at a disadvantageous moment.

Kennedy sought the two-day get-together to get a better sense of the Soviet leader. What he saw, and even more what Khrushchev saw in return, ratcheted up Cold War tensions. The Soviet leader was already unimpressed by the botched Bay of Pigs invasion on April 17. The Vienna talks confirmed his initial impression that his interlocutor was "very inexperienced, even immature"—not "a man of intelligence and vision," like his predecessor, Dwight Eisenhower. This encouraged Khrushchev to bully Kennedy, warning

Brezhnev and Nixon, 1973

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him that "if the U.S. wants war, that is its problem."

Immediately after the summit, Kennedy told James Reston of the *New York Times* that the meeting had been the "roughest thing in my life." For a veteran of PT-109, that's saying something. He went on to complain that Khrushchev "just beat the hell out of me. So I've got a terrible problem. If he thinks I'm inexperienced and have no guts, until we remove those ideas we won't get anywhere with him." Bobby Kennedy thought this was "the first time the President had ever really come across somebody with whom he couldn't exchange ideas in a meaningful way." (One wonders if Obama has met such a person yet.)

Of course, the upshot of the Vienna summit was that Khrushchev went ahead with plans to build the Berlin Wall and, when Kennedy did not resist this provocative move, to install nuclear missiles in Cuba—what he called throwing "a hedgehog down Uncle Sam's pants." Reynolds contends that another result of Vienna was the growing American commitment to South Vietnam, undertaken by Kennedy to show that he was tougher than he looked at first glance.

"Their ill-tempered encounter, which degenerated into a test of virility," Reynolds writes, "constitutes a classic example of how not do summitry."

After Vienna, no American president rushed into another early summit, but none could entirely avoid the lure of these occasions, either. (Churchill once noted "how much more attractive a top-level meeting seems when one has reached the top!") The fourth summit that Reynolds focuses on is the 1972 meeting in Moscow between Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev, although he also gives considerable attention to the *tête-à-tête* earlier that year between Nixon and Mao Zedong—a meeting momentous enough to warrant its own book: Margaret Macmillan's grandiloquently titled *Nixon and Mao: The Week that Changed the World.*

Both meetings were long in the making: They did not occur until the final year of Nixon's first term, and they were both preceded by what Macmillan describes as "three years of delicate feelers, of careful signals sent out and usually but not always received, of indirect contacts, of intense internal debates, and, finally, of direct negotiations." The culmination of these preparations came in trips to Beijing and Moscow by the man the press had dubbed "Super K"—national security adviser Henry Kissinger. Nixon and Kissinger, those two inveterate schemers, wanted to use an opening to Beijing to apply pressure on Moscow, and vice versa. One of their top goals was the isolation of North Vietnam: They hoped to win at the negotiating table with Hanoi's allies what Americans no longer had the willingness to fight for on the ground.

For a while the administration's diplomacy seemed to live up to the hype. But only for a while. In the wake of these summits, the United States and North Vietnam did reach agreement in 1973 on the Paris Peace Accords. Nixon and Kissinger sold this as a guarantee of South Vietnam's independence. But they

had privately told the Russians, Chinese, and North Vietnamese that they simply wanted a "decent interval" between American withdrawal and Communist victory. What they got was an indecent interval. (Whether it would have been a different story if not for Watergate, as Nixon and Kissinger later claimed, is impossible to say. Probably not.)

The other achievements of Nixon and Kissinger's fabled summitry look little better in hindsight. The 1972 meeting with Brezhnev produced agreement on SALT (the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks), including the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, as well as a statement of Basic Principles of U.S.-Soviet relations. These laboriously crafted treaties did not slow the Soviet arms buildup or Soviet adventurism in the Third World, and before long, "détente" had become a millstone around the neck of Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford.

"The ultimate beneficiary of Nixon's summitry," Reynolds concludes, "was Leonid Brezhnev."

Of all Nixon's summits, the one that he was most proud of was the one with Mao, probably the greatest mass murderer in history. As he prepared to leave Shanghai, Nixon called his visit to China "the week that changed the world." Margaret Macmillan, the respected author of a history of the 1919 Versailles peace conference, endorses this "bombast" but does not really back it up. The momentous change in China did not occur as a result of an hour of "amicable and, at times, jocular" chitchat between Nixon and Mao but as a result of Mao's death in 1976 and the accession to power of the reformist Deng Xiaoping. Such internal shifts are always far more important than fleeting encounters between world leaders.

This elementary insight received further confirmation in the late 1980s when Soviet-American relations thawed to a far greater extent than they had in the 1970s. This was due to the coming to power in Moscow of a Communist reformer dedicated to reducing arms expenditures and in Washington of a conservative dedicated to consigning the "evil empire" to the "ash heap of history." Many of Ronald Reagan's early moves—raising the defense budget, increasing support for the anti-Soviet *mujahedeen* in Afghanistan and the Nicaraguan contras, launching the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—were denounced at the time for being overly provocative. We know now that they helped pave the way for *perestroika* and *glasnost*, and the end of the Cold War.

It was Margaret Thatcher who first recognized that Mikhail Gorbachev was different from his predecessors: "I like Mr. Gorbachev," she said after meeting him for the first time in 1984. "We can do business together." His new foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, also proved more accommodating than his hard-line predecessor, Andrei Gromyko.

Ford and Brezhnev, 1974

Reagan sought to take advantage of the opportunity by inviting the new Soviet leader to a parley. The meeting was held in Geneva in November 1985. Reagan immediately gained the advantage when he stepped outside into the cold to meet the Soviet leader without benefit of an overcoat, thus projecting an energetic aura. Behind closed doors he steadily parried Gorbachev's attacks and adamantly refused to trade SDI away in return for deep cuts in both sides' nuclear arsenals.

Gorbachev upped the ante the following year at the Reykjavik summit: He offered to abolish both the Russian and American nuclear arsenals in return for an end to Star Wars. But after flirting with a deal, Reagan wisely replied, "*Nyet*." Instead, he would eventually agree in 1987 to a more limited accord eliminating short-range and intermediate-range land-based nuclear missiles. The Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty included tough verification procedures that had been missing in previous arms-control pacts.

Without doubt the increasingly amicable talks between Gorbachev and his American counterparts—first Reagan, then George H.W. Bush—contributed to the peaceful end of the Cold War. But they were more symptoms than cause of this profound transformation in world affairs. The same might be said for the most successful example of summitry in recent history: the 13 days of meetings at Camp David in September 1978 among Anwar Sadat, Menachem Begin, Jimmy Carter, and their senior aides.

Carter deserves credit for orchestrating a breakthrough, but it would not have been possible if Israel and Egypt had not had leaders ready to make sacrifices for peace. Sadat had proved his seriousness the previous year by flying to Israel. Begin reciprocated by visiting Egypt. That laid the groundwork for the Camp David deal under which Egypt agreed to end its war with Israel and Israel agreed to return the conquered Sinai desert. Although, during the negotiations, Begin had repeatedly said he would not dismantle Israel's Sinai settlements, in the end he did just that, and his conservative Likud party backed him up.

This monumental achievement—the first peace accord between Israel and one of its Arab neighbors—has become the prime exhibit whenever anyone cites the virtues of talking to one's enemies. But as Bill Clinton learned in 2000, when he convened a copycat summit at Camp David between Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat, imitation can be not just unflattering but downright dangerous. Because Arafat was not as committed to peace as Sadat had been, the negotiations led not to a settlement but to another round of

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fighting. That is another warning (one that Reynolds does not mention) of the dangers of negotiations.

There is yet another omission in this book that Senator Obama would do well to ponder. Reynolds chronicles meetings between the leaders of Britain and Germany, the United States and the Soviet Union, Israel and Egypt—all countries of relatively similar stature. Note what he *doesn't* describe, because it never happened: Dwight D. Eisenhower did not sit down with Kim Il Sung, John F. Kennedy did not chat with Fidel Castro, Jimmy Carter did not break bread with Pol Pot, Ronald Reagan did not engage in repartee with the Ayatollah Khomeini. Why not?

The most obvious obstacle was the difference in stature: By meeting with these petty dictators, an American president would have granted them legitimacy and diminished his own standing. That might have been a price worth paying in return for a real breakthrough, but none of these leaders demonstrated a sincere desire for accommodation on any terms other than his own.

Neither has Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Kim Jong Il, Raúl Castro, Bashar Assad, or Hugo Chávez—the motley crew that Obama, assuming his campaign rhetoric is to be believed, proposes to meet during his first year in office. If any of them were willing to make Sadat-like concessions, no doubt President Bush (or President McCain) would be willing to talk with them, too. What sets Obama apart, and makes his pledge both eye-catching and dangerous, is his willingness to meet without "preconditions"—that is, without some good reason to believe in advance that something positive will emerge.

Obama must hope that his personal magnetism and savvy will carry the day: that, at worst, he will emerge with a better understanding of his adversary and, at best, with a Nobel Peace Prize. That is what Chamberlain, Kennedy, Nixon, and many other summiteers of the past thought as well. If the history of "parleys at the summit" teaches anything, it is that there is danger in "jaw jaw" as well as in "war war"—and that sometimes the former can make the latter more likely. ♦

Mastering the Game

The business of America is small business—and entrepreneurship. **BY THOMAS W. HAZLETT**

Entrepreneurs are the rock stars of the business world. Politicians flatter them, investors clamor to discover them, and corporate executives claim to be them.

Sadly, none of this flash is likely to make it into your college economics class. There, the textbook drearily focuses on land, labor, and capital as the economy's basic ingredients. The entrepreneurs who stir the pot in brash and productive new ways are a mysterious force, difficult to chart with PowerPoint bullets. There is no doubt that innovation and risk-taking—the contributions of these master chefs of the economic stew—drive progress. But they are elusive, and will not hold still for measurements.

Overcoming Barriers to Entrepreneurship in the United States
Edited by Diana Furchtgott-Roth
Lexington, 174 pp., $24.95

This sleek, nifty volume of essays seeks to pursue the beast—and if not to capture it, then, at least, to triangulate its position. Edited by labor economist Diana Furchtgott-Roth, it teaches us why venture capitalists cluster in places like Silicon Valley; why tax cuts may (or may not) encourage entrepreneurial risk-taking; why Mexican immigrants are less likely to go into business for themselves than other U.S. workers; and why larger firms are more likely to offer workers pension plans. *Overcoming Barriers* brings high-level analysis to entrepreneurship, and its breadth—from investment banking, to tax policy, to immigration, to retirement programs—underscores how far the pursuit ranges.

The studies are written for both serious and more casual readers, although the latter will want to breeze past thickets of analysis only an economist could love. Fortunately, the seven essays are well organized and nicely edited, communicating the basic narrative even to those who are not in it for the "*t* statistics." But the book is, *caveat emptor*, not a cheerleading manual: Neither Henry Ford nor Sam Walton nor Bill Gates is mentioned. The authors are social scientists at prominent institutions who probe substrata economic formations looking for clues as to what factors drive the self-employed to leave their wage jobs behind, and how public policies impact this migration.

For instance, the chapter on Silicon Valley's venture capital hub offers a fascinating window into the sociology of entrepreneurial nurturing. Venture capital investments in Silicon Valley appear to be made differently than elsewhere: They come earlier to start-ups, and lavish more capital on firms. Either due to this, or the other way around, start-ups there outperform those elsewhere, on average.

Why is this? The answer seems to lie in the commercial culture. Unlike investment bankers doling out high-risk, early-money investments on the East Coast, Northern California financial sources are run by technical experts possessing business experience—entrepreneurs funding entrepreneurs. These capitalists operate like bankers, but they know more. Which may account for the more frequent huge payoffs in Silicon Valley *and* a higher wipeout rate. No irony here: Risk is hardwired into the entrepreneurial economy, and

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ugly failures are inputs into spectacular successes.

Economist Junfu Zhang, the author of the VC chapter, concludes that the mission launched by many local or state governments—to replicate the Silicon Valley experience—is a fool's errand. The social networks that form are key; capital chases smart people connected to other smart people. Wealth is created when those dollars and networks combust. The best strategy is to eliminate the underbrush of tax and regulatory disincentives that inhibit productive economic activity generally. Or somewhat more ambitiously, create a Stanford University and let the graduate students figure out the rest.

In the essay on tax policy, written by Donald Bruce and Tami Gurley-Calvez, an interesting body of research is presented. It shows that the vast majority of business owners in the United States pay taxes as individuals, not corporations. This means that rate increases for high-income taxpayers reduce pay-offs for the start-up entrepreneur. And tax hikes on capital reduce the pool of risky funds that these new ventures seek to tap.

Soaking the rich sinks this ship. Entrepreneurship is all about creating new wealth while tax redistribution is premised on the assumption that resources are static and the collateral damage from tax hikes is no more than the cost of ear plugs to block out the whining at the country club.

In the concluding essay, a real-life entrepreneur finally makes an appearance. Eric Meltzer is a University of Chicago MBA and the son of a famous economist, but otherwise he is perfectly normal—and enterprising. He invests in highly risky wireless communications plays, often at the frontier of technology. He counts passion and knowledge as primary inputs, with dumb luck perhaps dominant. But to capture that fortuitous return, you have to enter the game. And think hard. And pursue objectives energetically. That your "luck" improves with the skill, foresight, and strategic subtlety of the risk-taker is capitalism's very special gift. ♦

'Love Carefully'

Africans against AIDS. BY JENNIFER ROBACK MORSE

Last year, the chief United Nations researchers on AIDS publicly admitted that the U.N. has consistently overestimated the size of the AIDS epidemic. UNAIDS revised their estimates of the numbers of HIV cases worldwide downward from 40 million to 33 million, and cut the number of annual new HIV infections by more than 40 percent from previous estimates.

The Invisible Cure
Africa, the West and the Fight Against AIDS
by Helen Epstein
Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 352 pp., $26

Skeptics wondered whether the history of consistent U.N. overstatement of the HIV problem was a deliberate ploy to raise more funds. Helen Epstein, author of *The Invisible Cure*, was not surprised: Her work shows beyond any doubt that the politics of AIDS often dominates the science of AIDS.

Trained in biology, Helen Epstein began her interest in HIV and AIDS with a postdoctoral project at the Uganda Cancer Institute in 1993, and her new book, based on a series of articles she wrote for the *New York Review of Books* between 1995 and 2006, is invaluable for anyone interested in the politics of AIDS in America. She argues that Western aid agencies are gravely culpable in their handling of the AIDS epidemic because they allowed their preconceived notions to interfere with their objective interpretation of the data. The Lifestyle Left comes off much worse than the Religious Right.

Epstein criticizes some Bush administration African initiatives, but not because their message was wrong. Their error was to transfer American abstinence-only programs into the African context, where they did not realistically apply. Abstinence Only is a fine concept if you are trying to reduce teen pregnancy; it isn't so great in a culture where adults have multiple concurrent partners, as in societies that permit polygamy or concubinage. Epstein suggests that the ABC strategy—Abstain, Be Faithful, Use Condoms—was only imperfectly applied. The right emphasized the Abstain while the left emphasized the Condoms; the Be Faithful part of the strategy did not get sufficient attention, except in Uganda.

The Ugandans themselves, not Western experts, developed a messaging strategy uniquely adapted to the local situation. The slogans "Love Carefully" and "Zero Grazing"—meaning, in the words of the head of Uganda's AIDS Control Program, "avoid indiscriminate and free-ranging sexual relations"—were posted on public buildings, broadcast on radio, and bellowed in speeches by government officials.

According to Epstein, "The genius of the Zero Grazing campaign was that it recognized both the universal power of sexuality and the specific sexual culture of this part of Africa, and it gave people advice they could realistically follow."

By far the lion's share of the blame for the African AIDS debacle lies with the Lifestyle Left. They pride themselves on being scientific, yet these are the very people who were most beguiled by their preconceived notions that condom promotion would control the spread of HIV. They clung to this superstition, even in the face of hard data to the contrary.

Condom promotion strategies take sexual behavior as a given, and attempt to reduce the risk associated with that behavior. Partner reduction strategies, by contrast, focus directly on changing sexual behavior. Here is Helen Epstein's even-handed assessment of the data:

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> Partner reduction has played a key role wherever HIV rates have fallen—from the market towns of East Africa to the red-light districts of Asia to the gay enclaves of the United States. . . . Part of this decline was attributable to the increased use of condoms, but partner reduction was even more important. In San Francisco, the proportion of gay men with multiple anal sex partners fell by 60% between 1984 and 1988, and similar changes were recorded in New York, Chicago and other cities. In Zimbabwe and Kenya, the HIV rate began to decline in the late 1990's. Rates of condom use had been increasing throughout the decade, but it was not until rates of multiple partnerships began to decline that HIV rate in these countries also fell.

This means that the Religious Right was much closer to the mark than the Lifestyle Left. Abstinence Only is a special case of partner reduction. The flaw of the right was that it did not sufficiently adapt its partner reduction strategies to the local situations.

The left's flaw was much more serious. It was simply not open to the conclusion that behavior change was more significant than the risk-management of existing behaviors. By the 1990s, Uganda had the greatest success in controlling the spread of HIV of any African country, even though it started the decade with the highest rates of new HIV infections. "Before" and "after" data on sexual behavior were available. A Belgian medical anthropologist, who had worked for the World Health Organization for many years, first analyzed this data and concluded in 1997 that there had been steep rises in condom use and in the age of sexual debut, but almost no change in the proportion of people with multiple sexual partners.

By the end of the 1990s, some AIDS experts were beginning to doubt this conventional wisdom. Condoms were heavily promoted, and condom sales in Africa soared, but the HIV rate continued to climb throughout the continent—except in Uganda. In 2001 anthropologist Daniel Halperin, a veteran AIDS researcher, reanalyzed the data. The Ugandan HIV decline, he concluded, had coincided not with a uniquely marked increase in condom use but with a plunge in the proportion of people with casual sexual partners.

AIDS clinic, Nairobi

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You would think that this might be exciting and welcome news. Although Epstein is too polite to say so, her account suggests that U.N. officials were blinded by ideology.

> When I read through every UNAIDS document I could find that had been produced in the decade before … 1996, I found almost no mention of partner reduction. … When independent consultants, some of them hired by UNAIDS itself, reported to the agency that partner reduction, not condoms, was largely responsible for Ugandas's HIV decline, their reports were ignored or never made public. The agency's "Best Practice" collection of briefing documents contains issues on condom programs, voluntary testing and counseling, STD treatment services and many other things, but as of this writing, there was no Best Practice document about encouraging partner reduction or fidelity. It was only in 2006 that UNAIDS officials began to stress that the reduction of multiple sexual partnerships should be a key goal for AIDS prevention programs in southern Africa.

The question is why the AIDS establishment did not take this research more seriously, and sooner. Always the lady, Epstein allows the words of others to suggest answers.

> A US government contractor [who] had been running condom campaigns in Africa for decades, admitted, "AIDS produces so much emotion, it is hard to look at the evidence. . . . There was a sense that promoting fidelity must be totally wrong if it was a message favored by the Christian Right. We've made an emotion-based set of decisions and people have suffered terribly because of that."

The Invisible Cure also reports situations similar to those reported by Edward C. Green in THE WEEKLY STANDARD ("AIDS in Africa—a Betrayal," January 31, 2005): Advocates of partner reduction, even sober-minded researchers presenting evidence at an international AIDS conference, "were accused of 'moralizing' and practically booed off the stage." Why would people do such a thing? Her continuation of the story suggests an answer:

> Participants [at the International AIDS conference] engaged in a rowdy celebration of sexuality, safe and otherwise. In the corridors, actors in giant condom costumes twirled through the crowds and a trained elephant passed out free condoms with its trunk. Offsite, a topless go-go bar for the "HIV positive and proud to be sexy" had to close when another elephant trampled a conference-goer to death.

Simply stated, Western hedonists are too committed to the privilege of living out their own lifestyle choices to face the evidence. And their risky lifestyles are deadly to people in the Third World, who have fewer resources to manage the consequences of HIV.

When Helen Epstein finally located Maxine Ankrah, the African-American sociologist who collected the first round of Ugandan data, she described the considerable difficulty she had in locating Ankrah's report. Dr. Ankrah had shown that partner reduction had brought about the Ugandan miracle, but her paper had disappeared without a trace.

"I have no evidence that this was anything other than an honest mistake," Epstein told her, "but it is possible that the reason WHO and UNAIDS never released your report or made any reference to it is that they did not like your results."

Anyone can sympathize with Dr. Ankrah's reaction: "You know, for a long time, I wondered whether there was something wrong with that study. But I was so careful. . . . If those people really were protecting their preconceived notions, they will have a lot to answer for." ♦

Pound for Pound

A poet to admire in spite of his politics.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

Ezra Loomis Pound memorably defined literature as "news that stays news." But the same could be said of his biography. His career was a scandal that is still scandalous, and Pound is among the 20th century authors whose personality remains vivid almost 40 years after his death, at age 87, in 1972. Pound endures as a literary icon in English, united with James Joyce no less than T.S. Eliot, and notwithstanding his intellectual overreaching and undeniable moral faults.

Ezra Pound: Poet
A Portrait of the Man and His Work
Vol. I: The Young Genius, 1885-1920
by A. David Moody
Oxford, 544 pp., $47.95

After communism collapsed in Albania in the 1990s, followed by an unprecedented explosion of translation and publication of contemporary writing in a hitherto isolated European country, my friend Rudolf Marku, the poet, chose verse by Pound, Eliot, and W.H. Auden to introduce to a public hungry for knowledge of the wider world. When I read Marku's translations I already possessed a selection of Pound rendered into Serbian, issued under the Tito regime—a book I found for sale on a Sarajevo street, scavenged from a house wrecked in the late Balkan war. It may seem absurd to have learned these languages by recourse to the most difficult of all American poets—spelled "Paund" in both Albanian and Serbian—but it was surprisingly helpful, and a source of pride in me as an American, demonstrating how far his standing is recognized.

Pound's knotty character was defined early: A teenaged scholar at the University of Pennsylvania, he was judged "more or less obnoxiously different" by his fellow students. So writes A. David Moody, a British academic, in *Ezra Pound: Poet*, which far exceeds the previous contributions of Hugh Kenner, C. David Heymann, Noel Stock, and others. Moody writes that if Pound's collegiate peers "could not take him seriously they were probably quite right not to, since his life among them was for the most part artificial. His real life was elsewhere."

That last comment echoes a dictum of Pound's younger French contemporary, the surrealist André Breton: "Living and ceasing to live are imaginary solutions. Existence is elsewhere." In some ways Pound and Breton could not have been more different. Breton was a Trotskyist and pronounced Judeophile, Pound an admirer of Mussolini and infamous Jew-baiter. Yet in their understanding of the modernist impulse, they were alike. Pound's "Salutation the Second," one of a series of poems published during World War I, concludes with these lines:

> *But above all, go to practical people—*
> *go! jangle their door-bells!*
> *Say that you do no work*
> *and that you will live forever.*

This verse, reminiscent of the Russian futurism of Vladimir Mayakovsky, could stand as a credo for the adventurous intellect embodied in Dada and in Breton's 1928 "novel," *Nadja*, where there is no development of character, and no events of substance are described. (Breton had also pledged never to earn a living by ordinary means, and proclaimed his belief in his immortality.)

Pound further epitomized modernism in his pursuit of an ineffable poetic essence. Moody describes how, in his precocity, he

> was secretly nursing the overweening ambition … to discover "what part of poetry was 'indestructible,' what part could not be lost by translation, and … what effects were obtainable in one language only and were utterly incapable of being translated."

In this sense, the young Pound might have considered ridiculous the presumption of translating his work, many decades later, into the Balkan tongues. But more important, as Moody indicates, "The university which this wholly unusual young man wanted was indeed not there for him."

This first volume of *Ezra Pound: Poet* traces, through the life of the young Pound, the transformation of Western literary sensibility, in its Anglo-Saxon incarnation, from the mannerism still in place at the end of the 19th century to the radical, dissonant aesthetic that emerged from the global conflict of 1914-18. More than any other writer in English, Pound served as a register for this change, and his work, although challenging, was foresighted.

The "nightmare, stammering confusion" of Pound's later verse, as described by William Butler Yeats, represented a harbinger of the cultural babel of globalization. Pound brought together scraps and snatches of tradition and immediate communication in a mode very much like the Internet—polyphonically, to use one of Pound's favorite terms. He was the first literary exemplar of today's "remix"—parallel with, but because of the freedom of his words, bolder than his friends in such successive experimental movements as Imagism, Vorticism, futurism, poetic cubism, even Dada.

Still, his most permanent, satisfying works illustrate the continuing tension between classicism and modernism. There his voice, even as a translator, remains clearest. As noted by Moody, Pound's incomparable rendition of the Anglo-Saxon poem "The Seafarer" revealed a translator "inventing a diction which kept as close as possible to the Anglo-Saxon, with a minimum

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of words from other sources." At the other end of Pound's universe, it is hard to imagine a better evocation of the confusion and anonymity of contemporary life than his 19-syllable haiku, "In a Station of the Metro," perhaps the simplest and most appropriate of any 20th-century poem: *The apparition of these faces in the crowd; Petals on a wet, black bough*. An Eastern inspiration provides spiritual resolution for Pound's introspection and sense of isolation.

Pound's talent for anticipation naturally comprised positive and negative elements. His anti-Jewish prejudice proved to be a herald of the persistence of this atavism in modern life. But Pound began as a critic of *all* people of religion, not the Jews alone. In 1920, as argued by Moody, he showed little evidence of an exclusive anti-Semitic bias. Pound then wrote in an idiom remarkably like that of our contemporary enemies of faith, condemning Judaism, Christianity, and Islam alike: "All religions are evil. . . . We write in the fifth century of the Struggle for Deliverance from these religions."

Like other agitators for irreligion, he appeared incapable of understanding his own contradictions. Pound had distinguished himself as a scholar and translator of the Mediterranean troubadours, whose prosody represented a unique product of Persian and Arabic influences, conveyed through medieval Andalusia, on the mystic Christian culture of Provence and Catalonia. There would have been no troubadours without the monotheistic passion for God, and without the troubadours, there would have been no Pound worth recalling.

This brilliant first volume records in detail the maturation of the poet, a period encompassing his Romance translations, his eccentric but monumental Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian studies, and concludes with the achievement of the long poem-cycle, "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley." According to Moody, "Mauberley" was "metafictional" in its varied perspectives on the text and its creator. "Out of key with his time," as self-described in its opening stanza, Pound drew far ahead of his peers aesthetically, rather than stagnating in a backward-looking snobbery, as he is often caricatured. A "metapoetics" that is still fecund today, it was implicit in all his well-known manipulation of "personae" or "masks." Meanwhile, Pound had come to serve as an indispensable mentor to Eliot as well as friend of William Carlos Williams.

Ezra Pound

KATHERINE EASTLAND

The narrative here ends in 1920, before Pound was disgraced by the full emergence (and allure) of fascism. It will be fascinating to see how Moody deals with the poet's remaining 52 years of life.

Few phenomena in contemporary intellectual life are more tedious than the perfunctory, but typically strident, denunciations of Pound for his distasteful political views. While Pound's long-term ideological stance embodied a cracked modernism that led him to embrace and express repellent opinions, this outlook had little or nothing, in principle or practice, to do with his verse or criticism. Unlike, say, Yeats, who wrote marching songs for the Irish fascist movement, Pound did not compose cadences for the Italian black shirts or the German brown shirts.

Moreover, considering that his offenses were almost exclusively intellectual and literary, attacks on Pound's sanity are in vivid contrast to the near-universal adulation accorded such Stalinist scribblers as Pablo Neruda, who was a Soviet secret terror agent in addition to his wild, public enthusiasm for Stalin. In this regard, Pound is symbolic of other right-leaning authors, including Gottfried Benn and Knut Hamsun, whose biographies are habitually besmirched, while the lives of Soviet enthusiasts (and, sometimes, spies) such as the Pulitzer poetry laureate George Oppen and the Portuguese novelist José Saramago, are praised beyond measure.

At first look, Pound has little in common with the life of the Old Testament Ezra, except that he resembles him in his role as a scribe who sought to reorder the national tradition. But in line with a suggestion by Arthur Koestler discussing the fate of the 1930s Communists, Pound has more in common with Jacob. Laban promised Jacob the hand of his beautiful daughter Rachel, but Jacob was tricked on his wedding night into a match with the ugly Leah. Like most totalitarian intellectuals, Pound believed the grandiose promises of fascist modernism, and found himself tied to the bloody cart of Mussolini and, eventually, to Hitler's minions.

Yet he remains America's Jacob, who taught us to wrestle with our idiom, and how to subdue it. In illuminating this development of Pound's intellect, A. David Moody deserves our thanks. ♦

Gone to Press

The less-than-perfect messenger. **BY JOEL SCHWARTZ**

According to a February Harris Poll, only 10 percent of Americans have "a great deal of confidence" in the press, 48 percent have "only some confidence," and 41 percent have "hardly any confidence at all." For purposes of comparison, 51 percent of Americans have a great deal of confidence in the military, and 47 percent of Americans have a great deal of confidence in small business.

James Bowman has written *Media Madness* to explain why Americans are right to lack confidence in the media. In fact, he thinks they should have even less confidence: "To me, the remarkable thing is how much trust there still is in the 'mainstream' media."

There has obviously been much conservative criticism of the media's leftward slant in recent years, but here Bowman tries to do, and succeeds in doing, something more: As he says, he wrote the book "not . . . to go back over the old ground of media 'bias.'" Instead he seeks to understand the roots of what he calls "media madness . . . the real arrogance of assuming that no other belief [than that espoused by a media consensus] is possible without the assumption of the believer's lunacy, imbecility, viciousness, corruption, or some combination of all four to explain it."

Media Madness
The Corruption of Our Political Culture
by James Bowman
Encounter, 130 pp., $20

Why do so many journalists believe that they are uniquely privileged to understand and define reality?

A good recent example of this arrogance about which Bowman complains concerns NBC's editorial proclamation of a "civil war" in Iraq. As White House counselor Ed Gillespie noted in a May 19 letter to the NBC News president, Steve Capus,

> On November 27, 2006, NBC News made a decision to no longer just cover the news in Iraq, but to make an analytical and editorial judgment that Iraq was in a civil war. . . . Both the United States government and the Government of Iraq disputed [this] account at that time. . . . Around September of 2007, [the] network quietly stopped referring to conditions in Iraq as a "civil war." Is it still NBC News's carefully deliberated opinion that Iraq is in the midst of a civil war? If not, will the network publicly declare that the civil war has ended, or that it was wrong to declare it in the first place?

Needless to say, Capus did not respond to Gillespie's questions. NBC can proclaim when there is a civil war, but cannot bring itself to admit that it erred in so proclaiming.

Bowman's previous book—succinctly entitled *Honor*—was a first-rate cultural history, examining the rise and decline of belief in honor, the need for its contemporary revival, and the unlikelihood of its being revived. The shift in subject matter from honor to media madness may seem surprising, but in fact, the two books are connected: Bowman declares that "the mind of the media and therefore the media madness that it has given rise to has . . . been formed by [our] post-honor society."

What does Bowman mean? In *Honor*, Bowman began by defining his subject as "the good opinion of the people who matter to us." Media madness, we learn, stems in large part from the absence of people and institutions whose opinion might matter to, and so constrain, the media: It came into existence "through the gradual elimination of any authority in church and state or even in scientific or intellectual life to which the media, or those who think as the media have taught us to think, might defer."

It is this collapse of intellectual authority—and intellectual seriousness—that explains much of the phenomenon that Bowman laments. Consider the tendency of many journalists to revere the feelings of those who have suffered, as though their suffering somehow gives them expertise. Bowman quotes Elspeth Reeve, who observed that "it's a little absurd to hold up a person as an expert judge of the 9/11 Commission Report . . . just because she lost a loved one."

Nevertheless, as Bowman notes, journalists tend to ask "a father whose son was stillborn because of the distance to the nearest hospital . . . for his views on hospital closures" or "the mother of a child killed by a speeding driver about traffic regulations." When the *Washington Post* ran a story about an antiwar blogger who proclaimed that she was "insane with rage and grief," it seemed to regard her proclamation "as a reason to take her and her views seriously instead of a reason not to take them seriously."

But that journalistic predilection points to a failing that transcends the media. Within the culture more broadly, feelings are king insofar as reason or reasons are no longer in sufficiently high regard. If it is considered easier to determine who feels more strongly than who thinks more clearly, and if vivid emotions are judged to be more "authentic" than arid rationality, feelings rather than thoughts will be given preference. This embrace of irrationality, evident also in the respect accorded fanatics because of the strength of their "commitment," augurs poorly for the future of rational discourse—and of reasoned democratic deliberation.

My point here—and Bowman would not disagree, I think—is that arrogance, irrationality, and know-nothingism are hardly unique to the media. Arguably journalists are, as one would expect, primarily messengers: The transmitters, not the originators, of a problematic message. The intellectual failings of the media that Bowman insightfully and wittily dissects are failings of American culture as a whole. The media worsen the problem of our intellectual incoherence, as Bowman convincingly shows. But they did not invent it. ♦

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Father Dearest

A quiet family melodrama—and that's a compliment.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Once upon a time, there were a dozen movies released every year similar to the English picture *When Did You Last See Your Father?*—which is nothing more or less than a portrait of ordinary family life and the tensions, traumas, and glories thereof. The family drama has become a relative rarity in English-language cinema, and there is something more than a little odd about that. After all, the family has been the dominant subject of narrative art since the dawn of the age of the novel in the 18th century, and for the most obvious of reasons: Everyone is part of a family, and so no matter how unfamiliar the setting or elaborate the plot, the characters are grounded in a recognizable reality.

When Did You Last See Your Father?
Directed by Anand Tucker

When Did You Last See Your Father? chronicles the final three weeks in the life of Arthur Morrison (Jim Broadbent), a rural Englishman whose Londoner son Blake (Colin Firth) is approaching middle age in a state of quiet filial rage. When Blake returns to his boyhood home to await his father's eventual passing, the movie intertwines the past and present, detailing the causes of Blake's anger and the ways in which he may have misunderstood his rude, blustery, overwhelming, loving dad.

There isn't much more to the movie than this; indeed, it's so simple that its director, Anand Tucker, does everything he can to add visual variety in the form of inventive flashbacks, weird perspectives, and whole scenes shot in mirrors. There's a theory buried in there somewhere about how the son and the father are changing places—one is a reflection of the other, and so on—but Tucker is just gussying up the oldest of stories, a story so powerful and elemental that it doesn't need the fancy camera work to pack a wallop.

The movie works as well as it does because Arthur is a sensationally interesting character, and he is played by a sensationally interesting actor. Broadbent (whom you may not know by name but you do know by face) is put in the near-impossible position of having to play 15 years younger and 15 years older than he is in different scenes, and he manages it perfectly without much in the way of makeup or bother.

At first we think Arthur is a petty con man, since Blake's narration informs us that his father is always looking for an angle, a way around the rules, a freebie, a shortcut. Getting something for nothing is the great pleasure of his life, Blake says. It comes as a great surprise when it turns out that the scamming line he feeds a parking lot attendant—that he is a doctor—turns out to be the truth.

Blake's brief of particulars against Arthur starts out rather petty. He recalls a camping trip during which Arthur insisted they use a newfangled sleeping bag he invented, only to end up floating in two feet of water. Arthur makes too much noise at a pub. Arthur complains about Blake's interest in English literature, because he'll never make a living that way.

And then things start to get rather more complicated. There's a woman around whom Arthur insists Blake call Auntie Beaty. His mother is noticeably uncomfortable when they are both in the room. Beaty's presence in their lives sours Blake on his father, and when the adolescent Blake begins to express himself romantically, he is seized by the fear that his father will somehow overshadow and replace him.

Blake Morrison is a real person, an English poet, and the movie is based on his 1993 memoir. If *When Did You Last See Your Father?* has an abiding weakness, it is that the Blake we see is barely articulate, much less a celebrated writer with a keen eye. As he proved earlier this year in the wonderful *Then She Found Me*, Colin Firth is unparalleled when it comes to displays of unabashed emotional distress. But he is prevented from constructing a rounded character by Andrew Nicholls's screenplay, which becomes very rote whenever it is about anyone but Arthur.

When Did You Last See Your Father? ends spectacularly, with a transfiguring sequence that lasts all of two minutes and that no one who sees it will ever forget. If the movie as a whole were the equal of that closing scene, it would rank with the greatest films. As it is, it is a solid, intelligent, honest, engrossing piece of work.

Jim Broadbent and Colin Firth

How sad that this last sentence almost certainly convinced you that *When Did You Last See Your Father?* is a crashing bore. It is for this very reason that the movies gave up on the family drama. Who wants family drama when you can have robots beating each other up on a Los Angeles street? ♦

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

Archibald Macliché

Shattering the Paradigm: A Running Mate for Obama

Barack Obama's "choice of a running mate will be the first important decision he makes with the whole country watching," writes George Will, "so it will be a momentous act of self-definition." Difficult to disagree. Nor can one argue with Will's persuasive contention that—electorally, presidentially, personally—it would be an enormous mistake for the Democratic nominee to bring Senator Clinton, with all her freight (her husband alone constitutes excess baggage) on board his now well down the runway but still far from aloft campaign plane.

The standard thinking about the choice of a vice-presidential running mate is, of course, to find that political figure who can win votes that are likely to elude those of the presidential candidate. The vice-presidential candidate should complement not duplicate the attractions of the presidential candidate. When John F. Kennedy chose Lyndon Johnson as his running mate, the hope was that Johnson would bring in the southern vote, which he did, and that Johnson's long experience in the Senate would bolster Kennedy's relatively brief experience there and in Washington politics generally, which it also seemed to do.

A barely known governor (Phil Bredesen of Tennessee) or a white-bread southern senator (James Webb of Virginia) just won't cut it for Obama. A solid if perhaps too stolid choice would be Tom Daschle. A man of much wider experience than Obama's, rural in background, one of the party faithful, Daschle lacks the magic that an untried politician such as Obama requires.

If political magic is wanted, what of a Kennedy, or, better, a Kennedy woman? Caroline Kennedy, though without direct political experience, is, as they would have had it at the court of Louis XIV, one of the children of France, by which is meant of course American royalty of the first blood. Her never having held political office must be viewed with caution; and her interest in the job is also in doubt. Another Kennedy woman, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, the oldest child of Robert Kennedy, and a former lieutenant governor of Maryland, is a possibility. But she is a mere princess of the blood, not a direct lineal descendant, and hence perhaps not so magical as all that.

If Barack Obama is in earnest in bringing about change in the way that things currently work in Washington, he and his strategists do well to begin straightaway, when it comes to the choice of a running mate, thinking well outside the box, subverting the paradigm, making the radically unexpected choice, no matter how unconventional it might at first appear. The word radical brings the name Ralph Nader to mind; putting him on the ticket would, at a minimum, prevent him and his Green Party doing in Obama as he did in Al Gore in 2000, yet Nader may well view being on the Obama ticket as selling out. With the debate on stopping the spread of obesity in America picking up steam, Al Gore himself, even if he could be persuaded to take on another turn as second banana, is unlikely to make the weight for the job. Jeb Bush is a passing thought, but scarcely more.

The notion of bringing on Karl Rove as Obama's vice-presidential candidate, shocking though it may seem at first, has much to recommend it. Nobody knows more about electoral politics than Rove. Nobody has a keener insight into winning the Fundamentalist Christian vote, with its impressive money and large number of voters. Having done it twice for George W. Bush, why couldn't he do it again, this time as part of the ticket, for Barack Obama? Bringing Rove over to the side of the Democrats would pay the added dividend of not having to worry about having this formidable political talent working against them.

Karl Rove would be a seductive choice if a more compelling and until now entirely overlooked candidate wasn't out there. This candidate is a woman, and thereby likely to bring to the polls so many of the women voters thought to be alienated by the defeat of Hillary Clinton. Although she has never run for office, she has direct White House experience. Finally, Jewish herself, she is likely to calm the unease that so many Jewish voters have expressed about Barack Obama and Israel. Not an unimpressive list of qualifications for the Democratic party's vice-presidential candidate. The woman, the paradigm-shattering choice for a running mate, is Monica Lewinsky. When you think about it, Barack Obama couldn't make a better choice.

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