the weekly
Standard

RICK PERRY AND HIS ENEMIES
ANDREW FERGUSON • MARK HEMINGWAY

SEPTEMBER 19, 2011 • $4.95

WEAK AND WEARY

Obama's no Truman
JAY COST

And the Republican shouldn't be Dewey
WILLIAM KRISTOL

WEEKLYSTANDARD.COM

Americans are asking Washington:

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*There is one aspect of life that **unites**, **controls**, and **affects** all people. That one aspect is life's **natural laws**. They **unite**, **control**, and **affect** people no matter what their race, gender, creed, or where on this planet they live. Consider that the creator of the laws of physics also created another law to **unite**, **control**, and **affect** people's relationships with one another.*

If you are a new reader of this subject matter, be prepared for a pleasant shock.

Whoever or whatever is the creator revealed nature's law of right action to the mind of Richard W. Wetherill in 1929. The law calls for people to be rational and honest not only regarding the laws of physics but also to be rational and honest in their thinking and behavior toward one another.

After decades of rejection, the behavioral law is as viable and effective as when it was created, whereas people's behavior, in general, has become more and more blatantly irrational and dishonest.

Despite the fact that compliance to each law of physics requires its specific right action in order to succeed, people's behavior toward one another, whether noble or ignoble, was deemed to be a matter of personal choice.

Wetherill used words to describe the elements of nature's law of behavior such as rational, logical, honest, appropriate, moral, and true to the facts. He also cautioned that the law, itself, is the ***final arbiter of right behavior***. The law states: ***Right action gets right results whether it relates to laws of physics or the law of behavior, whereas wrong results in either case indicate the failure to comply.***

There is one requirement of the behavioral law that people need to give careful attention. Rational and honest responses in their relationships with one another must be made specifically to satisfy the law and not to satisfy their particular expectations.

Ordinarily people conduct their relationships to satisfy their purposes, none of which qualify according to natural law. Such behavior, however, does explain why the earth's population is not being peacefully ***united*** and ***controlled*** nor favorably ***affected***.

Do people intentionally refuse to accommodate the requirements of gravity for instance? No, they do their best to keep their balance or recover it when needed.

Behavioral responses require that same attitude. Do not act for personal reasons; act because a self-enforcing, natural law requires people's ***obedience***.

Those who are familiar with the accounts of creation in scriptures will realize that the first wrong act of the created beings was to ***disobey***. That wrong behavior ended the perfect situation that had existed and brought about the predicted wrong results.

Whether those scriptural accounts are actual or symbolic, they graphically illustrate the problem.

For ages people have sought to control their behavior and have suffered myriad troublesome results. Nature's law of behavior when obeyed *unites* people, allowing them to enjoy the benefits that then *control* and favorably *affect* their lives.

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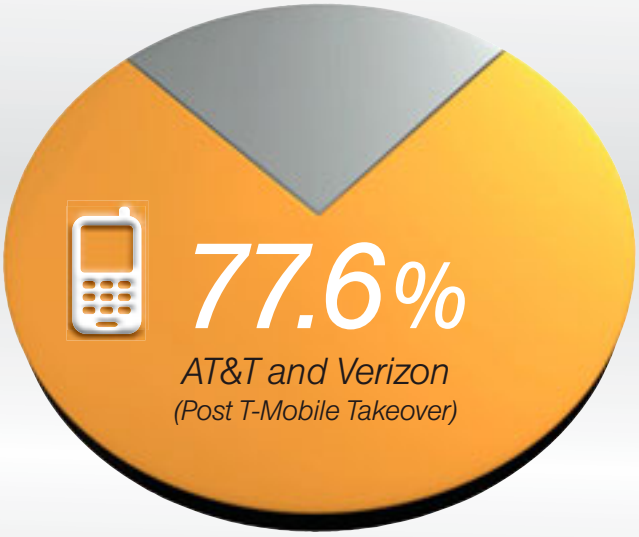
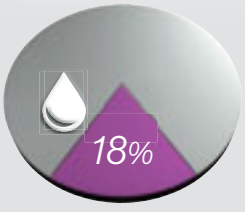
This public-service message is from a self-financed, nonprofit group of former students of Mr. Wetherill.

Two companies controlling this much wireless industry revenue creates a one-sided conversation.



Wireless



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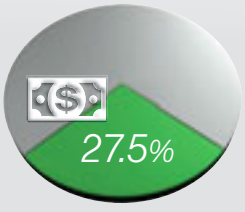
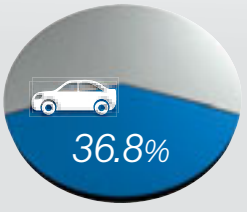


Banking



Auto

AT&T's proposed takeover of T-Mobile would result in two companies controlling more than 77% of wireless industry revenues. In other major industries, the two top firms control much less.

Two wireless industry giants would marginalize the ability of other providers to keep prices competitive for consumers and influence the pace of wireless industry innovation.

This is a bad idea for consumers, competition and our country.

Wireless industry source: Individual company annual financial reports for 2010.
Oil source: www.alacra.com/acm/2042_sample.pdf, page 22. Note: data includes oil refining and gas.
Airline source: DOT, form 41, Schedule P-1.2.
Banking source: DATAMONITOR'S "Banks in the United States" and www2.fdic.gov/sdi/main.asp.
Auto source: SEC 10-K filings, (includes cars and trucks and may include other revenue streams).
Foreign currencies converted to dollars using prevailing exchange rates.

Sprint

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COVER BY GARY LOCKE

Unions: As Nasty as They Wanna Be

The president, you may remember, gave a speech this past January in the wake of the shooting of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords on how "only a more civil and honest public discourse can help us face up to the challenges of our nation." Some consider the speech to be the finest of his presidency, though history is likely to be less kind to it now that we know the president was completely insincere.

Early last week, President Barack Obama sat idly on the same stage while Teamsters president James P. Hoffa told the assembled union crowd, "We've got a bunch of people there that don't want the president to succeed, and they are called the Tea Party. . . . Let's take these son of a bitches out, and give America back to America where we belong."

Hoffa, of course, owes his current position as a powerful union leader to a family legacy of crime and corruption. It may not have been a literal call to violence, but when your name is "Jimmy Hoffa," you don't deserve much in the way of the benefit of the doubt. Especially given that the American left almost gleefully—and wrongly—accused the Tea Party of pulling the trigger in the Giffords shooting. The White House declined to comment on whether Hoffa's remarks were appropriate.

But, believe it or not, that wasn't the most offensive thing that the White House did last week to suck up to organized labor. Last Thursday, a group of longshoremen in Washington state broke into a port. That's when things got really ugly according to the Associated Press: "Hundreds of longshoremen stormed the Port of Longview early Thursday, overpowered and held security guards, damaged railroad cars, and dumped grain that is the center of a labor dispute, said Longview Police Chief Jim Duscha. Six guards were held hostage for a couple of hours."

Like most union disputes, getting to the bottom of International Longshore and Warehouse Union's (ILWU) grievance is as byzantine a process as programming Satan's own VCR. Basically, the port had an agreement with the ILWU, but a shipping consortium had recently built new facilities at the port. The shipping company was under the impression that the newly signed lease freed them from having to hire exclusively ILWU workers, and hired another union that negotiated more favorable terms.

It's not clear whether ILWU has a case, and, if it does, whether the port or the shipping company is to blame for violating the contract. And the shipping company went off and hired union workers, anyway. It does seem clear that this is a matter for the courts to decide, and there's utterly no justification for violence. There's a reason it's called "collective bargaining," not "collective hostage-taking."

That was last Thursday. As you might recall, something else of significance happened that day—the president gave his long-awaited speech rolling out a $450 billion jobs package to a joint session of Congress. Shortly before the president's speech, the White House sent out an email announcing the official guests of the president that would be sitting in the first lady's box.

Among the names was one Richard Trumka, head of the AFL-CIO. Note that the ILWU is an AFL-CIO affiliate. Not that it's likely Trumka was troubled by the ILWU's conduct—after all, Trumka once shrugged off the murder of a worker in the middle of a mine dispute, saying, "If you strike a match and you put your finger in it, you're likely to get burned." Trumka's union then fought the wrongful death lawsuit brought by the victim's wife and children for years.

So just hours after AFL-CIO workers were literally taking hostages, Trumka was being honored by the White House. Of course, Trumka figuratively took the Obama White House hostage a longtime before the air in the port of Longview was thick with the heady smell of pepper spray. The AFL-CIO has spent more than $100 million electing Obama and Democrats in the last two election cycles.

Obama may have refused to comment on union rhetoric last week, but the message came through loud and clear: Write enough campaign checks, and unions can talk—and act—as violently as they want to. ♦

The Rest of the 'Kelo' Story

The case of *Kelo* v. *City of New London* has reached its absurd end. Readers will recall the essentials of the 2005 Supreme Court decision: In 2000, the city of New London, Conn., embarked on a massive redevelopment plan for the town's Fort Trumbull area. The redevelopment was spurred by pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, which indicated it was going to build a $300 million research facility adjacent to Fort Trumbull. Eager to capitalize on the new Pfizer facility, the city invoked eminent domain to seize several middle-class homes in the development zone, including Susette Kelo's house. In their place, the city planned to allow a developer to build a mixed-use residential neighborhood with expensive housing, hotels, bistros, and—this was the key—$1.2 million in new tax revenue. Mrs. Kelo, relying on the text of the Fifth Amendment, which allows such "takings" not for the convenience of developers but for a "public use," sued to stop the seizure; the Supreme Court—relying in part on those tax revenues—found in favor of the city.

Since then, the City of New London has been on an epic losing streak. The *Kelo* decision came near the height of the housing bubble and by the time the loose ends were tied up, the home-

owners displaced, their houses bulldozed, the bubble had burst. The city's chosen developer, Corcoran Jennison, was unable to get financing despite the sweetest of all sweetheart deals—a 99-year lease on the land which required them to pay the city $1 per year. The developer changed its plans over and over, turning its proposed luxury condos first into apartments, and then into FHA housing. None of which mattered. There was no money; there is no project. Nothing is being built.

In October 2009 matters got worse when Pfizer merged with pharmaceutical giant Wyeth. As part of the reorganization, they closed all operations in New London and moved them to nearby Groton. Now the entire rationale for the redevelopment was gone. For years, the Fort Trumbull site has sat vacant. No houses. No new "urban village." No jobs. No tax revenues.

But Hurricane Irene changed all that. Last week the local paper reported that the city had finally found a use for the blighted land it now owns: In the aftermath of the storm, the town informed residents that their tree branches and other vegetative debris could be dumped on the vacant lots of Fort Trumbull. Justice Stevens, who wrote the majority opinion (with Kennedy, Souter, Ginsburg, and Breyer), should be ashamed. ♦

IKEA's Stasi Sofas

Though famously Swedish, big blue IKEA furniture stores are increasingly a part of the American consumer landscape. They may deal in thinly veneered particle board, but the stuff is well designed and affordable if you're willing to tolerate an hour spent dropping an Allen wrench, cursing under your breath, and getting in heated arguments with your spouse over divergent interpretations of the hieroglyphic assembly instructions.

But cheap or not, The Scrapbook is reconsidering purchasing anything there ever again, no matter how much we enjoy the tasty cafeteria meatballs. Ron Radosh, one of the country's premier anti-Communist historians (not to mention a valued Weekly Standard contributor), explains some rather shocking new details that have come to light:

> It appears that the Swedish retail firm IKEA, that thousands of Americans go to in malls throughout our country to purchase cheap and poorly made but sometimes workable furniture, had a very special arrangement with the Stasi, East Germany's notorious secret police. IKEA actually used political prisoners as slave labor to make its furniture, in particular, sofas manufactured in one plant that was conveniently situated next to a prison!

We wonder what this particular model of sofa was called—the IKEA Gulag? At a minimum, IKEA should issue a public apology for their despicable corporate behavior and attempt to make amends to the political prisoners they exploited. Until they do, we're all too happy to put down the Allen wrench and let Craigslist meet our cheap furniture needs. ♦

Happy Anniversary!

The Scrapbook takes pleasure in congratulating our friends at the *New Criterion* on the 30th anniversary of the journal's founding in 1982. We look forward to celebrating the 30th anniversary of this 30th anniversary in 2041, and beyond.

When Hilton Kramer and Samuel Lipman set out to found a monthly journal of culture and the arts—in

conscious imitation of T. S. Eliot's *Criterion* of the interwar period—they intended to have the same effect in our time as Eliot had in his: to clarify first principles of cultural criticism, to resist the critical fashions of the moment, and to raise the standard of distinction in the fine arts and humanities. This put the *New Criterion* fiercely at odds with the reigning orthodoxies in the academy, in journalism, and even in politics, where the canons of Western civilization were under siege.

Since then, in lively and trenchant prose, many battles have been fought and won; but the struggle is far from over—and The Weekly Standard and the *New Criterion* remain comrades in arms. This month, under editor Roger Kimball, they have published a special double issue in honor of the anniversary, and it contains all the ingredients that have made the *New Criterion* required reading and a genuine force in the culture: James Piereson on higher education, David Yezzi on poetry, Kimball on G. K. Chesterton, Michael J. Lewis on the commemoration of 9/11, and much more. ♦

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Small Perfections

Way down in what passes for my soul, I've always felt an impatience—a kind of ungenerous demand for efficiency, immediacy, and speed. Add to that the small tremor I've always had in my hands, and I may be the worst painter in the world today.

Room and house painter, that is. My lack of talent at more artistic painting leaps beyond the petty confines of individual ability to reach historic levels: I'm cosmically bad at putting paint on canvas. Unless, that is, you care for portraits of blobs and messes. Imagine a Jackson Pollock drip composition, except that the colors have all merged to form a monochrome brown tinged with sick green—by an artist who was trying to paint a realistic landscape.

At the more mundane kinds of painting, however, I'm merely bad. When I try to paint a room, there are dribbles on the floor. Corners skipped. Bald patches. Goopy, overpainted sections. Wavy lines. A sloppy performance that doesn't even fulfill my hunger for quick completion, since the whole thing has to be done over again. By someone else.

I'm just as bad at sanding. And machining. Model-airplane assembly. Reinserting those tiny screws in the earpieces of eyeglasses. Arranging lead soldiers in accurate representation of the Battle of Gettysburg. Brain surgery, too, I assume, although I've not yet had occasion to try it.

Basically, I'm rotten at anything that requires precision, care, and patience. Anything fiddly.

Fiddly. It's such a perfect word. A perfect word, that is, for all I cannot do—cleaning, building, repairing, constructing the small perfections of the world. And perfections, they are, in a minor mode. To be alive—at least past the age of 20—is to know that, outside of Heaven, there are no grand fulfillments, total answers, or finished histories. Everything human comes up a little short. But there do sometimes exist focused, discrete actions that approximate the ideal—the acts that create precise objects, nearly perfect of their kind. A well-painted wall, for instance. A correctly tuned carburetor. An exactly aligned shelf. A smooth, finely sanded curve of wood.

WEEKLY STANDARD ILLUSTRATION; BUCKET, BIGSTOCKPHOTO

William Butler Yeats once suggested—while speaking of the rare satisfactions of writing poetry—that a poem should arrive at its conclusion like a well-made box clicking shut. You know what he means: the *snick*, the decisive closing sound, that makes a thing a joy to hold in the hand. That's hard to achieve in long poems; Yeats was probably speaking only of epigrams. But he was referring to an experience we've all had: In precision, a kind of patient carefulness for small things, we come closest to knowing perfection.

In the town where I live, one of the men who runs a car-repair shop has that Yeatsian sense of things. He does less business than other repairmen manage, but he always seems to get it right. A carpenter I know has the careful sense, as well: this need to see the construction square and the corners painted well. As it happens, he wants to be a general contractor, one of those big-picture builders who gets the contract and hires others to do the work, but his perfectionism makes him lousy at all that. People driven by carefulness in the little things are not usually good at delegating tasks.

Interestingly, the local potter whose bowls my wife likes lacks the impulse. He's got good ideas, but too often they're gestured at rather than fulfilled. It isn't craft that he's missing, exactly. It's more like *precision*: the need to see the edges clean and the balance right.

I sometimes wonder—actually, I often wonder—whether my own lack of patience is what keeps away the kind of calm happiness I wish I had. You know the sort of thing I mean, yes? That abiding contentment that seems so enviable on the rare occasions when we spot it in other people. It comes, I think, most of all from patience and care, but it flowers in the execution of tasks that, in turn, seem to feed the contentment. The fiddly chores done correctly. The precise works finally completed. The small things done well.

Perfection, in other words. Or as close to it as we can find. A foretaste, perhaps, of a different world, a different life.

Joseph Bottum

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Overstimulated

Stop us if you've heard this one before. The economy is suffering from low growth and high unemployment. Families are struggling with debt. Many are living in homes whose mortgages cost more than the property is worth. All over the world, governments are reeling from the economic and political consequences of excessive sovereign debt.

The president of the United States, Barack Obama, appears before Congress to offer his solution. America, he says, is experiencing a collapse in what economists call aggregate demand. Consumers aren't spending enough to fill the "output gap"—the theoretical difference between what the economy is producing now and what it might produce at full capacity. Government, he says, needs to cover the difference.

How? Through temporary tax cuts, aid to state and local governments, and federal spending on highways and high-speed rail. We can worry about how to pay for it all later. And if the Federal Reserve resumes its "extraordinary measures" to promote demand, well, that's fine too. Americans won't have to worry about the inflation that results, unless of course they drive a car that uses gasoline, shop at a grocery store, or live in Asia.

Such is the logic that has determined American economic policy for the last two and a half years. Actually, longer: The same assumptions informed the decisions made by President Bush at the end of his term, from the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 to the bailouts of banks, insurers, and automakers to the massive interventions of the Federal Reserve to prevent a global banking collapse. Whether it's Bush in 2008, Obama in 2009, or Obama last week, the federal government's response to the Great Recession has been remarkably consistent. Like a corny one-liner, the setup is always the same. Government must "stimulate" the economy to encourage recovery.

Here's the punchline. Fourteen million unemployed. No net job creation in August. A projected 9 percent unemployment rate through at least 2012. Trillion-dollar-plus deficits. A projected doubling of the national debt in one decade. The first downgrade of U.S. Treasuries in history. Dismal growth. A high chance of another recession (assuming we ever really left the first one). An inescapable sense of national decline.

GARY LOCKE

So, for almost four years, a prolonged and brutal economic slump has coincided with sustained government efforts to bring demand forward and get consumers spending as they did before the crash. The powers that be say they've tried everything: temporary tax cuts, public works, Cash for Clunkers, Cash for Caulkers, cash transfers, preferential loans to favored companies, plus two rounds of what's known as "quantitative easing," aka money creation. They've sent money to states to prevent layoffs of public sector workers. They've entangled the government in AIG, GM, and Chrysler and further entangled it in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Nothing's worked.

And yet the delusion persists that the way out of recession is for government to "create jobs." The president's September 8 address to a joint session of Congress was chockablock with more of the same failed policies. Not once does it seem to have occurred to him that the inconsistent, frenetic, short-term, and haphazard activity of his government may be contributing to the sputtering economy. How are entrepreneurs to risk capital when they don't know what tax rates will be in the long term, how are companies to hire when they don't know which EPA regulations will be suspended and which won't be, how are banks to lend to startups when they get a safer return buying coupons from the Fed?

None of this shows up in the abstract and soulless models of the macroeconomists. But if those models were accurate, happy days would be here again. The models are flawed. They did not know how to handle stagflation in the 1970s, nor do they know how to handle stagnation today. Simple, unfashionable common sense tells us government doesn't need more stimulus. It needs a tranquilizer.

The fact is that everyone is drowning in debt. Governments, banks, individuals all took on far too many obligations. We've been on a sugar rush for a decade—and the president says the answer is just one more Pixy Stix.

A responsible chief executive would level with the public and say tough measures are required to accelerate the great deleveraging, return the economy to equilibrium, and resume the natural tendency of market economies to grow. That means ending the policies of the last four years. It means a renewed focus on limiting government, the unwinding of federal involvement in housing, insurance,

and autos, a moratorium on regulations, an end to drive-by decision making, the permanent revision of the individual and corporate tax code, and a rethinking of monetary policy. It means a change at the top. Because this joke isn't funny anymore.

—Matthew Continetti

Don't Be Dewey

Historians will little note nor long remember what President Obama said in his jobs speech to Congress last Thursday night. For one thing, it was painfully obvious that the main job Obama was concerned to save was his own. But some may, after Obama leaves office in January 2013, recall the inspired decision by the Republican leadership to depart from recent precedent and not to bother offering a response to the Obama speech. That decision had the virtue of allowing millions of Americans to turn their attention more quickly to preparations for serious viewing of the season-opening Packers-Saints football game. But it also signaled a level of confidence on the part of Republicans that they no longer had to worry much about President Obama's ability to frame the national debate, rally support for his proposals, or draw blood from his attacks.

That confidence is, on the whole, warranted and welcome. Of course, it shouldn't become overconfidence. Obama still has advantages going into 2012. Incumbent presidents usually get reelected. What's more, since the end of the Cold War the Democratic presidential nominee has outpolled the Republican in the national vote 4 out of 5 times. Third-party efforts, either from the Tea Party right or the Jon Huntsman-like center, could hurt the GOP. And Republican control of the House leaves open the possibility that Obama may succeed in assigning the GOP some part of the blame for the nation's parlous condition. Obama clearly intends to mimic Harry Truman and run against "do-nothing" Republicans.

Still, Republican confidence is more justified than not, given the survey data regarding President Obama's job performance and the economic data regarding the state of the nation. And such confidence will prove healthy—if it leads Republicans not to obsess about their ongoing criticism of Obama, but to devote time and effort to their own agenda for governing in 2013. And that agenda should be both politically and substantively bold. Republican presidential candidates have to understand that the way to avoid Tom Dewey's fate in 1948 is to be more like Ronald Reagan in 1980—or, to be bipartisan about it, like Bill Clinton in 1992. Reagan and Clinton ran not only as governors with reasonably successful records but, more important, as bold reformers with clear and big agendas for the country. They were also were willing to break with their own party's recent past and their party establishment's orthodoxy. That's the model for Republican success in 2012.

Which is why some of us were hoping for Paul Ryan or Chris Christie or Mitch Daniels to run for the presidency. That seems not to be in the cards. But the good news, lost in some of the back-and-forth during last Wednesday's GOP presidential debate and the micro-analysis afterward, is that the frontrunners, Rick Perry and Mitt Romney, do seem open to Reaganite boldness, not Dewey-esque caution. It's true that they're not quite there yet. Romney's almost self-parodic 59-point economic plan, unveiled last week, lacks an underlying narrative and vision. Perry's impressively forthright general statements of policy direction so far lack enough detail. But each can correct his characteristic deficiency. And if neither shows signs of doing so by mid-October, after four more debates, then there will still be time for another candidate to move to the top tier or to enter the race.

Thomas E. Dewey

AP IMAGES

But what's key, surely, is to think big. Bill Bennett likes to quote Chekhov: "You will not become a saint through other people's sins." Of course the presidency isn't sainthood, and you can become president partly through the incumbent's deficiencies. But you can't count on that. In any case the country, at this moment, deserves more. The Republican primary electorate and the American public expect more. Neither will reward a presidential candidate who tries to play it safe.

This means Republicans will have to think of 2012 as an election on the scale of 1932 and 1980. This election can be a moment when the nation endorses a major course correction in policy and governance, and not merely a reactive repudiation of a failed incumbent. The example of FDR—a governor for four years, a child of privilege with a mixed reformer-establishment pedigree who was able to bridge rifts in his own party—should give heart to those inclined to support Mitt Romney. The example of Reagan—a big-state governor with a history of risky positions and incautious statements who was able nonetheless to win over independents to a bold agenda—should give heart to those inclined to prefer Perry. The example of Clinton (a less auspicious example, to be sure), who didn't get into the race until October 1991, can give hope to those holding out for Christie or others. But the task is to go far beyond react-

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ing to Obama's failed presidency, and to lay out a governing agenda suitable to the challenges of the day.

Here the frontrunners can benefit from the other candidates in the race. They can learn from Rick Santorum's moral clarity on social issues and intellectual clarity on foreign policy; from Michele Bachmann's steely opposition to big government and welfare-state liberalism; from Newt Gingrich's willingness to consider big ideas from whatever source; even from Ron Paul and his critique of fiat currency, Jon Huntsman and his proposal for tax simplification, and Herman Cain and his call for citizen empowerment rather than liberal paternalism. And they can learn too from Sarah Palin's powerful critique of corporate crony capitalism.

Ronald Reagan

Just as FDR became the carrier of all sorts of progressive ideas that he didn't originate and hadn't been particularly identified with before 1932, just as Ronald Reagan added in 1980 to his previously more conventional conservative repertoire elements of supply-side economics and the neoconservative critique of the Great Society—so the next Republican nominee has an opportunity to speak for more than himself. He can speak for a broad movement of economic reform and political reformation. He can speak for the best in the American tradition. If he does so, victory in 2012 will be more likely, and it will be worth having.

—William Kristol

Losing Iraq?

President Obama did a good job of feinting to the right on national security issues during his first two years in office. Lacking much standing on military policy, he often acceded to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Michael Mullen—a trio of hard-headed centrists. He kept 50,000 troops in Iraq, down from more than 100,000 but still a substantial figure. He sent 64,000 troops to Afghanistan, tripling the size of the American force there. He gave up his initial hopes of high-level talks with Iran. He stepped up drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. He abandoned plans (under pressure from Congress) to close Guantánamo Bay and end military tribunals, and generally kept in place most of President Bush's counterterrorist policies. The apogee of his unexpected tilt to the right was reached on May 1 with the (extrajudicial, unilateral) killing of Osama bin Laden in a daring special operations raid in Pakistan authorized personally by the president and carried out without the permission of the host government.

Yet Obama has lately been turning dovish—a trend that has accelerated since bin Laden's demise.

First, in January, the White House budget office demanded $78 billion in cuts from the defense budget. Gates, who had already canceled or delayed numerous programs, reluctantly complied. Then in April, with almost no notice to Gates, Obama announced another $400 billion in cuts—a figure that was soon passed into law by Congress, which might (with the president's support) cut far more before long. By the time Gates left office, he was complaining in public that he couldn't "imagine being part of a nation, part of a government . . . that's being forced to dramatically scale back our engagement with the rest of the world."

Those complaints were given greater salience when, just weeks before Gates's departure, Obama decided on a precipitous force reduction in Afghanistan, pulling all 30,000 surge troops out by September 2012 against the advice of Gates, Mullen, and General David Petraeus. Now the president appears to be determined to bug out from Iraq. At least that's the only way we can interpret the report that the administration will ask to keep just 3,000 to 4,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq after the end of this year.

That is far below the figure recommended by U.S. Forces-Iraq under the command of General Lloyd Austin. It has been reported that Gen. Austin asked for 14,000 to 18,000 personnel—enough to allow his command to train and support Iraqi security forces, conduct intelligence gathering, carry out counterterrorism strikes, support U.S. diplomatic initiatives, prevent open bloodshed between Arabs and Kurds, and deter Iranian aggression. To perform, in other words, at least a few of the crucial tasks that U.S. troops have been carrying out in Iraq since the success of the surge in 2007 and 2008.

But keeping nearly 20,000 troops in Iraq was judged by State and Defense department officials too politically volatile in both Iraq and the United States. So they whittled down Gen. Austin's request to 10,000 personnel. That's still a substantial force package—amounting to two Brigade Combat Teams plus enablers—and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, Admiral Mullen, and other senior leaders signed off.

When U.S. representatives presented this proposal to Nouri al-Maliki, the prime minister gave his tacit support provided that other Iraqi politicos did so. Remarkably enough, despite nationalist sentiment in Iraq against "foreign occupation"—a sentiment fed by Iranian propaganda—

AP IMAGES

all of the major Iraqi political factions, save the Sadrists, gave their assent on August 2 to open negotiations with the United States on precisely these terms. And even the Sadrists merely abstained instead of voting against negotiations.

Moreover, the Maliki government took to heart U.S. complaints that we could not keep a substantial number of troops in Iraq if they were going to be subject to a relentless Iranian-backed terrorist campaign. June was the bloodiest month for U.S. troops in Iraq since 2009—15 soldiers died, most of them in Iranian-backed strikes. But then the Iraqis cracked down, with U.S. help, on Shiite militants, and lo and behold, not a single U.S. soldier perished in August—the first time that has occurred since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

At the same time, the Iraqi government announced a belated decision to purchase 36 F-16 fighters from America. The pieces appeared to be in place for a long and fruitful strategic relationship between one of the world's oldest democracies and one of the newest. And then, just as negotiations between the U.S. and Iraqi governments were heating up on a new status of forces agreement, the administration let on that it wanted to keep no more than 4,000 troops there. That request, which is completely at odds with the best advice of military commanders on the ground, undercuts the position of American negotiators and suggests that Iraq's future is of little importance to the United States.

We are the last people in the world to argue that civilian policymakers should uncritically accept the views of the uniformed military. Many generals (though not all) were dead set against the surge that saved the situation in Iraq, and it was only by relieving Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and senior commanders on the ground that President Bush was able to implement a change in strategy. But we see no reason to distrust the best judgment of Gen. Austin, a seasoned and respected commander whose views echo those of other military experts, in uniform and out. Nor have we heard the administration offer any explanation of why 3,000 to 4,000 troops would suffice in such difficult and dangerous conditions.

In fact, with such small troop numbers, U.S. commanders would be forced to all but close shop. They could still provide some training and support to the Iraqi Security Forces, but not much more than that. It would be difficult if not impossible to continue conducting counterterrorist raids or patrolling the volatile border separating Iraq proper from the Kurdish Regional Government. And such a small number of U.S. troops could well become targets of the Iranian-backed militias.

So why would the administration decide, at least tentatively, on such a minuscule deployment? A clue can be found in an item posted August 3 on TheAtlantic.com by senior editor Joshua Green. He relayed Rep. Barney Frank's account of what Vice President Joe Biden reportedly told the Democratic caucus two days before. Here is Frank's version (which has not been contradicted by the vice president or his aides):

> Biden was at the caucus, and I said I was upset about Afghanistan and Iraq. So [budget director] Jack Lew says, "Well, we're winding them down." I said, "What do you mean, you're winding them down? I read Panetta saying that he's begging the Iraqis to ask us to stay." At which point Biden asserted himself and said—there's clearly been a dispute between them within the administration—"Wait a minute, I'm in charge of that negotiation, not Panetta, and we have given the Iraqis a deadline to ask us, and it is tomorrow, and they can't possibly meet it because of all these things they would have to do. So we are definitely pulling out of Iraq at the end of the year." That was very good news for me. That's a big deal. I said, "Yeah, but what if they ask you for an extension?" He said, "We are getting out. Tomorrow, it's over."

That item might have looked preposterous in early August, when U.S.-Iraq negotiations were just beginning. But it looks prescient now, because the White House essentially has chosen to pull the plug on a large-scale U.S. deployment to Iraq, regardless of what the Iraqis think. (It is possible that the Iraqis would not approve more than 4,000 troops, but how would we know without pushing for a higher figure?) Joe Biden—who supported the decision to invade Iraq but opposed the surge and instead proposed breaking Iraq into three different parts—appears ascendant on both Iraq and Afghanistan policy. He seems to have been looking for an excuse to leave Iraq, and Iraqi foot-dragging, which is to be expected in such a rickety parliamentary system, provided it to him.

But of course Biden does not get the final vote. He can carry the day only if his boss, the president, lets him. For all of Obama's feints toward the right, it seems that in the end he cannot get over the fact that he launched his presidential bid—and won the Democratic nomination—by opposing the war in Iraq. Whenever he talks about the achievements of his administration before a partisan audience—as he did, for example, at an August 8 Democratic National Committee event in Washington—he brags not only about rescuing the economy from the 2008 recession and implementing health care and financial regulatory reform, but also ending "the war in Iraq" and "transitioning into a posture where in Afghanistan, Afghans can take responsibility for their own security."

Given the administration's current ideological tilt, the best we can hope for in Iraq is an agreement that does not impose a numeric limit on U.S. forces. An open-ended agreement for the United States to help and support the democratic development of Iraq could be used by a future administration to send more U.S. troops—as long as our Iraqi partners see the need for them.

Clearly Obama envisions running for a second term as he did for his first term—as the "antiwar" candidate. The sad irony, however, is that an American drawdown in both countries makes continued war—and with it the possibility of a catastrophic American defeat—more likely by emboldening our enemies and disheartening our friends.

—Max Boot

Perry and the Profs

He picked the right fight.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

If you want a glimpse of the way Rick Perry operates as an executive and a politician, consider the issue of higher education reform in Texas, which no one in Texas knew was an issue until Perry decided to make it one.

In his 30-year public career, Perry—how to put this delicately?—has shown no sign of being tortured by a gnawing intellectual curiosity. "He's not the sort of person you'll find reading *The Wealth of Nations* for the seventh time," said Brooke Rollins, formerly Perry's policy director and now president of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a free-market research group closely allied with Perry. At Texas A&M he majored in animal science and escaped with a grade point average a bit over 2.0. (Perry's A&M transcript was leaked last month to the left-wing blog Huffington Post by "a source in Texas," presumably not his mom. How his GPA compares with Barack Obama's is unknown, since no one in higher education has thought to leak Obama's transcript to a right-wing blog.)

Perry expends his considerable intelligence instead on using political power and, what amounts to the same thing, picking fights with his political adversaries. When Rollins came to Perry in 2007 with a radical and comprehensive proposal to overhaul higher education in the state, Rollins says the governor quickly understood the potential of the issue, not only politically but on its merits. The state operates more than 100 colleges, universities, technical schools, and two-year community colleges, organized into six separate systems. As in other states, public higher education in Texas is scattered, expensive, poorly monitored, and top heavy with administrators, even as it subjects students to often large annual tuition increases without a compensatory increase in educational quality.

Perry's first poke at this sclerotic establishment came early in his first term. He suggested converting the money that the state gives to public colleges and universities into individual grants handed straight to students. Money is power, and Perry's idea was to place the power in the hands of "consumers," as he put it, rather than the administrators, to increase competition among schools and thereby lower costs and increase quality. "Young fertile minds [should be] empowered," he said at the time, "to pursue their dreams regardless of family income, the color of their skin, or the sound of their last name."

The higher ed establishment, led by regents of the University of Texas system, rebelled, and the legislature, well-wired with the system's allies, agreed, and the proposal died. But

THOMAS FLUHARTY

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Perry continued to poke. College graduation rates in Texas are unusually low, and the gaps among whites, blacks, and Hispanics are unusually high. Nationwide 38 percent of American adults (age 25-64) have a post-secondary degree; in Texas the figure is 31 percent. So Perry proposed "Outcomes-based Funding," tying the amount of aid a school receives to the number of students it graduates. To keep a school from lowering its standards to increase its graduation rates, he suggested giving an exit exam to all students receiving a B.A. Students wouldn't have to pass the exam to get their degree, but the information yielded by such a test—how much learning is going on around here?—would be useful, mostly to reformers. The proposal was seen, correctly, as a threat to the status quo, which has so far successfully fought it off.

The proposals Rollins brought to Perry in 2007 turned on the same themes of—apologizing in advance for the buzzwords—accountability and transparency: collecting information about how much students learn and how well schools function, and holding the schools responsible for the results. "His priority has been putting students back into the driver's seat," Rollins said. Perry said he hoped to apply the cost-benefit logic of business to public higher education. He incorporated Rollins's ideas into a package of reforms and called a "higher education summit" to build support.

The reforms attacked the establishment from multiple angles. They would require schools to expand their websites to make vast amounts of new information available to students. For the first time, professors would be required to post course syllabi online. To suss out slackers among the faculty, schools would post every teacher's salary and benefits along with the average number of students and course hours they taught every year. A summary of student evaluations would be posted too, and the average number of As and Bs professors handed out, to guard against grade inflation. Before choosing a particular school or enrolling in a major, students would be given a list of the specific skills or knowledge that they could expect to learn, as well as the average starting salaries of students who had graduated from a similar course of study.

Perry also suggested separating teaching budgets from research budgets, as a way of encouraging teachers to teach and researchers to do research. Tenure would be granted only to teachers who spent a large majority of their time teaching; a defined percentage of tenure jobs would go to researchers, who would concentrate on pure research. A system of cash awards and other incentives would compensate professors who successfully taught a large number of students.

Any businessman in a profit-seeking enterprise would see ideas like 'pay for performance' as unremarkable, but they overwhelm the delicate sensibilities of people who have spent their professional lives on campus, where the word 'nonprofit' is meant to act as a firewall against the unpleasantness of commercial life.

Any businessman in a profit-seeking enterprise would see ideas like "pay for performance" as unremarkable, but they overwhelm the delicate sensibilities of people who have spent their professional lives on campus, where the word "nonprofit" is meant to act as a firewall against the unpleasantness of commercial life. "Texas Governor Treats Colleges Like Businesses," headlined the *Chronicle of Higher Education*—a sentence sure to induce aneurysms in faculty lounges from El Paso to Galveston. The outrage was deafening, especially when university regents began acting on the recommendations. The Texas A&M system, for example, which includes a dozen schools, posted a spreadsheet on its website evaluating teacher performance on a cost-benefit basis.

"Very simplistic and potentially very dangerous," an official of the American Association of University Professors said. "This is . . . simplistic," said the dean of faculties at A&M. "Simplistic," said the *Houston Chronicle*. A group of former regents and wealthy school boosters organized a pressure group to oppose Perry's reforms. The group hired Karen Hughes, a close aide to the second President Bush, as press spokesman. The rage at Perry from within the establishment has taken many forms: You think it's easy stealing someone's college transcript?

The protests might have been more effective except that Perry, for the last decade, has been seeding Texas higher education with like-minded reformers (cronies too). By 2009 he had appointed every regent in the state. The chancellor of A&M who issued the cost-benefit report, for example, was a former chief of staff of the governor. At least three campus presidents have been pressured to resign in recent years, to make way for Perry appointees—all Republican businessmen. A particularly popular (and vocal) vice president of student affairs at the University of Texas was removed and replaced by . . . a retired Marine Corps general.

The appointees weren't as pliant as Perry might have wished. The implementation of the reforms has been difficult and at times dilatory. Perry barrels on. In his state of the state address this spring, he urged administrators to develop a four-year bachelor's degree that would cost less than $10,000 "including textbooks." The discount degree, he said, would be a "bold, Texas-style solution" to the problem of rapidly rising tuition. (The average in-state cost of a four-year degree in Texas, including books, is roughly $30,000.) After the goal was declared impossible by Perry's critics, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board published a plan to lower costs dramatically: greater use of online classes and "open-source" course materials, accelerated

or staggered student schedules, fuller integration of four- and two-year colleges, and more.

Perry's admirers praise his sure-footedness—his ability to sense cultural trends before others do and turn them to his political advantage. He was the first national politician to ally himself to the Tea Party movement in 2009, a move that's just now paying off. He caught the mounting anxiety among middle-income parents about college costs early on. Most American parents now say that a college degree will be essential for their children's future success; at the same time, according to a new Pew Foundation poll, only 22 percent of Americans believe that most people can afford to send their kids to college. And 57 percent describe the quality of American higher education as "only fair" or "poor." To address this anxiety Perry's opponents offer more government subsidies, which in turn provide an incentive for schools to raise their prices—an attempt to douse the fire with gasoline. Perry's ideas are cheaper, more comprehensive, more imaginative, and more likely to work.

And they have a good chance of being put into action. In late August, Perry scored another significant, if partial, victory. The University of Texas regents approved an "action plan" proposed by the system's chancellor, who isn't a Perry appointee. The plan is a compromise, but it incorporates many of Perry's ideas, including some of the most radical, such as "pay for performance" and "learning contracts" between schools and their students. Amazingly, the plan has won support from both the right (Brooke Rollins's Texas Public Policy Foundation) and left (Karen Hughes's group).

Reforms like these would have been unthinkable 10 years ago, before Perry picked up his stick and started poking the system until it had to respond. It's been a remarkable display of political entrepreneurship: Create an issue, define it on your terms, cultivate public support, and your opponents, who never saw it coming, will have to go along, even if only partway—at first. ♦

Right-to-Work Showdown

Should New Hampshire be pro-choice when it comes to unions? BY FRED BARNES

Nashua, New Hampshire

Republicans won a smashing victory in New Hampshire in the 2010 elections, capturing the state senate and house by staggering margins. Yet they've been unable to enact one of House speaker Bill O'Brien's cherished initiatives, a right-to-work law allowing workers to reject union membership.

It's an issue of enormous national significance. Twenty-two states have right-to-work laws, most of them in the South and West. If New Hampshire passes such a law, it will be the first state in the Northeast to do so. And this, O'Brien says, would "send a signal to the rest of the country."

New Hampshire House speaker Bill O'Brien

Indeed, New Hampshire would be a beacon in the economically troubled Northeast. When Texas governor Rick Perry was interviewed on a radio show in Nashua recently, he said New Hampshire could post an "open for business" sign, since it is already the only state besides Alaska with neither an income tax nor a sales tax. That would give the state a trifecta of incentives for private investment, economic growth, and job creation, says Pete Silva, the Republican whip in the state house.

New Hampshire's rate of unemployment, 5.2 percent, is remarkably low. But census figures show that people in the 25 to 34 age group are leaving the state. "We're not producing jobs for our young people," says O'Brien. He believes right-to-work would keep more of them home.

Given the Republican landslide, passage appeared likely when the legislature convened in January. Republicans gained an eye-popping 124 seats in the House, giving them a 298-102 advantage. In the Senate, they picked up 9 seats for a 19-5 edge.

The right-to-work bill sailed through the House (221-131) and Senate (16-8). Then two roadblocks emerged, one expected, the other a surprise.

Governor John Lynch, a Democratic survivor of the 2010 massacre, had vowed to veto right-to-work, and he kept his promise. The surprise was the emergence of 35 Republican dissidents in the House, nearly all of them active or retired union members who are prepared to vote to sustain Lynch's veto.

O'Brien and his allies must turn a half-dozen of them, a difficult task. The dissenters are dug in. Few, if any, have been persuaded to change their vote. And last week, another Republican opponent, a firefighter, was elected in a special election. In that race, only the libertarian candidate supported right-to-work. Democrats won't

NEWSCOM

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provide any help either. They voted unanimously against the bill.

No state has enacted a right-to-work statute since Oklahoma passed a referendum, 54-46 percent, in 2001. And the issue has a poor track record in New Hampshire. It's been taken up repeatedly in the legislature since the 1980s, passing the House on occasion but never the Senate until this year.

The issue was barely mentioned in last year's campaign, but when Republicans announced their legislative agenda for 2011, it got top billing. "For some of us, it's always been a philosophical priority," O'Brien told me. "It'll be great for our state's economy, and it's a liberty issue as well."

In recent years, states with right-to-work laws have done well economically as new industries—notably foreign automakers who reject unions—have moved there. The laws outlaw union shops in which workers are compelled to join a union and pay dues as a condition of employment. Right-to-work allows workers to opt out of union membership and any obligation to pay dues. The result: Right-to-work states are very tough to unionize.

Organized labor has been fighting against right-to-work since the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 permitted states to bar compulsory unionization. Union officials regard it as a life-or-death issue. Thus their campaigns against efforts to enact right-to-work laws are well financed, passionate, and often heavy-handed.

When the issue was debated in the New Hampshire House, O'Brien cleared the gallery of union firefighters who were shouting their disapproval. Now, union lobbyists have been joined by other liberal groups in a united front against O'Brien and Republicans. They keep close tabs on the legislators allied with them, especially on their whereabouts daily.

There's a reason for this. New Hampshire has a part-time, volunteer legislature. Members are paid $100 a year. (As speaker, O'Brien gets $125.) On a good day when votes are taken, 350 House members will show up. The trick for O'Brien is to call a vote when the numbers look good for an override.

"If you change a few minds and a few people don't turn up, there's a shot," says John Kalb, a Dartmouth graduate from Brooklyn who's the New Hampshire lobbyist for the National Right to Work Committee. "But two-thirds is a high bar to jump over."

Many Republicans appear indifferent to right-to-work, but they face a new source of pressure, a phalanx of conservative groups who've become a powerful element in New Hampshire politics. "Conservative activists have come into their own," says Kevin Smith of Cornerstone Action. "They really know how to influence their members to take action," says former talk radio host Jennifer Horn of We the People, a grassroots group she organized.

The split among Republicans, while lopsided, has caused bitter feelings. Representative Mike McCarthy of Nashua calls himself a "committed conservative and Republican." For the past 20 years, he's voted a straight Republican ticket. He's also a member of the electrical workers union. His wife, brother, father, and grandfather are union members or retirees. McCarthy voted against right-to-work and intends to vote against overriding the governor's veto.

This went over poorly with Pete Silva, the whip. McCarthy used to join Silva on his weekly radio show in Nashua. Silva says if McCarthy doesn't like right-to-work, he didn't have to vote for it. "He could have been sick that day" or taken a walk—that is, simply not voted. For months now, Silva hasn't invited McCarthy to his show.

There's a flip side to the promising signal New Hampshire will send if right-to-work prevails. Should it fall short, the signal will be discouraging. If an overwhelmingly Republican legislature—with its leaders strongly in favor, conservative activists fired-up and on board, and organized labor in steep decline—can't enact a law that gives workers the simple right to choose whether to join a union, where can such a law pass? Indiana, maybe, or perhaps Missouri. But I wouldn't bet on it. ♦

Family Feud

Rick Perry versus the Bush machine.

BY MARK HEMINGWAY

At last week's Republican debate at the Reagan Library, a long-simmering Texas political feud made its grand entrance onto the national stage. *Politico*'s John Harris asked GOP presidential frontrunner and Texas governor Rick Perry about his former political adviser Karl Rove's recent statement that Perry's views on Social Security were "toxic."

"Karl has been over the top for a long time in some of his remarks, so I'm not responsible for Karl any more," Perry fired back, later adding, "We're not trying to pick fights here."

This wasn't the first shot that Rove has taken at Perry in recent weeks. When Perry said Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke would be "almost treasonous" for inflating the money supply ahead of the election, Rove went on television and unhelpfully offered his opinion that this was "not, again, a presidential statement."

The two powerful Texas Republicans have a relationship that goes back over 20 years, long predating Rove's ascension to the White House with Perry's predecessor as governor, George W. Bush. To this day, Rove takes credit for persuading Perry to switch parties in 1989 and run for agriculture commissioner as a Republican the following year. It's not surprising that two fiercely competitive political figures would have had their share of disagreements in all that time.

"There's no question that there's tension between Bush world and Perry world. The idea that there isn't is ludicrous to anybody that has been in the middle of Texas politics," says *Texas Tribune* editor in chief Evan Smith, referring to the two main camps in the Texas GOP.

But getting anyone actually involved in Texas politics to talk about that tension—especially to a Washington reporter—would violate the first rule of the Perry-Bush fight club. Reached by phone, veteran Texas newspaperman and *Texas Monthly* contributor R.G. Ratcliffe immediately volunteers, "Let me guess—nobody would talk to you, huh?"

Another Texas political observer flatly states, "I think everybody is in fear of Perry or Rove." This person declined to be named.

"We have written and others have written about the Bush-Perry stuff, and mostly just speculated, because nobody will talk about it on the record," Smith says. "We've all talked to people off the record or on background. Nobody will talk about exactly what's at work here—Is it rivalry? Is it jealousy? Is it a simple difference of ideology?"

Ardent Perry booster and Texas state senator Dan Patrick dismisses the tension as "a problem that no one in Texas sees" and "more media hype than reality." But that is definitely a minority view.

In the end, Smith says that explaining the relationship boils down to interpreting "widely accepted lore." And in Texas politics there's enough lore to compile a volume that would put Bulfinch's to shame.

The trouble is that lore isn't always dependable. "Everyone who's been around Texas politics can point to some great story demonstrating the vast fight between the two camps, when in fact sometimes those stories are just stories," says Michael Quinn Sullivan of the influential grassroots group Empower Texans.

Here are a few of the stories freely offered:

THE 1998 CAMPAIGN: In Texas, the governor and lieutenant governor are elected separately, and in 1998, Bush ran for governor (as the incumbent) and Perry for lieutenant governor. It was already plain that Bush and Rove had designs on the 2000 presidential election, and Rove was pursuing an electoral strategy that would maximize Bush's margin of victory in the governor's race so as to demonstrate his broad appeal. Accordingly, Rove was working to mobilize Bush supporters—even if they also supported the Democrat in the lieutenant governor's race.

The trouble was that Perry's opponent, John Sharp, was a formidable candidate, and the race between the two of them was close. Rove's get-out-the-vote calls to supporters of Bush and Sharp would make the race even closer.

"Rove claimed that he had polling showing that Perry was up by 14 points so this wasn't going to hurt," recounts Ratcliffe. "[Perry strategist Dave] Carney … had polling showing that Perry was neck and neck with Sharp at best and probably losing by a couple of points, and they got into a big argument with Rove over whether he would continue to make the get-out-the-vote calls to Sharp supporters."

Complicating things, the Perry campaign wanted to run a negative ad against Sharp. "Depending on who you talk to, you get a different version of the ad. One of them was attacking Sharp on a plan he had for overhauling the state's business tax, and they were going to call it an 'income tax,'" Ratcliffe says. "And it was so similar to a plan that Bush [had once endorsed that] there was some fear this would come back to haunt Bush in the presidential campaign as, 'Oh, he proposed an income tax in Texas.'"

Rove is then alleged to have threatened the Perry campaign that if they went negative on Sharp, he would withhold further use of the endorsement ad that Perry had received from George H.W. Bush, which was proving effective. Perry didn't go negative and eked out a too-close-for-comfort victory by 68,000 votes.

Mark Hemingway is online editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Open Letter to Congress and President Obama

6 STEPS You Can Take to Create Millions of Jobs—Starting *Now*

Now that you are back in Washington, it's time to get to work so the **25 million Americans who are unemployed, underemployed, or have given up looking** can find work.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce urges you to take these specific steps ***right now*** to spur faster job growth **without adding to the deficit**.

1 EXPAND TRADE AND GLOBAL COMMERCE.

Pass the three pending free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama to save **380,000 jobs** and add **hundreds of thousands of new jobs**. Completing export control reforms, spurring exports to Europe and Asia, and protecting intellectual property through patent reform and rogue sites legislation would create thousands of additional jobs.

2 PRODUCE MORE AMERICAN ENERGY.

Open offshore resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska and create **244,700 new jobs**. Expand access to federal lands for oil and gas exploration and add **530,000 new jobs**. Develop natural gas in the Marcellus Shale, as well as other resource-rich shale reserves, and add **116,000 new jobs** in Pennsylvania alone by 2020. Approve the Keystone XL project, which would support **250,000 jobs**.

3 SPEED UP INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

Reauthorize the FAA and help keep **70,000 workers** on the job. Pass a multi-year highway bill and water bill with adequate funding and create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Implement the Energy Savings Performance Contracts Program and create **35,000 jobs** a year. Remove regulatory and permitting obstacles to 351 stalled energy projects and create **1.9 million jobs** annually. Unlock $250 billion in global private capital for infrastructure and create even more jobs.

4 WELCOME TOURISTS AND BUSINESS VISITORS.

Create **1.3 million jobs** by restoring the U.S. share of the travel market to 2000 levels by promoting tourism, expanding the visa waiver program, and reforming the visa application process without compromising safety.

5 SPEED UP PERMITS AND PROVIDE REGULATORY CERTAINTY AND RELIEF.

Take up to $1 trillion in accumulated private capital off the sidelines and into business expansion by eliminating uncertainty caused by burdensome regulations. Streamline and expedite the permitting process to get job-creating projects moving.

6 PASS TAX INCENTIVES THAT CREATE JOBS WHILE INCREASING REVENUES.

Implement a repatriation holiday and generate **2.9 million jobs** in two years. Temporarily reduce the capital gains tax rate on business to free up cash for hiring.

We stand ready to work with all stakeholders to put Americans back to work. So let's start here. Let's start now! **Americans need action, not just talk**.

For the full text of our letter and additional details on the **CHAMBER'S 6 STEPS FOR JOB CREATION**, visit **uschamber.com/jobs**.

BUSH'S LEGACY: In 2007, as improbable as it seems, Perry was stumping for Rudy Giuliani in Iowa and told the crowd, "George [W. Bush] has never, ever been a fiscal conservative." That might be a defensible statement to many Republicans, but it appears to have been taken as a major affront in Bush world.

"I think the Bush people consider that an extraordinary breach of etiquette from someone whose career was at least in part made by George W. Bush's embrace of him," says Smith, "and by Bush's departure for the White House," which promoted Perry from lieutenant governor to governor. Ratcliffe thinks the incident created more tension between Rove and Perry than the squabble in the '98 election. This was seen as a personal attack, and the dispute over election strategy as just a "consultant fight."

Further, Rove likely encouraged Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison to mount a primary challenge to Perry last year. "It's hard to look at who endorsed Kay and not draw conclusions," Smith says. "You had Karl, you had Karen [Hughes], you had H.W. Bush, you had Baker. You have pretty much every consequential figure in Bush world—with the exception of Joe Allbaugh—supporting Kay. You want to call that a coincidence?"

PROXY WARS: To some extent, Perry and Bush really just embody the divide in the broader GOP between grassroots conservatives and the more moderate political establishment. Fairly or unfairly, these differences get projected onto Bush and Perry as personal characteristics.

There are obvious contrasts. Perry was the son of rural tenant farmers, while Bush was born into a wealthy political dynasty. "Certainly there are style differences, there are approach differences, there are background differences. You can go on and on and on," Sullivan says. "These differences mean that everyone thinks there must be conflict, conflict must exist."

But Sullivan insists the differences mean little to Texas voters. "[There are] great staunch supporters of Hutchison in the gubernatorial primary who are now sporting 'Perry for President' bumper stickers on their cars," he said.

The reality is that many of the contrasts between Bush and Perry could also be explained away by circumstance. Bush had to work with a Democratic legislature when he was governor so was naturally more conciliatory. Perry, on the other hand, enjoyed a GOP supermajority in the last state legislative session, and the era of Pelosi and Obama has GOP voters wanting sharp-elbowed, rather than compassionate, conservatism.

Still, to the extent there is a class divide in Texas politics, neither camp is above exploiting perceptions when it's useful. "One thing to understand is that it's really Dallas versus the rest of the state. Over the last decade, if you went to Fort Worth or Houston or Midland you would find Republicans like Rick Perry. But if you went to Dallas they would say he was a hick and a bumbler and was an embarrassment to the Republican party. Dallas is kind of a blue-blood Republican town," Ratcliffe says.

During the 2010 primary fight against Hutchison, Perry strategist Dave Carney described her and those behind her campaign as "country-club Republicans" to some effect. Smith thinks Rove took that personally. "If you know anything about Karl Rove, he is many things, but I'm not sure a 'country-club Republican' is one of them," he says.

Despite this, Jeb Bush told Fox News last month he's "never heard anybody in my family say anything but good things about Rick Perry." But he did allow that there might be tension "maybe with Karl." For his part, Rove dismissed that idea on *The O'Reilly Factor* as recently as the night before the Reagan Library debate when Perry dismissed Rove's criticisms as "over the top."

Assuming, then, the existence of a Bush/Rove/Perry feud, the question becomes whether this will have an effect on a Perry candidacy.

For starters, the feud may actually help Perry. Democrats will have a hard time portraying Rick Perry as the second coming of Dubya if he's being regularly jabbed by the man affectionately described as "Bush's Brain." (And don't discount the possibility that Rove the evil genius knows he's doing Perry a favor by helping draw a sharp contrast between him and the former president early and often.)

Still, like most internecine political disputes, this one may come down to a single concern: money. "There's probably 100 to 150 extraordinarily rich and extraordinarily conservative Texans," Ratcliffe says. Access to that many wealthy donors is a unique advantage for a presidential candidate from Texas. "[Housing magnate] Bob Perry [no relation] typically drops anywhere from $4-6 million just in a Texas election," Ratcliffe says. "It wouldn't surprise me at all if Bob Perry dropped $10 million into a Rick Perry super-PAC."

Of course, Bob Perry also gave $7 million to Rove's super-PAC, American Crossroads, just last year. If Rove really had it out for Perry, he could possibly prevent Perry from securing the "Bush money" in Texas and elsewhere.

But so far that doesn't appear to be happening, and Rove shrugged off the suggestion it would on *The O'Reilly Factor*. "He's got to have his people call the Bush people," said Rove. "Perry's just now into the race, and he needs to pick up the phone and start dialing those people—and he is."

Ultimately, Smith thinks that any disputes with Rove won't affect a Perry candidacy. "The enthusiasm for Governor Perry in Texas will be sufficient that he'll not only win Texas, but he'll win it by a great margin, and he'll have no shortage of money raised," Smith says.

Ratcliffe agrees. "I suspect that if the smoke clears and Perry's the Republican nominee, Rove will fall right in line helping him out."

Until then, it may seem improbable to have Perry and Rove on the same political page. But if Perry does become the nominee, there's a whole new chapter in the book of Texas political lore just waiting to be written. ♦

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Another Voting Paradox

Political scientists and democracy. BY JAMES W. CEASER

While most Americans spend their Labor Day weekend savoring the last moments of summer vacation, political scientists are normally hard at work at their annual association meeting, held this year in Seattle. This event is usually a rather sedate affair, with scholars debating such recondite subjects as "Bayesian approaches to political research" and "The political-theological problem in Xenophon's thought."

But this time things were a little different. A dissident group of members challenged the American Political Science Association's governing system, asking for some modest changes to the constitution to institute competition in the selection of officers and the governing council. The dissidents billed their proposal as a small step toward democratization. Imagine, then, their great surprise when defenders of the status quo, who included some of the leading political scientists in the nation, instructed them in no uncertain terms that devices like competitive elections, labeled "procedural democracy," counted as next to nothing in comparison to "substantive democracy." Substantive democracy meant "diversity" as computed by race, gender, and ethnicity.

Without going into details—who would care?—the association's current form of government might most accurately be described as a cooptocracy. A nominating committee, appointed by the association president, proposes to the membership a slate of nominees for all of the officers and representatives to the council. (The president at the Seattle meeting was Professor Carole Pateman of UCLA, known best for her work *Participation and Democratic Theory.*) The nominating committee's slate can be challenged by candidates nominated by a petition process from the members; but the way things normally work—and always, now, for the officers—"elections" take place with only one person "competing" for each slot. Only in the case of council representatives have the dissidents put up alternatives in recent years, winning a few seats.

The change advocated by the dissidents was to require the nominating committee to name *two* candidates for each position. Democratic theory would suggest, they insisted, that this limited competition would increase member interest and participation in elections and afford an opportunity for an occasional candidate to raise a substantive question. Professors Gregory Kasza of Indiana University and Rogers Smith of the University of Pennsylvania led the way in arguing for the importance of elections as an integral component of anything resembling democracy, with Smith, a leading theorist of democracy in his own right, wondering what signal would be sent to our students if the nation's political scientists rejected electoral competition.

Hold on there, Professor Smith. The responses came fast and furious from a legion of defenders of the cooptocracy. Such stalwarts in the profession as former presidents Theda Skocpol of Harvard and Henry Brady of Berkeley pointed out the indignity of asking great scholars to stand in competitive elections and invoked the old conservative saw that "if it ain't broke don't fix it." But the nub of the case for defenders of the status quo was that elections do not enhance, but limit democracy: The key to democracy is found in the assurance of diversity, not of views but of physical characteristics.

One self-described Latino speaker said it will be time enough to permit procedural democracy when certain groups are assured, at some point in the future, of their proper overall representation within the association. Until then, the great beast of the mass of political scientists cannot be trusted. (It is rumored that certain group caucuses own the privilege of naming candidates whom the nominating committee slates, making the system one of managed diversity.)

Political scientists today generally consider themselves an empirically minded group, less impressed by airy theoretical speculations than by attention to "hard data." On this dimension, the cooptocrats possessed a clear advantage in the debate. The association's treasurer, Arthur Lupia of the University of Michigan, one of the profession's most decorated methodologists, introduced the only real evidence. In a lengthy speech, he proposed to answer the question "How have competitive

APSA'S Democratic Travesty

Year	Elected Write-In Candidate	Not Elected Nominating Committee Candidate
2004	White American Male	Asian Male from India
2005	White American Male	Asian Woman from Taiwan
2006	White American Female	White Male from Canada
2007	White American Female	Black Male from Benin
2008	White American Female	African-American Male
2009	White American Female	White American Male
2010	White American Female	White Female from Israel
2010	White American Male	White Female from Germany
2010	White American Female	African-American male

SOURCE: Arthur Lupia, University of Michigan

James W. Ceaser is professor of politics at the University of Virginia and a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution.

elections changed the council?" Analyzing the cases over the last six years in which competitive elections for the council resulted in dissidents defeating the nominees proposed by the nominating committee, Lupia generated a table, which he read in full, that bears close study. It compares the diversity attributes of the victorious dissident candidates with the diversity attributes of the candidates proposed by the cooptocracy, but not elected.

Interpreting the result, Lupia observed, "In nine of the ten cases [I counted nine], competitive elections led to the council being more white or less international than it would have been under the nominating committee's recommendation. . . . From the perspective of racial, ethnic, and international diversity, the actuality of these elections is difficult to support."

This evidence, cited time and again, appeared to have a decisive impact on the outcome of the debate. It was so impressive that on my return from the association meeting, I immediately convened a panel of graduate students at the University of Virginia to further mine this rich data set and allow it to speak in all of its nuance. The heated objection of one panelist—that Lupia had buried the fact that the dissidents promoted more gender diversity (six females instead of three!)—was duly noted, but quickly set aside. Other panelists pointed out that there were several factors in play here, not just gender, so the full matter could in fairness only be determined by a more rigorous statistical approach that assigned weights to each variable. The resulting "Diversity Index" the panel constructed adopted the following weights. For gender, a male received a (-1) designation, a female (+1); for race, White (-1), Asian (+1) and Black (+2). Country of origin provoked some discussion, but in the end, in accord with the spirit of diversity's concern for reversing the domination of hegemonic countries (and their allies) over oppressed nations, the panel decided to accord a (-2) to America, (-1) to dependent American allies like Taiwan and Israel, and up to a (+2) for the former French colony of Benin. For each entrant on the table it became possible to calculate a single diversity score [t = R(race)+O(origin)+G(gender)]. For example, to take the outliers, a White American Male (WAM) was scored at -4, while a Black Benin Male (BBM) rated an impressive +3. The White Female from Israel netted -1. When the totals for the dissidents who were elected were compared with the totals of the candidates from the nominating committee who were defeated, the panel had little difficulty concluding that the cooptocracy had, if anything, understated the strength of its case. These were robust findings in every sense of the word.

The wisdom of social science was happily confirmed at the association meeting. Leaving the hall, I saw a smiling set of past association presidents being congratulated by their coopted beneficiaries. Substantive democracy had prevailed—by an exercise of procedural democracy, no less. ♦

The New Global Warming?

Here's an issue governments can get fat on.

BY WESLEY J. SMITH

The U.N.'s expansive agenda

Obesity is the new global warming, and the battle plan for the crusade against it was published in the August issue of the journal *Lancet*. Funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and coauthored by nine Ph.D.s, the document is entitled "Changing the Future of Obesity: Science, Policy, and Action." Its appearance was timed to coincide with the September "High-level Meeting of the U.N. General Assembly" on noncommunicable diseases, with the intention of moving the fight to the international front burner.

The stated goal of the fat fighters is to fashion "integrated interventions throughout society—individuals, families, local, national, and international," as well as "interventions across the life course for all demographic groups to reinforce and sustain long-term behavioral change." Notice that's *all* demographic groups, whether overweight or not.

A job so huge and important can't be left to free individuals making personal choices. It's a job for the international community. Thus, obesity prevention "should be considered in relevant trade, economic, agricultural, environmental, food, and health agreements and policies." The paper urges that the U.N. "coordinate policies and funding to prevent obesity … across its agencies" (maybe through a body like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change?). The World Health Organization "should develop global standards, particularly for food and beverage marketing to children and for nutrient profiling."

The U.N. can't do it alone, of course. National governments "are the most important actors in reversing the obesity epidemic." This means increasing the size and intrusiveness of governments already drowning in debt by passing new laws and endowing bureaucracies with broader regulatory mandates.

And what modern international crusade would be complete without targeting the automobile? "Healthy public policies" should "prioritize public transport, walking, and cycling environments, and safe recreation spaces in transport and urban planning policies and budget allocations." Shades of Al Gore.

Wealth redistribution is another familiar component of fighting the bulge. Since the poor among us tend to be fatter, government leaders are called upon to "ensure [that] taxation and social policies support reduction of socioeconomic inequalities that contribute to health inequalities." Also, "increased investment in population obesity monitoring" will be required. In other words, tax the rich to make us thin.

No lifestyle crisis is complete without villains to punish. Just as global-warming fighters want to tax carbon dioxide-producing industries and activities, the anti-obesity campaign calls for taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and "unhealthy food and beverages." And in places like the United States where it is difficult to restrict speech, "corporate tax deductibility of advertising costs for unhealthy foods" should be eliminated to prevent the obesity pushers from promoting their toxic wares to the helpless masses.

Indeed, as in the warming controversy, only one side of the issue should be heard. Anti-obesity ideology holds that people are getting fatter because corporate villains wield undue influence in their greedy quest for profits, so all parties are urged to "limit the influence of commercial interests in policy making."

And where would a government anti-obesity campaign be without

Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute's Center on Human Exceptionalism.

calling in the professoriate to disgorge white papers, studies, and symposia to beat back the calories? Yes, there will be computer models! "New thinking and approaches, and the use of computational modeling are needed to create a better understanding of the interconnectedness and synergies of the whole system, and of its individual components and subsystems." We have been here before.

By the way, lest you doubt the nexus between global warming and obesity, the *Lancet* authors make the connection explicit. "Obesity," they write, "should be considered alongside other major issues that confront societies . . . [including] reduction of poverty in all countries, a sustainable food supply, and action against climate change, because they all have strong links with obesity prevention, including common causes and solutions."

With the coming anti-obesity campaign so similar to the global-warming juggernaut, it seems clear that modern liberalism has devised a new strategy for imposing policies that it can't attain through ordinary politicking. First, identify a crisis ostensibly caused by modern lifestyles and/or capitalism. Next, launch a multifaceted international response to prevent allegedly looming catastrophe. Third, act as if the desired policies are objective, scientific solutions. Fund it all by imposing onerous taxes on an expanding list of villainous enterprises, *et voilà*: Liberalism rides to the rescue. And if the strategy fails on one front, as it appears to have with global warming, find another crisis and start again.

Let me be clear: No one denies that obesity is a serious problem. Anyone who is overweight should eat less, eat better, and exercise more. We can argue about government's proper role in promoting good nutrition. But there is a genuine crisis to consider as well—the obesity of government. We should not allow the need to encourage good health to be an excuse for empowering yet another economically enervating, bossy, bureaucratic behemoth dedicated to promoting political agendas more than to helping people control their weight. ♦

A Time of Heroes

The 9/11 decade. BY PAUL WOLFOWITZ

This tenth anniversary of that grim September day when so many innocent people died in the most horrible fashion is a time to mourn their loss, as well as the thousands who have been lost in the past 10 years of the war against global terrorists, and to share in the grief of the loved ones they left behind.

It is also an occasion to give thanks for the heroism of so many on that day whose courage prevented the deaths of thousands more. There were the New York firefighters and police who rushed into the burning buildings to rescue people, Todd Beamer and his fellow passengers on Flight 93 who brought down that plane before it could reach Washington, Richard Rescorla, whose foresight and bravery may well have saved thousands, and scores of others whose sacrifices saved lives.

We also have reason to be thankful for the heroism of the brave Americans—and their allies from many different countries, including from Afghanistan and Iraq—who have been fighting the war on terror for the past 10 years. More than 1,700 Americans have lost their lives in Afghanistan and more than 4,400 in Iraq. Many more have suffered grievous wounds. But we have not been fighting alone. Afghans and Iraqis fighting for their countries have borne the greatest burden. Although the numbers are less precise, more than 10,000 Iraqi soldiers and police have been killed since 2003 and more than 5,500 Afghans in just the last four years. More than 300 other coalition members have been killed in Iraq and almost 1,000 in Afghanistan, the largest share coming from our British allies, who have suffered 559 deaths. Those numbers represent individual tragedies but also individual bravery for which we all should give thanks.

One way to honor those dead is to recognize what they accomplished. Along with the mourning and thanksgiving, there is also much to celebrate on this anniversary. Three successes stand out as particularly important.

First is the fact that there have been no further successful attacks on the United States. No one predicted this outcome 10 years ago. Indeed, there was every reason to expect additional large-scale attacks, and we know that the terrorists were planning for them. They were stopped thanks to a massive effort by the United States, with a great deal of support from others, to go on the offensive against the terrorists and to treat this fight as a matter of national security and not just law enforcement.

Until September 11, terrorism was treated in the framework of law enforcement. Captured terrorists were treated as defendants awaiting prosecution, not as potential sources of intelligence about future plots. States that supported terrorism might be the object of retaliatory strikes, as with Libya in 1986 or Afghanistan and Sudan in 1998, or subjected to restrictions on commercial transactions. But there was no serious effort to get them out of the terrorism business entirely. Even Ramzi Yousef, the mastermind of the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center and close relative and associate of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who went on to mastermind the attacks of 9/11, was read his *Miranda* rights and never seriously questioned about what he might know of future terrorist plans.

That changed fundamentally after 9/11. One can debate whether all the individual decisions taken under that new approach were necessary, but it is impossible to argue that we could have achieved the success we have so far without treating terrorists not just as criminals but as enemies.

Beyond simply preventing

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additional attacks, our second big success has been against al Qaeda itself. Although still a force to be reckoned with, it is a shadow of its former self, with Osama bin Laden dead, many of its other senior leaders dead or captured, its sanctuary in Afghanistan gone, and its attempt to defeat the United States in Iraq a strategic failure.

The third success we have occasion to celebrate is that state support for terrorism is in retreat. Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya are no longer sponsors of terrorism—although there are groups that would like to return them to that status. We can hope that Syrians will soon topple the terror-sponsoring Assad regime. That would still leave serious dangers from North Korea, which possesses nuclear weapons, and from Iran, which aspires to get them. But it is significant progress.

The most controversial element of the strategy adopted after 9/11, except perhaps for enhanced interrogations and the terrorist surveillance policy, was the decision to go to war to remove Saddam Hussein in Iraq. That war was costly and there were some costly mistakes. But that doesn't settle the question of whether the war was a mistake. We paid a high price in Korea for MacArthur's decision to push up to the Yalu River, but few would argue today that Truman's controversial decision to come to the defense of South Korea was a mistake. Even World War II, the wisdom and necessity of which even fewer would question, had its costly errors. After the brilliant D-Day landings, we wound up bogged down in the hedgerows of Normandy and suffered 40,000 casualties in six weeks. Failing to recognize that Germany was not yet defeated, we were unprepared for its attack in the Ardennes in December 1944. The Battle of the Bulge that ensued, one of the largest in American history, proved to be a disaster for the Germans. But it also cost more than 80,000 American casualties.

Why did we go to war against Saddam Hussein when it was al Qaeda that attacked us on 9/11? Saddam presented the special danger of someone who might provide terrorists with weapons of mass destruction. He had a record of supporting terrorism and praised the attacks of 9/11. (Even the Taliban condemned the attacks, while complaining that there was no proof al Qaeda was responsible.) Alone among heads of government, Saddam warned that Americans should feel "pain" so that "when they suffer, they will find the right solution and the right path." And he defied multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions, including the ones that required him to dismantle the chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs he had been developing prior to the 1991 Gulf war.

It is true that we didn't find the stockpiles of WMD that American and other intelligence agencies predicted we would discover in Iraq. But the Iraq Survey Group—the very same authority that everyone relies on for the finding that there were no WMD—is equally clear that Saddam had the intention *and* the capability to restart those programs once the sanctions were lifted. According to George Piro, Saddam's Arabic-speaking FBI interviewer, "He wanted to pursue all of WMD. . . . [He wanted] to reconstitute his entire WMD program," chemical, biological, and even nuclear. "The folks that he needed to reconstitute his program [were] still there."

Those who say that it was a mistake to go to Afghanistan and remove the Taliban have an obligation to say what alternative course of action would have produced success. Strategic bombing, the 1998 response on a larger scale, wasn't going to force the Taliban to abandon al Qaeda, nor would it have enabled us to capture so many key terrorists. And removing the Taliban necessarily confronted us with the challenge of working to create an Afghan government that could stand on its own feet.

Similarly, in Iraq, simply continuing the sanctions regime—which was collapsing—would have confronted us sooner or later with the problem of Saddam's WMD ambitions. We might have armed and supported Iraqis to overthrow Saddam, instead of a full-scale invasion. But whichever choice we made, I believe it was right to confront him sooner rather than later.

Ten years after 9/11 we increasingly hear complaints that our response was an overreaction. In fact, by preventing further attacks we may have prevented a different kind of overreaction, the one that happened 70 years ago. After Pearl Harbor, Japanese-American citizens were put in internment camps, a stain on the record of our democracy. After 9/11, despite some ugly incidents, Americans on the whole behaved well toward their Muslim fellow citizens, and leaders from both political parties went out of their way to emphasize the importance of doing so.

America is not at war with Islam, either here or abroad. Indeed, in Afghanistan and Iraq our most important partners are Muslims. As long as there are images of Americans killing enemies who happen to be Muslims, those images will be used to feed anti-American propaganda among the world's Muslims. As long as those images are around, we have to make a sustained effort to explain that we are fighting in defense of people who also happen to be Muslims. And we have done this many times before: in Kuwait in 1991, in northern Iraq in 1991, in Somalia in 1992, in Bosnia in 1995, in Kosovo in 1999, and most recently in Libya this year. We have acted in our national interest and because we believed that the Muslims of those countries deserved our help, not because they were Muslims but because they were human beings. That impressive record needs to be recounted much more often, because it is often forgotten.

There is one final thing to celebrate on the tenth anniversary of al Qaeda's terrible deed. That is the rejection of al Qaeda's ideology by so many brave Arabs, in many different countries, who are risking their lives not for a heavenly paradise but for freedom and democracy. We are only at the beginning of that story. We don't know what season will follow the Arab Spring. But what we hear these protesters saying is not that they love death, but that they love freedom even more than life. That is no small thing, and something else to celebrate on this grim anniversary. ♦

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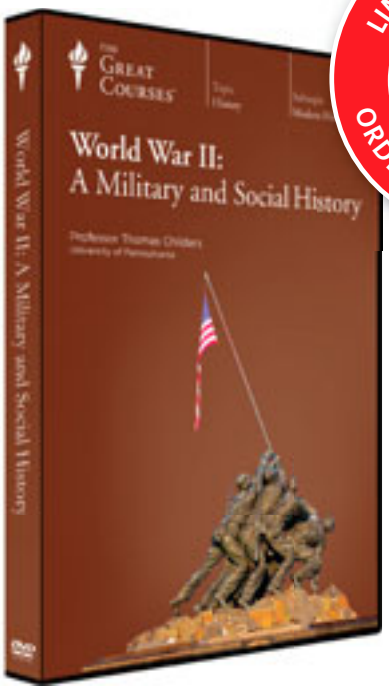

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He's No Truman . . .

And it's not 1948 anymore.

By Jay Cost

A year from now, the presidential election campaign will be in full swing. Obama and the Republican nominee will be touring the country at a feverish pace, trying hard to convince swing voters to go their way. Obviously, we're still too far out from November 2012 to know what will happen, but we're close enough to get a sense of the shape of the race.

President Obama's chances next year don't look good. As of this writing, the InTrade prediction market gives the president about a 50-50 chance, and even Democratic insiders are starting to doubt the top of their ticket. According to *National Journal*, they're privately giving the president just a 63 percent chance of victory, which is not a great score considering the partisan source. These relatively gloomy odds are not surprising, as the president faces some historic challenges in his reelection quest.

Obama's biggest problem is the economy, particularly as the typical voter experiences it. Though the recession technically ended in June 2009, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the average American has not felt the slightest hint of a two-year "recovery."

To start with, the unemployment rate stood at 9.1 percent in August. And that figure actually understates how bad the job market is. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) counts a person as unemployed only if he is actively looking for work but cannot find any. Given the duration of this slump, there are plenty of able-bodied people who would like to work but have become so discouraged they have given up the job hunt. When we include these people in our estimates, the picture turns much darker. The "population-employment ratio," calculated monthly by the BLS, measures the percentage of adults who are employed: In August that number stood at 58.2 percent, down from 63.4 percent at the peak of the previous growth cycle. In fact, we have not seen so low a number persist for an extended period since the early 1980s, and that was before the gender revolution in the workplace was complete.

One consequence of high unemployment is that people who do have jobs are in no position to negotiate for higher wages. Unsurprisingly, then, real income has been stagnant under the Obama administration. Worse, people are depending more and more on government subsidies to maintain their standard of living. Government benefits accounted for a whopping 18 percent of all income in July, up from 13.5 percent during the Clinton and Bush years. Meanwhile, some 46 million Americans now depend on government assistance to put food on the table, up from just 23 million during the previous two administrations.

For the White House, the likelihood that these terrible trends will continue into next year is a serious concern. The kind of V-shaped recovery Ronald Reagan enjoyed just before the 1984 election is probably not going to happen; in fact, the economy still might dip back into recession. The *Wall Street Journal* conducts a monthly survey of top economists to gauge where the economy is headed; in the most recent survey they predicted unemployment basically unchanged a year from now and a tepid 2.5 percent GDP growth rate through 2012. Even Obama's own Office of Management and Budget is forecasting unemployment next year above 8 percent, higher than it has been in any election season since World War II. These estimates, if borne out, will mean that most Americans still are not feeling the positive effects of a recovery by Election Day.

The economy puts a real strain on Obama's reelection effort. Since the Great Depression, eight incumbent presidents have won a second term. Six of them—FDR, Eisenhower, LBJ, Nixon, Reagan, and Clinton—won because national conditions had noticeably improved during their tenures. Just two—Harry Truman and George W. Bush—won despite the continuation of hard times. Both Truman and Bush won by convincing America that, for all the trouble the country faced, electing the opposition would make things worse.

This is Obama's only real hope of victory next year, and it's been clear for a while that his campaign team plans to rerun a version of the Truman campaign in 1948. In fact, at his Labor Day address to union workers in Detroit last week, the president quoted Truman's Labor Day speech from 1948, given at the start of that year's election campaign.

It is commonly remembered that Truman ran around

Jay Cost is a staff writer at The Weekly Standard.

the country blasting the "Do Nothing" Republican Congress, but this is only part of the truth. In fact, Truman blasted a Republican Congress that not only did none of the progressive things the 1948 GOP platform had promised, but also demonstrated a willingness to roll back the New Deal. For instance, congressional Republicans tried for a time to reduce federal farm subsidies, and they did cut labor down to size with the Taft-Hartley Act.

This enabled Truman to turn the weak economy of the late 1940s to his advantage. Yes, he admitted, times were tough now, but they had been tough before. That was why FDR gave us the New Deal, which saved the country from the Great Depression. With dark clouds on the horizon once again, did the people really want to boot the Democrats from power and return the party of Herbert Hoover to the White House?

Truman's campaign was one of the most nakedly partisan and dishonest in modern history. After all, his opponent—Thomas Dewey—was about as far from the laissez-faire wing of the Republican party as one could get. As governor of New York, he had actually stood out as a liberal on many issues, including civil rights. Regardless, Truman's demagoguery worked like a charm, delivering him a solid, if not overwhelming, victory on Election Day.

No wonder the Obama team would like to re-create Truman's success. But can it work?

Obama will have some substantial challenges in pursuing this approach. For starters, the Republican nominee would have to behave like Dewey, who overlearned the lessons of 1944. Dewey had been the GOP nominee against FDR that year, too, and was criticized for running too tough a campaign during wartime. So in 1948 he hung back, limiting himself to only the vaguest pronouncements on the stump, thereby enabling Truman to dominate the conversation. There's virtually no chance that the 2012 GOP nominee will be so accommodating.

An even larger problem for the Obama administration is the policy context. The public in 1948 remembered fondly the farm supports, banking regulations, and social welfare provisions of the New Deal, to say nothing of success in World War II, and Truman could draw upon this deep reservoir of trust in what the government had done for the country over the last two decades. Such trust does not exist today; instead, the number of people who are skeptical of the government's competence is at an all-time high. Worse, the main achievement of the current administration—Obamacare—is deeply unpopular, favored by less than 40 percent in the latest RealClearPolitics average of recent polling. And for good reason: Credible reports from nonpartisan agencies like the Congressional Budget Office and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services predict that under Obamacare millions of people will lose their current insurance, pay higher premiums, and may even see their doctors stop accepting Medicare patients.

In other words, Truman could argue in 1948 that a vote for the Republicans would threaten the social welfare system the country knew and approved; but in 2012 the Republican nominee will be the one who can argue that a vote for Obama will endanger that system.

So, if President Obama cannot look to Truman for a model, where does that leave him? Essentially, he's in uncharted territory. No incumbent president in the modern era has faced the kinds of trouble he now does—a weak economy combined with an exceedingly unpopular legislative record—and still won reelection.

That's not to say he cannot win. Just because something has never been done before does not mean it cannot be done. And with 14 months until Election Day, there is plenty of uncertainty. A lot of things could still break Obama's way: a third party challenge that steals votes from the GOP, a weak Republican nominee, a surprising rebound in the economy, or some national crisis that creates a "rally round the flag" effect.

The point is that the president is going to have to catch a break somewhere along the line—because he will lose, and by a large margin, if things continue on their present course. In this way, he's like a Texas hold 'em player who was dealt a pair of diamonds. He has a shot to win with a flush, but he has to hope that the dealer draws another lucky card for him. If that doesn't happen, he'll lose. ♦

GARY LOCKE

How the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is Destroying U.S. Manufacturing

Imagine that Congress enacted for the state of California alone a special law that:

- Dropped the minimum wage to $0.50-$1/hour
- Exempted employers from child labor laws
- Expanded the work week
- Reduced health and work place safety laws
- Banned unions
- Gave California exporters full, duty-free access to the rest of the states

Wouldn't that be ridiculous? Well, that is **exactly** what NAFTA did for Mexico, to the detriment of the entire United States.

No U.S. manufacturers can compete with those conditions. They are closing up, selling out or leaving the country.

Since 1994, our federal leaders have mistakenly given China, Caribbean countries and some others this same lopsided, special "free trade" advantage.

NAFTA has been instrumental in rendering our economy totally uncompetitive and has forced us to outsource our manufacturing to other countries. It has also caused millions of our jobs to leave the country.

President Obama and many in Congress now want to extend this one-sided trade arrangement to South Korea and all other Asian nations. It is being sold under the false pretense that it will help our exports, not mentioning that it will more than double our imports and shut down more of our factories. Congress will likely vote on the Korean Free Trade Agreement in the fall of 2011. **Please, help us stop it!**

If the KORUS FTA (Korean-U.S. Free Trade Agreement) passes, all parts of our economy; manufacturing, trade, banking and finance will then be covered in the agreement. Our economy will then be supervised and controlled by the foreign WTO (World Trade Organization). The American government as you knew it will be a thing of the past. We will no longer be self-governed, self-managed and we will no longer be free. **Asian countries are slowly, quietly tightening the noose around our neck by crippling our ability to produce for ourselves.**

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Vive la Différence

Are France's more centrist politics better than ours (and not just for the sex)?

By Sam Schulman

As Maine is New England's Texas, France is Europe's U.S.A. It's big. It's ornery. Like us, the French are notably more inward-looking than Europe's other populous, geographically big, and prosperous states. Despite France's co-leadership of the European unification project, a new German Marshall Fund study shows the French have the least confidence in EU leadership, are more anti-EU than any other EU country except the U.K., and have the largest percentage who think the euro has been bad for their economy—a solid 60 percent majority. France may symbolize cosmopolitanism to the world but doesn't itself partake. Over 92 percent of the French never leave the *hexagone* during their long vacations. Italians are 60 percent more likely to visit another EU country, Germans 227 percent more likely, and sea-girt Britons 314 percent more likely to brave the Channel.

Nicolas Sarkozy

The French presidential election, with primaries next month and a finale next spring, also mirrors our own. Sarkozy, France's well-tailored and glamorous president, will like our own be seeking a second term. This year he finds himself in a predicament similar to President Obama's. His popularity has reached historic lows measured in poll numbers that seem relatively unresponsive to his words or deeds. From an unprecedented 30 percent in the spring, Sarkozy's approval percentage has risen to only 37 percent after a summer spent on familiar problems: the Libya police action and a financial crisis at home. Sarkozy's rivals, like Obama's, enjoy the media spotlight and predictions that convince them that the only elections that matter are their party primaries, which take place next month. The winner of the Socialist party nomination will step into the shoes of "Generic Sarkozy Opponent" and win the presidency next April or May, much as America's own beloved Generic Republican Candidate stands to beat Obama.

With all these similarities, what is fascinating about the French campaign is that its candidates, unlike our own, elbow one another in order to be closest to the political center. Our own much-lamented tendency, of course, is for candidates and parties to move towards the periphery in order to highlight their differences, seizing on a clearly delineated issue from which they cannot be budged, even though it may seem extreme: guns, abortion, budget hawkishness. So the Gallic rooster's entrails are worth examining, not just because of the beautiful women, dashing men, and their sexcapades (about which more later), but because France models a kind of centrist, consensual politics that many tell us we should yearn for. Does it produce a governing class that reflects the desires of the electors? And is a race to the center inherently a good thing—or an effective strategy—for American candidates and political parties?

Sarkozy's strategic position may be as unenviable as Obama's, but a big difference between them is style. Our president has gone into full campaign mode, and press reporting on the White House takes this for granted. Sarkozy takes the opposite tack. The French media cover the Socialist primary and candidates in exacting detail, seldom mentioning the current president whom the winner will probably face next year. Sarkozy refuses to sweat on camera. Last week the right-of-center daily *Le Figaro* ran an admiring story on Sarkozy's election sang-froid. For the entire summer he dismayed his staff by simply refusing to discuss the reelection campaign. Sarkozy's presumptive campaign manager confided to *Figaro* that Sarkozy finally permitted some discussion at a dinner in late August with the chairman of his UMP party—a particular moment, he recalled, between the pear and the cheese.

How Sarkozy dug himself into his pit is a different story. We might think of it as a French version of Arnold Schwarzenegger's political career in California. Sarkozy

Sam Schulman last wrote for The Weekly Standard *on "Frenemies of Free Speech."*

won the 2007 election on a law-and-order platform. As a government minister he had become famous for his tough talk on urban crime to a nation disturbed by the riots in Paris's suburban slums, dominated by immigrant populations whose youth erupted in violence, burning almost 9,000 cars and injuring over 100 police. Sarkozy dared to call the rioters *racaille*—scum—which thrilled middle France and scandalized the media. His campaign two years later built on this Giulianiesque image, and promised the same toughness on budgeting, with economic reform along Reagan-Thatcher lines. Sarkozy promised to loosen restrictions on capital and labor—particularly the notorious 35-hour work week—in order to help France's economy catch up to the rest of the world. But, like Schwarzenegger, he changed his politics dramatically midway through his term. In response to the financial crisis of 2008, he abandoned his combative free-market stance.

Even when Sarkozy executes a policy U-turn, he does so as a manager, not a community organizer. Like many leading French politicians, he came to national prominence as a local leader. As mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine, a prosperous Paris suburb, he had the kind of prominence that, say, the Westchester County executive has in New York: a big job near the country's media capital. During his quest for the presidency, Sarkozy's personal life was as complex and demanding to manage as his cabinet position. He's had three wives of diverse origins—Marie-Dominique Culioli from Corsica, Russian-Spanish Cecilia Ciganer-Albéniz, and French-Italian Carla Bruni—but they all come from what Philip Roth called "the country of Fetching." The nation thrilled as Sarkozy's second marriage fell apart for a second time, after a trial desertion two years earlier. Upon assuming office, the grieving Sarkozy courted Bruni, a woman with an international reputation for difficulty. While he was memorizing the launch codes for France's nuclear deterrent, he persuaded her to become engaged, and their marriage took place nine months into his presidency.

François Hollande

The French thought they had elected a Giuliani, but for the second half of his five-year term Sarkozy has governed and sometimes spoken like a Franco-Hungarian Jon Huntsman. He has called for higher taxes on the rich, has yielded to protesting unions and students, and has been a loyal member of NATO and a good European. So good a European, in fact, that this summer he and his German counterpart Angela Merkel proposed themselves as a Bismarck/Napoleon consortium to rule a more forcibly united EU. Sarkozy has a valid claim to call the war against Libya's Qaddafi *his* war. If Obama led from behind, Sarkozy followed from out front. It was Sarkozy who decided that it was imperative to back the rebels with Western arms, who convinced British prime minister David Cameron to join him in persuading Obama to go along (and to provide the bulk of the firepower). So Sarkozy's prospects in the 2012 election should interest those on either side of the debate about whether "electability" matters to electability. He is, in French terms, the sort of non-Tea-Party, un-Southern-accented, social and economic moderate who doesn't give the French equivalents of David Brooks the heebie-jeebies.

How, then, does the neo-centrist Sarkozy fare with voters? Not very well. His surrender to the center hasn't earned him much popularity with the chattering classes. His triumph in Libya over the summer moved his approval numbers from catastrophic to merely disastrous. And his centrist actions seem tone-deaf to flyover France's concerns. Sarkozy raised the Value Added Tax on theme park admission tickets for this past summer, enraging families who had looked forward all year to their visit to EuroDisney. He reversed course under heavy pressure from theme park operators. Although only *Financial Times* readers are conversant with Sarkozy's proposed wealth levy on the super rich, every homeowner knows that his prime minister has announced the end of tax breaks for long-term gains on residences, amounting to a confiscation of a considerable proportion of middle-class wealth. Pundits in the United States warn GOP candidates about the "bad optics" of opposing tax hikes for the rich. It's not clear from the French example that symbolic moves matter much to the great mass of voters.

The French incumbent faces challenges from left and right. Polls show that the challenge from the left has momentum: Sixty percent prefer a president from the Socialist party. The right-wing challenger, Marine Le Pen of the National Front, which has acted to shed the anti-Semitic and racist image of the party founded by her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, polls in the high teens. But *gauche* and *droite* is different from left and right. Translated to American politics, the policy difference between the Socialist party and the National Front is roughly equivalent to the distance between a Democratic congressman from California and a Blue Dog congressman from West Virginia.

Leading all actual candidates is what a French Michael Barone would call Candidate X: a generic Socialist party candidate running against Sarkozy. The actual candidate will be chosen in two rounds of voting in October. Until he had to check out of his hotel in a hurry to catch a plane in

May, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the head of the IMF and a man of Sarkozy-like personal magnetism, seemed to have the Socialist nomination sewed up. Polls showed he would beat Sarkozy with 62 percent of the vote. DSK's notorious difficulties in communicating his feelings to women sold newspapers and prompted a good deal of anger within his own party, the partisan home of France's feminist elite. But it also opened the field to a wide range of unprepared challengers, all luminaries in the party that is native to affluent, college-educated, bien-pensant France. They include the woman whom Sarkozy defeated to win the presidency in 2007, Ségolène Royal, Royal's former common-law husband, François Hollande, and the mayor of the northern industrial city of Lille, Martine Aubry, who is also chairman of the party. These three and several others are all competing in the two-stage primary next month.

Subtly handsome Hollande leads the field in the polls. A familiar figure in French politics for 20 years, he may owe his emergence as frontrunner more to his figure than his program. Hollande's sleek new look has been a triumph of presidential politicking (Governor Christie, take note). "Ask any French person—nine out of ten will mention his waistline," as Jean-Bernard Cadier, a news editor for the France 24 TV network, put it. "Now what sticks with everyone is how much weight he has lost [17 pounds]. And for the French, this is a sign of strong resolve . . . a big asset for him."

Hollande was shown the door by Royal, the mother of his four children, shortly after her 2007 campaign. Her sudden decision to run against him is often described as the act of a scorned woman seeking revenge. But Royal retains her Katie Couric-like freshness at 57, and among the candidates she is the most photogenic and appealing.

The stolid figure and often scowling face of Martine Aubry—resolutely dumpy in a world of beautifully turned-out female French political and media figures—has gotten the most press coverage over the summer, focusing on her family life and her fury to protect her husband, the civil-rights activist Jean-Louis Brochen, from accusations that he is the "lawyer for Islamists." He's active in the left-wing Ligue des droits de l'Homme, which lies somewhere on the ideological spectrum between the ACLU and the National Lawyers Guild, and which feminists like Caroline Fourest describe as "frequently very ambiguous" on women's rights when they conflict with the religious obligations of French Muslims, such as the veil. There are rumors that her partnership with Brochen is a *mariage blanc*—which the French public finds scandalous, instead of respectable.

Aubry, as mayor of Lille, was bound to be on good

terms with that city's large Muslim community, and she had made many public accommodations for Muslim religious practices that in the opinion of some were violations of France's rigorous constitutional separation between state and religion and would never have been made out of deference to the sensibilities of Catholics or Jews. Aubry took the line earlier this year that the label "lawyer for Islamists" was a concoction of "ultra-Zionists" until a journalist discovered that the label originated in a 2004 book by the impeccably intellectually chic Fourest.

Aubry, as loyal to her man as Strauss-Kahn's wife has been to hers, defends her husband with litigation and repeated fusillades launched bravely at all enemies, from the lowliest pensioner with a blog to the president of the Republic. Sarkozy's party responds by drawing attention to her attacks: The UMP party chairman told *Le Figaro* that Aubry is trying to create a diversion to distract the public from her lack of political ideas. "Aubry has a new idea—really? Will it shed light on the Socialist position on immigration, digital technology, or education? . . . No, she declares war on the UMP because it appears that the UMP has spoken ill of Martine Aubry."

Martine Aubry

One leaves these heated precincts of loyalty, betrayal, conspiracy, and revenge with regret to turn to the policy differences that the Socialist standard-bearer will run on. What novel proposals do the Socialists offer voters? The candidates all agree on these basics: reduce France's deficit to 3 percent of GDP by 2014, lower the retirement age (which Sarkozy raised to 62 less than a year ago) back to 60, roll back a number of other anti-unemployment measures, fund preschool for 500,000 more children, create 300,000 new jobs for youth, index the minimum wage to inflation, increase barriers to trade, and raise taxes.

With smaller numbers and percentages attached, there aren't many of these policies that are unimaginable coming from a Sarkozy second-term government. Sarkozy himself is saying little, admitting that for the head of state, 2012 is too far in the future to issue election promises that would not be affected by the European economic crisis. If Sarkozy and the Socialists increasingly resemble one another, it is because they are, as many advise the Republicans to do, both seeking the same political center. The question is only who best can claim it: a pink UMP or a PS mugged by reality. The centrist voter may find it difficult to get very excited about that choice. And the picture is further confused by the fact that a former member of Sarkozy's cabinet with an even more exotic name, Jean-Louis Borloo, is thought to be Sarkozy's biggest worry. Why? Borloo may be building a centrist presidential campaign which aims to insert itself into the impossibly narrow space between Socialists and Sarkozyists.

Neither the Socialists nor Sarkozy would be attractive to a typical center-right American voter. Would such a voter turn naturally to the far-right candidate, Marine Le Pen? Let's stipulate that the National Front has been purged of its racist and anti-Semitic heritage—and this may in fact be increasingly the case. A specialty of French political bloggers is to announce the discovery among the party's supporters and staff of exotic political opposites: an Islamist and an Islamophobe, a neofascist and a Trotskyist, an anti-Semite and an ultra-Zionist, a hurler of threats at Algerian immigrants and a leader of the Algerian immigrant community.

The attractive, mellow, and modern Marine Le Pen has been duly denounced by her father, although immigration and traditional values are her issues. Her sanitizing has attracted more supporters than her father ever had, from a wider range of people, but she has not defused the hatred and fear of the French chattering classes, for whom the National Front is still not *salonfähig*. To an American conservative, it's not her ethnic/social appeal that would sound strange, such as her demand that French children be taught French history, not postcolonial narratology. But her economic policies are repellent to anyone outside the Pat Buchanan wing of the GOP. Le Pen is a Blue Dog Democrat in American terms: antiglobalization, full of schemes to protect domestic industry, picking winners among sectors and companies. In spending and entitlement policy she boasts that President Obama is "*plus à droite que moi*," further to the right than I am. Her commitment to the state provision of cradle-to-grave economic security is ironclad.

There is no way that the political wish list of the majority of Americans who now say they intend to vote GOP in 2012 could be fulfilled by any of the French parties. We would have the choice that French economic liberals/social conservatives have: to waste one's vote on a tiny party that aspires to reach a single percentage point of the vote, or to choose the lesser among a choice of evils that, as far as Tea Party policies go (constitutionalism, low taxes, and less regulation), are nearly identical.

There is no place in French politics for a pro-capitalist, pro-constitutionalist populist movement like the Tea Party, or for any of the leading candidates for the GOP nomination (I'll pause here while the cheering in the MSNBC studio dies down). But here's what's even worse about the center-seeking French system. It doesn't allow any populist leaven at all in the political baguette. The grand gesture, the romantic, unattainable desire, and the purism of our various populist

movements, right and, more commonly, left, have enriched our political culture by periodically scaring the pants off our political class, forcing its members to humble themselves by touching hands with the voters—reconnecting with them, even at the cost of losing face with the *New York Times* and party leaders like Nancy Pelosi. The necessity to retain this connection with disaffected voters, understood instinctively by Democratic members of Congress after the 2010 midterms, infuriates liberal pundits because they haven't any feeling for it. What does France provide its voters in the place of populism? In 2011, instead of reconnecting with the French electorate, the French political class offers them—Bernard-Henri Lévy.

Known by his initials, BHL is in many ways an admirable figure, and certainly a romantic one, thundering against the old left, denouncing any sign of reemerging Stalinism, taking stands that are reminiscent of America's Cold War liberals of old. This summer, BHL made a lot of noise in support of two causes: the liberation of Libya, for which he claims even more credit than Sarkozy, and the injustice of his friend Dominique Strauss-Kahn's arrest. In each cause, he imagined himself a prophet, giving voice to the demands of an aroused public—a public that is in fact rather cynical about the prospects of a happy outcome in Libya and the fundamental innocence of DSK. BHL is tone-deaf to popular ideas—that there is something corrupt about how DSK had been protected by the establishment while he enjoyed himself with women, willing and not so much, at the expense of the nation. BHL's hymns to Libyan freedom and his self-dramatizing arrival in Tripoli have not in fact made much of a difference to the success or failure of the Libyans who fought on the ground, or the NATO forces in the air. BHL himself is not to be blamed: It is the French political culture that we have just examined which has a weakness for the likes of BHL, even as it is deaf to the popular expression of political desires.

Marine Le Pen

Okay, so the *New York Times* editorial board has now joined the MSNBC cheering section. But even nonconservatives should recognize that the outcome of the French system is bad in this respect: It isolates politics, politicians, and lawmaking from voters. Think of our unenviable president. Obama is inclined to do nothing different during the next year, but were he to undertake any of a number of actions to conciliate the rebellious voters of 2010, he could make his reelection probable and put his party in a much better place.

On the other hand, the president of France poses as a man of action, and may well be one. But his actions—some of them ill-advised, some of them perfectly pitched—will have no consequences. For example, Sarkozy has spent the summer pushing a balanced budget amendment, called *la règle d'or*, through the legislature. The French public wants it, the Socialists, idiotically, opposed it—and it will not make much difference to Sarkozy's lack of popularity or the Socialists' lead. The French voter is accustomed to seeing the political class make solemn, unbreakable pledges—such as the promise that nations entering the eurozone would never let deficits rise above 3 percent of GDP—then break them with electoral impunity. It was not just Greece and Portugal but France and Germany who repeatedly violated these terms in the early 2000s, as Holland's finance minister scornfully declared recently. Our own president has discovered that Americans do not reward speeches unaccompanied by action. Sarkozy has discovered that the French do not reward action even when he spares them the speeches.

Imagine a Sarkoized Obama (even if these statements are, clearly, packaged to feed the public). If Joe Biden were to say, as a Sarkozy adviser told *Le Figaro*, "When you're in a war, you don't spend time thinking about the next election." Or were Jay Carney to declare, as Sarkozy's communications chief did, "The president is convinced that the best way to campaign is to do his job—especially during the [opposition's] primary." Or if Obama were to think, as Sarkozy does, in the words of the same communications chief: "It is a time for decisions, not for speechifying. The French see what we do: You can't establish your credibility by decree."

Sarkozy's strategy for reelection is not to say very much, not to expect very much, and to do what he pleases. On a number of matters it is prudent of him to wait, and even more prudent to remain silent. No one can possibly know the final outcome of causes he has been associated with, such as Libya and the fight to save the euro. An adviser put it well, speaking in July to Charles Jaigu of *Le Figaro*. Sarkozy disappointed those who voted for him, and they think they want a change. After they get a good look at the competition, they will see that "the president, finally, isn't so bad."

American voters, both right and left, want more and get more from their candidates than "not so bad" because they have the power to punish those who disappoint them—by choosing to replace them with someone whose differences are clear and distinct, even if doing so alarms the *New York Times* op-ed page. Would ordering things here as they do in France, eschewing divisiveness and seeking the center, improve the health of our politics? No—except for the sex part. ♦

NEWSCOM

V. Sackville-West by Philip de Laszlo (1909), Violet Trefusis by Sir John Lavery (1919)

Love Among the Shadows

Hidden lives, fatal passion, in genteel England. BY SARA LODGE

Biography is a form of love affair, the more intense because it can never be consummated. Like lovers, biographers rifle through their subjects' letters and diaries for evidence of the absent one's activities and affections. They guard their subject's reputation and become jealous of rivals. They profess to interpret, to comprehend, to promote, but they requite the years that they devote to their chosen figure of fascination by exercising the power of life or death over them, the right to immortalize or to dissect.

A Book of Secrets
Illegitimate Daughters, Absent Fathers
by Michael Holroyd
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 272 pp., $26

Michael Holroyd's latest book is about a series of forgotten love affairs. It traces the stories of several women—Luie Tracy Lee, José Cornelia Brink, Eve Fairfax, Violet Trefusis, and Catherine Till—who are connected by their relationships to the Beckett family, the Barons Grimthorpe of Yorkshire. Luie was the wife of Ernest Beckett (1856-1917), a restless banker, MP, traveler, and playboy. Eve and José were two

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of his mistresses, Violet his illegitimate daughter, and Catherine is (probably) his illegitimate granddaughter. In tracing the lives of these women, Holroyd evokes a transient era, from the late 19th century to the Second World War: a period that saw the English aristocracy acquire new money from industry, indulge in new cultural adventures, but also experience a new self-doubt. All of the figures in Holroyd's tale are poignant: Even the philandering Ernest seems lost in a social canvas that, despite his talents and advantages, he can never properly fill. It is the women in this minor tragedy, however, with whom Holroyd is in love. He paints their secret lives, their failures, and their indomitable spirit with the sensitivity of someone who cares, almost too much, for those whose passion is laced with suffering.

Luie Tracy Lee was an American heiress whose charmed girlhood at Highland Falls, a country estate near West Point, collapsed when her father died. To console her, her cousin, Pierpont Morgan, took her to Europe. She was the kind of young American on the brink of life, an ingénue straying into Old World lairs, who would have fascinated Henry James. They went to Paris and Marseilles and Alexandria, cruising through the Mediterranean in an "uncomfortable and beastly boat." In Cairo, she saw improper stage shows and was dubbed "la Belle Américaine." She bought dozens of dresses and admired Joshua Reynolds's painting *The Age of Innocence*, but nothing could dispel her ennui until she met Ernest Beckett in Rome. She was 19 and lost; he was 27 and reckless: Within five months they were married. Luie was one of a band of Pilgrim Daughters, young American brides whose transfusion of dollars reinvigorated aristocratic English families whose fortunes were hemorrhaging. Alas, however, all Luie's wealth, youth, and beauty could not prolong her own life. Having had two daughters and a miscarriage, she died in 1891 giving birth to the male heir that was required to sustain the Grimthorpe title.

Perhaps it was just as well. Had Luie lived longer, she might have had to confront Ernest's mistress, José Cornelia Brink. José was a blonde bombshell from South Africa, whose figure even Victorian contemporaries had to admit was eye-catching. When still only a teenager, José evidently decided that she could have more fun in London without a chaperone. Ernest took a suite at the Savoy and invited her for lunch. When he suggested they might adjourn to the bedroom, José was not slow to relinquish her fork and anything else she might be holding up, or vice versa.

José was, perhaps, the only woman to get the better of Ernest Beckett. He rented her a luxurious house, where they continued their liaison when he was in London. Meanwhile, José thought she would take up acting. Hilariously, she took a part in a traveling production of Oscar Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance*. José is the epitome of all the paradoxes of Victorian society that Wilde satirizes: a courtesan whose credit ran so high that she traveled first-class; a kept woman who was freer than her married counterparts; a comic actress whose lover was Ernest. She wasn't a great success in the theater, but she didn't need to be. If she did Wilde on stage, she did wilder off it.

Ernest had a curious instinct for a bad gamble: He invested in San Francisco just before the 1906 earthquake. José, by contrast, hedged her bets outrageously and got away with it. At a party, while Ernest was abroad, she met a businessman called John Joseph Lace flaunting a diamond ring. She told him she didn't like men who wore rings, so he promptly transferred it from his finger to hers. When Ernest returned and discovered she had married, he was irate. He insisted on claiming her back. He was now a widower, so José must have thought she had a chance of becoming Lady Grimthorpe. She renewed the relationship and bore Ernest a son. But Ernest (characteristically) tired of his victory and left her. So José went back to Mr. Lace who—remarkably—remarried her, accepted her son, and sailed back to South Africa with them.

As Mr. Lace put it, "Living with José is hell; but it is worse hell without her."

Eve Fairfax, another of Ernest's lovers, was equally plucky but not so lucky. She is evidently Holroyd's favorite muse in this narrative. You can see her bust, by Rodin, in the Victoria and Albert Museum—and it was encountering this strong face, with its long neck and challenging eyes, that made Holroyd wish to seek out the story of the sitter. Eve was born into a noble family descended from Parliamentarians who had defeated Charles I during the Civil War. The spirit of resistance was strong in her. Educationally neglected, she poured her energies into sport and was an excellent cricketer. She galloped her pony eight miles to school and back each day and often rode to balls with her gown in her saddlebag. Sadly, late Victorian English society offered little scope to Calamity Janes of Eve's vigorous physical type. She dodged proposals like bullets, but could not quite resist the danger of Ernest Beckett. He broke off their engagement, perhaps after she miscarried his child, perhaps because his ruinous finances didn't allow him to marry anyone without money. Eve spent the rest of her life as a genteel guest, travelling around the stately homes of England, providing entertaining company in return for lodging.

At this point in the book, Holroyd's focus shifts to modern times. He describes his visit to the Villa Cimbrone, Ernest Beckett's beautiful Italian cliff-top house near Ravello, with Catherine Till, who is hoping to find there letters that might reveal whether she is Ernest Beckett's granddaughter. Holroyd's account of his high-speed Italian adventure with the seventy-something Catherine at the wheel of a rental car—driving recklessly in the wrong direction—is an entertaining travelogue in its own right. Catherine's combination of gusto, charm, recklessness, and insecurity tend to make the reader think that she must surely be a Beckett after all.

The Villa Cimbrone, however, despite its magical setting amid lemon groves and umbrella pines, fails to pro-

vide any significant clues. Catherine's quest to establish her true identity ends in disappointment. So Holroyd's narrative path twists again and takes up the story of Violet Trefusis, Beckett's illegitimate daughter by Alice Keppel, a Victorian wife remarkable for the suavity of her depravity: She was also the Prince of Wales's favorite mistress.

Violet was a force of nature: selfish, intense, passionate, and strange. She hated and adored her mother in equal measure. Like other women connected to Ernest Beckett, she seems to have had more fire and freedom in her sexuality than British society of her era could openly accommodate. In Violet's case, however, the situation was complicated by the fact that she was homosexual. When still only a teenager, she developed a crush of Wagnerian proportions on Vita Sackville-West: Over the years this would develop into a tempestuous love affair whose waves of attraction and withdrawal threatened to capsize everyone near to either of them. Moreover, Violet was a writer, with a vengeance: Those who crossed her ended up in tales.

Holroyd leads us through Violet's stormy career, with a commentary on each of her works of fiction. The biography is full of startling anecdotes. Violet and Vita married and participated, to some degree, in the polite fiction of heterosexuality. But they also repeatedly ran away together. On one occasion in 1920 they were pursued to France by their husbands in a small plane, which Alice Keppel had hired. After Violet was forced to relinquish Vita, she became involved with a French princess (a daughter of Isaac Singer, the American sewing-machine millionaire) who favored sadomasochistic role play with whips and boots. We know because a visitor to her palace, being mistaken for "the lady who was expected," went upstairs and stumbled on an all-female party that went well beyond tea and cake. Violet's desire for absolute love sometimes seems petulantly childlike, but her experiments in life and art were decidedly adult.

Holroyd's detailed commentary on Violet's fiction, while interesting in itself, strays from family history into literary criticism. And this is a problem with the book as a whole: It is rather diffuse and digressive. The struggle for identity, which troubles several of Holroyd's characters, is a struggle with which his book also grapples. *A Book of Secrets* isn't entirely sure whether it is a group biography, a history of an era, a house (in the architectural or familial sense), or a literary study.

The author himself notes that his book has "no settled agenda. . . . [It is] not so much a traditional 'biographical' narrative, as a set of thematically related stories." When he gives us some of Eve Fairfax's life, then wanders away from her to other figures, only to return to her story later, those readers who prefer their narrative track to be straight and direct will be frustrated.

If, however, you enjoy a loose structure and can embrace the degree of randomness that is a quality of how we encounter human stories in real life, there is much to enjoy here. Sometimes the vignettes Holroyd briefly sketches but does not pursue are the most intriguing. Ernest's father, William, was mysteriously killed on a provincial railway track, with a large banknote in his pocket. Probably he was visiting a mistress (infidelity seems to be the one constant in the Beckett family), but why he crossed the line we'll never know. His death forms an ironic tableau worthy of Dickens: the magnate scattered along one of the railways whose wealth built his family, his body accidentally divided into multiple shares.

A Book of Secrets is, in various senses, an elegiac history. It depicts an era in which much was hidden and lost. Also Holroyd now suffers from a serious illness; he has announced that this is his last book. It is not his best work, but its tangents are haunting. They evoke a problem that fascinated Modernists like Violet Trefusis and has always fascinated Holroyd: What are the limits of biography as a form? Where does it enter the realm of fiction, of desire? At his best, Holroyd makes a virtue of what cannot be known or recovered. The romance of the past lies, like the beauty of Eve Fairfax's sculpture, in its inscrutable, provocative, always unfinished gaze. ♦

B&A

Der Führer's Girl

The love (?) story of Eva Braun and Adolf Hitler.

BY SUSANNE KLINGENSTEIN

Eva Braun
Life with Hitler
by Heike B. Görtemaker
translated by Damion Searls
Knopf, 336 pp., $27.95

Eons ago, in 1989, when Germany was in the midst of its most intense phase of coming to grips with the murder of the European Jews by largely ordinary Germans, Times Books was planning a collection of essays subtitled "Contemporary Writers Make the Holocaust Personal." The American writers' task was to bring the Holocaust unnervingly close to home.

A discussion ensued among some of the New York-based contributors whether the task required an unethical use of the imagination, whether by fitting the monumental suffering of the European Jews into the puny dimensions of one's private life, or by imagining oneself back into that time and place, one was somehow cross-

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ing the line. The book was published and, predictably, sank like a stone because there is nothing that the late-born can add that the towering stacks of letters, diaries, photographs, film footage, and oral testimonies have not already brought home to us who were not there.

One essay, however, stuck out like a thorn. The writer, a descendant of Orthodox Jews displaced from Frankfurt, shared a fantasy she had nurtured as an adolescent. Using her femininity she would seduce Hitler and convince him that he didn't really hate the Jews: "It involved a lot of gentle argument of the sort two lovers might engage in." The *frisson* here is created by the fantasy work required to imagine Hitler as a human being with sexual desires and submitting to them. It's hard to imagine anything more repulsive.

I was forcefully reminded of that essay while reading Heike Görtemaker's fluently written and adequately translated book about Eva Braun, Hitler's consort for 16 years, wife for 40 hours, and companion in suicide. The aptly named Eva Braun was the one woman in Hitler's life with whom he was possibly intimate. Yet so little is known about her or about her actual relationship with Hitler that *Eva Braun* becomes an extended invitation to fantasize about what was or was not going on between the two of them.

In the process, the unsuspecting reader is forced to consider Hitler as a human being. Since we have no letters, no authentic diaries, no honest eyewitness accounts, the couple Adolf & Eva remains an empty space which the writer seeks to define by extensive descriptions of the skittish lovers' social environment, mainly the exclusive circle that congregated around Hitler at his Bavarian hilltop refuge, the Berghof. It's best to think of this book as a glazed donut: a hole surrounded by some fluffy dough, which you will find more or less nourishing depending on how starved you are for information about Hitler's comings and goings.

By far the most interesting fact about Eva Braun opens the book: On March 7, 1945, when the endgame was on in Berlin, she suddenly took action. On that day she jettisoned the placid life and safety of the Berghof and asked to be driven to the Führer's bunker in Berlin. The only purpose of that journey could be to join Hitler in death. Why did she do it? Hero worship to the end? She, who supposedly knew Hitler in his socks? By the way, did she ever see him in his socks, or without underwear, and if she did was her final action motivated by love? There is something profoundly revolting in that thought. And if not love, loyalty? Megalomania? Martyrdom?

Friedrich II's Castel del Monte, about which we learn in connection with Hitler's delusional designs for Linz, have to do with poor Eva Braun, a Bavarian girl as simple as her name?

Hitler met Braun in Munich in 1929, when the lower-middle-class blonde, one of three sisters, was 17 and he was 40. She had just started to work in the photo store of Heinrich Hoffmann, an enterprising photojournalist and dedicated Nazi of the first hour, when her boss arrived one evening in the company of one Herr Wolff and sent his shopgirl to buy beer and sausages. One hesitates to say that the relationship between Eva and Adolf blossomed because coyness, priggishness, and above all, extreme secrecy surrounded the entire affair. In part this was due to Hitler's pathological unease with his own body and his fear of being perceived as ridiculous (he was never seen in public in anything less than impeccable attire). But, explains Görtemaker, not being associated with one woman in public was also part of the religious myth he and Joseph Goebbels constructed around his person. The Führer's public celibacy, signaling purity, divinity,

Eva Braun sunbathing at the Berghof

AKG-IMAGES / NEWSCOM

Putting Braun's decisive action of March 7 at the beginning, and defining it as a riddle, was a clever move by Görtemaker, whose fundamental problem is lack of authentic biographical material. The move creates suspense and allows her to unfold her study like a mystery novel in which much circumstantial evidence is mustered to solve the riddle. The smallest details now become interesting, and it is only after you finish reading that you see the cartloads of red herrings that inflate the product. What does the octagonal design of Emperor

and total dedication to his cause—the restoration of Germany's dignity and grandeur—not only worked to raise Hitler above ordinary mortals but also kept the Führer available as love object to the imagination of millions of German women, inviting projections of desire or maternal love.

Far from being apolitical victims of the regime, relegated to *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* (children, kitchen, church), women were primary enablers of the regime. Görtemaker is good where she explains the role of women in the Nazi system, and she is particularly good (because analytical and to the point) where she talks about the wives of Hitler's top men, foremost among them Goebbels, Hermann Göring, Rudolf Hess, Martin Bormann, and Albert Speer. As guests at the Berghof these women had to deal with the irregular existence of Braun, whose presence was never explained, and whose status was never clarified, and whom no one dared to cross.

Although (or perhaps because) Eva and Adolf very likely became lovers in 1932, Braun was scrupulously kept out of the public eye. She continued to work for Hoffmann's shop to the very end, and Hoffmann laundered the money that came to her by way of Bormann, and later paid her a fortune for snapshots she took at the Berghof. The impressively wide dissemination of Hoffmann's photos and well-groomed photo books helped engineer the public myth of Hitler and made Hoffmann a wealthy man. When Hitler began to increase his travel, usually with a huge entourage, Braun came along in the guise of a private secretary, often sharing a railway compartment with other clerical employees. The official role of the Reich's "first lady" was usually filled by the glamorous Magda Goebbels.

Only at the hermetically sealed Berghof did Braun reign supreme over Hitler's inner circle of devotees, and as the years went by she seems to have become more secure in her role as Hitler's *de facto* wife. And yet, after all the circumstantial evidence has been examined, we are not a step closer to knowing precisely what motivated Braun to join the man in death whom she could not officially join in life. We can speculate, of course—and that is how we get sucked into thinking about the tiny, private, totally irrelevant world of a provincial woman as millions of human beings, including more than one million children, are dying gruesome deaths.

Görtemaker entitles the last section, which covers 1939 to 1945, "Untergang" (downfall), clearly alluding to the eponymous 2002 book by Joachim Fest about the unraveling of the Third Reich. Fest's book served as the basis for Oliver Hirschbiegel's movie *Downfall* (2004), which dramatized the last 10 days in Hitler's bunker and unleashed a discussion, both here and in Germany, whether it was ethical to humanize Hitler. That is not the problem with *Eva Braun* because Hitler remains a rather fuzzy figure whose contours sharpen to the degree that readers bring their own knowledge to the book.

Nor is the main problem that we get sucked into the rather narrow world of Eva Braun, and see the monumental transformation of Germany, with its tragic consequences for Europe, from the unsophisticated perspective of what one is sorely tempted to call a birdbrain. The real problem is that the author, by reconstructing Braun's world and her possible mindset, is going for the simplest, most conventional, and most easily comprehensible explanations, and stays entirely on the polished social surface of observable phenomena. Nowhere is scholarship about every aspect of the Nazi regime more plentiful, more trenchant, more methodically rigorous, and more insightful than in Germany. But you wouldn't know it from this book.

One example will suffice. When SS-Obergruppenführer Julius Schaub, Hitler's personal adjutant who'd been close to him for 20 years, was pressed on the topic of Hitler and Braun in questioning at Nuremberg in 1947, he would not come right out and describe the relationship as intimate. But he did say that the men surrounding Hitler had a hard time understanding why he didn't marry her. Görtemaker concludes that Schaub was "a simple soul" whose statements after the war were "generally questionable or downright false" anyway, and who in this case just "did not understand the compulsion bound up with Hitler's categorical self-idealization, nor the fact that the power of the National Socialist system depended in large part on the myth of the 'Führer' standing above all everyday politics and problems."

But what if it just wasn't so? What if the power of the Nazis was actually sustained by an entire people because that people was doing quite well under Hitler's dictatorship? What if the more simple-souled Germans who, like Schaub, didn't see a problem with being married and being away from the wife because duty called, were simply letting Hitler have his myth while they were improving their social conditions? As the Heidelberg historian Götz Aly showed in his study *Hitlers Volksstaat* (2005), Hitler's regime set in motion massive social mobility in the lower classes by implementing policies that redistributed wealth, largely the confiscated wealth of the Jews and later the wealth transferred back to the Reich during the looting of Europe. From Martin Bormann, who lived in a confiscated villa in Munich's elegant Bogenhausen section, to the little shopkeeper at the corner who was glad to get rid of a Jewish competitor, millions of Germans benefited in palpable material ways from Hitler's persecution of the Jews. The Germans wanted what the Jews had, and Hitler gave it to them. The Germans supported him as long as his power was to their benefit.

Whether he was married or not would not have made the slightest difference to them. Schaub, a married man who lived in the real world, saw that very clearly, and in his statement he dared to indicate that he thought Hitler a bit odd. If Görtemaker had listened more carefully to people like Schaub, she might have written a more complex, more interesting, book. ♦

B&A

Quiet Capitalist

The portrait of a founding father of business philanthropy. **BY CLAUDE R. MARX**

Business leaders often feel obliged to keep a strong public persona and make conspicuous displays of philanthropy to persuade the public to like, or at least respect, them. They aren't content to let their good works or business prowess speak for themselves—as if creating thousands of jobs and making many people prosperous isn't enough of a contribution to the common good.

One of America's most significant business leaders, Thomas Mellon (1813-1908), was the opposite of a self-promoter, and kept his philanthropies private. As a result, while people know his name, and the bank and other businesses that he founded, they don't know as much about him as they do about other titans such as Andrew Carnegie or John D. Rockefeller.

His great-great-grandson, historian James Mellon, has produced a well-researched biography that could go far to help people better understand the family patriarch. And while *The Judge* presents its subject in a favorable light, it's not a hagiography and the warts aren't hidden.

Unfortunately, while the story of Mellon, whose life spanned the period in which America came of age as an economic power, is quite engaging, the writing here is not. The prose is often bland and the author does not take advantage of opportunities to make the narrative sing. Mellon was born in Northern Ireland into a family originally from Scotland, and when he was five, he and his family emigrated to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. Like many a driven business titan, Mellon was a tireless worker and self-educator as a boy. He would "come to view pleasure, ease, luxury, and recreation as unnecessary, debilitating, and therefore, dangerous indulgences that were to be strenuously avoided, especially by young men in their formative years," the author writes.

The Judge
A Life of Thomas Mellon, Founder of a Fortune
by James Mellon
Yale, 592 pp., $38

Western Pennsylvania was heavily influenced by the Scotch-Irish origins of many immigrants, and at the time Mellon came of age, there was very much a frontier/rugged individualist mentality in the region. This caused in Mellon a lifelong skepticism about government (although he served as a judge and city councillor) and, although from humble origins himself, he would eventually develop an ironic skepticism about the ability of average citizens to make political decisions.

At 14 he read Benjamin Franklin's autobiography and considered this a seminal event in his development, giving him not only a role model but a set of principles by which to live his life. James Mellon notes that "self-mastery and the reduction of daily life to a strict discipline accorded entirely with Scotch-Irish values and with [Mellon's] personality." Thomas Mellon applied these principles to his successful career as a business lawyer and 10-year stint as a judge. All the while, he used his spare money (and funds from the family of his wealthy wife) to buy valuable property in downtown Pittsburgh and started a bank that, by the end of the century, would be the largest outside New York. He was extraordinarily bright, spending part of his early career as a classics professor, but was socially awkward and standoffish, and though the book is at pains to describe him as a talented raconteur, the author writes of his subject's "atrophied sense of humor."

What Thomas Mellon had in abundance was a single-minded devotion to his work and a knack for getting business decisions right far more often than not. In addition to banking and real estate, he invested in coal fields, lumber, and a construction company. He also helped launch the careers of others and lent $10,000 to Henry Clay Frick, whose company would supply coke to Carnegie's steel mills. Mellon and Frick had a strong professional and personal relationship—although Mellon never quite understood his friend's need to spend so much of his fortune on a luxurious mansion in New York City and in amassing an impressive art collection.

Mellon had a lifelong aversion to displays of wealth and philanthropy. He was also skeptical of philanthropic efforts by others (including Carnegie) when they required the government to pay for part of the largesse. While on the Pittsburgh city council, Mellon unsuccessfully fought an effort by Carnegie to donate a public library to the city because Carnegie wanted the city to pay for its operation. Mellon preferred to have the library run privately by a group of businessmen. Ever the advocate for his distinguished ancestor, James Mellon writes that "Pittsburghers can look back wistfully on the day when a flinty old judge warned the city government about assuming burdensome and continuing financial obligations." Mellon's heirs were far more enthusiastic about philanthropy than the patriarch. His family founded an institution of higher learning (which eventually merged with another to form Carnegie-Mellon University) and was active in shaping museums and other cultural enterprises.

The family, incidentally, almost didn't have any money to spend because the senior Mellon came very close to losing his fortune in the Panic of 1873.

Claude R. Marx is a writer in Washington.

Drawn and quartered between wealth and respectability, he waffled and agonized and miraculously emerged clinging to both. … Like a battle-scarred, tempest-tossed warship, with her sails in tatters, her masts broken, and bilges awash, T. Mellon & Sons was, incredibly, still afloat.

Point made—and would have been understood without the rhetorical overkill.

In a memoir, Mellon would paint a decidedly unromantic account of his feelings toward his wife: "There was no love beforehand so far as I was concerned," he wrote. "Nothing but a good opinion of worthy qualities; if I had been rejected I would have felt neither sad nor depressed only annoyed as to the loss of time." Nevertheless, the Mellons had eight children (four survived to adulthood), and all of the surviving offspring worked in the family's businesses, with varying degrees of success.

The son who became the most successful, Andrew (1855-1937), was a triple threat: He vastly expanded the family business, served as secretary of the Treasury during the Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover administrations—and amassed an art collection that would become the nucleus of the National Gallery of Art. The author paints a vivid portrait of Andrew Mellon: "He was sparing with words, but those that he uttered flew straight to the mark. He had X-ray vision for spotting the hidden defects in a business proposal."

After handing off his business affairs to his children, Thomas Mellon would spend his final years somewhat frustrated and bored. He slowly lost his eyesight and could no longer indulge his lifelong love of reading, and he lost money on an unsuccessful business venture, trying to build an incline railway in Kansas City. This got him caught up in that city's notoriously corrupt politics, and he was (unsuccessfully) sued for slander by a local pol. Never a particularly religious man, he explored the contemporary vogue for spirituality and participated in séances. It was a slightly eccentric ending to an extraordinary life. ♦

B&A

The Reading Life

Pleasure, not duty, should bring us to books.

BY MICAH MATTIX

Americans have always prided themselves on being a practical, self-made people, suspicious of newfangled theories in foreign books. Early cultural heroes were worldly-wise figures like Daniel Boone and David Crockett, and bookishness was nearly the end of Ichabod Crane. Ralph Waldo Emerson, for his part, made a living telling Americans not to read. Yet, despite all our anti-intellectual bravado, the feeling that we *should* read books has never really been absent from our collective consciousness. The question is, which books to read, and how? For over 60 years now there has been no shortage of books answering these two questions. Here are the latest.

The Use and Abuse of Literature
by Marjorie Garber
Pantheon, 336 pp., $28.95

The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction
by Alan Jacobs
Oxford, 176 pp., $19.95

For Marjorie Garber, we should read "literature," and her goal in *The Use and Abuse of Literature* is "to return literature to the center, rather than the periphery, of personal, educational, and professional life." Garber notes that until 200 years ago, the word "literature" could be used as a possessed noun. Dr. Johnson, she remarks, once referred to Milton's reading thus: "His literature was unquestionably great." Garber wants to recapture this particular use of the term. "The result," she writes, "of such a radical reorientation of our understanding of what it means to read, and to read literature, and to read in a 'literary' way, would be enormous."

That "radical" is telling. Rather than returning to an older way of thinking about literature—for Johnson, another meaning of the term was *belles lettres*—Garber is interested in legitimizing (wonderful Marxist term) her egalitarian definition and "critical" approach. So what is literature for Garber? Better start with what it's not. It's not works that possess stylistic mastery, or works of redeeming social value, or works of particular genres (drama as opposed to graphic novels, for example), or works that embody certain unchanging truths about human nature, or even books taught at university. No, literature is whatever people agree to call literature for various "aesthetic, political, situational, and cultural" reasons. Oh, and it's works that pose "unanswerable questions."

Let's take that last one. It is true enough that great works ask questions—questions that often lack facile answers. Yet it is patently false that great works *only* ask questions, or always lack "closure." Closure is not the same as ending. For Garber, all works end but none have closure. Yet, if closure is *satisfaction*, clearly all works have some sort of closure—*even if it is the satisfaction of the absence of it*. That the absence of closure is satisfying to some was made abundantly clear to me when I suggested in a seminar a few years ago that closure was unavoidable. I was quickly silenced by dismissive scoffs and panicked evil eyes. All meanings are possible, of course, except that one. Garber ends her own book with a chapter entitled "The Impossibility of Closure," and I'm sure she is aware of the not-too-subtle irony

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of this. But I wonder if she is aware of the deeper irony—of the fact that so many literary critics of Garber's ilk, herself included, find this absence of closure so deeply satisfying, both intellectually and morally.

Garber ushers in all of the standard reasons for viewing literature in her egalitarian, relativistic way—works that were once thought trash are now considered masterpieces, notions of truth, beauty, and goodness are relative, and genres once associated with the masses are now part of highbrow literary culture—none of which hold up to close scrutiny. I'm no fan of the divide between high and low culture, but all cultures have made distinctions between more and less valuable artifacts in terms of complexity, nuance, truth, beauty, and so forth. No doubt what used to be considered trash is sometimes considered great, but it would be ridiculous to turn such exceptions into the rule. Even *The Waste Land* and *Leaves of Grass* were considered great by an insightful few when they were first published. It's rare indeed for a work to go from absolute scorn to the status of masterpiece.

So if literature is whatever folks decide it is, what is the use of reading it for Garber? This is not a mere academic question anymore: The humanities, as Garber notes, are on the ropes, funding is shrinking, and French departments are disappearing left and right. Well, because literature is a social construct that asks "unanswerable questions." To read it—or, as Garber would say, to *have* it—is to think of all of life in these terms. To think in a "literary" way is to view roles, morals, and religious beliefs as constructs. It is to become an enlightened materialist and social democrat. If only literary scholars would begin thinking about literature in this way, the humanities (Garber believes) would be saved.

Marx had another term for this. It's called "false consciousness." It was much to my relief when, in the midst of Garber's prescriptions, I received Alan Jacobs's wonderful *Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*. We live not only in an age of distraction but one of liberal, Puritanical moralists, and Jacobs provides a wonderful respite from both.

If Marjorie Garber is preoccupied with policing the use and abuse of literature, Alan Jacobs is more concerned with helping readers, or former readers, rediscover the joy of reading. And the first and most important step, for Jacobs, is to stop worrying about what you should read and simply read what strikes you. Start reading, he says, at whim:


MOBY-DICK;

OR,

THE WHALE.

BY

HERMAN MELVILLE.

NEW YORK:

First edition of Moby-Dick

> Read what gives you delight—at least most of the time—and do so without shame. And even if you are that rare sort of person who is delighted chiefly by what some people call Great Books, don't make them your steady intellectual diet, any more than you would eat at the most elegant of restaurants every day.

The problem with reading only Great Books under a sense of intellectual duty, and usually with the hope of improving ourselves, Jacobs writes, is that we close ourselves off to what these books have to offer. We treat these books not as valuable in and of themselves but as an exercise to be done to improve ourselves. But reading alone does not improve anyone: While some readers are good people, others are not. Reading at whim, for Jacobs, means reading a book "for itself" alone. It is only when you read in this way that you are truly reading.

This does not mean that reading is never difficult, or that all books are equally valuable. Nor does it mean that books make no moral demands on our lives. Moreover, reading at whim is not always sufficient: "Some forms of intellectual labor are worth the trouble. In those times when Whim isn't quite enough, times that will come to us all, we discover this." Because we have learned through practice that pushing through difficult texts brings "new and greater delights," we continue to read long after whim has left us. For Jacobs, this is not reading out of duty but experience.

No doubt, experience helps us to make this choice, but I wonder if Jacobs overestimates our power not only to calculate those "new and greater delights" but to choose those deeper pleasures over more immediate superficial ones. Reading out of duty can free me from this calculation and push me to choose the deeper pleasures in spite of myself. Yet, overall, Jacobs is mostly right: Reading at whim is the best way to recapture the joy of reading.

And what of this "age of distraction" in Jacobs's title? He thinks that it is exaggerated. Humans have always had distractions. Readers during Francis Bacon's time were distracted by the overwhelming number of books! And if our age offers more opportunities for some distractions, it also eliminates others. Consider the temptation to flip to the back of a book to read the ending, or return to the table of contents. This, he notes, is difficult with a Kindle, requiring several steps:

> The technology generates an inertia that makes it significantly easier to keep reading than to do anything else. E-readers, unlike many other artifacts of the digital age, promote *linearity*—they create a forward momentum that you can reverse if you wish, but not without some effort.

Should we read for use or pleasure? Dr. Johnson once said that "if a man never has an eager desire for instruction, he should prescribe a task for himself. But it is better when a man reads from immediate inclination." Read at whim, that is, and discover the true utility of books. ♦

B&A

Page-Turning

Will the leatherbound volume go the way of the eight-track tape? **BY PHILIP TERZIAN**

One of the features of a life in journalism is the casual assumption, expressed by nonjournalists at cocktail parties, that journalists "know" things: have the inside dope, heard the real version, predict the future. I have always defended myself by saying that, apart from being acquainted with public officials and the occasional celebrity, journalists know little more than the average reader. And as for predictions, your guess is as good as mine.

In my present capacity, however, one question comes up with intriguing regularity: Are we finished with books? Not with content, of course, but with the physical objects. The question is usually asked, I am pleased to report, with a noticeable mixture of regret and anxiety—as if the Internet, for all its manifold virtues, might have gone too far. Its genius and convenience cannot be denied, but obsolescence for certain much-beloved artifacts—the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, AM radio—was not necessarily part of the bargain.

So here is my answer: I'm not sure.

If we go by the evidence at hand, I would guess that the imminent demise of books has been greatly exaggerated. It is true that the Internet has transformed the way we acquire them—goodbye Borders, hello Amazon—but the number of books published annually remains steady (indeed, voluminous) and shows no signs of abating. Since we are well into the second decade of the Internet age, I take this to mean that if books were to disappear in the same way that carriages were swiftly supplanted by the automobile, it would have happened by now. Moreover, the publishing world has, to some degree, duplicated the experience of breweries: Whereas the giants have tended to decrease in quality as they expand (Budweiser/Random House), microbreweries/publishers have emerged to fill a vacuum perceived by consumers. As any scholarly writer can attest, it is

increasingly difficult to find a big-name "trade" publisher for comparatively arcane subjects, but that does not mean that no publisher can be found.

Still, there are ominous signs. The sale of books on Kindle now equals, perhaps exceeds, the sale of printed books. Speaking for myself, I am impervious to the charms of Kindle: I tend to read in books rather than devour them straight through, and find the Kindle machinery both claustrophobic and aesthetically unappealing. But I readily admit that I am a very small minority of readers, and am married to a satisfied Kindle customer.

For that matter, I have long suspected that certain mass-market products—the novels of James Patterson, for example—might someday subsist exclusively in electronic form, which would satisfy most Patterson fans and leave the rest of us unaffected. But that bodes poorly for trade paperbacks. It is sometimes argued that the virtue of the Kindle is that it enables, say, the vacationing reader to settle easily on the beach with multiple titles instead of lugging around a dozen books. Maybe so. But one virtue of the throwaway paperback is that the reader can bend it, fold down the pages, use it to swat flies, and spill liquid on the contents—and then discard it when finished. I am not sure the Kindle is so versatile.

And of course, the introduction of the paperback edition, which was greatly accelerated after World War II, did not spell the end of the clothbound version. The cost of the paperback was attractive to students obliged to buy titles, and to people who did not wish to invest in an expensive copy of, say, *Advise and Consent* or *The Greening of America*. Yet bookbuyers are motivated by more than thrift and convenience. Which, if I'm required to hazard a guess, suggests that books are here to stay.

There is, of course, some resonance in the history of technology. Photography, after the invention of the Kodak camera, became a mass enthusiasm; but painting is still with us. Come to that, the number of equestrians in our society is limited, but automobiles didn't spell the extinction of horses. And the fact is that the purchase and consumption of books—the clothbound variety, with a dust jacket, usually costing around $27.95—is a habit for many, but not all, Americans. In a lifetime of house-hunting—within, if I may say, sturdy middle-class neighborhoods—I have often been struck by the number of residences which appeared to contain not a single book. By the same token, bookstores are not ghettos for the elderly or Luddite but seem to attract those same 18-to-34-year-olds who don't use telephones and were raised on video games.

The business of buying and selling books is evolving, and the types of books that make it into print may change in time. But printed books—a mass luxury and acquired taste since the late 15th century—seem destined to endure. ♦

JOE SOHM VISIONS OF AMERICA / NEWSCOM

Philip Terzian, literary editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD*, is the author of* Architects of Power: Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and the American Century.

B&A

Blame the Glucose

Or, who Hollywood enriches when it makes movies.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

I haven't seen *The Help*; I keep meaning to, but I also keep meaning to get my shoes shined and my receipts filed according to month, and I haven't done those either. *The Help* strikes me, a male entering my sixth decade, as a movie to be seen more out of duty than out of desire, and I understand from the new book on willpower by John Tierney and Roy F. Baumeister that I make too many decisions during the day and I use up all my available glucose making those decisions and so doing my duty relative to *The Help* has proved beyond me.

So blame the glucose is what I'm saying.

Nor have I read the bestselling novel on which it is based, because I am not in a book club. And I gather that unless you are in a book club, it is against the law in 26 states to read *The Help*, because it is mandatory that you share the experience with other people (really, women, but the law forbids specific gender discrimination) over guacamole and mojitos and a very large common salad with a low-fat vinaigrette—kind of like how Jewish law forbids you from praying unless you are one of ten men gathered at a set time for a set service.

However, I'm not surprised that *The Help* is a major hit, just as I was not shocked that *Bridesmaids*, the uproarious comedy released at the beginning of the summer, will be the most profitable film of the year. Movies like these are the kind of fare that made the cinema the most popular art form for most of the 20th century around the world—stories about the lives of ordinary people to whom the moviegoer feels a real commonality, albeit told in a highly glamorized or stylized form.

The fact that *The Help* and *Bridesmaids* are both films that appeal primarily or only to women proves the case even more pointedly. They were made with relatively modest budgets and marketed cannily to an audience that is looking for entertaining fare of this sort. They survived and thrived in the marketplace because people who saw them told other people to go see them, and those people told other people in turn. The same is true of the films the actor-writer-director Tyler Perry makes for primarily black audiences. It proved true even for the perennial box-office bum Woody Allen, whose *Midnight in Paris* got literate people over the age of 60 into the movie theater for the first time in ages to thrill to its exhaustingly wan depiction of Hemingway's moveable feast.

This is how the movie business used to work in America, and still does work for the most part in movie-addled countries across the globe like India. Movies were made for audiences of all kinds—rural and urban, men and women, educated and lowbrow, the very young and the rapidly aging. Men got westerns and war movies; females got musicals and tearjerkers; urbanites got literary adaptations; rural audiences got broad comedies. It was assumed that if costs were kept in line and the movies featured performers audiences liked to see, they would make several multiples of their production and marketing costs, and would be accounted as hits. And this was long before there were ancillary markets, like television and cable or videotape or DVD, that would allow producers to sell the same product many times over.

You can see what a good business model this is; how sensible, how orderly. But today, with the exception of horror movies (which are produced with the general expectation that a well-received one will make around $60 million and is budgeted accordingly), you can count on two hands the major studio films that are made with this model in mind. As a result, the motion-picture business actually underserves the fastest-growing sectors of its audience, women with disposable income and people over the age of 45 generally, as it continues to chase younger audiences studio executives falsely believe they understand better and can control more easily with their marketing ploys.

This may seem like a market failure; why would a studio risk $200 million on an idiocy like *Green Lantern*, which any 15-year-old could have told you he wouldn't want to see, rather than make eight possible *Helps*? The answer is that for everyone involved in the making of a $200 million movie, the cash rains down upon them like manna no matter how it does in the end. A cheaper movie may make more money for its investors, but it doesn't do as well for the people who work in and on and around an expensive one.

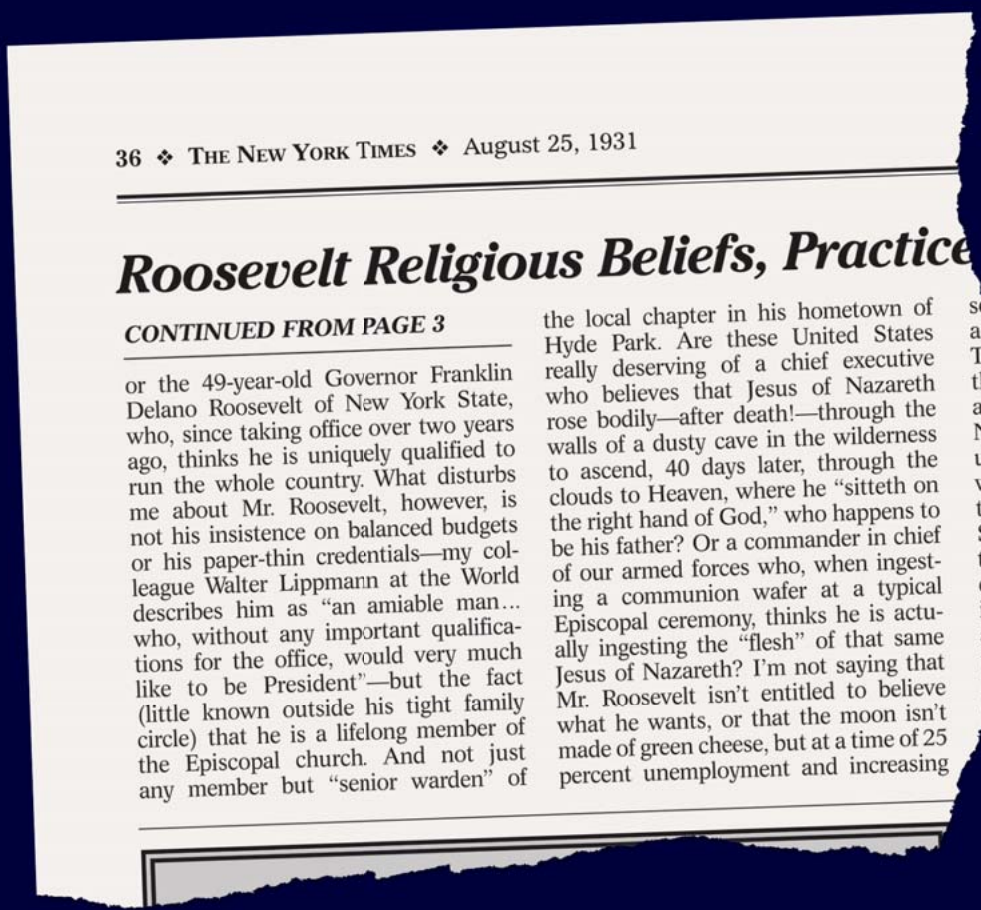
The incentive structure of the business is askew. The thing individuals in Hollywood want most is to make money without risk, and they can do that more easily with junk produced wastefully than with story-driven projects made with care and modesty. And what is the end result of this process? This summer, for the fourth year in a row, attendance was lower than the year before; fewer tickets were sold in the summer of 2011 than at any time since 1997, when the national population was 267 million. This year the national population is almost 20 percent larger, at 312 million.

Ticket sales aren't just decreasing; they're cratering relative to the size of the population. Adult moviegoers have lost their taste for the medium because there are only a few films made every year they might actually want to see. Hollywood is destroying itself, even though the answer to its salvation is as plain as the over-the-counter salsa served with the Trader Joe's guacamole at that book club next door where they're all crying over *The Help*. ♦

John Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, *is* The Weekly Standard*'s movie critic.*

"Mitt Romney and Jon Huntsman are Mormons, a faith that many conservative Christians have been taught is a 'cult' and that many others think is just weird . . . . Rick Perry and Michele Bachmann are both affiliated with fervid subsets of evangelical Christianity—and Rick Santorum comes out of the most conservative wing of Catholicism—which has raised concerns about their respect for the separation of church and state, not to mention the separation of fact and fiction."

***—Bill Keller, editor of the* New York Times,**
in the* New York Times Magazine*, August 28



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Roosevelt Religious Beliefs, Practice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

or the 49-year-old Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt of New York State, who, since taking office over two years ago, thinks he is uniquely qualified to run the whole country. What disturbs me about Mr. Roosevelt, however, is not his insistence on balanced budgets or his paper-thin credentials—my colleague Walter Lippmann at the World describes him as "an amiable man... who, without any important qualifications for the office, would very much like to be President"—but the fact (little known outside his tight family circle) that he is a lifelong member of the Episcopal church. And not just any member but "senior warden" of the local chapter in his hometown of Hyde Park. Are these United States really deserving of a chief executive who believes that Jesus of Nazareth rose bodily—after death!—through the walls of a dusty cave in the wilderness to ascend, 40 days later, through the clouds to Heaven, where he "sitteth on the right hand of God," who happens to be his father? Or a commander in chief of our armed forces who, when ingesting a communion wafer at a typical Episcopal ceremony, thinks he is actually ingesting the "flesh" of that same Jesus of Nazareth? I'm not saying that Mr. Roosevelt isn't entitled to believe what he wants, or that the moon isn't made of green cheese, but at a time of 25 percent unemployment and increasing