the weekly Standard

GRAND OLD REFORM PARTY
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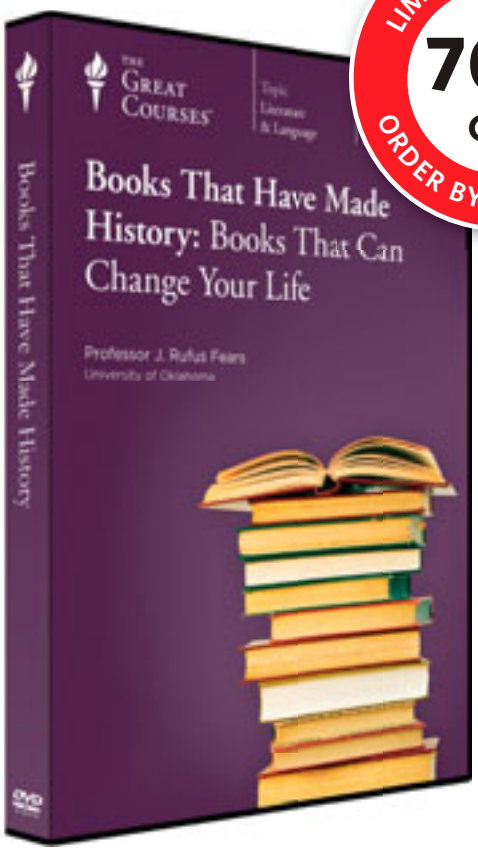

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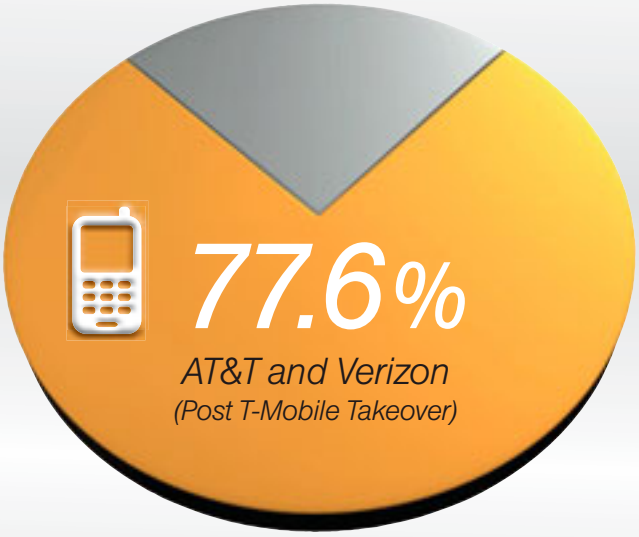

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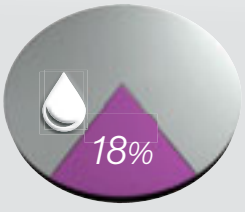

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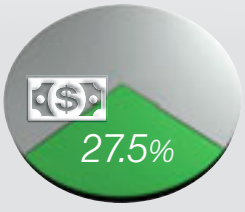

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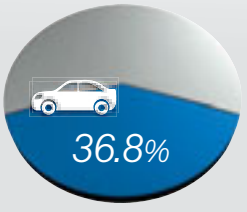

Auto

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.
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December 5, 2011 • Volume 17, Number 12

COVER: F. SCOTT AND ZELDA FITZGERALD AND THE LIGHTS, BY MARK SUMMERS

Gallantry in Action

A reader points out that the Marine featured in our cover photo three weeks ago is Captain Timothy R. Sparks, who was recently honored with a Silver Star for his actions during the Battle for Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand Province. Sparks received the medal in a September 28 ceremony at Camp Lejeune.

The official citation reads as follows:

"The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Captain Timothy R. Sparks, United States Marine Corps, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as Company Commander, Company B, First Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment, Second Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan on 13 February 2010 in support of Operation MOSHTARAK.

"In the early morning hours, Company B conducted a low-light heliborne assault to seize the Taliban stronghold in the Koru Chareh village. As the company maneuvered to assault the enemy positions, a like-size enemy force attacked Company B from all directions with a heavy volume of small arms and indirect fires. Undaunted by the enemy fires,

Captain Sparks moved from position to position, covering hundreds of meters of open terrain in order to effectively direct his platoons. With complete disregard for his own safety, Captain Sparks led his company from the front, refusing to lose momentum and cede the initiative to the enemy.

"As the Company pushed into the village, Captain Sparks remained well-forward, spearheading the assault to seize key terrain and gain a foothold. He and his men continued to fight off the Taliban counter-attack through the night. During heavy fighting the following day, he personally led an ambush of an enemy force as it displaced, destroying ten insurgents and a sniper. Over the next several days, the company expanded its foothold in Marjah and encountered stiff resistance. Throughout numerous direct fire engagements, Captain Sparks' calm demeanor, confidence under fire, and exceptional tactical prowess ensured he was always at the point of friction.

"By his bold leadership, determination, and complete dedication to duty, Captain Sparks reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service."

The photo on our cover was taken nine days after the fighting described in the citation. ♦

The Dark Lady Returns

Twice earlier this year—first in March (www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/her-chris-christie_552733.html) and again in August (www.weeklystandard.com/articles/marvellous-ode_582082.html)—a Dark Lady approached The Scrapbook's boss with poems. The first, "To Her Chris Christie," implored the governor of New Jersey to take the presidential plunge. The second, "To Our Coy Non-Candidates," addressed Christie as well as Paul Ryan, Marco Rubio, Jeb Bush, "and others," urging them to enter the lists.

Well, the Dark Lady seems to have given up on getting someone new to join the field. She appeared in Constitution Hall just after last Tuesday's Republican presidential debate. Kristol didn't recognize his old friend at first, as she was dressed as a witch. But when she spoke, he says, her sultry tones were unmistakable. She seemed cheerful (for a Dark Lady) and animated. She'd enjoyed the debate, asked that Bill pass on compliments to the sponsors, the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation, and pressed a scrap of paper into his hand. Then (as before) she faded into the crowd.

The paper was ripped from a larger manuscript. Here are the only lines The Scrapbook could make out:

Round about the cauldron they go;
Each with good ideas to throw—
Eye of Newt, and hair of Mitt,
Which should in the Oval sit?

To yield on either we are loath—
So—ye gods!—let's have them both.
Choosing one's a sticky wicket,
Put them both then on the ticket!

Mitt and Newt—or Newt and Mitt?
Whichever order the results fit.
The combo's more than twice as lov'ble,
Double the flavor, double the trouble.
So fire, burn, and cauldron, bubble.
And bury the Dems in the rubble. ♦

Major Crisis Looms in Iraq

A friend of The Scrapbook forwards an email from the United Nations offices within the Green Zone in Baghdad:

> Message from the
> Staff Welfare Committee
> We regret to inform you that the UNdercover Bar will be closed on Tuesday 22 and Thursday 24 November due to stock shortages. The bar will reopen on Tuesday 29 November. The Riverside Bar, also affected by stock shortages, will reopen in the *new year*. [emphasis added]
> As you know, the UNdercover Bar is staffed by volunteers. We're always looking for new volunteers, and encourage you to sign up for bartending shifts in December! . . .
> Many thanks !

Needless to say, panic has set in. Our correspondent also shared some commentary from a U.N. acquaintance:

> The Iraqis closed the only booze shop in the [Green Zone] because [U.N. personnel] didn't have proper papers. This was maybe two months ago but people were well enough stocked that it was a dwindle situation. And it's dwindled, as you can see. . . . Feet are in the air. Drinking corked wine is not frowned upon. All of a sudden, everybody has a long-lost friend at the U.S. embassy, and they're going over there and loading up at the PX.

It's reassuring to know that in times of crisis, you can always count on Americans to lend a helping hand, and that, in extremis, there are limits to anti-Americanism at the U.N. ♦

The Way We Live Now (Harvard Edition)

The *Harvard Crimson* reports the university's health plan will henceforth cover "lower gender reassignment surgery":

> Lower surgery, also known as bottom surgery, alters an individual's genitals to match his or her transitioning gender identity.
> "I know Harvard students who have made the decision to take steps to have surgeries to reassign their gender," said QSA [Queer Students and Allies] Co-Chair Samuel J. Bakkila '11-'12. "I know it's always a difficult decision for anyone to make, and I think that it's great that the University is now supporting steps to have [individuals'] outward gender reflect their inward gender."
> Last year, Harvard modified its health care plan to include coverage of top surgery, which includes breast construction and mastectomies, for "individuals struggling with serious gender identity issues," according to a statement issued by University Health Services. This change took effect on Aug. 1, 2010.
> In 2010, the University decided not to include lower surgery in its health plan, though Blue Cross Blue Shield had outlined Harvard's new health policy to include the operation. At the time, the University cited a lack of local qualified health care providers for individuals transitioning from one gender to another.

The celebratory coverage does not explore why there might be a shortage of surgeons. A hint can be found in a 2004 essay in *First Things* by Paul McHugh, then the University Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University. Johns Hopkins was once a center of sex-change operations but closed its clinic after rigorous followup studies showed poor outcomes for patients.

As McHugh explained:

> We in the Johns Hopkins Psychiatry Department eventually concluded that human sexual identity is mostly built into our constitution by the genes we inherit and the embryogenesis we undergo. Male hormones sexualize the brain and the mind. Sexual dysphoria—a sense of disquiet in one's sexual role—naturally occurs amongst those rare males who are raised as females in an effort to correct an infantile genital structural problem. A seemingly similar disquiet can be socially induced in apparently constitutionally normal males, in association with (and presumably prompted by) serious behavioral aberrations, amongst which are conflicted homosexual orientations and the remarkable male deviation now called autogynephilia.
>
> Quite clearly, then, we psychiatrists should work to discourage those adults who seek surgical sex reassignment. When Hopkins announced that it would stop doing these procedures in adults with sexual dysphoria, many other hospitals followed suit, but some medical centers still carry out this surgery. Thailand has several centers that do the surgery "no questions asked" for anyone with the money to pay for it and the means to travel to Thailand. I am disappointed but not surprised by this, given that some surgeons and medical centers can be persuaded to carry out almost any kind of surgery when pressed by patients with sexual deviations, especially if those patients find a psychiatrist to vouch for them. The most astonishing example is the surgeon in England who is prepared to amputate the legs of patients who claim to find sexual excitement in gazing at and exhibiting stumps of amputated legs. At any rate, we at Hopkins hold that official psychiatry has good evidence to argue against this kind of treatment and should begin to close down the practice everywhere. . . .
>
> The improved understanding of what we had been doing led us to stop prescribing sex-change operations for adults at Hopkins—much, I'm glad to say, to the relief of several of our plastic surgeons who had previously been commandeered to carry out the procedures. ♦

the weekly Standard

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1968 and All That

My alluring wife accuses me of harboring a "weird aversion" to the televised debates that seem to be the sum and substance of the Republican campaign for the presidency. I plead guilty to the charge. And "weird" may well be the right word, for although our modern political mythology is now populated with memorable debate moments—"there you go again . . . my daughter Amy . . . fuzzy math"—I seem to be a party of one in disdaining the form and believing it does more harm than good.

Since 1976, when the practice was revived after a 16-year lapse, my argument has been that ours is not a parliamentary system, and that the ability to answer snarky questions from journalists, or engage in snappy repartee on camera, has nothing to do with success in the presidency. I am not sure how warmly Franklin Roosevelt or James Knox Polk would have been perceived by post-debate focus groups. And too many turning points in these historic confrontations—Nixon's five o'clock shadow, the elder Bush consulting his wristwatch, the imaginary rape and murder of Kitty Dukakis—have been almost totally devoid of significance. Watch the legendary Kennedy-Nixon debates—pitting the youthful (43) Jack against the ancient (47) Dick—and you would guess that the islands of Quemoy and Matsu were the most important issue of the 1960s.

Indeed, in the current contest, Mitt Romney, the candidate who has (in my view) the best chance of defeating the incumbent, has been steadily impressive in every debate yet penalized by the media because he appears to be respected rather than loved. Conversely, Newt Gingrich, a candidate who (in my view) is among the least likely to defeat the incumbent, has benefited in recent polls from his tactical decision to debate the press instead of his fellow candidates. So instead of voters choosing their presidential nominee, the media are effectively in charge of the process. How this benefits the prospects of the Republican party is not clear to me. And I suppose, in that sense, what really annoys me about these serial beauty contests is that they are a product of the Democratic party's long-term project of crippling itself as a national party.

ZACH FRANZEN

Readers of a certain age will remember the disorder and uncertainty of 1968, which was duly reflected in the Democratic party politics of the time: an insurgent campaign (Eugene McCarthy) against a sitting president (Lyndon Johnson), the assassination of one aspirant (Robert Kennedy), a suicidally chaotic national convention (Chicago), another insurgent candidacy by a nominal Democrat (George Wallace) which administered the *coup de grâce* to the regular nominee (Hubert Humphrey) in November.

By the morning after Richard Nixon's election, the Democrats had been so demoralized by the sequence of events that they concluded the nominating process—which had yielded FDR, Harry Truman, Adlai Stevenson, and JFK in modern times—was somehow at fault, and that the top-down politics of bosses, smoke-filled rooms, and county chairmen had to be replaced by a kind of people's democracy. This meant primaries, not state conventions, with issues activists, not party regulars, at the controls. For in the words of the McGovern Commission, which was created by the Democratic National Committee to reinvent the business of choosing candidates during 1969-70, "women, young people, and blacks found delegate positions at the Democratic Convention to be among the political offices that still remained beyond their reach."

Here began the Democratic party's policy of organizing itself along lines of race and sex, eventually mandating quotas and marginalizing those who had supported the party on pragmatic or historical grounds. It seemed to me, a lowly intern (and sometime speechwriter) at the DNC, that this was pandering to one agitated segment of the party, and that it would drive away those elements—the voters Nixon called "the silent majority" and who were later diagnosed as "Reagan Democrats"—discomfited by the party's leftward lurch, including isolationism. Of course, it is no coincidence that the first candidate to benefit from the McGovern reforms was George McGovern himself, whose 1972 coalition of "the poor, the black, and the young" (and the antiwar left) went down to historic defeat, but whose influence remains vital, especially in Congress and the media.

From my perspective, two good things came out of the McGovern Commission: I got to know its research director Ken Bode (later of NBC News), who has remained a lifelong friend; and Republicans have benefited from the long-term effects of the Democrats' left-wing populism and dismantling of party discipline.

So why has the Grand Old Party, in its wisdom, chosen to leave the nominating process to chance, and created a vacuum now filled by these stylized, press-run vaudeville performances? A question, perhaps, for the next cattle call.

Philip Terzian

the weekly Standard

Assad Must Go

The "realist" case for Bashar al-Assad—and before him, for his father, Hafez—was that he was supposedly a pillar of stability. The Assads, we were told, were all that stood between Syria and chaos. If that was ever true, it definitely is not true now. Assad's heavy-handed attempt to repress a revolution is not cowing the protesters. Instead it is leading growing numbers of them to take up arms. Soldiers are defecting to the Free Syrian Army, which in recent days has reportedly attacked an intelligence headquarters outside of Damascus and a Baath party headquarters inside the capital.

Homs, Syria's third-largest city, is descending into civil war with, in the words of a *New York Times* correspondent, "supporters and opponents of the government blamed for beheadings, rival gangs carrying out tit-for-tat kidnappings, minorities fleeing for their native villages, and taxi drivers too fearful of drive-by shootings to ply the streets." This could be a vision of what all of Syria might become if Assad continues to cling to power—as he shows every sign of trying to do.

Syrian protesters demonstrating against Syria's president Bashar al-Assad at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, November 12

NEWSCOM

Indeed, Assad recently vowed defiance to the *Sunday Times* of London, telling a reporter he "will not bow down" despite growing international pressure, such as the European Union's decision to stop buying Syrian oil and the Arab League's decision to suspend Syria from membership. It is not only Barack Obama, Nicolas Sarkozy, and other Westerners who are telling Assad to step down. The same message is coming from the leaders of neighboring Turkey and Jordan. Even Hamas, long headquartered in Damascus, is backing away from Assad. His actions are beyond the pale for a terrorist group—that tells you something.

The tough economic sanctions imposed by Europe—the major buyer of Syrian oil—will reduce Assad's revenues and, over time, undermine his hold on power. But Assad retains the support of the Iranian regime, which is assisting and advising him in his war against his own people. He also has the backing of much of the Alawite minority, which dominates Syria's military and government. With such backing, he could try to cling to power indefinitely even as the country collapses around him and the death toll—already at 4,000 or more—continues to climb.

The West could just sit back and watch this slow-motion catastrophe unfold. But doing so runs the risk of deepening fissures, in particular between Alawites (a Shiite offshoot) and the majority Sunnis, that could take decades to heal. We also run the risk that regional players will become more deeply embroiled in backing competing sides in what is fast becoming a Syrian civil war. If parts of Syria slip outside anyone's control (as occurred in Iraq from 2003 to 2007), they could become havens for Sunni extremists such as al Qaeda.

On the other hand, if Assad goes, it will be a historic opportunity for a strategic realignment that takes Syria out of the Iranian camp and denies Hezbollah its main source of supply. It is almost certain that any Sunni regime that succeeds Assad will not be as close to Tehran as he has been. And, if we help bring about Assad's downfall, we will have leverage with his successors that we would otherwise lack.

In some ways the current moment recalls the Balkans of the early 1990s—another situation where the West (and in particular the United States) tried to ignore a human-rights catastrophe but eventually intervened. That intervention stopped the killing and produced a delicate but durable peace accord. Might outside intervention be equally successful in Syria? It very well could be, which is why, despite the understandable reluctance in Washington to mount another Libya-style operation, it is time to start thinking seriously about what can be done to hasten Assad's downfall. Obama has done a good job so far of isolating and sanctioning Syria, but more action is necessary.

For a start, we should abandon the rhetoric and mindset of moral equivalence reflected in statements such as the

one issued by State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner after reports of the Free Syrian Army's attack on the Baathist party headquarters. While placing the bulk of blame on the Assad regime, Toner also said that "we are very concerned" about the attack and "we certainly don't condone this kind of violence . . . in any way, shape, or form." We don't? Why not? Isn't the use of force legitimate to overthrow a regime that has time and again shown its willingness to slaughter civilians in the street? It certainly was in Libya. Why not in Syria?

We and our allies should signal our support not only for nonviolent demonstrations but also for armed action to bring down the Assad clique. More than that, we should provide arms and training to the Free Syrian Army, which is based in Turkey, so that they can fight the regime on more equal terms. This doesn't necessarily have to be done directly by the United States. In Libya the Qataris took the lead in arming the rebels, although if we outsource the supply of military help we also risk giving the Qataris an outsized say in Syria's future.

The Syrian opposition itself is asking for even more help. They would like to see the imposition of a no-fly zone over their country. Such a step is certainly feasible, even though Pentagon planners will remind us that Syria's antiaircraft defenses are much more robust than Libya's. (Keep in mind, though, that Israeli warplanes had no trouble penetrating Syrian airspace undetected to bomb a suspected nuclear site in 2007.)

But a no-fly zone would have only a symbolic impact because there is not much evidence of Assad using aircraft to target protesters. The work of repression is being carried out by thugs, troops, tanks, and armored personnel carriers. All of them could be targeted from the air, but that would require more than a no-fly zone—it would require a no-drive zone as well. That, again, is feasible and should be under serious discussion in Washington, even though accurate targeting would require the insertion of foreign Special Operations forces, a role played in Libya by the British, French, and Qataris.

Even if we are not yet prepared to launch airstrikes against regime targets, we can back another option: the creation of "buffer zones" along the Syrian border with Turkey. These would be places where refugees come to escape Assad's tyranny and where the Free Syrian Army trains and operates. The creation of such zones could speed the unraveling of the Assad regime by encouraging more defections and by making possible the creation of a Free Syrian government on Syrian soil. Setting up buffer zones would require Turkish military intervention, something that the United States should encourage and offer to support with logistics, intelligence, airpower, and other "enablers."

It will not be as easy to get U.N. Security Council authorization for military action in Syria as it was in Libya, because the Russians and Chinese are unhappy with the NATO-led regime change that toppled Muammar Qaddafi. But the Chinese are unlikely to stand alone to resist a resolution, and the Russians may be susceptible to pressure from Turkey and the Gulf states, which have also broken with Assad. Even if a Security Council resolution isn't forthcoming, NATO, the Arab League, and the Gulf Cooperation Council could still provide multilateral cover for intervention. In Kosovo, recall, there was no Security Council approval—and Bill Clinton still intervened.

Although America should not act alone against Syria, U.S. leadership is needed to galvanize a coalition for effective action. That means President Obama will need to put away any lingering illusions about the desirability of maintaining Assad in power and do whatever is needed to help topple him swiftly, thereby limiting the physical and psychological damage to the Syrian people and easing the work of rebuilding a free Syria.

—Max Boot

Grand Old Reform Party

In 2010, Republicans won control of the House by offering to resist the Obama agenda. But their victory left open the question of whether they would also confront the grave fiscal challenges facing the country, and move beyond mere opposition to present an alternative governing vision to that of the Obama Democrats.

It was by no means obvious that they would do so. The key component of any effort to avert fiscal catastrophe in the coming decades, and to create the kind of stability in the American economy required for serious growth in the near term, would have to be entitlement reform—especially Medicare reform. And proposing such reform carried political risk. In the early months of the 112th Congress, Republicans held an intense debate, in public and in private, about whether to take the lead in proposing bold fiscal measures, or whether being an effective opposition to an increasingly unpopular president would be enough to lay the groundwork for an eventual presidential nominee who could offer such reforms himself.

In the end, House Republicans decided that the substantively responsible course was also politically prudent. They passed a budget that illustrated what a recovery of sound fiscal policy would look like in both the short and long term. Crafted by Budget Committee chairman Paul Ryan, the "Path to Prosperity" set out to cut discretionary spending while sustaining a commitment to national defense; reform

key safety-net programs to make them more effective and efficient; broaden the tax base while lowering rates so the tax code enabled growth; and transform Medicare into a premium-support program that could unleash innovation in the health sector and reduce costs, while continuing to provide seniors with a guaranteed benefit.

The Medicare reform was the most risky. Although it would leave current seniors and those within a decade of retirement in the existing system, and although some reform along the lines of premium support is utterly necessary if we are to avoid a debt crisis in the coming decades, it was always clear that the Democrats would demagogue the issue and try to scare seniors away from Republicans. Indeed, for a time earlier this year, it seemed as though such a campaign of reckless fearmongering would be at the very core of the Democrats' 2012 agenda.

Since Republicans controlled only the House, and could not hope actually to enact their budget, the main purpose of putting forward their ambitious proposals was to define the presidential race—to make it easier for a Republican candidate to champion serious entitlement reform, and to make it more difficult for that candidate to ignore the issue (as candidates have in the past). But would the Democrats' attacks mean that the effort would have exactly the opposite effect, and scare presidential contenders from making a forthright case for essential changes? This crucial question lingered in the air through much of 2011.

The past month has settled that question, and in a way that should make Republicans proud. Until late October, most of the party's presidential contenders had remained vague about Medicare reform, and were clearly trying to keep their options open. But, by late November, all the major candidates had lined up behind a serious premium-support overhaul of the program, and several of them presented their plans in some detail. Rick Perry proposed such a reform in an October 25 speech, Mitt Romney proposed his own version in a November 4 speech, and Newt Gingrich did so in a November 21 speech.

Meanwhile, congressional Republicans have reasserted their commitment, too. In the course of the ill-fated supercommittee negotiations, Republicans proposed the Ryan plan and, according to committee co-chair Jeb Hensarling, also said they would be willing to pursue the version of premium support proposed by the Bipartisan Policy Center's debt-reduction task force, headed by former Republican senator Pete Domenici and Democratic budget guru Alice Rivlin. (The Domenici-Rivlin reform is much like Ryan's, but with a higher rate of benefit growth and with a government fee-for-service option on the menu of Medicare plans available to seniors.)

Democrats on the committee reasserted their own party's views, as well: They demanded a trillion-dollar tax increase and refused to consider any structural entitlement reforms, and thus any way of actually averting a long-term debt disaster.

All of this should help to clarify the choice before voters next year. If November 2010 showed that the American people had grown wise to the perilous excesses of the Obama Democrats, November 2011 showed that the Republican party is willing to step up to the challenges of our long-term budget problems. When the two forces join together in November 2012, America can begin in earnest to chart her course back to prosperity and strength.

—Yuval Levin

Cleaning Up Congress

When former New Hampshire senator Judd Gregg was being considered for Commerce secretary in early 2009, his investments came under scrutiny. Among other things, Gregg had earmarked $66 million in federal funds to transform a decommissioned Air Force base in his home state into a business park.

The project was being spearheaded by Gregg's brother Cyrus, and the senator had invested $450,000 to $1 million of his own money. Since the taxpayer-financed redevelopment, Judd Gregg has earned somewhere between $240,000 and $650,000. Yet when asked about his earmarks, Gregg replied, "I am absolutely sure that in every way I've complied with the ethics rules of the Senate both literally and in their spirit relative to any investment I've made anywhere."

Gregg's statement is true—and that's a problem. In terms of earmark abuse, Senator Gregg was far from the worst member of Congress. But Senate ethics rules are toothless and easily skirted. George Washington Plunkitt of Tammany Hall once put it this way: "There is so much honest graft in this big town that they would be fools to go in for dishonest graft." (As the Charlie Rangel and Maxine Waters ethics investigations indicate, we still elect our share of fools.)

The anecdote about Gregg and the Plunkitt quote above are both included in Peter Schweizer's *Throw Them All Out*. The book has received a massive publicity push—including a much-discussed *60 Minutes* segment—and for good reason. Though many people may think it's impossible to be any more cynical about Washington, D.C., Schweizer's well-documented litany of political corruption is likely to discover wells of indignation heretofore untapped.

Aside from its land deals and earmarks, Schweizer notes that Congress has exempted itself from insider

trading laws. At a time when Americans hate Wall Street with the fire of a thousand suns, behavior that would get a bank executive a perp walk and a jail sentence is business as usual in the nation's capital.

Schweizer provides exhaustive detail on members of Congress actively and profitably trading health care stocks during the debate over Obamacare, given their advance knowledge of which companies the legislation would turn into winners and losers. It also appears that a number of congressmen dumped or traded stock in the wake of confidential briefings by Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke and then-Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson in the fall of 2008, as the country headed for bank collapses and a market meltdown.

House Financial Services Committee chairman Spencer Bachus, who has regular access to privileged financial information, has been brazen. Bachus has quite successfully engaged in risky short-term options trading—he made $50,000 in capital gains between July and November of 2008, when just about every American was watching his 401(k) fall off a cliff.

Now some of Schweizer's targets are pushing back. Nancy Pelosi and her defenders say the fact that the former speaker of the House was let in on a lucrative Visa IPO as Congress was considering major credit card legislation is less sinister than Schweizer makes it appear.

Note that Pelosi's office is not rebutting Schweizer's convincing documentation of how her earmarks and other legislative activity have significantly increased the value of her real estate holdings. Note too that telling sitting congressmen to avoid trading or purchasing stock they are in a position to affect the price of is hardly a radical suggestion.

Outrage over Schweizer's revelations has revived the Stop Trading On Congressional Knowledge (STOCK) Act, which would finally make congressional insider trading illegal. First introduced in 2006 by Democratic representatives Louise Slaughter and Tim Walz, the legislation initially went nowhere. It's now being reintroduced by a bipartisan group of senators, including GOP rising stars Scott Brown and Marco Rubio. Both parties should come together and pass something like the STOCK Act quickly.

But they shouldn't end there. The GOP should take active steps to deal with corruption in its own ranks and look for additional, sensible legislation to champion.

It's not just clean politics. It's good politics. Americans understandably loathe the political class, and the growing hype over Schweizer's book suggests corruption is politically potent. After all, Republican's long-term goal of re-limiting government is compatible with a short-term agenda of curbing the corruptions of big government.

—Mark Hemingway

Abramoff and His New Pals

Rehabilitation, Washington style.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

The rehabilitation of Jack Abramoff began on November 6, with a sympathetic *60 Minutes* profile, and climaxed on November 15 with a book party thrown in his honor at the home of *Daily Caller* editor Tucker Carlson. Abramoff is the former GOP lobbyist who spent three and a half years in prison after pleading guilty to conspiracy, bribery, mail and wire fraud, and tax evasion in 2006. He was released in June 2010. His reputation in tatters, his former millions consumed by legal fees, Abramoff has fallen back on what he knows best: running a scam.

This scam is not like the others. Abramoff is not overbilling and defrauding Indian casinos of $25 million. He is not using his connections to close the Tigua Indian casino, then convincing the Tigua to hire him and his friends to arrange for it to open again. He is not forging a $23 million wire transfer to secure some $60 million in cash for the purchase of the SunCruz Casino company.

This time, Abramoff's con is to blur the distinction between his crimes and the everyday business of Washington, so that instead of looking like an unabashed felon he comes across as a brave truth-teller. In his book, *Capitol Punishment: The Hard Truth About Washington Corruption from America's Most Notorious Lobbyist*, television appearances, newspaper interviews, and op-eds, Abramoff argues that he was put in prison for stuff that happens on a daily basis. In a recent attack on Newt Gingrich in Reuters, Abramoff wrote, "My forte was creating strategies and game plans, which my minions would implement. How is this much different from what Newt and almost every Democrat and Republican former congressman and senator claim to do in lieu of actual lobbying?" Like the criminologists who blamed "social deprivation" for rising crime in the '60s and '70s, Abramoff attributes his malfeasance to the surrounding environment. If everyone is guilty, what he did is nothing special. It wasn't him—it was "the system."

Some people are happy to agree. At the book party, Abramoff mentioned his new allies. "I used to be a right-wing guy who sort of disdained the *New York Times*, *60 Minutes*, and Michael Moore," he said, according to press accounts. "Now, I'm happy to be on *60 Minutes*, I love the pieces in the *New York Times*, and Michael Moore is my new best friend." Abramoff met the left-wing propagandist on the set of MSNBC's *Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell*. Moore told him, "God bless you. Keep up the great work. It's fantastic." Abramoff was floored.

He shouldn't have been surprised. There is an industry of writers and activists devoted to the idea that the American government is fundamentally corrupt. They cite instances of actual illegality to draw the farfetched conclusion that the entire city has been compromised. They like to portray all politicos as mini-Jack Abramoffs to foster cynicism and subvert faith in our representatives and institutions. They have helped to weave the blanket of distrust, bitterness, and hopelessness that smothers the capital. According to the website *Talking Points Memo*, for example, Tucker

GARY LOCKE

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Carlson wrote in an email: "I can't stand to listen to one more self-righteous windbag denounce [Abramoff] as evil when, as anyone who lives here knows, what he did is hardly out of the ordinary for Washington."

But to say that Abramoff's crimes were "hardly out of the ordinary" is to insult him. The Abramoff scandal was unique in its breadth and depth: not only in the number of lobbyists, legislators, and aides involved in the wheeling and dealing, but also in the size of the sums—tens of millions of dollars—that passed through their fingers. Even before his arrest Abramoff had a reputation for extravagance that made his fellow lobbyists cringe. Whatever his apologists may say, there really aren't many lobbyists in Washington who defraud clients, create shell entities from which they can pilfer at will, and brazenly conflate gambling with the goals of the American conservative movement. There aren't many lobbyists who so greatly contributed to the Republican party's loss of Congress in 2006.

The ideological damage Abramoff caused was great. What made him such a slippery character was that he and his friends lambasted the federal government even as they profited from it. They were part of a generation of conservative activists who came to Washington with revolutionary dreams and stayed to cash in. Their libertarian politics didn't prevent them from manipulating the administrative state to their advantage.

Today Abramoff is less skeptical of government power. He proposes to ban political contributions from lobbyists, contractors, and all those taking public dollars. He wants a lifetime ban on lobbying by elected officials and their staff. Having already sullied the conservative movement with his vulgar thievery, he is now saying the only way to stop people like him is to restrict political speech and further regulate the interactions between representatives and those they represent.

We have progressed so far in exiling the language of morality from politics that it never seems to occur to the likes of Abramoff that what is needed is a sense of decency and shame. The right to petition the government for a redress of grievances—the right to lobby—is embedded in the Bill of Rights not to protect lucrative consulting contracts but to ensure that no faction or interest predominates in government. But this right presupposes that individuals will try to act justly, behave honestly, and keep in mind the common good. The widespread belief that everyone in politics is a crook has become an explanation and an excuse for self-dealing. Yet the Jack Abramoff scandal would never have happened if those involved had been able to distinguish right from wrong and had acted as if the distinction mattered.

Tinker with the rules that determine the relations between government and the influential all you want. As long as Congress and the regulatory agencies insert themselves into every nook and cranny of American life, individuals and firms will try to protect their interests and influence outcomes. It's revealing that Abramoff, in his new guise as public scold, does not emphasize the connection between the size and scope of government and the growth of the lobbying industry. In a system where government was limited to its enumerated powers, and where citizens and their representatives aspired to virtue, the list of Abramoff's potential clients would be short. There would be few opportunities for him to use the government to lie, cheat, and steal—and pretend to instruct the rest of us how to live after he is caught. ♦

Not So Young Guns

The House GOP's new establishment.

BY FRED BARNES

The three House Republicans who founded Young Guns—Eric Cantor, Kevin McCarthy, and Paul Ryan—weren't much of a force when they banded together in 2007. And they weren't all that young, either. Cantor was 44, McCarthy 42, Ryan 37. Four years later, their influence has zoomed and Young Guns is a brand.

Its impact has been palpable and it's likely to grow. Young Guns changed the way Republican House candidates are recruited, nurtured, and, once elected, pampered. They published a book last year (with the obvious title *Young Guns*) that spent at least one week on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and now they're going big-time with a super-PAC to support Republican challengers in House races, a separate political arm, and a policy shop.

A few weeks ago, John Murray left Cantor's office—he'd been deputy chief of staff—to set up the three new Young Guns entities independent from the congressional group. "YG," as Murray refers to Young Guns, "captured a new sort of energy and vibe through these three guys. How do you keep the brand and the movement alive? You have to create a new vehicle to do it. Every movement needs a megaphone."

Murray says the YG political action committee aims to raise $20 million to fund "independent expenditures" on behalf of candidates challenging Democratic incumbents or running in open seats. The policy group will hold

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conferences to publicize conservative policies, and the political unit will run issue ads in congressional races, Murray says.

The rise of Young Guns was accelerated by the Republican takeover of the House in 2010 and the increased prominence of the three principals. Cantor is majority leader, McCarthy is Republican whip, and Ryan is chairman of the House Budget Committee and the leading Republican voice on domestic policy.

The three were prompted to form Young Guns by a cover package in The Weekly Standard of October 1, 2007, that pointed out that their political skills were complementary: Cantor the party leader, McCarthy the strategist, and Ryan the policy thinker. The cover dubbed them "Young Guns of the House GOP."

"We saw eye-to-eye on what we needed to do, where we were, and how we diagnosed our problem," Ryan says. They knew Republicans had lost their way, ideologically and politically. And they were eager to promote House candidates from diverse backgrounds, with little or no political experience but a zeal for bold conservative reforms.

"We focused our effort," Cantor says, "on recruitment of people who wanted to run for the right reasons."

In the 2008 election, Young Guns played a small role. Five House Democrats were defeated, four by Young Guns-endorsed candidates. Three others won open seats.

In 2010, Young Guns played a huge role. Its approach was adopted by the official House GOP campaign outfit, the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC). The result: Sixty-two of the 92 candidates dubbed Young Guns were elected. Also, Republicans fielded 431 House candidates, up from 421 in 2006 and 426 in 1994, a landslide year for Republicans.

McCarthy was the chief recruiter in 2010. He's partial to candidates with "real life" experience rather than a deep political background, candidates who may never have run for office or even thought about running. He scouted candidates, but insists he never asked anyone to run. Asking wouldn't produce the right candidates.

In *Young Guns*, he recounts a conversation with a potential candidate:

> McCarthy: Are you going to run?
> Candidate: Do you need me to run?
> McCarthy: No. I don't need you to run.
> Candidate: Do you want me to run?
> McCarthy: No, *I* don't want you to run. I'll help you if *you want* to run.

"By the time the meeting had ended, I told him not to run," McCarthy said. "'This can't be about you.

This is about changing America.'"

Recruitment is but one phase of the Young Guns strategy. In 2010, McCarthy determined that a minimum of 15 Democrats would have to retire for Republicans to gain control of the House. Open seats are easier to win.

Many months before the election, the NRCC went after incumbents in Republican-leaning districts, airing radio and TV ads and making thousands of robo-calls to voters. As it turned out, more than 15 Democrats retired. The list included moderate John Tanner of Tennessee, who'd had no Republican opponent in 2008, and liberal David Obey of Wisconsin, a 40-year House veteran.

The Republicans who succeeded Tanner and Obey were ideal Young Guns candidates. Stephen Fincher was a farmer concerned, McCarthy says, about how he would answer his children when they asked, "What did you do when the country changed? Did you stand up and fight?" Sean Duffy was a local prosecutor and world champion lumberjack.

In the 2012 cycle, the NRCC has already run television spots in 18 Democratic seats and made robo-calls in dozens more. So far, 6 Democrats have announced their retirement.

McCarthy, and now the NRCC, judge candidates by specific criteria. McCarthy recently took House Republicans to see the movie *Moneyball*, the story of a major league baseball general manager who felt obscure metrics often told more about a player than scouting reports.

Thus, to be deemed Young Guns, candidates last year had to meet a series of metrics. Reaching a fundraising threshold put candidates "on the radar." Building a significant campaign operation made them contenders. Drafting a campaign plan leading to victory and reaching a higher fundraising goal elevated candidates to full Young Guns status.

Is the Young Guns activity responsible for the Republican landslide? It's bound to have helped. Ryan thinks Young Guns has emboldened Republicans in the House. As a Young Guns leader, "I stick to my policy stuff," he told me. Yet he has his own measurement for the impact of Young Guns.

In 2008, he had 8 House cosponsors for his Road Map, whose sweeping reform of entitlements was controversial. In 2010, with the House controlled by Democrats before the election, he had 13.

Everything changed this year with the influx of GOP freshmen, three-fourths of them Young Guns. Ryan drafted a budget that mirrored his Road Map. Only 4 Republicans in the House voted against it. In the Senate, only 5 Republicans voted no. Would this have happened absent Young Guns? Not a chance. ♦

The Chump Effect

Reporters are credulous, studies show.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

Lots of cultural writing these days, in books and magazines and newspapers, relies on the so-called Chump Effect. The Effect is defined by its discoverer, me, as the eagerness of laymen and journalists to swallow whole the claims made by social scientists. Entire journalistic enterprises, whole books from cover to cover, would simply collapse into dust if even a smidgen of skepticism were summoned whenever we read that "scientists say" or "a new study finds" or "research shows" or "data suggest." Most such claims of social science, we would soon find, fall into one of three categories: the trivial, the dubious, or the flatly untrue.

Diederik Stapel

A rather extreme example of this third option emerged last month when an internationally renowned social psychologist, Diederik Stapel of Tilburg University in the Netherlands, was proved to be a fraud. No jokes, please: This social psychologist is a fraud in the literal, perhaps criminal, and not merely figurative, sense. An investigative committee concluded that Stapel had falsified data in at least "several dozen" of the nearly 150 papers he had published in his extremely prolific career.

Perhaps "falsified" is too mild a word. Stapel didn't just tweak and twist numbers, he made stuff up. With his colleagues, *Science Insider* reported, "he would discuss in detail experimental designs, including drafting questionnaires, and would then claim to conduct the experiments at high schools and universities with which he had special arrangements. The experiments, however, never took place." Questionnaires are the mother's milk of social science, given (most often) to collections of students who are easily accessible to the scientist. After being rewarded with course credits or money, the students go on to serve as proxies for humanity in general, as the scientist draws from their questionnaires large conclusions about the way human nature compels us, all of us, to think and act.

The conclusions that Stapel drew were large indeed. One thing he liked to demonstrate in his studies was the exploitive nature of democratic capitalism. Last year, the *New York Times* reported on a typical Stapel study, called "The Self-Activation Effect of Advertisements." It proved that advertising for cosmetics and fancy shoes "makes women feel worse about themselves," as the *Times* put it. Another study, released at the end of the scandal-ridden year 2009, was called "Power Increases Hypocrisy." Quite a timely little study it was. Stapel and his colleagues' research revealed that powerful people were more likely to be "moral hypocrites." And which powerful people did the researchers have in mind? "Politicians [who] use public funds for private benefits while calling for smaller government" and CEOs "accepting executive bonuses while simultaneously asking for government bailouts."

Both of these studies purported to employ the usual social-psychology method: Students in psychology or marketing classes were asked to "role-play" or perform some artificial task under the observation of graduate students. Then they'd fill out those questionnaires to report their thoughts or feelings.

Sometimes, though, social psychologists move beyond the lab. A good example is a more recent study from Stapel's corpus, released last spring to wide publicity. It touched on another of Stapel's favorite themes: white racism.

"Disorder can encourage stereotyping, study says," read the headline in the *Los Angeles Times*. Stapel discovered—scientifically, of course—that white heterosexuals used racism and homophobia as defense mechanisms. Confronted with disorder in their "social environment," Stapel showed, they quickly reverted to their natural inclination to stereotype "the other" and draw comfort from their prejudice.

At this writing, investigators are not yet clear to what extent the results of these particular studies are discredited by Stapel's fakery. And nobody knows how extreme an anomaly Stapel's behavior will prove to be. Leslie John of Harvard Business School recently surveyed more than 2,000 social psychologists about their research methods. She found a rash of research practices she deemed "questionable." Indeed, she wrote, in social psychology, "some questionable practices may constitute the prevailing research norm."

But it hardly seems to matter, does it? The silliness of social psychology doesn't lie in its questionable research practices but in the research practices that no one thinks to question. The most common working premise of social-psychology research is far-fetched all by itself: The behavior of a statistically insignificant, self-selected number of college students or high schoolers filling out questionnaires and role-playing in a psych lab can reveal scientifically valid truths about human behavior.

And when the research reaches beyond the classroom, it becomes sillier still.

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Consider this recent study by Stapel, demonstrating the relationship between "disorder" and white racism and homophobia. Several news reports outlined the methodology as Stapel explained it.

The experiment began after janitors at the Utrecht railroad station went on strike. Stapel and colleagues leapt into action. As the garbage in the station piled up, they cornered 40 white passengers. One by one the travelers were asked to take a seat in a row of folding chairs. They were given a questionnaire. If they filled it out, they were told, they would get a piece of chocolate or an apple as a reward.

The questionnaire asked to what degree the travelers agreed with stereotypes about certain types of people. (Are gays "creative and sweet" or "strange and feminine" or "impatient and intelligent"?) And then came the twist! Stapel had planted a person at the end of the row of chairs—sometimes a black person, sometimes a white. Researchers measured how far away from the person each respondent chose to sit. Meanwhile, thanks to the questionnaire, they could measure the degree of racism or homophobia each was feeling. On average, the travelers sat 25 percent closer to the white man than to the black man.

In time the janitors came back to work. The station was cleaned spick-and-span. Stapel and his gang returned and performed the experiment again, on another 40 white travelers. There in the tidy environment, their questionnaires showed they were less racist and homophobic than their counterparts from the earlier experiment. And on average, they sat the same distance from the white person as the black person. Hence, as the headline read: "Messy surroundings make people stereotype others."

But Stapel, as an internationally respected social psychologist, wasn't satisfied. So he designed another experiment to confirm his finding. The Stapel gang went to a wealthy neighborhood. They threw a bicycle on the ground, tore up paving stones, and, as the *L.A. Times* noted, parked Stapel's Subaru on the sidewalk. Chaos! Disorder! Forty-seven passersby were collared, given a new questionnaire to test their racism, and asked to donate money to (I'm not making this up) a charity called "Money for Minorities."

Then the bike was removed. The stones were replaced. Stapel moved his Subaru. Now it was just a nice, rich, tidy neighborhood. More passersby were collared, more questionnaires were filled out, and—here's the scientific finding—less racism and homophobia were revealed. And the passersby in the tidy

neighborhood gave more money to minorities on average: to be precise, 0.65 euro more.

Social psychologists around the world gazed on these findings when they were published this spring. They gave their chins a good, firm tug. "This need for order matters a lot more than we might have thought," a Duke psychologist told the *Times*.

Did Stapel fake his research? Did he and his students really make all those people fill out forms for an apple? Did Stapel really cross-tabulate the data? Did he really park his car on the sidewalk?

Who cares? The experiments are preposterous. You'd have to be a highly trained social psychologist, or a journalist, to think otherwise. Just for starters, the experiments can never be repeated or their results tested under controlled conditions. The influence of a hundred different variables is impossible to record. The first group of passengers may have little in common with the second group. The groups were too small to yield statistically significant results. The questionnaire is hopelessly imprecise, and so are the measures of racism and homophobia. The notions of "disorder" and "stereotype" are arbitrary—and so on and so on.

Yet the allure of "science" is too strong for our journalists to resist: all those numbers, those equations, those fancy names (say it twice: the Self-Activation Effect), all those experts with Ph.D.'s!

To their credit, the Stapel scandal has moved a few social psychologists to self-reflection. They note the unhealthy relationship between social psychologists and the journalists who bring them attention—each using the other to fill a professional need. "Psychology," one methodologist told the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "has become addicted to surprising, counterintuitive findings that catch the news media's eye."

That's a scandal, all right. Stapel's professional treachery is a scandal, too. But the biggest scandal is that the chumps took him seriously in the first place. ♦

SUSANA VERA / REUTERS / LANDOV

Demonstrators in Madrid: youth unemployment in Spain approaches 50 percent.

Hasta Luego, Zapatero

The rout of the Spanish socialists.

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Just as incoming American presidents are given the atomic "briefcase" by their predecessors, along with the codes for launching a nuclear attack, perhaps Spanish prime ministers will henceforth receive a begging cup and a German phrasebook. It was al Qaeda that made José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of the Socialist Workers' party (PSOE) Spain's prime minister; Lehman Brothers and the euro crisis have unmade him, putting his country at the financial mercy of its European neighbors. Zapatero came to power when jihadists bombed several trains in the heart of Madrid on election weekend 2004. The bombs convinced Spaniards they would be safer voting for the candidate more congenial to al Qaeda's reading of the Iraq war.

This week prime minister-elect Mariano Rajoy, leader of the conservative Popular party, put an end to seven years of Zapaterismo. He will take power on Christmas Eve. Zapatero's successor as PSOE standard-bearer, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, got the lowest vote total the Socialists have ever received. It was Rajoy whom Zapatero beat in 2004, to the surprise of everyone, including Zapatero himself. Once he had pulled Spain out of the Iraq war coalition, he struggled to find things to do. That meant indulging the whims of whatever interest group was complaining most loudly. The achievements of the Zapatero years are numerous and nugatory. Gay marriage. A record number of women in the cabinet. Divorce reform.

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Another bizarre priority of Zapatero was to erase every trace of dictator Francisco Franco, who ruled Spain for four decades, from its bloody civil war until his death in 1975. One need not approve of Franco, and until Zapatero came to power one did not need to disapprove of him either. But one must take Spain for what it is—a country of deep and permanent ideological divisions. There were statues of Franco all over Spain, and Zapatero set out to have them all toppled. He dragged Spain into a self-deception. Just as official France obliterated all memory of its collaboration in the immediate aftermath of World War II, so did Zapatero—long after the fact, and unnecessarily—try to convince Spaniards that their "real" country had nothing to do with forces that had ruled it for much of the past century.

What resulted was a strange climate of opinion. Zapatero mixed the ideological hothouse atmosphere of the European 1930s with a futuristic utopia of infinitely negotiable gender roles. The only thing that was missing was the present. When Spain's economy began to lose altitude, and then went into a death spiral following the collapse of Lehman, it didn't have enough to do with fascism or gender roles to hold Zapatero's attention. Zapatero remained confident that men who could no longer put food on the family table would consider gay marriage and liberal abortion rights a reasonable substitute. They didn't, of course, and by September 2010 workers had called a general strike. It fizzled, but to a progressive Manichean of Zapatero's ilk, it was traumatic to see the forces of the working class arrayed against him.

So long, Generalissimo

Spain's predicament in the economic crisis was the opposite of most countries'. Many, like Ireland, had a mostly healthy real economy that was undone by the excesses of the financial sector. Spain's financial sector was quite responsible—although the country had a real estate bubble, it emerged from it better than the United States in many respects. It did not have a lot of securitization or derivatives. It had stringent capital requirements for home mortgages. It had a central bank that was competent and alert. But starting in the Franco era, Spain's labor market had been strictly regulated to provide security at the expense of income. With the coming of democracy in the late 1970s, the benefits offered to workers grew ever more generous. The result is a two-tier labor market. Workers in old, inefficient industries have preposterously generous pay packages and benefits. But companies cannot afford to hire young Spaniards.

It is in Spain, more than in any other country, that one can see the weak position of European youth in the face of the present crisis. The unemployment rate for 18- to 24-year-olds in the job market is 46 percent. And they are weak politically. Although many have been occupying various plazas in Spain, starting with Madrid's Puerta del Sol, since May, they have so far been unable to get either Zapatero or Rajoy to take them seriously. This weakness may have a demographic cause. The collapse of Spanish birthrates means that young adults have less than half the weight in Spain's population that they had at midcentury.

Rajoy has not yet mapped a strategy for taking Spain out of the Zapatero years. One of the complaints about Rajoy—you can read it in the conservative/free-market *El Mundo* as often as in the socialistic *El País*—is that he has come to power in an emergency without making clear what his economic policies are. It may be that, as the leader of one of the eurozone's mendicant countries, he must play his cards close to his chest. On the other hand, it may be that Spaniards, like the rest of us, are just being introduced to a new political style. Leaders who now have the job of seizing back gifts recklessly bestowed are bound to be less voluble than those who handed them out in the first place. ♦

NACHO CUBERO / REUTERS / LANDOV

The Xinjiang Procedure

Beijing's 'New Frontier' is ground zero for the organ harvesting of political prisoners.

By Ethan Gutmann

To figure out what is taking place today in a closed society such as northwest China, sometimes you have to go back a decade, sometimes more.

One clue might be found on a hilltop near southern Guangzhou, on a partly cloudy autumn day in 1991. A small medical team and a young doctor starting a practice in internal medicine had driven up from Sun Yat-sen Medical University in a van modified for surgery. Pulling in on bulldozed earth, they found a small fleet of similar vehicles—clean, white, with smoked glass windows and prominent red crosses on the side. The police had ordered the medical team to stay inside for their safety. Indeed, the view from the side window of lines of ditches—some filled in, others freshly dug—suggested that the hilltop had served as a killing ground for years.

Thirty-six scheduled executions would translate into 72 kidneys and corneas divided among the regional hospitals. Every van contained surgeons who could work fast: 15-30 minutes to extract. Drive back to the hospital. Transplant within six hours. Nothing fancy or experimental; execution would probably ruin the heart.

With the acceleration of Chinese medical expertise over the last decade, organs once considered scraps no longer went to waste. It wasn't public knowledge exactly, but Chinese medical schools taught that many otherwise wicked criminals volunteered their organs as a final penance.

Right after the first shots the van door was thrust open and two men with white surgical coats thrown over their uniforms carried a body in, the head and feet still twitching slightly. The young doctor noted that the wound was on the right side of the chest as he had expected. When body #3 was laid down, he went to work.

Male, 40-ish, Han Chinese. While the other retail organs in the van were slated for the profitable foreigner market, the doctor had seen the paperwork indicating this kidney was tissue-matched for transplant into a 50-year-old Chinese man. Without the transplant, that man would die. With it, the same man would rise miraculously from his hospital bed and go on to have a normal life for 25 years or so. By 2016, given all the anti-tissue-rejection drug advances in China, they could theoretically replace the liver, lungs, or heart—maybe buy that man another 10 to 15 years.

Body #3 had no special characteristics save an angry purple line on the neck. The doctor recognized the forensics. Sometimes the police would twist a wire around a prisoner's throat to prevent him from speaking up in court. The doctor thought it through methodically. Maybe the police didn't want this prisoner to talk because he had been a deranged killer, a thug, or mentally unstable. After all, the Chinese penal system was a daily sausage grinder, executing hardcore criminals on a massive scale. Yes, the young doctor knew the harvesting was wrong. Whatever crime had been committed, it would be nice if the prisoner's body were allowed to rest forever. Yet was his surgical task that different from an obstetrician's? Harvesting was rebirth, harvesting was life, as revolutionary an advance as antibiotics or steroids. Or maybe, he thought, they didn't want this man to talk because he was a political prisoner.

Nineteen years later, in a secure European location, the doctor laid out the puzzle. He asked that I keep his identity a secret. Chinese medical authorities admit that the lion's share of transplant organs originate with executions, but

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no mainland Chinese doctors, even in exile, will normally speak of performing such surgery. To do so would remind international medical authorities of an issue they would rather avoid—not China's soaring execution rate or the exploitation of criminal organs, but rather the systematic elimination of China's religious and political prisoners. Yet even if this doctor feared consequences to his family and his career, he did not fear embarrassing China, for he was born into an indigenous minority group, the Uighurs.

Every Uighur witness I approached over the course of two years—police, medical, and security personnel scattered across two continents—related compartmentalized fragments of information to me, often through halting translation. They acknowledged the risk to their careers, their families, and, in several cases, their lives. Their testimony reveals not just a procedure evolving to meet the lucrative medical demand for living organs, but the genesis of a wider atrocity.

Behind closed doors, the Uighurs call their vast region in China's northwest corner (bordering on India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia) East Turkestan. The Uighurs are ethnically Turkic, not East Asian. They are Muslims with a smattering of Christians, and their language is more readily understood in Tashkent than in Beijing. By contrast, Beijing's name for the so-called Autonomous Region, Xinjiang, literally translates as "new frontier." When Mao invaded in 1949, Han Chinese constituted only 7 percent of the regional population. Following the flood of Communist party administrators, soldiers, shopkeepers, and construction corps, Han Chinese now constitute the majority. The party calculates that Xinjiang will be its top oil and natural gas production center by the end of this century.

To protect this investment, Beijing traditionally depicted all Uighur nationalists—violent rebels and nonviolent activists alike—as CIA proxies. Shortly after 9/11, that conspiracy theory was tossed down the memory hole. Suddenly China was, and always has been, at war with al Qaeda-led Uighur terrorists. No matter how transparently opportunistic the switch, the American intelligence community saw an opening for Chinese cooperation in the war on terror, and signaled their acquiescence by allowing Chinese state security personnel into Guantánamo to interrogate Uighur detainees.

While it is difficult to know the strength of the claims of the detainees' actual connections to al Qaeda, the basic facts are these: During the 1990s, when the Chinese drove the Uighur rebel training camps from neighboring countries such as Kazakhstan and Pakistan, some Uighurs fled to Afghanistan where a portion became Taliban soldiers. And yet, if the Chinese government claims that the Uighurs constitute their own Islamic fundamentalist problem, the fact is that I've never met a Uighur woman who won't shake hands or a man who won't have a drink with me. Nor does my Jewish-sounding name appear to make anyone flinch. In one of those *vino veritas* sessions, I asked a local Uighur leader if he was able to get any sort of assistance from groups such as the Islamic Human Rights Commission (where, as I found during a brief visit to their London offices, veiled women flinch from an extended male hand, drinks are forbidden, and my Jewish surname is a very big deal indeed). "Useless!" he snorted, returning to the vodka bottle.

So if Washington's goal is to promote a reformed China, then taking Beijing's word for who is a terrorist is to play into the party's hands.

Xinjiang has long served as the party's illicit laboratory: from the atmospheric nuclear testing in Lop Nur in the mid-sixties (resulting in a significant rise in cancers in Urumqi, Xinjiang's capital) to the more recent creation in the Tarim Desert of what could well be the world's largest labor camp, estimated to hold 50,000 Uighurs, hardcore criminals, and practitioners of Falun Gong. And when it comes to the first organ harvesting of political prisoners, Xinjiang was ground zero.

In 1989, not long after Nijat Abdureyimu turned 20, he graduated from Xinjiang Police School and was assigned to a special police force, Regiment No. 1 of the Urumqi Public Security Bureau. As one of the first Uighurs in a Chinese unit that specialized in "social security"—essentially squelching threats to the party—Nijat was employed as the good cop in Uighur interrogations, particularly the high-profile cases. I first met Nijat—thin, depressed, and watchful—in a crowded refugee camp on the outskirts of Rome.

Nijat explained to me that he was well aware that his Chinese colleagues kept him under constant surveillance. But Nijat presented the image they liked: the little brother

with the guileless smile. By 1994 he had penetrated all of the government's secret bastions: the detention center, its interrogation rooms, and the killing grounds. Along the way, he had witnessed his fair share of torture, executions, even a rape. So his curiosity was in the nature of professional interest when he questioned one of the Chinese cops who came back from an execution shaking his head. According to his colleague, it had been a normal procedure—the unwanted bodies kicked into a trench, the useful corpses hoisted into the harvesting vans, but then he heard something coming from a van, like a man screaming.

"Like someone was still alive?" Nijat remembers asking. "What kind of screams?"

"Like from hell."

Nijat Abdureyim: 'It's so you won't feel pain when they shoot you.'

Nijat shrugged. The regiment had more than enough sloppiness to go around.

A few months later, three death row prisoners were being transported from detention to execution. Nijat had become friendly with one in particular, a very young man. As Nijat walked alongside, the young man turned to Nijat with eyes like saucers: "Why did you inject me?"

Nijat hadn't injected him; the medical director had. But the director and some legal officials were watching the exchange, so Nijat lied smoothly: "It's so you won't feel much pain when they shoot you."

The young man smiled faintly, and Nijat, sensing that he would never quite forget that look, waited until the execution was over to ask the medical director: "Why did you inject him?"

"Nijat, if you can transfer to some other section, then go as soon as possible."

"What do you mean? Doctor, exactly what kind of medicine did you inject him with?"

"Nijat, do you have any beliefs?"

"Yes. Do you?"

"It was an anticoagulant, Nijat. And maybe we are all going to hell."

JAYA GIBSON / 3 LOTUS MEDIA

I first met Enver Tohti—a soft-spoken, husky, Buddha of a man—through the informal Uighur network of London. I confess that my first impression was that he was just another emigré living in public housing. But Enver had a secret.

His story began on a Tuesday in June 1995, when he was a general surgeon in an Urumqi hospital. Enver recalled an unusual conversation with his immediate superior, the chief surgeon: "Enver, we are going to do something exciting. Have you ever done an operation in the field?"

"Not really. What do you want me to do?"

"Get a mobile team together and request an ambulance. Have everyone out front at nine tomorrow."

On a cloudless Wednesday morning, Enver led two assistants and an anaesthesiologist into an ambulance and followed the chief surgeon's car out of Urumqi going west. The ambulance had a picnic atmosphere until they realized they were entering the Western Mountain police district, which specialized in executing political dissidents. On a dirt road by a steep hill the chief surgeon pulled off, and came back to talk to Enver: "When you hear a gunshot, drive around the hill."

"Can you tell us why we are here?"

"Enver, if you don't want to know, don't ask."

"I want to know."

"No. You don't want to know."

The chief surgeon gave him a quick, hard look as he returned to the car. Enver saw that beyond the hill there appeared to be some sort of armed police facility. People were milling about—civilians. Enver half-satirically suggested to the team that perhaps they were family members waiting to collect the body and pay for the bullet, and the team responded with increasingly sick jokes to break the tension. Then they heard a gunshot, possibly a volley, and drove around to the execution field.

Focusing on not making any sudden moves as he followed the chief surgeon's car, Enver never really did get a good look. He briefly registered that there were 10, maybe 20 bodies lying at the base of the hill, but the armed police saw the ambulance and waved him over.

"This one. It's this one."

Sprawled on the blood-soaked ground was a man, around 30, dressed in navy blue overalls. All convicts were shaved, but this one had long hair.

"That's him. We'll operate on him."

"Why are we operating?" Enver protested, feeling for the artery in the man's neck. "Come on. This man is dead."

Enver stiffened and corrected himself. "No. He's not dead."

"Operate then. Remove the liver and the kidneys. Now! Quick! Be quick!"

Following the chief surgeon's directive, the team loaded the body into the ambulance. Enver felt himself going numb: Just cut the clothes off. Just strap the limbs to the table. Just open the body. He kept making attempts to follow normal procedure—sterilize, minimal exposure, sketch the cut. Enver glanced questioningly at the chief surgeon. "No anaesthesia," said the chief surgeon. "No life support."

The anaesthesiologist just stood there, arms folded—like some sort of ignorant peasant, Enver thought. Enver barked at him. "Why don't you do something?"

"What exactly should I do, Enver? He's already unconscious. If you cut, he's not going to respond."

But there was a response. As Enver's scalpel went in,

Enver Tohti: I am a killer, *he screamed inwardly.*

the man's chest heaved spasmodically and then curled back again. Enver, a little frantic now, turned to the chief surgeon. "How far in should I cut?"

"You cut as wide and deep as possible. We are working against time."

Enver worked fast, not bothering with clamps, cutting with his right hand, moving muscle and soft tissue aside with his left, slowing down only to make sure he excised the kidneys and liver cleanly. Even as Enver stitched the man back up—not internally, there was no point to that anymore, just so the body might look presentable—he sensed the man was still alive. *I am a killer*, Enver screamed inwardly. He did not dare to look at the face again, just as he imagined a killer would avoid looking at his victim.

The team drove back to Urumqi in silence.

On Thursday, the chief surgeon confronted Enver: "So. Yesterday. Did anything happen? Yesterday was a usual, normal day. Yes?"

Enver said yes, and it took years for him to understand that live organs had lower rejection rates in the new host, or that the bullet to the chest had—other than that first sickening lurch—acted like some sort of magical anaesthesia. He had done what he could; he had stitched the body back neatly for the family. And 15 years would elapse before Enver revealed what had happened that Wednesday.

As for Nijat, it wasn't until 1996 that he put it together.

It happened just about midnight, well after the cell block lights were turned off. Nijat found himself hanging out in the detention compound's administrative office with the medical director. Following a pause in the conversation, the director, in an odd voice, asked Nijat if he thought the place was haunted.

"Maybe it feels a little weird at night," Nijat answered. "Why do you think that?"

"Because too many people have been killed here. And for all the wrong reasons."

Nijat finally understood. The anticoagulant. The expensive "execution meals" for the regiment following a trip to the killing ground. The plainclothes agents in the cells who persuaded the prisoners to sign statements donating their organs to the state. And now the medical director was confirming it all: Those statements were real. They just didn't take account of the fact that the prisoners would still be alive when they were cut up.

"Nijat, we really are going to hell."

Nijat nodded, pulled on his beer, and didn't bother to smile.

On February 2, 1997, Bahtiyar Shemshidin began wondering whether he was a policeman in name only. Two years before, the Chinese Public Security Bureau of the Western city of Ghulja recruited Bahtiyar for the drug enforcement division. It was a natural fit because Bahtiyar was tall, good-looking, and exuded effortless Uighur authority. Bahtiyar would ultimately make his way to Canada and freedom, but he had no trouble recalling his initial idealism; back then, Bahtiyar did not see himself as a Chinese collaborator but as an emergency responder.

For several years, heroin addiction had been creeping through the neighborhoods of Ghulja, striking down young Uighurs like a medieval plague. Yet inside the force, Bahtiyar quickly grasped that the Chinese heroin cartel was quietly protected, if not encouraged, by the authorities. Even his recruitment was a bait-and-switch. Instead of sending him after drug dealers, his Chinese superiors ordered him to investigate the Meshrep—a traditional Muslim get-together promoting clean living, sports, and Uighur music and dance. If the Meshrep had flowered like a traditional herbal remedy against the opiate invader, the Chinese authorities read it as a disguised attack on the Chinese state.

In early January 1997, on the eve of Ramadan, the

SIMON GROSS / 3 LOTUS MEDIA

entire Ghulja police force—Uighurs and Chinese alike—were suddenly ordered to surrender their guns "for inspection." Now, almost a month later, the weapons were being released. But Bahtiyar's gun was held back. Bahtiyar went to the Chinese bureaucrat who controlled supplies and asked after it. "Your gun has a problem," Bahtiyar was told.

"When will you fix the problem?"

The bureaucrat shrugged, glanced at his list, and looked up at Bahtiyar with an unblinking stare that said: It is time for you to go. By the end of the day, Bahtiyar got it: Every Chinese officer had a gun. Every Uighur officer's gun had a problem.

Three days later, Bahtiyar understood why. On February 5, approximately 1,000 Uighurs gathered in the center of Ghulja. The day before, the Chinese authorities arrested (and, it was claimed, severely abused) six women, all Muslim teachers, all participants in the Meshrep. The young men came without their winter coats to show they were unarmed, but, planned or unplanned, the Chinese police fired on the demonstrators.

Casualty counts of what is known as the Ghulja incident remain shaky. Bahtiyar recalls internal police estimates of 400 dead, but he didn't see it; all Uighur policemen had been sent to the local jail "to interrogate prisoners" and were locked in the compound throughout the crisis. However, Bahtiyar did see Uighurs herded into the compound and thrown naked onto the snow—some bleeding, others with internal injuries. Ghulja's main Uighur clinic was effectively shut down when a squad of Chinese special police arrested 10 of the doctors and destroyed the clinic's ambulance. As the arrests mounted by late April, the jail became hopelessly overcrowded, and Uighur political prisoners were selected for daily executions. On April 24, Bahtiyar's colleagues witnessed the killing of eight political prisoners; what struck them was the presence of doctors in "special vans for harvesting organs."

In Europe I spoke with a nurse who worked in a major Ghulja hospital following the incident. Nervously requesting that I provide no personal details, she told me that the hospitals were forbidden to treat Uighur protesters. A doctor who bandaged an arm received a 15-year sentence, while another got 20 years, and hospital staff were told, "If you treat someone, you will get the same result." The separation between the Uighur and Chinese medical personnel deepened: Chinese doctors would stockpile prescriptions rather than allow Uighur medical staff a key to the pharmacy, while Uighur patients were receiving 50 percent of their usual doses. If a Uighur couple had a second child, even if the birth was legally sanctioned, Chinese maternity doctors, she observed, administered an injection (described as an antibiotic) to the infant. The nurse could not recall a single instance of the same injection given to a Chinese baby. Within three days the infant would turn blue and die. Chinese staffers offered a rote explanation to Uighur mothers: Your baby was too weak, your baby could not handle the drug.

Shortly after the Ghulja incident, a young Uighur protester's body returned home from a military hospital. Perhaps the fact that the abdomen was stitched up was just evidence of an autopsy, but it sparked another round of riots. After that, the corpses were wrapped, buried at gunpoint, and Chinese soldiers patrolled the cemeteries (one is not far from the current Urumqi airport). By June, the nurse was pulled into a new case: A young Uighur protester had been arrested and beaten severely. His family paid for his release, only to discover that their son had kidney damage. The family was told to visit a Chinese military hospital in Urumqi where the hospital staff laid it out: One kidney, 30,000 RMB (roughly $4,700). The kidney will be healthy, they were assured, because the transplant was to come from a 21-year-old Uighur male—the same profile as their son. The nurse learned that the "donor" was, in fact, a protester.

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Chinese police inspect the bodies of executed prisoners, 1994.

In the early autumn of 1997, fresh out of a blood-work tour in rural Xinjiang, a young Uighur doctor—let's call him Murat—was pursuing a promising medical career

in a large Urumqi hospital. Two years later he was planning his escape to Europe, where I met him some years after.

One day Murat's instructor quietly informed him that five Chinese government officials—big guys, party members—had checked into the hospital with organ problems. Now he had a job for Murat: "Go to the Urumqi prison. The political wing, not the criminal side. Take blood samples. Small ones. Just to map out the different blood types. That's all you have to do."

"What about tissue matching?"

"Don't worry about any of that, Murat. We'll handle that later. Just map out the blood types."

Clutching the authorization, and accompanied by an assistant from the hospital, Murat, slight and bookish, found himself facing approximately 15 prisoners, mostly tough-guy Uighurs in their late twenties. As the first prisoner sat down and saw the needle, the pleading began.

"You are a Uighur like me. Why are you going to hurt me?"

"I'm not going to hurt you. I'm just taking blood."

At the word "blood," everything collapsed. The men howled and stampeded, the guards screaming and shoving them back into line. The prisoner shrieked that he was innocent. The Chinese guards grabbed his neck and squeezed it hard.

"It's just for your health," Murat said evenly, suddenly aware the hospital functionary was probably watching to make sure that Murat wasn't too sympathetic. "It's just for your health," Murat said again and again as he drew blood.

When Murat returned to the hospital, he asked the instructor, "Were all those prisoners sentenced to death?"

"That's right, Murat, that's right. Yes. Just don't ask any more questions. They are bad people—enemies of the country."

But Murat kept asking questions, and over time, he learned the drill. Once they found a matching blood type, they would move to tissue matching. Then the political prisoner would get a bullet to the right side of the chest. Murat's instructor would visit the execution site to match up blood samples. The officials would get their organs, rise from their beds, and check out.

Six months later, around the first anniversary of Ghulja, five new officials checked in. The instructor told Murat to go back to the political wing for fresh blood. This time, Murat was told that harvesting political prisoners was normal. A growing export. High volume. The military hospitals are leading the way.

By early 1999, Murat stopped hearing about harvesting political prisoners. Perhaps it was over, he thought.

Yet the Xinjiang procedure spread. By the end of 1999, the Uighur crackdown would be eclipsed by Chinese security's largest-scale action since Mao: the elimination of Falun Gong. By my estimate up to three million Falun Gong practitioners would pass through the Chinese corrections system. Approximately 65,000 would be harvested, hearts still beating, before the 2008 Olympics. An unspecified, significantly smaller, number of House Christians and Tibetans likely met the same fate.

By Holocaust standards these are piddling numbers, so let's be clear: China is not the land of the final solution. But it is the land of the expedient solution. Some will point to recent statements from the Chinese medical establishment admitting the obvious—China's medical environment is not fully ethical—and see progress. Foreign investors suspect that eventually the Chinese might someday—or perhaps have already—abandon organ harvesting in favor of the much more lucrative pharmaceutical and clinical testing industries. The problem with these soothing narratives is that reports, some as recent as one year ago, suggest that the Chinese have not abandoned the Xinjiang procedure.

In July 2009, Urumqi exploded in bloody street riots between Uighurs and Han Chinese. The authorities massed troops in the regional capital, kicked out the Western journalists, shut down the Internet, and, over the next six months, quietly, mostly at night, rounded up Uighur males by the thousands. According to information leaked by Uighurs held in captivity, some prisoners were given physical examinations aimed solely at assessing the health of their retail organs. The signals may be faint, but they are consistent, and the conclusion is inescapable: China, a state rapidly approaching superpower status, has not just committed human rights abuses—that's old news—but has, for over a decade, perverted the most trusted area of human expertise into performing what is, in the legal parlance of human rights, targeted elimination of a specific group.

Yet Nijat sits in refugee limbo in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, waiting for a country to offer him asylum. He confessed to me. He confessed to others. But in a world eager not to offend China, no state wants his confession. Enver made his way to an obscure seminar hosted by the House of Commons on Chinese human rights. When the MPs opened the floor to questions, Enver found himself standing up and speaking, for the first time, of killing a man. I took notes, but no British MP or their staffers could be bothered to take Enver's number.

The implications are clear enough. Nothing but self-determination for the Uighurs can suffice. The Uighurs, numbering 13 million, are few, but they are also desperate. They may fight. War may come. On that day, as diplomats across the globe call for dialogue with Beijing, may every nation look to its origins and its conscience. For my part, if my Jewish-sounding name tells me anything, it is this: The dead may never be fully avenged, but no people can accept being fatally exploited forever. ♦

Mr. Eliot at the typewriter, Faber & Faber, London, ca. 1950

Sincerely, T.S. Eliot

New letters from Old Possum BY EDWARD SHORT

In 1909 Henry James took thousands of letters that he had received over the years into his garden at Lamb House in Rye and committed them to a great bonfire. In his last years what time he could spare from refining his ever more rarefied fiction he devoted to confounding his biographers. Indeed, he instructed his nephew that since his "sole wish" was "to frustrate as utterly as possible the post-mortem exploiter," he was insistent that his will include "a curse no less explicit than Shakepeare's own on any such as try to move my bones." T.S. Eliot also spent a good deal of time trying to thwart his biographers, stipulating in *his* will that no biography should be written until 50 years after his death. But as these two volumes of letters show, his epistolary candor was always at odds with his yearning for concealment, which now seems, in retrospect, to have been the unavailing protest of a profoundly confessional man.

The Letters of T.S. Eliot
Vol. 1 1889-1922
edited by Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton
Yale, 871 pp., $45

The Letters of T.S. Eliot
Vol. 2 1923-1925
edited by Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton
Yale, 878 pp., $45

In these adroitly annotated volumes, the poet's conquest of literary London is brought brilliantly to life. Here we see Eliot assuming the mantle of that great tradition of poet-critics that had ruled English literature from Dryden to Arnold. We see him pushing the Georgian bookmen from their stools and touting the work of his friends, including Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and James Joyce. We also see him making alliances with Richard Aldington, John Middleton Murry, and Herbert Read, all in an attempt to introduce rigorous new critical standards, a campaign which often leaves him throwing up his hands. As he remarks to one correspondent, "There are so very few people who will take the trouble to write well." Some sins can be laid at Eliot's door but not that one.

The letters also take up his

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Edward Short is the author of Newman and his Contemporaries.

harrowing marriage to Vivien Haigh-Wood and his always-arduous spiritual progress, which eventually leaves him on Margate sands connecting nothing with nothing. Here, the despair that underlies so much of Eliot's early verse is ubiquitous: Correspondent after correspondent is regaled with his fiscal woes, physical woes, marital woes, editorial woes, social woes, familial woes. Then, again, his distress can have an oddly literary quality. Vivien once remarked how "poetry and literature are the very only things Tom cares for or has the faintest interest in." In a letter to Murry, written in 1925, it is as if he can only approach the ruin of his marriage by resorting to literature.

> In the last ten years—gradually, but deliberately—I have made myself into a *machine*. I have done it deliberately—in order to endure, in order not to feel—*but it has killed V*. . . . I have deliberately killed my senses—I have deliberately died—in order to go on with the outward form of living—This I did in 1915. What will happen if I live again? "I am I" but with what feelings, with what results to *others*—Have I the right to be I—But the dilemma—to kill another person by being dead, or to kill them by being alive? . . . Does it happen that two persons' lives are absolutely hostile? Is it true that sometimes one can only live by another's dying?

In this one passage, he invokes Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, Shakespeare's *Richard III*, Dostoyevsky's Raskolnikov, and Henry James's *The Sacred Fount*, the inspiration for which was the novelist's fascination with the beautiful Minny Temple, who died of tuberculosis at 24 and became the prototype for Isabel Archer and Milly Theale. As James told his brother, what he meant to capture in the novel was "the gradual change and reversal of our relations: I slowly crawling from weakness and isolation and suffering into strength and health and hope: she sinking out of brightness and youth into decline and death."

The parallels to Eliot's marriage are striking. When Eliot first met Vivien in a dance hall, she was bright and unconventional and promised to rescue him from the academic career that might otherwise have been his fate at Harvard. More than anyone, Vivien encouraged the poet in him. "I do think he is made to be a great writer," she confides to one correspondent. Eliot, in turn, plundered Vivien's insights and battened on her maladies. When Vivien claimed, for example, "As to Tom's *mind*, I am his mind," she was not entirely exaggerating, at least for the period covered in these letters. And yet no sooner did they marry (months after meeting) than

Vivien began her long descent into madness while Eliot went from strength to strength as poet and critic. In one letter he boasts, "I really think that I have far more *influence* on English letters than any other American has ever had, unless it be Henry James." Thus, the vampirism of James's novel reappears in Eliot's marriage with eerie fidelity.

At the same time, apropos Eliot's complex, tragic marriage, it is surprising to see the editors citing Carole Seymour-Jones's entirely unreliable *Painted Shadow: The Life of Vivienne Eliot* (2001), which Ann Pasternak Slater demolished in *Areté*. Despite the guilt Eliot felt over the collapse of his marriage, he was a dutiful husband. Certainly, there are no grounds for blaming him for Vivien's travails. Lyndall Gordon's excellent entry on Vivien in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, which incorporates Pasternak Slater's insights (albeit without acknowledgment), supplies a far more credible account.

Behind all the letters looms the Great War. "Everything looks more black and dismal than ever," Eliot writes in March 1918. "The whole world simply lives day to day"—an observation that oddly recalls something once said by Jules Laforgue, whose poetry had such an indelible influence on Eliot: "Oh, what a day-to-day business life is!" For Eliot and his generation, however, the quotidian had become lacerating. "We feel sometimes as if we were going to pieces," Eliot writes his mother, "and just being patched up from time to time." Still, the suffering of civilians was nothing compared with that of combatants. Vivien's brother Maurice, an officer in the Manchester Regiment whom Eliot found "very aristocratic and very simple too," briefed his brother-in-law on the horrors of the trenches, painting "a picture of a leprous earth, scattered with the swollen and blackening corpses of hundreds of young men."

> Swarms of flies and bluebottles clustering on the pits of offal. Wounded men lying in the shell holes among the decaying corpses; helpless under the scorching sun and bitter nights, under repeated shelling. Men with bowels dropping out, lungs shot away, with blinded, smashed faces, or limbs blown into space. Men screaming and jibbering. Wounded men hanging in agony on the barbed wire . . .

After sharing these images with Eliot, Maurice admitted how "these are only words, and probably only convey a fraction of their meaning to their hearers." Of course, Eliot would spend most of his life immersed in what he called "the intolerable wrestle with words and meanings," though the evils of the First World War gave this "wrestle" an entirely new consequence, one with which we struggle still.

The letters chronicle the formative years of the *Criterion*, the magazine with which Eliot put his cosmopolitan stamp

PHILIP TERZIAN

on the criticism of the age. In one letter, he describes his exemplary vision for the magazine: "I wish, certainly, to get as homogeneous a group as possible: but I find that homogeneity is in the end indefinable . . ."

> I do not expect everyone to subscribe to all the articles of my own faith, or to read Arnold, Newman, Bradley, or Maurras with my eyes. It seems to me that at the present we need more dogma, and that one ought to have as precise and clear a creed as possible . . . but a creed is always in one sense smaller than the man, and in another sense larger; one's formulations never fully explain one. . . . I do not, for myself, bother about the apparent inconsistency . . . between my prose and my verse. Why then should I bother about particular differences of formulations between myself and those whom I should like to find working with me?

The *Criterion* letters show what unrelenting demands the review placed on its unsalaried editor, though the biographical index here furnishes too scanty a profile of Lady Rothermere, without whose largesse the magazine would never have been launched.

Several letters take up the theme of *aboulie* ("want of will"), a major preoccupation of Eliot's poetry from "Prufrock" onwards. In one letter, the ruthlessly practical Eliot observes how "there can be no contemplative or easy chair aesthetics . . . only the aesthetics of the person who is about to do something." This might serve as an epigraph for Eliot's handling of the related themes of atonement and conversion. The theme also appears in the family letters, for failure of will was wired into the very DNA of the Eliot family. "It is almost impossible," Eliot says at one point, "for any of our family to make up their minds." Their letters related to travel, for example, are of a Byzantine indecisiveness. In one, the poet nicely describes the Eliot penchant for putting on "climbing irons to mount a molehill."

Proof of the strength of Eliot's own will can be seen in the success he made of his position at Lloyd's Bank, where he handled all of the firm's foreign correspondence in an underground office on Henrietta Street. "Within a foot of our heads when we stood," the critic I.A. Richards recalled, "were the thick, green glass squares of the pavement on which hammered all but incessantly the heels of the passers-by." Before leaving the bank, Eliot was making £500 per annum, a good salary in mid-twenties London. Nevertheless, it is startling to see how much Eliot connived in Pound's scheme to free him from the bank by enabling him to live off the bounty of his friends. If there was a capable businessman in Eliot, there was also something of a chancer.

The acid pen of Virginia Woolf serves as a kind of mocking chorus throughout these pages. In one aside, for example, she astutely observes of Eliot, "I suspect him of a concealed vanity & even anxiety about this," and in another she describes Mrs. Eliot as "so scented, so powdered, so egotistic, so morbid, so weakly" that it almost makes her want to "vomit." Caritas was not one of Virginia's strong suits.

Yet unlike Seymour-Jones, Woolf had no illusions about the unbearable burden that the increasingly insane Vivien placed on Eliot, exclaiming in one journal entry, "But oh Vivienne! Was there ever such torture since life began! to bear her on one's shoulders, biting, wriggling, raving, scratching, unwholesome, powdered, insane, yet sane to the point of insanity. . . . This bag of ferrets is what Tom wears round his neck." That Woolf, the darling of the feminists, should confute the feminism that instigated Seymour-Jones's assault on Eliot is an amusing irony.

The poet's brother, Henry Ware Eliot, brings welcome comic relief to a series of letters that can be unremittingly grim. In one 1925 letter this wonderfully good-hearted, generous man holds forth on the subject of marriage, at exactly the point at which Eliot's own marriage is in tatters.

> Good God, how does anyone get married? I would not accept a job as a traffic manager or shipping clerk because I know nothing about it, and yet here is a job which every man accepts apparently on the blithe assumption that knowledge of the business is innate in him. Should I take a course in obstetrics, infant feeding and household management? On top of my present duties [Henry worked in printing, publishing, and advertising], and the necessity of making a change in my whole mode of life, I cannot casually pick up these things. I have often puzzled over the marriage relationship, which seemed to me the most incongruous, impossible, and inconsistent thing ever conceived. One has to translate an iridescent fantasy into the hardest and ugliest of facts.

Of course, Henry's brother found his marriage to Vivien equally appalling, though his matrimonial troubles led to musings of a more meditative cast:

> *The awful daring of a moment's surrender*
> *Which an age of prudence can never retract*
> *By this, and this only, we have existed*
> *Which is not to be found in our obituaries*
> *Or in memories draped by the beneficient spider*
> *Or under seals broken by the lean solicitor*
> *In our empty rooms.*

When Eliot looked back on *The Waste Land* from the perspective of his later, happier years, he dismissed it as "a grouse against life." In many letters here, the poet's grousing is fierce. After his father dies, he writes, "I feel that both he and mother in spite of the strength of their affection were lonely people, and that he was the more lonely of the two—he hardly knew himself . . . in my experience everyone except the fools seem . . . warped or stunted." In quite a few of the letters, Eliot himself appears "warped and stunted." He is arrogant, pompous, and thin-skinned, reminiscent of Gilbert Osmond, the supercilious aesthete in James's *Portrait of a Lady* who subordinates everything, except his vanity, to his dedication to art.

Yet if these pages reveal the flawed man of talent in T.S. Eliot, they also reveal the emerging moralist, who does not flinch from confronting his flaws, or his demons, which he wrote so much of his finest work, including "Ash Wednesday" and *Four Quartets*, to drive out. The man who emulated Dante by setting out "to purify the dialect of the tribe" never forgot that this would require purifying himself. ♦

B&A

Victory at Sea

The Navy comes of age in the War of 1812.

BY JOSEPH F. CALLO

James Madison draws blood from John Bull

Towards the end of *1812* there's a key passage. It contains a response by the Duke of Wellington to his prime minister's suggestion that he go to Canada and take over the land war along the Canada-U.S. border. At that point Wellington had demonstrated his skills in the field in the Peninsula war against Napoleon's army, and the War of 1812 had been dragging on for two years. His response went to a critical strategic point:

> That which appears to me to be wanting in America is not a general, or a general officer and troops, but a naval superiority on the Lakes. . . . The question is, whether we can obtain this naval superiority. . . . If we cannot, I shall do you but little good in America.

Joseph F. Callo is the author of John Paul Jones: America's First Sea Warrior.

Wellington articulated a truth that his civilian leadership was just beginning to grasp. His reply also reflects a penetrating analysis of the strategic issues of the War of 1812, in this case the question of which nation would control the crucial means of communication and supply associated with the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain. There was no question of Wellington's confidence in the seasoned troops he would command, but he understood that even his Peninsula veterans could not succeed apart from strategic logistical realities.

1812
The Navy's War
by George C. Daughan
Basic, 528 pp., $32.50

Wellington had zeroed in on the kind of point that's often neglected in analyses of the War of 1812. Frequently that war is seen as a sequence of freestanding, intensely dramatic events rather than as the tightly intertwined series of battles, military campaigns, diplomacy, and domestic politics that it was. But if a compulsion to concentrate excessively on the more spectacular bits and pieces of the conflict has been an endemic problem among academics and writers, this volume is an antidote. Daughan not only thoroughly illuminates the emotion-triggering events of the conflict; he also adds the background that connects the highlights. That background includes, for example, the American and British domestic politics and diplomacy, which were continuously both cause and effect in the process.

The importance of context is nowhere more important than when trying to establish the basis of the conflict. The American declaration of war in June 1812 is generally attributed to America's need to assure "free trade and sailors' rights." But behind that memorable American battle cry there were strong political and diplomatic crosscurrents that shaped the decisions of James Madison and the two prime ministers who served during the conflict.

For example, during the runup to the war, and while Madison was leader in the House of Representatives, he had worked hard against pressure from Congress's War Hawks. After he became president, and as war approached, he maintained that posture and believed it was possible to convince Prime Minister Spencer Perceval that war was inevitable unless Britain dealt with the issues of free trade and the impressments of American seamen. Madison's belief that America's disputes with Great Britain could be settled peacefully was supported by his expectation that Britain would continue to be preoccupied with Napoleon for the predictable future.

For his part, Perceval was convinced by political divisions within the United States, combined with America's obvious military weakness, that Madison's warnings were mere rhetoric. He firmly believed that the United States had no real alternative but to tolerate Britain's aggressive maritime policies. Paralleling that opinion was the psychological residue left with the British public and

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its leaders after the American Revolution. Daughan doesn't equivocate:

> The Treaty of Paris . . . hardly reconciled the king or his people to colonial liberty. Bitter about their humiliating defeat, the British watched with satisfaction as the thirteen states floundered without a central government. . . . Many in London expected the American experiment in republican government to fail.

In the lengthening perspective of history, those deep-seated feelings become possibly more significant as drivers of British attitudes and behavior towards the United States than the disagreements over current maritime policies. Both Madison and Perceval miscalculated, and similar mistakes in diplomatic judgment continued as the war evolved. There were the early, spectacular single-ship victories of the U.S. Navy, the impact of American privateers on British commerce, and American naval victories on Lakes Erie and Champlain. Contrasting with those American successes were the dismal failures of American attempts to invade Canada.

For Britain's part, there were the economically suffocating Royal Navy blockade of American ports and the punitive expeditionary raids along the Atlantic coast, counterbalanced with the frustration of Britain's plans to establish an Indian nation to block American expansion to the northwest. As in the runup to war, the events of the conflicts continued to be riddled with miscalculations by the leaders of both countries; but eventually, partly through the intervention of Czar Alexander I in 1813, direct negotiations between the United States and Great Britain began at Ghent. By then Perceval had been assassinated and replaced by the Earl of Liverpool.

Lord Liverpool, like his predecessor, continued to be convinced that America could not sustain the war. Britain was buoyed as Napoleon was driven from power, and the political reorganization of Continental Europe began. It was, in the opinion of Liverpool and key members of his cabinet, only a matter of time and Britain's ability to apply steady military pressure before they would force a peace with the United States that would work to Britain's benefit.

Although generally a pragmatic politician, Liverpool was not immune to the widespread British hostility towards America, and as a result, was anxious to punish Britain's obstreperous and rapidly growing economic competitor across the pond. His means of exacting retribution included the hope of driving a wedge between New England, where the war was generally unpopular, and the rest of the United States. He even anticipated an invasion of New England to make it a part of Canada.

On the face of things, by the middle of 1813, it appeared that Liverpool's assessment might have been right; but the decisive victory of Commodore Thomas Macdonough at the Battle of Lake Champlain in September 1814, and the accompanying ground action at Plattsburgh, radically changed the dynamics of the war. Those decisive successes, plus the earlier victory by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry in 1813 at the Battle of Lake Erie, changed everything. The United States had gotten inside the British decision cycle, and the negotiations that had appeared to be going inexorably in favor of the British suddenly took on a different direction.

Writes Daughan:

> After the humiliation of [the burning of] Washington, Macdonough's wholly unexpected victory and [British general] Prevost's headlong retreat [from Plattsburgh] gave an immense boost to Madison's morale. . . . Prime Minister Liverpool and his colleagues would be thunderstruck when they heard the news from Plattsburgh. The British public would be as well. A major reappraisal of Britain's strategy in North America, however distasteful, would then be called for.

In context, the actions on Lake Champlain and companion events on the ground at Plattsburgh, both of which usually get minor attention, could well be identified as the war's tipping point. It was the point at which attitudes—particularly among the British public and government—began to shift significantly.

As a greater degree of reality began to emerge on both sides, the *status quo ante bellum* appeared attractive to both parties. The stunning American victories at Lake Erie and Lake Champlain, plus the need for the British government to (in Liverpool's words) "pay serious attention to the state of our finances," had changed attitudes.

The final agreement that ended the war was reached by the Treaty of Ghent on Christmas Eve 1814. Ironically, the issues that appeared central to the conflict at its outset, "free trade and sailors' rights," were never addressed in the treaty, and there were no major changes in borders or possessions. Further, there were no reparations paid by either side. "The maritime disputes about free trade and sailors' rights," writes Daughan, "were not even mentioned. The War seemed to have settled nothing."

There were, however, a number of critically important direct results of the War of 1812 that were, in the long term, exceptionally important. From the British perspective, her *de facto* dominance of the seas was confirmed, and the adversarial relationship between Britain and the United States began shifting towards something closer to a peer relationship between two major allies.

From the American point of view, the possibility of an Indian buffer nation against U.S. expansion to the northwest was eliminated. Almost certainly of greater importance, the United States gained international stature that did not exist before the war, and at the center of that new stature was the United States Navy. In the final analysis it would be hard to deny that the principal element of power that achieved America's new geopolitical status was the Navy, where leaders like Perry, Macdonough, Isaac Hull, William Bainbridge, and Stephen Decatur had come to maturity. It was a force that had established emphatically that it not only would fight against the best but could also win decisively at that level. And it could win not only in a tactical context but in a strategic context as well. In basic terms, and in Daughan's words, the United States Navy had "found a permanent place in America's strategic thinking." ♦

B&A

The Good Book

How the King James Version came to be.

BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

The King James Bible—the Authorized Version of Holy Scripture, dedicated to James I as "principal mover and author"—is not really a triumph of translation. Not, at least, if perfect accuracy and re-creation of the original narrative voice are the proper goals of translation.

The examples typically seem minor, but they've nagged at scholars for the past 400 years. The King James Version always had a little trouble with Hebrew verb tenses, for instance, and the problem shows up as early as the Bible's second verse, famously translated as "And the earth was without form, and void." The verb form there is *hayah*, which the King James correctly gives as *became* just a few pages later in Genesis: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." More theologically significant are such stumbles as perpetuating the misreading of *'azazel* as *'ez ozel* in Leviticus 16—the proper name of a demon transformed into the word for an innocent scapegoat, punished for sins not his own.

For that matter, the publication of the King James Bible in 1611 was not an unalloyed triumph of religion. A narrow set of Puritan and Roman Catholic scholars have always insisted that the Church of England was established primarily by force, imposed on a mostly reluctant nation by the government's power of pikes and scaffolds. But only over the past 20 years—particularly since the publication of Eamon Duffy's magisterial study *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580* (1992)—has popular awareness gained much sense of just how extreme the exercise of that power really was.

Bible
The Story of the King James Version, 1611-2011
by Gordon Campbell
Oxford, 256 pp., $24.95

It arrived at the right moment of political history in England . . . acceptable enough that it eased the worries of Protestants from the highest of high-church Anglicans to the lowest of low-church Puritans.

When James VI came down from Scotland at the death of Elizabeth in 1603, there was considerable relief at the lack of violence in his succession to the English throne and a reasonable expectation that the harsher elements of the Elizabethan religious settlement would be eased for Catholic and nonjuror Protestants. Unfortunately, early agitation against James, from the Bye and Main plots to the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, embittered him. He quickly settled into the coercive mode of his predecessors, and the King James translation became a key element of that mandatory nationalizing of religion: the only Bible that churches were allowed to purchase.

And yet, if it wasn't the best translation, or a genuine high point of Christian faith, the book was a triumph of rhetoric. In fact, the King James Bible remains the single greatest monument of the English language ever constructed. More than Milton, more than Shakespeare, more than Spenser, more than Chaucer, the 47 scholars who worked from 1604 to 1611 managed a feat unrivaled in English literature. They gave reality to the idea of a unified Great Britain by drawing together in a single tongue the separate nations of the islands. They gave America the vocabulary that would become the sole public idiom of the Protestants' new world. And they established, once and for all, the rhythms of English rhetoric: the way the language wants to go, the repetitions and patterns into which, like traps, it always falls.

The first copy is thought to have been printed on May 5, 1611, and publishers have been pouring out commemorative editions of the translation and popular studies of its effect. In *Begat: The King James Bible and the English Language*, for example, the British scholar David Crystal documents 257 idioms, from "salt of the earth" to "two-edged sword," that derive solely from the King James. In *Pen of Iron: American Prose and the King James Bible*, the American Robert Alter argues that the book's way of "imagining man, God, and history" infested the nation's "Bible-steeped, Bible-quoting folk" and thereby created American literature.

Meanwhile, here in *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611–2011*, Gordon Campbell provides an "affectionate biography" of the translation's origins, printings, and effects. Six groups undertook the work at Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster, and Campbell argues that even today it would be difficult to assemble as literate a set of translators:

> The population from which scholars can now be drawn is much larger than that of the seventeenth century, but it would be difficult now to bring together a group of more than fifty scholars with the range of languages and knowledge of other disciplines that characterized the KJV translators.

Joseph Bottum, a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard, *is the author, most recently, of* The Second Spring: Words into Music, Music into Words.

Of course, they didn't start from scratch. Officially, the King James was a revision of the Bishops' Bible, which was a reworking of the Great Bible, which drew on Miles Coverdale's efforts and John Roger's editions—both of which came out of William Tyndale's translations. David Crystal found only 257 common English idioms born in the King James because he excludes the ones that the translators simply took over from the burst of scholars, from Erasmus on, working in the century before.

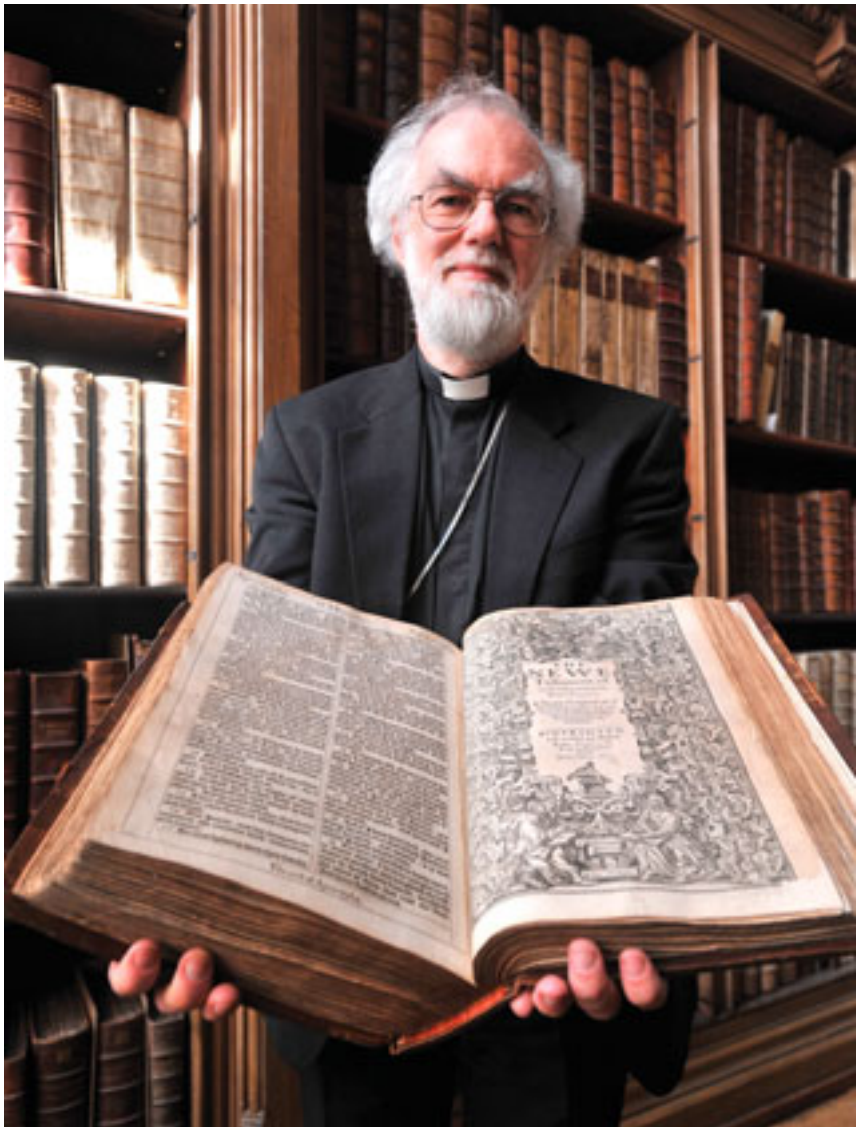
Nor was the text strictly defined. As Campbell notes, even the first year of this official Bible "appointed to be read in churches" saw two editions: the He Bible and the She Bible, which vary the ambiguous pronoun in Ruth 3:15, uncertain whether Ruth or Boaz has entered the city. Innumerable small and unannounced changes in wording, spelling, and punctuation followed over the years, until Oxford's Benjamin Blayney established the modern text in 1769. "Printers have persecuted me," declared one edition, misprinting "princes," and readers could well believe it. Although the typos were surprisingly few for a 1,400-page book at that stage in the history of printing, the early editions were famous for their (sometimes intentional?) misprints. "Let the children first be killed," one edition explained, instead of "filled." "The Lord our God hath shewed us his glory and his great asse," in place of "greatness." "The unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom." And of course, the Wicked Bible of 1631, which commands, "Thou shalt commit adultery."

Nonetheless, the King James Version won. It arrived at the right moment of political history in England, enforced by law during James's 22-year reign, and acceptable enough that it eased the worries of Protestants from the highest of high-church Anglicans to the lowest of low-church Puritans.

It arrived, for that matter, at the right moment of linguistic history. Here's an example: English would shortly undergo its transformation into what's known as a "polite language," the formal use of the second-person plural (the "vous" constructions) driving out the familiar use of second-person singular (the "tu" constructions). The King James correctly uses *thou*, *thy*, *thine*—all the singular forms of *you*, particularly to refer to God. It preserved them, in fact, far beyond the disappearance of those constructions from general speech, with the curious consequence that modern readers often hear *thou* not as familiar but as formal: a more ceremonial and polite way of speaking to God.

Which is surely a major part of what a translation of the Bible is supposed to provide. Looking back on the efforts, from the 1952 Revised Standard Version onward, to provide a text for modern readers, one has to say that they were profoundly misguided. The text of the King James was stable enough for over 300 years that biblical phrases could enter common speech and biblical rhythms shape literary prose.

Whether it should have dominated or not—the Douay-Rheims Bible, completed in 1610, may have been a better translation—the King James provided the language both a rich connection to the past and a general seriousness of reference. It was English, the living root. And it was public Christianity, the perpetual flower. What could possibly have possessed us to abandon it? ♦



Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the King James Bible

WENN PHOTOS / NEWSCOM

New York saloon, 1853

B&A

On the House

Why Americans are at home in a bar.

BY MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER

There are many reasons why people go to bars: to find a date, cheer on a team, or simply to get stewed. But the best reason to be in bars is that you're with friends. The best bars—free of televisions and background music, with an agreeable burger, good local draft beers, and well-informed bartenders—are places to be cherished. By providing places for clubs to meet and for acquaintances to become friends, bars reduce atomic individualism and enhance civil society.

Of course, all sorts of activities have gone on in taverns. Christine Sismondo, who teaches English at Canada's Ryerson University, shows that for over 300 years Americans have talked about politics in bars. This interesting and occasionally dogmatic book shows how taverns have acted as meeting places for people to argue about politics—and, more than occasionally, take action.

America Walks Into a Bar
A Spirited History of Taverns and Saloons, Speakeasies and Grog Shops
by Christine Sismondo
Oxford, 336 pp., $24.95

Most of us know that 18th-century Americans spent a lot of time in taverns. But Sismondo explains the reasons why. First, there weren't that many places for people to meet. There were coffeehouses, which often served as much alcohol as coffee, but these places were more comparable to the private club of today in that they prided themselves on their ability to exclude. Taverns would admit anybody. To differentiate themselves in the midst of robust competition, the taverns offered all sorts of embellishments. Some had regular Sunday sermons, while others bragged about their oddities, such as an eight-legged cat or a "learned pig" who knew how to multiply and divide.

The smarter taverns offered themselves as home to clubs where gentlemen could discuss philosophical and moral issues. One of the first of these was the Junto, established in 1727 by Benjamin Franklin at the Indian King Tavern in Philadelphia. The Junto proved so popular a venue for intellectuals that it eventually became the American Philosophical Society.

It wasn't much of a stretch for taverns to expand from cultural to political action. Sismondo shows how Samuel Adams spent most of his time traveling from bar to bar engaging in political agitation. His most congenial drinking place was the Green Dragon in Boston where, in 1773, protesters met, organized, and fortified themselves before tossing tea into Boston Harbor.

Sismondo notes two Philadelphia taverns that played important roles in the American Revolution. The City Tavern, which prided itself on its elegance and sophistication, held many sessions of the Continental Congress and was the place where, in 1774, George Washington met John Adams for the first time. On November 10, 1775, Continental Army officers met in the Tun Tavern to create America's first regiment of Marines. Every November, Marines around the world celebrate the Corps's birthday, commemorating events that took place in a bar over 200 years ago.

In the 19th century the great debate emerged between drinkers who wanted to preserve taverns and prohibitionists who wanted to ban booze. Prohibitionists seamlessly combined their hatred of drinkers with anti-Catholic prejudice. When Democrats, in the 1884 presidential contest, were denounced as the party of "rum, Romanism, and rebellion," this was political shorthand for telling voters that it was acceptable to despise drinkers, Roman Catholics, and Southerners.

Sismondo believes that the strongest example of this bias may have taken place in Rhode Island in the 1840s. Rhode Island was one of the last states to impose a property requirement for voters, which disenfranchised half the white males in the state. Many of these disenfranchised voters were Irish Catholics who enjoyed spending time in taverns. A lawyer named

GETTY IMAGES

Martin Morse Wooster is a regular contributor to Mid-Atlantic Brewing News *and* American Brewer.

Thomas Wilson Dorr tried to rally the drinkers to end the property requirement but after the Rhode Island legislature rejected Dorr's claim, he held an unofficial election for governor in 1842, which he won. Samuel Ward King, who won the official election, refused to relinquish power and seized Dorr's headquarters, Sprague's Tavern in Chepachet. Over several months the Rhode Island militia guzzled 37 gallons of brandy, 29 gallons of rum, and copious quantities of hard cider. Madeira, champagne, and cigars—all of which Jedediah Sprague, the tavern owner, was forced to pay for. Dorr was tried for treason and sentenced to hard labor and solitary confinement, but in 1843 the legislature changed the law so that any male voter who paid a dollar poll tax could vote—a reform that made Rhode Island the first state to give African Americans the vote.

Taverns did both good and harm in the Civil War. For example, there were at least four and as many as a dozen taverns that were stops on the Underground Railroad that allowed slaves to head toward freedom. But because many of the conspirators who plotted the assassination of Abraham Lincoln met in Mary Surratt's tavern in Clinton, Maryland, prohibitionists repeatedly noted that the assassination plotters "always met in a saloon."

Prohibitionists were so eager to close taverns that they ignored a basic question: Where would all the clubs and groups meet if bars were outlawed? Some expressed vague hopes that movie theaters would serve as a suitable replacement. G. K. Chesterton dismissed this notion after he visited the United States in 1922: "The cinema boasts of being a substitute for the tavern, but I think it a very bad substitute," he wrote. "Nobody enjoys cinemas more than I, but to enjoy them a man has only to look and not even to listen, and in a tavern he has to talk. Occasionally, I admit, he has to fight; but he need never move at the movies."

The post-Prohibition chapters are less interesting. A chapter on gay bars of the 1960s most notably reveals that Greenwich Village's Stonewall Inn, famous for the 1969 raid that catalyzed the nascent gay rights movement, was not a place where most people would want to drink. The primary "investor" in the tavern was the Genovese crime family, and its owners purportedly paid over $1,200 a month in bribes to cops and inspectors to stay open (a practice Sismondo calls "gayola"). The tavern charged customers a $3 cover, for which he got

> two watered-down drinks served in glasses that were "cleaned" with a dip into a bucket of soapy water that was rarely changed throughout the evening. The plumbing in the bathrooms was constantly backed up and the floors were covered in raw sewage most nights. As a result, unsurprisingly, the place was said to reek.

Sismondo concludes with a chapter about why parents should have an unquestioned right to bring their children to bars. This surely should be an individual matter, left to the bar owner's discretion. She would have done better if she had focused on the practice of mandatory identification checks at bars. By forcing scores of grey-headed boozers who came of age in an earlier century to prove that they're over 21, this ridiculous form of security theater does little or nothing to catch underage drinkers but a great deal to undermine the rule of law. ♦

B&A

Abe's Angle

Lincoln as president and commander in chief.

BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.

Given the everlasting cascade of books about Abraham Lincoln, is anything at all left to be said? Perhaps. We sometimes overlook Lincoln's pivotal role as a cause—or at least a provocation—of the war. Without his election, would hostilities have broken out? A hypothetical question, of course, but it is imaginable, if unlikely, that with a different election outcome in 1860 the secessionist fever might have abated—if (a big if) the abolitionists had quieted down. It might even have dawned on the South Carolina fireeaters that paid labor is more efficient than slave labor, as was congruent with the spirit of the age. But historical might-have-beens are sterile, and Michael Burlingame wastes little time on them.

Lincoln and the Civil War
by Michael Burlingame
Southern Illinois, 176 pp., $19.95

Edwin M. Yoder Jr. is the author, most recently, of Vacancy: A Judicial Misadventure.

No one, to turn to historical reality, has ever fully explained Lincoln's evangelical resolve to save the Union at any cost, unless it was his old congressional colleague Alexander Stephens, who observed that Lincoln's dedication to the Union approached "religious mysticism." Lincoln himself obviously meant it when he spoke of the American democratic union as "the last, best hope of earth." If it perished, the cynics who saw democracy as mob rule would be vindicated. Burlingame adds substantially to this mystery.

One persistent and fascinating question is how a rough-hewn plainsman, sprung as he himself said (in quoting Thomas Gray) from "the short and simple annals of the poor," attained surpassing strength, wit, and eloquence. Lincoln's biographers, including many of the best, have viewed his political and spiritual maturation as a seamless process in which

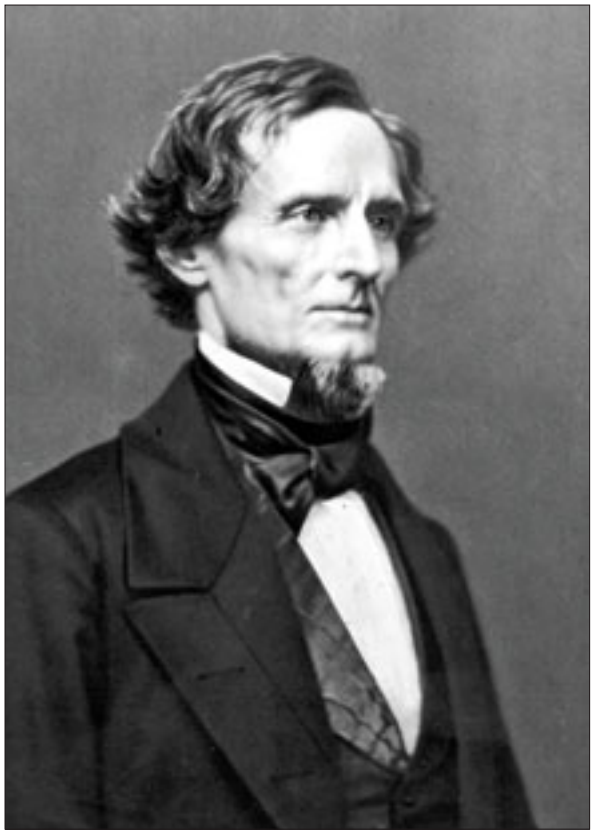
hidden strengths were intimated early, had there been wit to detect them.

In the conventional view, what was lacking all along were the catalytic events of the 1850s: the quarrel over territorial expansion, the collapse of the Missouri Compromise, and the *Dred Scott* decision. They galvanized him and became for him, as for Jefferson 30 years earlier, "a firebell in the night." Of Lincoln's mature emergence Burlingame offers an arresting explanation. It was, so to say, a sort of Dr. Phil moment, in which Lincoln, till then a sort of "political hack" (he actually uses the term), with the usual billingsgate vocabulary, experienced a transformative personal crisis. It left him with a new identity and a certain "psychic radiance."

> In his early forties Lincoln underwent a profound transformation as he passed through a difficult, painful but ultimately positive midlife crisis. . . . During his semi-retirement from politics, Lincoln outwardly devoted himself to his law practice while inwardly wrestling with the profound questions that many men confront as they make the transition from early adulthood to middle adulthood: What do I really want from life? . . . What do I hope to accomplish with the rest of my days?

This seems plausible, and Burlingame, a seasoned scholar, holder of the Lynn Chair in Lincoln Studies at the University of Illinois, Springfield, knows his stuff. This compact volume covers the usual story with style and penetration.

Some details are new, at least to the present writer. The term "miscegenation" first appeared during the Civil War, replacing the older term "amalgamation." Lincoln, Burlingame tells us, was too busy with other matters on the wartime day when a consoling letter needed to be written to Mrs. Bixby, who had lost five sons in the Union cause. Its well-remembered phrases (e.g., that no one had "laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom") were actually ghosted by his young secretary John Hay, a wordsmith with a distinguished future as historian, journalist, and statesman.



Jefferson Davis

Other scholars have recently disputed the hackneyed portrait of [Jefferson] Davis as a sour, dyspeptic, unsociable war leader.

As for the main figures in the war, Burlingame is caustic on the Rebels generally and no kinder than others to Gen. George B. McClellan, Lincoln's first generalissimo and ultimate foe in the 1864 election. Few detractors, however, have heaped upon McClellan so many hostile adjectives, one of which carries intimations of a personality disorder diagnosis without benefit of clinical information: "quarrelsome, mistrustful, secretive, harshly judgmental, rigid and self-righteous . . . an envious, arrogant and grandiose narcissist."

Here, we catch a whiff of what is perhaps the only signal defect of this otherwise equable book: that when it comes to those who obstructed or delayed Lincoln's war aims, and even more those who opposed them, it falls short of "malice toward none." Jefferson Davis, for instance, with his "egotism and disputatious nature . . . helped undermine Confederate unity." Perhaps the operative term there is "helped." By the logic of voluntary association, the Confederacy was vulnerable to disunity without the assistance of Davis's temperament—if Burlingame has that temperament right. Other scholars have recently disputed the hackneyed portrait of Davis as a sour, dyspeptic, unsociable war leader.

As for the South's most famous general, had Robert E. Lee "decided to remain true to his oath . . . the Civil War would doubtless have been much shorter and far less bloody." The point is unarguable, given the gross bloodshed of 1864-65. But the same might be said of Lincoln and Grant, both of whom were accused of butchery because they also aimed to win a costly war.

Burlingame is entitled to his contempt; it's his book. But crisp dismissals of men of substance and virtue, however mistaken they now are deemed, do small justice to the anguish felt in all civil wars by good men tormented by divided fidelities.

Who then will, or should, read this little book? Any and all students of our great national tragedy who want a compendious, informed, and readable brushup. But a warning: It comes seasoned, at times, with drops of the purest bile. ♦

NEWSCOM

Sigmund Freud's study, London

B&A

Pilgrims' Progress

Literary shrines and the people who worship them.

BY HELEN RITTELMEYER

The question asked in Simon Goldhill's new book is why someone who enjoys an author's books would want to examine the house where he wrote them. The Victorians were the first people to turn writers' houses into pilgrimage sites, and Goldhill—who is a Cambridge scholar of the Victorians as well as the ancient Greeks—can't see why this quasi-superstitious practice didn't go out of fashion along with the six-day bicycle race. Why should I visit Shakespeare's birthplace, he asks: "I haven't visited my own birthplace."

But year after year, tens of thousands of tourists visit the five shrines on his tour—the homes-turned-museums of Sir Walter Scott, William Wordsworth, the Brontës, William Shakespeare, and Sigmund Freud—in search of some insight or connection. So if Goldhill starts off skeptical of these pilgrimages, he also has reason to take them seriously.

Freud's Couch, Scott's Buttocks, Brontë's Grave
by Simon Goldhill
Chicago, 144 pp., $22.50

His journey begins with Sir Walter Scott's estate, which at first seems like a sensible choice: Scott, unlike any of the other authors, intended his home to be a destination and an expression of his personality. He purchased a property known as Clarty Hole ("roughly translated, 'sh—ty dump'"), renamed it Abbotsford, and stocked his ever-expanding mansion with a vast collection of historical objects: French cuirasses salvaged at Waterloo; a replica of Robert Bruce's skull; even "a piece of oatcake found on a dead Highlander at the battle of Culloden." Scott welcomed visitors to his palace of memorabilia; he was reputed to give excellent guided tours. After his death, his own relics—the clothes he wore for his final portrait, his ink-blotter, a lock of his hair—were put out for display with the rest.

Given all this self-conscious effort, one might expect Abbotsford to present in their purest form all the reasons to visit a writer's home. But its design is *too* deliberate. Goldhill thought the house "reeked of Scott"—and not even Scott the writer but "Scott the manipulator of his image, Scott the keen antiquarian." So the leadoff visit is in some sense a failure, but a failure with a lesson to teach about the dangers of being too literal. Ideally, a writer's home should offer insights that can't be found in his work, supplementing his writing the way body language supplements speech. At Abbotsford, Scott isn't using body language; he is playing charades.

Goldhill's trip to Wordsworth country is much more profitable, because he arrives with a specific mystery to solve. Wordsworth's years in the Lake District spanned two separate residences, Dove Cottage and Rydal Mount, and it is generally thought that the year he moved from one to the other was the year his talent began to desert him. Dove Cottage is a small, dark, converted pub where he lived with wife Mary and sister Dorothy when they were all poor. Rydal Mount, where the three of them moved when Wordsworth became eminent and financially secure, is much grander and seems exactly like a place where a sage would do his entertaining. We can see the outlines of our tragedy already. The question is whether visiting the two houses adds anything to this story of fame and creative decline. Surprisingly, Goldhill the skeptic answers yes.

There is no desk in Wordsworth's study at Dove Cottage. He did most of his composition outdoors on long walks, lowering his voice when anyone passed him "so as not to appear mad," and when he returned home, Mary or Dorothy would sit with a writing board

NEWSCOM

Helen Rittelmeyer is an associate editor at National Review.

on her knees and take dictation. Before his visit, Goldhill never understood why Wordsworth "didn't just write down his own poems" in the Dove Cottage years (which produced "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" and the "Immortality" ode). Having experienced the claustrophobic atmosphere for himself, Goldhill concludes that it had something to do with "the symbiotic life—intricately, emotionally interconnected—of the three adults in the close quarters of the tiny rooms."

Rydal Mount, on the other hand, is Wordsworth's Abbotsford: high ceilings, sweeping staircases, a dining room clearly intended for many guests and meals of several courses. Wordsworth devoted meticulous effort to designing the terraced garden, arranging the flowerbeds to frame optimal views of the lake. Goldhill arrived already knowing that Rydal Mount was a wealthier man's house, but it took a visit for him to realize that it was also a willing public celebrity's.

The Brontë estate in Yorkshire reveals the dark side of writers' homes, and not just because of all the moors. The Brontë sisters tend to attract hysterical fans—"going to Haworth feels like joining a cult"—and the museum at Haworth Parsonage certainly reflects a certain obsessiveness, which forces Goldhill to confront the voyeurism of his mission. In Charlotte Brontë's room, her very shoes and stockings are part of the exhibit: "What Victorian woman, let alone the cripplingly shy Charlotte, would want her used underwear on display?" It is also Goldhill's misfortune to have brought as his traveling companion a friend who once saw the original manuscript of *Jane Eyre* in the British Library. This friend finds nothing at Haworth Parsonage half as moving as beholding the page where Charlotte first set down "Reader, I married him," which leaves Goldhill wondering if the sisters' intimate belongings have been exposed not only tastelessly but pointlessly.

So he reverts to his former skepticism, which is only compounded by his stay in Stratford-upon-Avon. Sleepy Stratford became England's Shakespeare capital in 1769, when David Garrick decided to spearhead a grand celebration of "Avonian Willy" there. A parade was held and bad verse tributes were recited, but not a single play was actually performed. The tacky, faux Elizabethanism of the modern "Stratford Shakespeare Experience" suggests to Goldhill that, two-and-a-half centuries later, the Bard's hometown fans still haven't learned how to celebrate him properly.

Freud's home in London has its tacky side, too. Not only are there fuzzy "Freudian slippers" for sale, but excerpts from *The Interpretation of Dreams* have been hung in exceedingly obvious places throughout the house. (The famous dream of the burning child is posted by the fireplace.) But two things redeem even the plush dolls in the gift shop. One is Freud's office, untouched since his death, which is remarkably unlike the austere rooms fashionable with modern analysts. With its piled Persian rugs, vibrant red pillows, and mantelpieces full of archaeological oddities, it strikes Goldhill's wife (whose mother is a psychiatrist) as "a cross between an office and a bordello." The second redeeming feature is the visitors' book which, interestingly, is overwhelmingly populated with psychoanalysts and psychology students and professors. Apparently, even professional demystifiers have their holy shrines, which is somehow reassuring.

It is fairly unusual for a university professor to write a travelogue. Most of the great British travel writers are just the opposite, college dropouts or neverwents: Patrick Leigh Fermor, Bruce Chatwin, and Colin Thubron among them. Being autodidacts, they collected bits of knowledge like magpies, which suits travel writing far better than the academic's approach, methodically subordinating every new observation to some main thesis. If Goldhill had approached his journey more like a magpie, he might have found a better answer to his question. Scott's suits of armor and Emily Brontë's schoolbooks are not very interesting as expressions of artistic genius, but to someone who finds them simply interesting on their own terms, they don't have to be. ♦

Gordon S. Wood, Sandra Day O'Connor, 2011

B&A

What Makes America?

A historian's lifetime in search of an answer.

BY JAMES M. BANNER JR.

Few historians write about the long era of the American Revolution with greater authority than the author of the essays collected in this volume. One of the best-read scholars of his generation, for over roughly half a century Gordon Wood has written with a kind of infectious enthusiasm about what he unblushingly terms here "the most important event in American history, bar none." As anyone who has ever read or heard him knows, he holds this view out of the not-implausible Whiggish conviction that the revolution started the United States on its way toward being a democracy and open society. If, as Wood admits, he has gradually thrown himself into the camp of so-called Progressive historians who look upon colonial America as a kind of *ancien régime*, and upon the years after 1776 as a takeoff era for the modern United States, it's because of what he's convinced followed the revolution—a new age characterized by (as he termed it in an earlier book) the "radicalism" of American democracy, a theme he reprises in an essay here.

The Idea of America
Reflections on the Birth of the United States
by Gordon S. Wood
Penguin, 400 pp., $29.95

With such convictions, Wood occasionally skirts close to a kind of national triumphalism and exceptionalism—to the view that the United States is the only nation-state and society of its kind under the sun. While Wood does his utmost to keep his work from seeming to adopt this stance, he has not escaped challenge on that score. (Nor have most historians who write of the revolution escaped it. It is the occupational hazard of focus on those extraordinary decades.) Neither has he avoided the criticism that his scholarship sidesteps or underplays the realities of slavery, poverty, the decline of women's position, and the eliminationist horrors facing the native tribes in the era that has been the focus of his attention, realities that owed much to the advance of the very individualistic democracy that he has emphasized.

Such criticisms, however, arise much more from the approaches to the past Wood has adopted than from any blinkers on his insight. He started out and has remained principally a historian of ideas, vernacular as well as formal. More recently he has taken an interest in cultural history, the large domain that has to do with the created environment and with personal behavior (architecture, manners, dress, discourse, and the like) that are kin to, and draw from, more formal ideas and attitudes. Had Wood devoted his research and thinking to social history—to the history of the structure and operations of society—he would, perforce, have had to confront more directly the shortcomings of the early republic, and there is every reason to be confident that he would have done so. But his interests have been elsewhere.

These essays span much of Wood's career, the earliest dating from as long ago as 1966. That he includes an essay from 45 years ago suggests the continuity of his thinking. An afterword accompanies each essay, and in only one does he express any regret (and a modest one at that) about what he had earlier written. Nor, while distancing himself from those who argue that ideas directly cause people to act, does he shy away from a muscular defense of the importance of ideas in history. "Our minds are essential to the ordering of our experience," Wood insists. And so his aim here, as in everything else he has written, is to interpret how the ideas of the early nation affected Americans' experience of their world and caused them to act and invent as they did.

Consequently, Wood has had to fight against an idealist interpretation both of ideas and of his own

GETTY IMAGES NORTH AMERICA

James M. Banner Jr. is a cofounder of the National History Center and coeditor, most recently, of Becoming Historians.

scholarship. Even though in his very second published essay (reprinted here) he protested against giving ideas priority in explaining the American Revolution, and insisted on the need to take account of concrete realities as well as the words in which they were explained, others took him to be elevating ideas over events. Rereading that essay today, one is struck by the rich psychology of ideas the young Wood advanced. "Since ideas and beliefs are ways of perceiving and explaining the world," he asserted, "the nature of the ideas expressed is determined as much by the character of the world being confronted as by the internal development of inherited and borrowed assumptions."

That was particularly important to bear in mind because "it is perhaps only in a relatively unsettled, disordered society, where the questions come faster than men's answers, that ideas become truly vital and creative." Nevertheless, he has always insisted, "Ideas by themselves are never determinative of thought." The luggage in people's minds deposited there by the culture into which they are born jostle with new ideas, situations, and events to create an unending dynamic of historical change.

Moreover, the ideas that people possess do not claim human attention simply by being available to them. Men and women inherit ideas and then ransack their intellectual inheritance (as well as any fresh ideas they may have) in order to explain and justify their actions; they are instrumentalists. As illustration of this conviction, Wood here reprints an essay that seeks to explain what Roman history and ideas bequeathed to the revolutionary generation—or, rather, what that generation found useful in that bequest. For those who know of Wood's long interest in classical republicanism in America, it should come as no surprise that he believes that the American gentry absorbed a particular thread of Roman thought, one of particular appeal to those who thought of themselves as the patriciate. This thread emphasized disinterestedness, avoiding having to work for a living, and accepting roles of leadership as a necessary sacrifice for the common good. It thus, for example, becomes less of a mystery as to why George Washington met such little resistance to his leadership. Roman influences among the gentry had prepared the way for the application and acceptance of his leadership.

Those Roman influences hint at another characteristic Wood theme. While sensitive to the resonance that 18th-century ideas can retain over 200 years later, Wood is always at pains to insist on the "immense cultural chasm" that separates the Founders' era from our own. This bears emphasis in a day such as our own when claims, from right and left, to direct lineage from members of the revolutionary generation confuse and sometimes soil our politics. We mistakenly invoke the Founders, implies Wood, because of our own misreading of them, not because of their lack of clarity or wisdom. They were not democrats; they were not interest-group politicians: "For them government was not an arena for furthering the interests of groups and individuals, but a means of moral betterment. . . . [T]hey were not modern men."

'The idea that there was a sphere of private rights that lay absolutely beyond the authority of the people themselves, especially in a republican government, was a remarkable innovation.'

"Of course," may be a natural response of any reader to such assertions, as they should be of all historians. But even many historians err in embracing the Founders as if they were our contemporaries, their ideas and government inventions relieving us of the responsibility to think things through and anew for ourselves. Composed not only of unmodern men, the generation of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Madison, and Marshall was a generation of the 18th-century Enlightenment, indeed of what more and more scholars today refer to as the American Enlightenment, a distinct embodiment of a larger Western phenomenon. Wood devotes an essay to this theme, as he does to the distinction between monarchism and republicanism in the 18th century and to Jefferson's and Thomas Paine's kindred kinds of radicalism. And as is required of any student of this period, he considers the distinctiveness and peculiarities of the 1790s, when American politics—bitter partisan politics—first took form. Yet if echoes of those days can still occasionally be heard in our own times, they are echoes whose weakness is more impressive than their relevance.

In recent years, Wood has devoted attention to constitutional issues, jurisprudence, rights, and the courts. In one essay in this volume, this supremely gifted historian finds fresh things to say about the always-difficult-to-define concept of constitutionalism, American version. As typical of him, he bears down on the exceptionalism of American constitutionalism—not the mere fact of embodying fundamental law in a written document (distinctive enough and unprecedented before the revolution) but lodging sovereignty in the people through that constitution. As Wood points out, placing sovereignty outside the government itself has led "to all sorts of strange political institutions and practices" of which a deep mistrust of elected officials, manifest in such mechanisms as recall, initiative, and referendums, is foremost. One might retort that the reverse is the case—that an earlier mistrust of elected officials led to sovereignty's location outside government—but surely Wood is correct in wondering whether such approaches to governance suit the United States in this particular era of challenges to governance.

The Idea of America contains three canonical essays—"Rhetoric and

Reality in the American Revolution," "Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century," and "Interests and Disinterestedness in the Making of the Constitution"—that are known to most historians and remain accessible to anyone seeking to learn more of the young republic. But in my view the gem is Wood's essay on rights in early America. The challenge to Americans then, as he sees it, was "the formulating of a defense of individual rights and liberties against the people themselves"—that is, of a defense that could protect people from the representatives whom the sovereign people had elected to govern them.

How that occurred requires Wood to unfurl a line of argument too complex to summarize here. But the development of rights, commencing with that of religious freedom, involved distinguishing private rights (including, of course, property rights) from public rights and then placing the former under the protection of the judiciary. That is, the rise of the judiciary to a place of centrality unprecedented anywhere previously resulted from judges being called upon to limit legislative action and protect individual rights. "The idea," writes Wood with characteristic force, "that there was a sphere of private rights that lay absolutely beyond the authority of the people themselves, especially in a republican government, was a remarkable innovation." It's a feature that continues to set off the American state from almost every other polity.

It can still surprise some people that historical knowledge offers more than the pleasures of well-told tales. In the hands of deeply informed scholars who are analytical while lucid, engaged in their current world without being presentist in the choice of their subjects, or the approaches to them they take, knowledge of the past can often illuminate the present better than any other kind. That Wood has effectively done so throughout his career has helped put him in the forefront of practicing historians today. This work shows him at his very best. ♦

B&A

Back on the Job

Familiar faces, contemporary cases.

BY JON L. BREEN

Rex Stout, asked his opinion of writers who take over a deceased colleague's fictional characters, compared them to vampires and cannibals and said they should "roll their own." But that didn't stop Robert Goldsborough from writing several new cases for the team of Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin after Stout's death. When the creator of a famous fictional detective or thriller hero dies, readers want to see the saga continue, and, whether their motives are literary, celebratory, or purely commercial, heirs, writers, editors, and publishers are often eager to oblige.

Sherlock Holmes's official life in print ran from 1886 to 1927; but since the death of Arthur Conan Doyle in 1930 innumerable new cases for the Baker Street sleuth have been supplied by other hands. Raffles, the gentleman-burglar created by Doyle's brother-in-law E.W. Hornung, lived on in novels and stories by Barry Perowne, a pseudonym for Philip Atkey. The last novel by the late Joe Gores was *Spade and Archer*, a superbly managed prequel to Dashiell Hammett's *Maltese Falcon*. Eric Van Lustbader has inherited Robert Ludlum's Jason Bourne franchise; Don Winslow has written a new novel about Trevanian's assassin Nicholai Hel; and next year will see the first of Ace Atkins's new cases for the Boston private eye Spenser, created by the late Robert B. Parker, who himself had added new volumes to the saga of Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe.

Death Cloud
by Andrew Lane
Farrar, Straus amd Giroux,
320 pp., $16.99

The Attenbury Emeralds
by Jill Paton Walsh
Minotaur, 352 pp., $25.99

Carte Blanche
by Jeffery Deaver
Simon & Schuster, 432 pp., $26.99

Kiss Her Goodbye
by Mickey Spillane
& Max Allan Collins
Houghton Mifflin
Harcourt/Penzler, 288 pp., $25

The artistic and marketplace success of these ventures varies. Though Goldsborough started from the best of motives—he wrote his first Stout pastiche as a gift for his mother, never intending it for publication—his honorable efforts were inferior to the originals and generally derided by series fans. The Erle Stanley Gardner estate erred in hiring Thomas Chastain, a capable mystery writer whose new Perry Mason cases lacked the pace and spark of the originals. Parnell Hall, uniquely able to replicate Gardner's writing and plotting style and mastery of courtroom trickery, was turned down for the job but proved his superiority in novels about lawyer Steve Winslow, published under the pseudonym J.P. Hailey. The long-delayed sixth in the series, *The Innocent Woman*, was published earlier this year as an e-book.

Each of the four books here returns to the stage one of the most celebrated characters in mystery and thriller fiction, with varying approaches and levels of success.

In the last three or four decades, Sherlock Holmes has met virtually every celebrity of the Victorian/Edwardian period, involved himself

Jon L. Breen is the author, most recently, of Probable Claus.

with all of the period's notorious criminal cases (most frequently Jack the Ripper), and been used as a character in bridge problems and as an unlikely spokesman for evangelical Christianity. Secondary characters from the Holmes saga have had their own separate cases, including Dr. Watson, Inspector Lestrade, Mrs. Hudson, Irene Adler, and the sedentary brother Mycroft

Ian Carmichael as Lord Peter Wimsey

Holmes, severely distorted into an action hero. Juvenile series have featured the Baker Street Irregulars and a hitherto unimagined feminist sister of Sherlock and Mycroft.

Though the Doyle estate has given permission for many of these, only recently have they directly sponsored or commissioned new cases for Holmes, putting their imprimatur on one pastiche for adults and one for children. The adult book is *The House of Silk* by Anthony Horowitz, best known as the creator of the superb British TV series *Foyle's War*. The juvenile is Andrew Lane's *Death Cloud*, which concerns a schoolboy Sherlock, obviously gifted but an intellectual work in progress. Sent to spend the summer with relatives he's never met, he encounters negatives (a Mrs. Danvers-ish housekeeper) and positives (an American tracker hired by Mycroft to tutor him for the summer) and vanquishes a particularly grotesque principal villain. The author sets up a two-boys-and-a-girl theme that worked so well for the Harry Potter series, and enough loose ends are left behind to fuel future entries. The story is more thriller than detective story, with many effective scenes of physical action; but there's quite a bit of good reasoning as well, and the author is knowledgeable and respectful of the Holmes canon, slyly including allusions that Sherlockians will recognize. Apart from dialogue that occasionally sounds too contemporary, Lane does a good job with the 19th century.

Jill Paton Walsh was already well known as a mystery writer and Booker-nominated novelist when she got the job of finishing *Thrones, Dominations*, the novel about Lord Peter Wimsey and his mystery-writer wife Harriet Vane that Dorothy L. Sayers left unfinished when she deserted detective fiction for other literary and religious interests. A second posthumous collaboration, *A Presumption of Death*, drew on "The Wimsey Papers," a series of letters Sayers wrote for the *Spectator* early in World War II, but the mystery problem was entirely Walsh's own. In *The Attenbury Emeralds* Walsh brings Peter and Harriet, along with perfect manservant Mervyn Bunter and various associates and family members, into the Britain of the early 1950s to investigate a case that began 30 years earlier at the start of Wimsey's career as a consulting detective. The characters have aged in real time, and they confront a postwar Britain drastically changed for members of the aristocracy. Walsh is able to take the characters in new directions without distorting them. For plotting, literary style, and character insights, she is one of the most effective successor-authors.

While Walsh is the only writer (to my knowledge) to extend the Wimsey franchise, Jeffery Deaver is at least the fifth to continue the James Bond saga, following Kingsley Amis (writing as Robert Markham), John Gardner, Raymond Benson, and Sebastian Faulks. Unlike the other characters under discussion, Bond has not been placed in a period setting but is thrust into the contemporary world. Not content with ignoring Bond's past, Deaver effectively erases it. His clean-slate Bond is an Afghan war hero in his early thirties who has a tragic family backstory and works for a covert British unit called the Overseas Development Group. Forget *Goldfinger*, *From Russia With Love*, and the other Ian Fleming Bonds—apparently none of that stuff ever happened. Still the secondary characters are in their proper roles—M, Miss Moneypenny, Felix Leiter. Brand names are freely dropped. If Fleming's Bond had recommended the 2005 Rustenberg

POPPERFOTO / GETTY IMAGES

Peter Barlow Cabernet, it would have precipitated a run on the wine shops; but I don't know if Deaver's version will have the same effect. As in any respectable spy novel, a flurry of acronyms and initialisms are deployed: SOCA, JTAC, ELINT, IMINT, SIGINT, MASINT, COBRA, SAPS. There's no shortage of beautiful women with suggestive names—Ophelia Maidenstone, Felicity Willing—exotic locales are widespread and varied—Serbia, Dubai, South Africa—and gadgets from Q section are available at short notice. The main visible villains, recycling tycoon and corpse devotee Severan Hydt and engineer Niall Dunne (aka the Irishman), are in the grand tradition. Less Fleming-like is the whodunit element, solved by Bond from fair, if well-hidden, clues.

The novel begins unpromisingly with cinematic derring-do and a plethora of clumsily inserted tidbits from the author's research files, a tendency that becomes more tolerable as the story gathers momentum. Deaver is meticulous enough to explain why Bond wants his martini shaken rather than stirred: It's colder that way and serves to aerate the vodka, improving the flavor. Deaver is a trick constructionist whose fictional technique involves the planting of periodic jolts to the reader's expectations. However expertly done, this sometimes becomes too much of a good thing, like a fireworks display that goes on too long. It generally works better in his short stories. The bottom line: a respectable effort that mainly lacks Ian Fleming's stylistic flair.

Mickey Spillane was a competent writer with a knack for colorful prose and operatic plotting who struck a responsive note with mostly male readers in post-World War II America. Where Doyle, Sayers, and Fleming all had a favorable critical response in their own time, Spillane did not. In the April 1952 issue of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, four prominent reviewers were quoted on *The Long Wait*. Most backhandedly complimentary was Anthony Boucher of the *New York Times* ("may rank as the best Spillane . . . faintest praise this department has ever bestowed"). Also weighing in were James Sandoe of the *New York Herald Tribune* ("Readers will look without success for any hint of intentional satire"), Lenore Glen Offord of the *San Francisco Chronicle* ("murky and incredible plot and complete lack of taste, all as usual"), and Sergeant Cuff of the *Saturday Review*

Mickey Spillane

("Amnesia angle handcuffs reader; plot turgid and violent"). Those of us who believe the contemporary reviewers essentially got it right are swimming against the prevailing tide.

For me, the biggest drawback to Spillane is not the vivid sex and violence, not the vigilante justice and reactionary political slant, and certainly not the atmospheric prose and humor, but a distinct lack of the compulsive readability his admirers claim for him. Maybe Spillane, in opening up the mystery form to male aggressive and sexual impulses not fully represented in earlier popular fiction, made his books a masculine equivalent of the Nancy Drew juveniles revered by so many women mystery writers—another case of far superior work being traced to an original inspiration of limited artistic quality. (In fairness, Spillane's works do score higher on literary value than the Nancy Drews.)

Of the latter-day writers and critics who have celebrated Spillane's mysteries, none has been more vocal and effective than his friend and posthumous collaborator Max Allan Collins, a vastly better writer. Collins, though best known for historical novels based on true crimes or disasters, has successfully written virtually every type of crime fiction. After the death of Spillane, he inherited the job of mining the unfinished works and fragments. *Kiss Her Goodbye*, the third Mike Hammer novel to carry their joint byline, is based on two partial manuscripts found among Spillane's effects. All the expected features are here: evocative descriptions, frequent use of italics, bursts of explicit violence, over-abundance of beautiful women, and a dramatic final scene with a shock twist.

Hammer, who has been in Florida recuperating from gunshot wounds, reluctantly returns to a changed New York in the 1970s for the funeral of an old friend and mentor. He claims to have put his avenger days behind him, but he can't believe ex-cop Bill Doolan would have committed suicide. Hammer is a Manhattan celebrity, known by reputation to everyone he meets. It's hard to imagine anyone but sometime-actor Spillane himself speaking the humorous tough-guy dialogue. Sex scenes are more explicit than Spillane could get away with in his early days, but the enthusiastically graphic violence needs no stepping up. Collins's faithful imitation ultimately does Spillane better than the man himself ever managed. (I have a hunch that the creator of Mike Hammer, who never seemed to take himself too seriously and could afford to be generous to his fellow writers, would agree.)

Four pastiches, each to at least some degree worthy of its model and one surpassing the original. Whether the increasing franchising of dead bestsellers and successful series characters is salutary or not—and I suspect it is not—this quartet bolsters the case for the defense. ♦

GLOBE PHOTOS / ZUMAPRESS / NEWSCOM

B&A

Miró on the Wall

The art of performance in 20th-century art.

BY AMY HENDERSON

Rosamond Bernier, 1998

"I cannot remember a time," Rosamond Bernier announces early in this memoir, "when I didn't know Leopold Stokowski."

She met Aaron Copland during summer holidays after her sophomore year at Sarah Lawrence—and through him, the young Leonard Bernstein as well. She often visited Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Mexico City. She met Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas in fashion designer Pierre Balmain's Paris salon, where she had arranged a photography session with Horst for *Vogue*. The famous image resulting from this session featured Gertrude and her poodle, Basket, watching a woman model a gown. Rosamond appears in the background. Picasso, Calder, Matisse, Miró, Henry Moore, Philip Johnson, Louise Bourgeois, Jerome Robbins, David Hockney—she knew them all. Indeed, Rosamond Bernier's acquaintances were the *crème de la crème* of the 20th-century arts scene; if you were not listed, you were probably skimmed milk. *Some of My Lives* was published on the occasion of her 95th birthday in October.

Some of My Lives
A Scrapbook Memoir
by Rosamond Bernier
Farrar, Straus and Giroux,
292 pp., $30

Bernier is best known for her career as a lecturer on 20th-century art, a chapter that began in her early fifties when she reinvented herself after a divorce: "In my new persona as a professional talker I roamed far, if not wide. This phase started in Paris in 1970, when I was invited to give four lectures at the Grand Palais—on Matisse, Picasso, Miró, Max Ernst—in French." But her fame as a lecturer is really only the topper to decades of astonishing interaction with people who fascinated her. She was a player rather than an observer, which meant that she wanted to know people who intrigued her, not simply know about them. "With art, you need some connection," she writes. "If you are intelligently interested and sincere, people will talk to you."

Born in Philadelphia to an English mother and American father, she grew up surrounded by the arts. Her lawyer-father was a major supporter of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and famous musical figures were familiar household visitors as she grew up. She also seems to have had an exquisite sense of timing: Her friend Francine du Plessix Gray has said that Bernier has "charisma, intelligence, sex appeal," an "amazing ability to draw people out, and brilliant mastery of the art of conversation." And du Plessix Gray's stepfather was Alexander Liberman, the legendary art director of *Vogue* who, when he met Bernier in Mexico in 1945, instantly hired her as a fashion editor. In 1947, she became the first European Features editor for *Vogue*, living in Paris at the Hotel de Crillon and dividing her time between studios and dinners at the Rothschilds'.

It was in these years that Bernier's sense of style came to the forefront. The painter Alex Katz has said that "it's in the way she looks, the way she lives, the way she talks. She'd never settle for anything pedestrian." Befriended by couturiers, she began wearing the high-fashion clothes that established her as a lifetime member of the International Best-Dressed List: For a *Vogue* photo session on Miró she wore Schiaparelli; for Matisse, she wore Balenciaga.

In 1955 she founded *L'OEIL*, a magazine backed by some of the artists she had befriended—Picasso, Braque, Léger, among others—and her idea was to offer something unavailable in 1950s Paris: an art publication at an affordable price. She decided to use her contacts in

RICHARD SCHULMAN / CORBIS

Amy Henderson is a cultural historian and curator in Washington.

an effort that combined her interests in photography, good design, and good writing:

> My aim was to produce a lively publication with . . . readable texts by experts who did not pontificate, something of top quality that young people on a tight budget could buy.

One of the most enjoyable chapters in the Bernier scrapbook features "My Friend Miró." She met Joan Miró while she was preparing the first issue of *L'OEIL* and he was visiting Paris to work with his graphic artists. He soon invited her to visit his studio in Barcelona, where he "led me up and down and all around the town" and showed her "the art that means the most to me." As with anyone who captured her attention, Bernier worked her magic on this "most reserved and silent of artists." When he tackled a new métier, ceramics, he confided to her why it attracted him: "It is the unpredictability that excites me. The accidents in the kiln. You paint a piece red, and it comes out chocolate brown. You never know what will happen."

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Bernier's ties to the 20th-century art world illuminated a sphere that was remarkably connected: Miró talks about how Calder showed him around New York in the late 1940s, how Picasso visited his studio to see his work, and later how he came to know Klee and Kandinsky. Add a soupçon of Braque, a dash of Léger, a healthy helping of Matisse, and for Bernier life offered an endlessly replenished movable feast.

After her divorce in France, Bernier searched for a new life, and her career as a "professional talker" happened by accident. She was sunbathing with an art professor-friend on the Lido in Venice when he asked her to explain first Cubism, then Surrealism (to an academic, this seems to constitute small talk). Afterwards, he told her that "if you can talk like that off the top of your head, you should be lecturing," and she was soon launched on a lecture circuit that took her to major museums and "rural ones tucked away" across the United States. But it was her lectures for the Metropolitan Museum of Art that made her reputation, lectures that were performance pieces in themselves. She always wore fabulous gowns because "[t]hrough the clothes, you could tell the story of the people, the times, of what was going on in theater, and the music being played." Speaking without notes, she would float onstage and hold audiences enthralled. For one reviewer, Bernier revolutionized "the art of the art lecture. . . . Her glittering speaking style, the immediacy of her delivery and the fact that she had known many of the famous artists in Paris in the '40s turned her lectures into the hottest ticket in New York."

She also found happiness in these years, marrying the art critic John Russell in 1975. Their wedding was true to form: Staged in Philip Johnson's Glass House in Connecticut, it was orchestrated by Johnson, with Aaron Copland giving the bride away, Leonard Bernstein standing up for the groom, and Pierre Matisse (Henri's art-dealer son) serving as best man. "John [Russell] used to say," she says, "that you can make the history of art into the history of everything, and that you should just amuse yourself." ♦

"The White House and NASCAR are downplaying a Sunday incident in which some race fans booed first lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, the wife of Vice President Biden."
—USA Today, November 21, 2011

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

November 28, 2011

FROM: Kristina Schake, Communications Director
TO: All Staff
IN RE: NASCAR incident

After a friendly discussion with the First Lady and following the recent unpleasantness in Miami, it has been decided that a revamping of Mrs. Obama's upcoming schedule is in order:

(1) The November 30 luncheon at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has been canceled. We've had second thoughts about the First Lady delivering a speech on the perils of an unregulated marketplace.

(2) Mrs. Obama will not be attending the December 2 rally of concerned American families in Wichita, Kansas. We've just learned the rally is sponsored by the group American Crossroads, which is not very American at all.

(3) The First Lady will not be making an appearance at the December 6 NRA convention in Atlanta, Georgia. As it turns out, this is not the National Restaurant Association.

(4) Although Ohio is an important state in next year's election, Mrs. Obama will not be making a cameo in Cincinnati during a late December episode of "Man vs. Food," in which the host shows off a five-pound Reuben sandwich. Our health advisers are still calculating its caloric content and, well, they're still calculating.

(5) We have decided to cancel the First Lady's December 23 appearance on "The O'Reilly Factor," even if the host claims the episode will be holiday-themed. Our concern is that the show will not include all the holidays of the season. We have already informed Mr. O'Reilly why we are backing out and are certain *he won't have reason to* share this with the public.

Thank you all for your attention to this matter. And remember, we are still on schedule for the December 20 reception in the State Dining Room honoring Occupy D.C.

Sincerely,

Kristina Schake