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the weekly

# Standard

JANUARY 30, 2012

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## Their Master's Voice

If anybody doubts that our future will be mixed up with the People's Republic of China, THE SCRAPBOOK invites you to take a stroll along New York Avenue in Washington, D.C., and gape at the big new office building going up within easy walking distance of the White House. It's the Washington headquarters of China Central Television (CCTV), from which English-language news broadcasts with a Beijing twist will be coming soon to a cable service near you.

Apparently, the Chinese believe that their country doesn't get favorable coverage in the world's press because the world's press is, of course, largely non-Chinese. THE SCRAPBOOK isn't so sure about this (have they not been enjoying Thomas Friedman's *New York Times* columns in Beijing?), but

if it works for the BBC and Al Jazeera and Voice of America, why shouldn't it work for the world's largest Communist dictatorship?

This sort of news is, of course, catnip to THE SCRAPBOOK. The Chinese seem to believe one of the enduring myths of modern democracy: namely, that the only thing a Great Power needs to succeed in the world is (a) power and (b) good public relations. It also proves that countless journalists can be bought, if the price is right.

According to the *Washington Post*, CCTV's new outpost has hired some 60 ink-stained wretches "from NBC, Bloomberg TV, Fox News, and other Western news organizations," and all are committed to "report without fear or favor, free from government manipulation and second-guessing."

They insist that the network will have autonomy from Beijing, and that its journalists are seasoned professionals who understand the difference between government propaganda and news.

Well, of course they are "seasoned professionals"—would the Chinese hire any other kind?—who know the difference between news and propaganda. But the question is: At the salaries CCTV is prepared to pay them, are they likely to act on that knowledge?

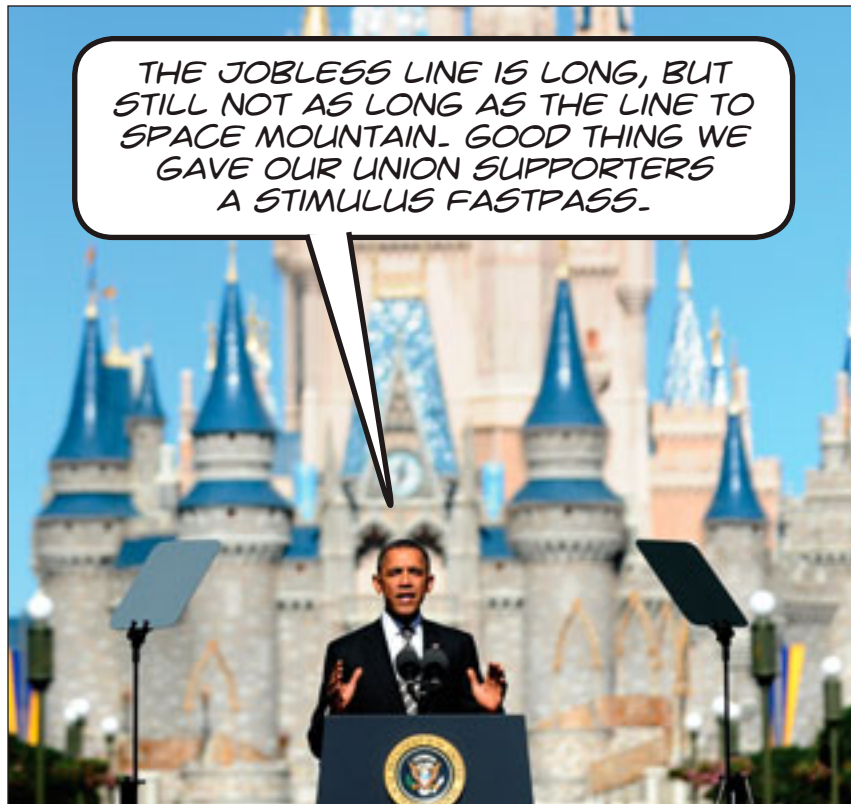
We think we know the answer. According to the *Post*, "CCTV wouldn't permit any of its officials or journalists to speak on the record," and after introducing Jim Laurie, the former NBC and ABC reporter who is now CCTV's top adviser for American news operations, the *Post* noted that "Laurie referred questions to CCTV's management."

THE SCRAPBOOK is willing to concede that, with rampant unemployment in journalists' ranks, it's hard to blame those 60 new hires for signing on to a regular paycheck. But will CCTV's Washington headquarters accomplish what Beijing hopes? Al Jazeera has a large, well-funded, and technically sophisticated news operation in Washington, and ostensibly enjoys a form of editorial autonomy from its patron, the government of Qatar. But while Al Jazeera successfully preaches to the choir in the Arab world, is there any evidence that it has had much effect on American public opinion? Not really.

The People's Republic of China already gets treated generously in the Western media: lots of stories about robust capitalism and graduate students in America and the wonders of the Great Wall, and plenty of academic talking heads eager to defend Beijing's policies. So are those 60 seasoned CCTV professionals going to mention the other China, the China of political repression, hostility to America, forced abortions, and regional bullying?

Wake us up when they do. ♦

## What They Were Thinking



President Barack Obama speaks at Disney World, January 19, 2012.

## Remains of the Day

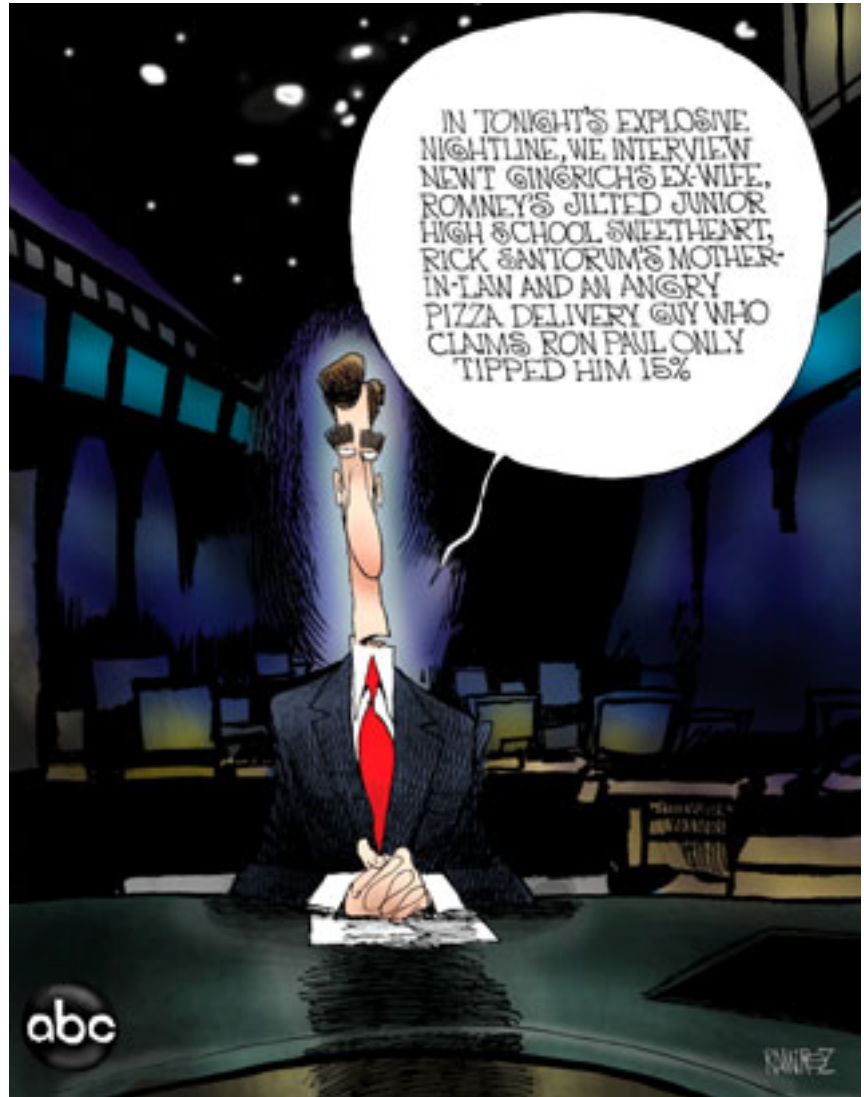
THE SCRAPBOOK is a lifelong believer in the law of unintended consequences, and one of our favorite examples is the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. This measure was intended to protect historic Indian burial grounds from plunder, and to assure that federally recognized tribes retain custody of “cultural items.”

But in the intervening two decades it has become a catastrophe for the scholarly study of prehistoric America. And the reason is simple: Certain tribes, and certain activists, are not so much interested in their cultural history as in being as obnoxious as possible to their fellow (non-Indian) countrymen. So they have laid claim to ancient skeletal remnants which they didn’t discover, don’t understand, and which, at 10,000 years old and older, haven’t the slightest connection to modern-day tribes.

Yet federal courts and the Department of the Interior have generally sided with the tribes, and universities and other research institutions that have been studying the ethnography of North America for the past two centuries are now forced to surrender artifacts—probably for destruction. It is worth asking whether, in the near future, any prehistoric human artifacts on this continent may be legally preserved.

On the one hand, THE SCRAPBOOK takes a certain malicious satisfaction in the spectacle of institutions such as Harvard and the University of California—cathedrals of political correctness—running afoul of their own doctrine. For example, the Kumeyaay Nation of San Diego County, which claims some 10,000-year-old remains found in La Jolla, is no more related to these bones than the anthropologists who study them at UC San Diego. But it seems probable that the stray chips and fragments will be handed over to the Kumeyaay, and lost forever to scientific inquiry.

Meanwhile, Kennewick Man, whose 5,000 to 10,000-year-old remains are the subject of continuing study at the University of Washing-



ton, remains in limbo. A half-dozen Pacific Northwest tribes are fighting one another for the privilege of pillaging the university’s collection, and the Umatilla tribe claim that their 10,000-year-old oral history demonstrates ownership.

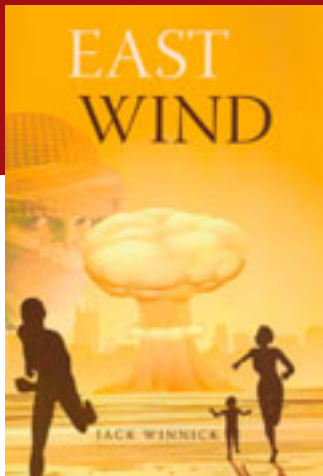
Which, of course, is nonsense. So, for that matter, is the argument that non-Indians would never subject their own primeval ancestors to such scrutiny. The bones and artifacts of European settlers in Virginia and New England are routinely subject to study, and how many museums in the world contain the remains of Egyptian royalty, Danish bog people, or Anglo-Saxon tribesmen? The 5,300-year-old “ice man,” who was discovered not long ago in the Italian Alps, is now on display in his own museum in Bolzano. ♦

## Journal-ism

Several of our favorite journals showed up recently in THE SCRAPBOOK’s mailbox (no, THE SCRAPBOOK hasn’t fully converted to the digital era yet), and they seemed to be even more chock-a-block than usual with interesting articles. The Fall 2011 issue of the *New Atlantis* features several WEEKLY STANDARD contributors: Nick Eberstadt on “The Global War Against Baby Girls,” Wilfred McClay on Nathaniel Hawthorne, Alan Jacobs on “Christianity and the Future of the Book,” and Algis Valiunas on Abraham Maslow and modern America. All the pieces leave you thinking . . . if somewhat depressed. But in a good way—intelligently depressed!

The Winter 2012 *National Affairs* is

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-- **Gerard Casale, Jr., Shofar Magazine**

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a little more cheery. Stuart Butler is basically positive on the coming revolution in higher education, and Scott Winship's "Bogeyman Economics" is a devastating indictment of "politics by horror story." But **THE SCRAPBOOK** particularly enjoyed William Schambra's account of the 1912 election. We'd forgotten how fundamental were the issues that were raised, how many of TR's old associates broke with him when he took Progressivism from a kind of American reformism to an assault on the Constitution, and how thoughtful some of those associates were. We're eager to read more on the impressive Elihu Root, whom Schambra discusses at some length.

Last but not least, the January *New Criterion* features one terrific piece after another, including Kevin Williamson on political economy, Keith Windschuttle, John O'Sullivan, and other worthies in a very interesting symposium on American decline, and James Piereson on George Kennan.

The football season is coming to an end—so there's more time for reading. Start with these three journals. ♦

## Thérèse Delpech, 1948-2012

Sad news from Paris: Thérèse Delpech—scholar, strategist, and philosopher of history—passed away on January 18 at the age of 63. For many years, Delpech had been the director of strategic affairs at the French Atomic Energy Commission. She was a prolific author and policy adviser, and her last two books, *Iran and the Bomb: The Abdication of International Responsibility* and *Savage Century: Back to Barbarism*, are exemplars of her erudition, technical knowledge, and fearless scrutiny of fashionable doctrines and policies.

In *Savage Century* she wrote: "History does not progress in a continuous fashion, nor does it even move forward in spurts. It seems to have abandoned any intelligible pattern." Delpech will be missed all the more by her friends, colleagues, and the policymakers she advised for her ability to provide sound guidance in such chaotic times. ♦

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## Bastard Wit

The angry man at the town-council meeting snarled, “As Harry Truman put it, ‘There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.’” “No,” answered his tension-easing neighbor, “that was Mark Twain. You remember, the guy who also said, ‘The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco’—and he should have been talking about the weather we get around here.” Everybody laughed, and the council moved on to water rates.

Except, of course, that Harry Truman didn’t coin that phrase about lying statistics, and Mark Twain only quoted it, attributing the line in 1906 to Benjamin Disraeli because he thought Leonard Courtney had said in 1895 that Disraeli had come up with it before he died in 1881, although, in truth, Disraeli didn’t say it, and Courtney never said he did. At that point, the trail runs cold, and the origin of the phrase fades into the mists of anonymity.

At a guess, someone in London around 1875 made a joke about escalating falsehoods. I picture him as a lawyer, for some reason—a punster, probably, with a shyly sly sense of humor. Certainly, by 1885, Thomas Huxley was calling classes of legal witnesses “liars, d—d liars, and experts,” as though the phrase were well known. By the 1890s, ordinary people had picked it up, sanded it off a little, repurposed it, and left us with the completed phrase about statistics.

The only trouble was that it lacked ascription. It still needed the *oomph*, the weight, that comes with authority. And so Mark Twain gets the line because he did, in fact, quote it and because—well, because it’s funny and he’s Mark Twain,

author of funny lines. Give a man a reputation for comedy (as John Randolph complained in the early 1800s, after hearing jokes he never told repeated and ascribed to him) and half the bastard wit of the nation gets fathered upon him.

Still, it’s a curious question why some people collect such lines. Anyone can gain a mistaken sourcing.



(Neither Edmund Burke nor Alexis de Tocqueville said, “All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing,” however much the Internet’s innumerable quotation sites think they did.) But why is Harry Truman a magnet for misattribution? At least Winston Churchill and George Bernard Shaw—owners, as near as I can tell, of the current land-speed record for wrongful ascription—had reputations as witty conversationalists. But no one ever thought of Truman as a wordsmith. Or Otto von Bismarck, for that matter, although he’s high in the ranks of those paying child support for bastard lines, along with Confucius, Jonathan Swift, Albert Einstein, and Samuel Goldwyn.

In fact, when we hear something attributed to these figures, we should remember that the Law of Perfection applies to quips, as it does

to everything in life: When something is too good to be true, mistrust is trustworthy.

Oh, I’m willing to believe that Oscar Wilde actually did announce to an American customs officer, “I have nothing to declare except my genius,” and even that he told visitors to the hotel where he lay dying, “My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us has to go.” What I don’t believe is that they’re genuine wisecracks. They sound too polished—too practiced and prepared—to be real quips, however much they get quoted as proof of Wilde’s quick wit.

Dorothy Parker has her share of these Wilde-like lines, up on the sophisticated end of attribution. (“Everything I’ve ever said will be credited to Dorothy Parker,” George S. Kaufman is said to have moaned.) And down on the low end, there’s Yogi Berra, who apparently didn’t say, “A nickel ain’t worth a dime anymore” or (of a restaurant) “It’s so crowded nobody goes there.”

At least, he didn’t say them originally. After he retired from baseball, however, Berra made something of a career out of claiming his purported malapropisms and strained logicisms. “I really didn’t say everything I said,” he once complained, but by the end of the 1990s, he had published in book form nearly everything attributed to him. I’m certain he never actually said, “It’s *déjà vu* all over again,” if only because *déjà vu* isn’t the kind of phrase we’d find in the mouth of a Yankees catcher in the 1950s. But people said that Yogi Berra said it, and so eventually he did say it, just to please them.

If only we could go back in time and get Mark Twain, Winston Churchill, and Harry Truman to do the same. All our attribution problems would be solved, and the good lines put where they belong.

JOSEPH BOTTUM

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Dr. Bart D. Ehrman is the James A. Gray Professor and Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He received his Masters of Divinity and Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He has won several teaching awards, including the Students' Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Bowman and Gordon Gray Award for Excellence in Teaching. Professor Ehrman has written or edited more than 15 books, including *The New York Times* bestseller, *Misquoting Jesus*, and *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium*.

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# Tariffs not Tax Breaks

Right diagnosis. Wrong prescription. That's the fairest way to describe Rick Santorum's idea to provide tax breaks for "manufacturing." Leave aside the definitional issues—some of us at THE WEEKLY STANDARD who "manufacture" ideas might qualify for the benefit he intends for others. The solution to the problem of unemployed and anxious blue collar voters lies in trade rather than tax policy.

Everyone agrees on three things.

- The tax code is impossibly convoluted, stuffed with special benefits, some for the worthy, many for those not so clearly worthy but well represented in the corridors of power in Washington.

- The impact of competition from China varies from industry to industry, and occupation to occupation. No one will fly to Beijing for a haircut because barbers there work for less than they do here, or ship their laundry to China because the Chinese laundries there are cheaper than the laundries here. In economists' jargon, these are not tradable goods, subject to direct foreign competition. Nor is the "output" of local, state, and federal employees, whose unions know that all they need fear is riling American voters by overreaching; Chinese workers are not about to take their jobs, so not for them wage restraint of the sort private-sector workers are forced to endure.

- It is difficult for free-market conservatives to have a sensible discussion about trade policy, because the idea of free trade is one to which conservatives cling pretty absolutely, even though we have been mugged by reality.

That reality is that China manipulates its currency to keep the renminbi sufficiently low to ensure that its goods are the lowest priced available in most markets. The regime aims to create enough jobs to avoid unrest that might threaten it. Yes, there are some areas in which China has a real competitive advantage. But there are others in which its artificially low currency combines with subsidies to tilt the playing field: No matter how efficient an American manufacturer might be, it loses and China wins.

Which is what troubles conservative candidates whose

commendable support for free trade leaves them uncertain how to respond. But Santorum has reached for the wrong weapon with which to deal with the problem: the tax code. He and his rivals should consult their surely dog-eared copies of the *Wealth of Nations*, where Adam Smith does not counsel sitting idly by while his nation's tradable goods industries are devastated by a predatory competitor.

In fact, the Great Scot concluded, "Revenge . . . naturally dictates retaliation . . . when some foreign nation restrains by high duties or prohibitions the importation of some of our manufactures into their country." Such retaliation is especially indicated when

it is likely to produce the repeal of the "prohibitions complained of." The job of doing all of this requires "the skill of that insidious and crafty animal, vulgarly called a statesman or politician," in ample supply here.

Smith also recognized that it "will be generally advantageous to lay some burden" upon imports "when some particular sort of industry is necessary for the defence of the country." And it is acceptable to tax imports to offset any taxes imposed on domestic

firms that exceed those imposed by foreigners on their companies: "When some tax is imposed at home upon the produce [of domestic industry] it seems reasonable that an equal tax should be imposed on the like produce" of foreign companies with which the hometown boy competes.

Finally, Smith pointed out that such restrictions as are imposed on trade should be removed only "gradually, and after a very long warning," lest workers and capitalists "suffer very considerably."

There are, of course, also warnings about the negative effects of some of these measures, and these restrictions are exceptions to Smith's general rule that free trade in most cases enriches the parties to it. But if currency manipulation doesn't warrant retaliation, if theft of intellectual property is not a sufficient barrier to the free flow of capital to justify retaliation, if the variety of administrative restrictions on both imports and exports of items such as rare earth metals doesn't warrant retaliation, if the persistent trade imbalances do not constitute a threat to "the defence"



Rick Santorum, Republican candidate debate in Charleston, South Carolina, January 19, 2012.

of the nation (all those IOUs in the hands of the Chinese regime surely affect our foreign policy), it is difficult to imagine what would.

That is the case whoever ends up facing off against Obama can make. It's trade policy, not the tax code, that can achieve the objective of providing American manufacturing a fair playing field. There are those who would accuse him of protectionism. He can respond by distinguishing his limited tariffs in a free trade regime from real protectionism. He can ask what his critics propose instead. And he can help move the debate among Republicans on economic policy in a more realistic direction.

—Irwin M. Stelzer

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# Lead from the Front

Last week, Syrian security forces withdrew from Zabadani, a town near Damascus where defectors from the army and other antiregime elements had been exchanging heavy fire with the army. In Lebanon, some democracy activists believe that an opposition victory in a major Syrian city will energize Bashar al-Assad's enemies, dooming his regime at last.

Now we'll see. In any case, this is where the real action is. The Syrian uprising is not being driven by the Syrian National Council, or the Muslim Brotherhood, or the other exile outfits busy drafting manifestoes, calling for conferences, and fighting among themselves for power and privilege. The future of Syria, and perhaps much of the region, will be decided by the fighting in Syria itself.

There are other signs it's coming to a head. Maybe, says a Lebanese journalist, the fact that the regime is targeting Homs shows its days are numbered. Homs is a midsized city in western Syria that's been one of the centers of the nearly yearlong uprising against Assad. For months now the regime has been pounding away at Homs. If Assad and his ruling Alawite sect are forced to withdraw from Damascus, they will seek refuge in the Alawite regions in the mountains and along the coastal plain, where the Iranians are already building a port. From there Assad will need to open up a passage to Hezbollah areas in northern Lebanon, which will be more accessible if he levels Homs.

Lebanon's pro-democracy activists are certain of the outcome they want next door; they just don't have the means to achieve it. Neither of those is true for the Obama administration, governing a superpower with expansive resources at its disposal but with no clear idea of what it wants to happen.

The White House boasts of its foreign policy successes,

like killing Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda fighters, ousting Qaddafi, and leading from behind. However, aside from taking the 9/11 mastermind off the playing field, the reality is that the record is thin, as can be seen in the context of the Syrian uprising.

The administration abandoned missile defense agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic to satisfy the Russians but has gotten little in return to justify it. In October, after Moscow and Beijing vetoed U.N. Security Council resolutions against the Syrian regime, U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice pantomimed outrage. Hadn't we hit the reset button with Moscow? Two weeks ago, Russia dispatched another shipload of arms to Assad.

If the administration boasts of having brought Qaddafi to justice, why, asks the Syrian opposition, can't the Americans apply the Libya model to Syria? Well, because Libya, for this White House, fit nicely into a domestic argument about U.S. foreign policy. By joining a NATO coalition with enthusiastic support in some European capitals, the administration could advance its position that American interests are best served by leading from behind.

As for the most pressing foreign policy issue of all, the administration has done little to halt Iran's march toward a nuclear weapon. The only progress in the campaign has come against the administration's wishes. Fearing that high oil prices would harm Obama's chances of getting reelected, the White House fought the Senate, both Republicans and Democrats, over sanctioning Iran's energy sector and central bank. Meanwhile, the real countermeasure to Iran's regional project is precisely that asset that the administration has left dangling for almost a year now—the Syrian uprising, which wants to topple Iran's client government in Damascus.



*Demonstrators against Bashar al-Assad in Homs, January 13*

The Obama administration, like many before it, came into office wedded to the theory that a Syrian-Israeli peace deal would cool off the region and isolate Hamas and Hezbollah and their patron in Tehran. The Europeans likewise hoped to lure Assad from Iran's embrace with political dialogue, trade, and investment. This theory, which occupied Western diplomats for decades, was undone when Syrian 15-year-olds scrawled antiregime graffiti on a wall in the city of Daraa, setting off the revolt.

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What started inside Syria will be decided there as well. The Obama administration has panted after various Syrian opposition groups, hinting at disappointment that these exile outfits are not more cogent. But it is not the exiles who have risked their lives in the streets for 10 months. Nor is it the exiles who have neutralized Iran's key ally. It is not the Syrian National Council that forced Hezbollah to move its arsenal from Syria to Lebanon, or compelled Hamas to abandon the sinking ship in Damascus and seek refuge elsewhere. All this was the work of the opposition inside Syria, which galvanized Arab and international opinion against Assad. Everyone else is just riding the wave that they made possible—everyone, that is, except for the White House.

The one real shift in the Middle East that has been entirely beneficial to American interests has nothing to do with the White House. It's time for the administration to acknowledge the gift that Syrian teenagers left in its lap and help them finish the job.

—Lee Smith

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# The French Connption

In the week since Standard & Poor's downgraded the credit ratings of nine European countries, French newspapermen and European politicians have viewed it as a warning sign for ... er ... Britain. Either that or for the barons of American "finance capitalism" who doubtless put S&P up to the task. Or maybe Germany is to blame for running its economy in such a way as to escape sanction, thus throwing the European economic machine out of balance. Credit downgrades are a bit like diagnoses of alcoholism: Almost anyone would rather trash the doctor than go to rehab. President Obama's advisers behaved no differently last summer when S&P, citing the impasse over the debt ceiling, removed the AAA rating of the United States for the first time in history.

Yet there is something particularly extreme about the French Connption. President Nicolas Sarkozy had made his protection of France's triple-A rating the centerpiece of next April's election. His finance minister has raised questions about the timing of the downgrades. But this is preposterous. The market has its own system of "ratings": interest rates. They show that France should count itself lucky with its double-A. Last summer, as worries over Greek solvency undermined the creditworthiness of Spain and Italy, France's rates began to diverge from those of Germany. Germany was a safer country to lend to for two reasons: It had a more dynamic economy, and it had

undertaken a grueling reform of its entitlement programs, of which France is still incapable. It had even enacted a balanced budget amendment. Germany's constitution, moreover, gave investors reason to hope that a bailout of Greece was not just unlikely but illegal. France had none of that. And it was not the only AAA country to get evicted from Germany's neighborhood—Austria did, too. Italy lost two notches in its credit rating, falling to BBB.

Similar reasons account for why France, despite more favorable debt and deficit numbers, is paying more to borrow money than Britain. Britain is not in the euro. France is. Whereas Britain can, in a pinch, print the money to buy its own debt, France cannot. If France buys anyone's debt, it will be Greece's. The daily *Le Monde* complains of a "Balkanization" of Europe by S&P. The ratings agencies persist in seeing different countries as posing different levels of risk, instead of taking at face value the propaganda emanating from Brussels about one-for-all-and-all-for-one. But in fact, Europe's individual countries do have different risk profiles. Monetarily speaking, Britain is still a sovereign country in a way that France no longer is.

The downgrades will affect the debt crisis that now engulfs Europe, because they affect the EFSF, the continent's bailout fund. The individual countries that belong to the euro have given it more than half a trillion dollars in guarantees for Greek and other European debt. Since the EFSF's credit rating depends on the credit ratings of the countries that guarantee it, the fund was naturally downgraded in turn. For months now, European finance ministers have considered the EFSF inadequate. They have sought ways to leverage it up—in other words, to borrow off the individual nations' guarantees. That is going to get more expensive to do.

Fund CEO Klaus Regling, eurozone head Jean-Claude Juncker, and European Council president Herman Van Rompuy doubt this. They note that the United States did not have to pay more to borrow in dollars after its own downgrade last summer. But they would say that, wouldn't they? Even if the United States is not fit to give anyone lessons in fiscal responsibility, there is a difference between a reserve currency and a fund set up to buy the marked-down paper of the world's slowest-growing economies.

The Europeans have been through this problem once already. Last winter, the EU's AAA countries were told that because of a miscalculation they would all need to top up their contributions to the EFSF. The result? In last April's election, the Finns gave a new Europe-hating party, the True Finns, 20 percent of the vote. In April, Sarkozy is slated to run against not just the anti-European National Front but also a Socialist party that has promised to rip up the debt agreements Sarkozy signed in December. Nor is France an exceptional case. You can look at what happened in Finland last year and expect that there is more where that came from.

—Christopher Caldwell

# The New Romney Firewall

On to Florida.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES



**A**n hour before the Republican presidential debate started on January 16, a relaxed Mitt Romney strode confidently behind the scenes at the cavernous convention center, past an empty concession stand, stepping over the thick cables alongside the bustling Fox News workspace to get his makeup for the big event. Hands in his pockets and wearing a suit without a tie, Romney smiled as he chatted with three of his top advisers—Eric Fehrnstrom, Ben Ginsberg, and Stuart Stevens. If Romney looked like a man without a care in the world, who could blame him? He had won the first two contests of the 2012 presidential campaign—narrowly in Iowa and comfortably in New Hampshire. And with a double-digit lead in the RealClearPolitics average of polls, he appeared to be coasting to a win in South Carolina five days later, a conservative state where he had come in fourth, with just 15 percent of the vote, in 2008.

The only potential hurdles were two debates—the one in Myrtle Beach that night and another in Charleston

on Thursday. But Romney had acquitted himself well in the 17 previous Republican debates, turning in performances that ranged from solid to the very strong effort he put in at the ABC News debate just a week earlier in Manchester, N.H. He was on a glide path to the nomination.

Then came the wildest week of a crazy race. Newt Gingrich dominated the first debate with what might have been the best night of any candidate in any debate this cycle—a performance that included a defiant challenge of the news media (again), an impassioned critique of Romney, and a rousing defense of conservatism that won him a standing ovation from the enthusiastic crowd.

Not only was Gingrich good, Romney struggled. He was not as sharp as he'd been in most other debates and stumbled badly over a question about his tax returns. He compounded that mistake with a comment the next day—declaring that his \$374,000 in earnings from speeches last year was “not very much”—and an uneven performance in the debate Thursday when he responded to a question about whether he'd release tax returns for several years, as his father had in 1967,

with a snippy “probably.” Gingrich, by contrast, turned in another good debate that he kicked off by blasting CNN moderator John King for opening the debate with a question about claims made by his ex-wife Marianne. Rick Perry, meanwhile, dropped out of the race and endorsed Gingrich, and the Iowa Republican party belatedly declared that Romney had not, in fact, won the Iowa caucuses, but trailed Rick Santorum by 34 votes after the certification process in that state. By the end of Romney's very bad week his 10-point lead in South Carolina polls had been erased, and Gingrich, counted out of the race twice, appeared to be surging once again. In the spin room after Thursday's debate, Stuart Stevens was downplaying Romney's prospects in the Palmetto state.

“Do I think we could lose South Carolina?” he asked, repeating a question posed to him by one of a dozen reporters crowded around him. “Sure. Of course.” He insisted that reporters were framing the issue incorrectly. “The idea should be: Does he have a chance in South Carolina?”

Well, maybe. But even as Romney had climbed to a lead in statewide polls in South Carolina, his campaign

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GARY LOCKE

saw the possibility of a win here as a bonus, not a necessity—in large part because of his aides’ confidence about Florida. Romney has been looking at Florida as a potential firewall since the beginning of his candidacy. He was a regular visitor to the state long before the race began in earnest, including a three-stop campaign swing with Marco Rubio a month before Rubio was elected to the Senate.

In Florida, Romney has been endorsed by most of the GOP’s state-wide officeholders, many members of its congressional delegation, and large segments of the state legislature. He has five paid staffers in the state, and the campaign has been operating phone banks almost daily since September. On several occasions after long days of campaigning in Iowa and New Hampshire, Romney set aside time to conduct tele-town halls with Florida voters—tens of thousands at a time—answering their questions and urging them to vote in the primary on January 31, or earlier.

The Romney campaign hasn’t been relying just on the candidate to encourage voters to cast their ballots early. Since mid-December, it has been on an “absentee chase”—aggressively reaching out to a list of more than 400,000 Florida voters who have signed up to receive absentee ballots automatically. Those voters have received mail, phone calls, and in many cases personal visits to persuade them to vote early and to vote for Romney. By late last week, more than 150,000 of them had cast ballots—a figure that almost certainly translates into a major advantage for Romney.

For one thing, Romney has been leading in Florida polls by some 20 points over the course of the early voting efforts, meaning a built-in lead if the support of actual voters mirrors those polls. And Romney advisers believe that the fact that those early voters have gotten disproportionate attention from their campaign means that margin is likely much larger. One Romney adviser told me that it’s possible Romney will be halfway toward meeting his total vote goal before polls open on January 31.

All of this early voting has taken place while Romney has had Florida airwaves virtually to himself. He has been advertising heavily in all 10 of Florida’s major media markets, using three English-language ads and one in Spanish. The first Romney ad went up in the state on January 3—the date of the Iowa caucuses—meaning that Romney will have been on the air in Florida for nearly a month by the time polls open. The English-language ads include a short biographical sketch, an ad that highlights the moral responsibility of addressing the national debt, and another touting Romney’s business record. The Spanish-language ad, narrated by Romney’s son Craig, touts his support in the Cuban-American community.

Even with these substantial advantages, the events of the past week have changed the race. Gingrich had been saying that South Carolina would end his campaign if he didn’t win there. “If Romney can win South Carolina, he’s

probably going to be the nominee. This is his big test,” Gingrich told NBC’s Chuck Todd on January 11. “He has so much money that if he also has the advantage of momentum, it’s going to be very hard to stop him.”

By week’s end he had abandoned that tack entirely. On January 20, top Gingrich adviser Kevin Kellems told *THE WEEKLY STANDARD* that his candidate plans to stay in the race through the convention regardless of the outcome in South Carolina. “He believes he is emerging as the conservative alternative to Mitt Romney and that Governor Romney’s campaign is showing real signs of being off-balance and nervous, and there must be a reason for it,” said Kellems. “Newt doesn’t think in terms of absolute marks on the primary calendar—he thinks in terms of why his bold conservative approach can eventually prevail over a timid moderate.” A week is an eternity in a presidential campaign—especially last week. ♦

## Upstairs at the White House

Who knows what the first marriage is really like?

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

**W**e have good news for all you skeptics who’ve been wondering whether you should trust the gossipy stories in the new book *The Obamas*: You can stop worrying. The author of the book, which was published to much hoo-ha this month, is a journalist named Jodi Kantor, and here’s what I read about her just the other day: “Ms. Kantor, who covered the Obamas for the *New York Times* during the 2008 presidential campaign, and is currently a Washington correspondent for the paper,

has earned the voice of authority.”

I read this in the *New York Times*. The reviewer didn’t go on to explain what exactly Jodi Kantor did to earn her authority, other than to work for the *New York Times*.

I can hear the skeptics already—should we really trust the word of the *New York Times* about the trustworthiness of the *New York Times*? Perhaps the skeptics get hung up on the circular reasoning, not realizing that it is this circularity that perpetuates the grand reputation of the *Times* and its many writers and reporters: Why can you trust the *New York Times*? Because it employs authoritative reporters like

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Jodi Kantor. How do we know Jodi Kantor is authoritative? Because otherwise she wouldn't work for the *New York Times*.

Now, even I will admit that the circularity gets stretched to the breaking point sometimes. You hand a skeptic a column by Maureen Dowd. He says: Why in the name of all that's holy do I have to read Maureen Dowd? Answer: Because she's a columnist for the *New York Times*. But why do I have to read a columnist for the *New York Times*? Because the *Times* is a great paper. But how is it a great paper? It employs columnists like Maureen Dowd.

You see? This is surely the only way someone can talk himself into reading a column by Maureen Dowd. It might puzzle you, but it's enough to satisfy us *Times* readers. You skeptic, you.

The Obamas themselves evidently want us to doubt *The Obamas* and its author. When the first gossipy stories leaked out—most of them about Mrs. Obama's rocky relationship with her husband's staff—White House spokesmen dismissed them as “exaggerated” or “hyped” or even “old news” that had been hyped and exaggerated. Mrs. Obama's only public comment came in a TV chat with a friendly interviewer (CBS's Gayle King, who is Oprah's best friend—talk about trust!) that she hadn't read the book and wouldn't, because it portrayed her as the stereotype of “an angry black woman.”

The response to Mrs. Obama's charge, among Jodi Kantor and her many friends in the press, has been incredulity. “Someone should tell the Obamas that this book makes them look really good,” one of them wrote. Conservative commentators even wondered whether the Obamas' loud objection wasn't a clever public relations carom shot: Their criticism guaranteed lots of attention to a book that the First Couple know is quite flattering. (The Obamas are very smart, as the book makes clear, but not that smart.)

Many readers will side with Mrs. Obama in her complaint. Anyone who

could come away from *The Obamas* insisting it makes them “look really good” must be suffering a case of Obamalove at 2008 levels. Jodi Kantor shows symptoms of a bad case of the disease herself, though it appears to be waning. Whatever the stereotype of an “angry black woman” is—do black women get angry in a different way from other people?—Mrs. Obama comes off as a bossy, short-tempered, high-handed ingrate, even as Jodi Kantor strives mightily to put a positive gloss on the material she's gathered in her exhaustive reporting.

“Michelle Obama had never been easy to impress” is a typical example



*Angry? Cold? Naaah...*

of the author's gift for delicate phrasing. Mrs. Obama is “more charming and more cutting” than her husband. “Her very direct way is very direct and it can rub some people the wrong way at times.” The first lady resents the attention lavished on her husband: “I've had to come to the point of figuring out how to carve out what kind of life I want for myself beyond who Barack is and what he wants.” Her employees call her The Taskmaster—“affectionately,” Jodi Kantor hastens to add. (*What a silly old Taskmaster you are!*) “If you underperformed, ‘you met the wrath of Michelle.’” And on and on: “She was tough on everyone around her, with expectations others often found unrealistically high, and few compunctions about calling people out when she felt they had failed.” Rhymes with rich, as another first lady once put it.

And as for her husband, he comes off as one chilly flounder, remote and unforgiving, quick to take offense and

reluctant to let go a grudge, with a self-regard and sense of entitlement that seem to have no dimension—beyond even the span reached by the egomaniacs who have preceded him. His only moments of self-doubt arise when he thinks he overestimated the maturity and wisdom of the public that elected him: “The Obamas, along with aides and friends, came to believe that the American public did not appreciate their exceptional leader.”

No one should doubt the love they have for one another, but put Mrs. Taskmaster alongside Mr. Freeze and it's an odd couple indeed. Their courtship is hard to picture. “Systemic change,” the author writes, “was what they had always dreamed of, from the beginning of their relationship.” *Come live with me and be my love / and we will effect systemic change...*

As I say, it's a measure of the hold that Obama worship still has over the president's partisans and the establishmentarians of the mainstream press that they should consider *The Obamas* flattering. But it's clear that Jodi Kantor intended it to be such, and so did the sources who dished to her.

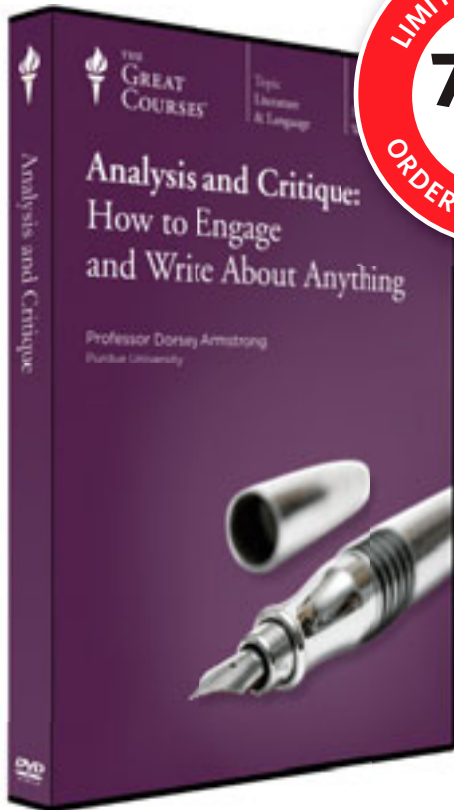
There are more than 200 of these, the author tells us, and they are as besotted by the first couple as any *Times* editorial writer. Jodi Kantor seems to have relied mostly on the 33 current and former aides who agreed to talk to her, along with the Obamas' closest friends. The Obamas themselves declined to be interviewed for the book, but they authorized their friends to gabble freely.

But how freely? More to the point, how reliably? *The Obamas* is the “story of a marriage,” the author has said. One of the first truths any person should learn in life—really, somebody should write it on our birth certificates, or stamp it backwards on our foreheads in the maternity ward—is that you can never, ever know what goes on inside another person's marriage and only mischief will result if you try. Jodi Kantor has bulldozed this advice, if she ever received it, with the encouragement of her sources. It seems not to have occurred to her that these

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staffers and friends might not know as much as they think they do, or as they would like a *New York Times* reporter to think they do. The White House easily inflates the self-importance of the people who work there and of the presidential pals who come and go through its gates, and tales of intrigue and conflict and confided intimacies tend to grow taller in the retelling.

Oblivious, the author exaggerates the reliability of the information she's acquired. "How can anybody know how I feel inside?" Mrs. Obama said to Gayle King. Jodi Kantor's answer is: Staffers know! The author believes she is indemnified from any skepticism about her reporting by the phrase "aides say" or "friends say." Consider this typical passage, about the president's day-to-day involvement in the grub-biness of politics: "... [but] he spent his nights with Michelle, who talked about moral imperatives, aides said, who reminded him again and again that they were there to do good, to

avoid being distracted by political noise, to be bold."

How do the aides know? Mrs. Obama might have hinted at it in conversation with one or two of them, or told them directly, though this is unlikely, and isn't a guarantee against spin in any case. Or the aides might have just surmised it; being her aides, they are likely to conceive of Mrs. Obama as a moral beacon to her beleaguered husband. Whatever. We haven't been brought any closer to knowing what the Obamas say to each other in their private moments than we were before the aides started whispering to Jodi Kantor. The very thing that the author believes gives her book authority—the talkiness of aides and friends whom the Obamas have allowed to be interviewed—is in fact its greatest weakness.

Of course, none of these issues of spin and truth-telling approaches the final question that occurs to a reader as he closes the book: Why should we care? "Barack and Michelle Obama

have been married to each other since 1992," the author writes, by way of an answer, "but for at least another year ... they are married to us, too." This isn't true even in the figurative sense that the author intends. The Obamas are interesting because of the positions they have come to hold in the national life, but you could say the same thing about Mr. and Mrs. Van Buren and Millard and Abby Fillmore, and Americans then and now have been spared the inside scoop on their eating habits, sleeping arrangements, and pillow talk.

Citizens already know everything about the Obamas that they need, or are entitled, to know. President Obama's record is unavoidable. And however she behaves backstage, out front Mrs. Obama has proved herself an exemplary first lady, a cheerful, encouraging presence whose direct effect on American life has been minimal and entirely benign. And that should be enough for the rest of us, even if the *New York Times* and its reporters disagree, authoritatively. ♦

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# Permanent Recess

The AWOL Democratic Senate.

BY FRED BARNES

**T**he Senate often goes into recess. This year it's going a step further. It's going into hibernation.

Not turn out the lights, lock the doors, and leave town hibernation. But rather than go about its normal business—such as taking up more than two dozen bills approved by the House and awaiting Senate action—the upper chamber will limit itself to voting on a few items deemed helpful to President Obama's reelection. These measures, mainly bits and pieces of Obama's "jobs bill," are not expected to pass. If they did, that would screw up the plan devised by Democrats.

Their strategy is for the Senate, after extending the payroll tax, to reject or ignore everything else and become part of a "do-nothing Congress" that will serve as the chief villain in the president's campaign. Since the Republican-controlled House has been a graveyard for Obama's agenda, it already fits the bill as a do-nothing institution.

But Democrats are in charge of the Senate, a problem for the "do-nothing" campaign. How could Republicans be solely to blame for obstructing Obama if they control only one chamber of Congress? Now we know the answer. Democrats will pretend Republicans actually run the Senate, too.

So far as I know, this has never

been tried before. The Senate, after all, is a proud institution. To become a mere tool in the president's reelection juggernaut is a step down. But even though Senate majority leader Harry Reid is hardly Obama's biggest fan in Washington, he's a willing partner in this political charade.

The Democrats' best-case scenario is for voters to buy into the illusion



*So for next fall, Harry and I have decided to just make stuff up.*

of a Republican-led Senate. As Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, Reid's deputy, has noted, many voters already have. This makes them susceptible to the notion that a "Republican Congress" is blocking legislation that would jolt the economy and create a wave of jobs. At least Democrats hope more voters are ready to swallow this canard.

Republicans fear the Democratic strategy might work. And they haven't figured out how to combat

it—other than to point to the feeble economic recovery, trillion-dollar deficits, a soaring national debt, a still-declining housing market, and a generally pessimistic populace. Those facts on the ground may be enough to defeat Obama, but maybe not.

To understand how a Senate-in-name-only became an important part of the Obama campaign, you have to hark back to the president's speech to a joint session of Congress in September. That's when he outlined his jobs bill, to be paid for by raising taxes on the well-to-do. It was a non-starter. Since a number of Democrats opposed it along with most Republicans, it lacked majority support. Reid never brought the bill to a vote.

Instead he yanked out individual parts—infrastructure spending, aid to states to pay for cops and teachers—for "show votes." To assure Republicans would vote no, he attached the parts to tax hikes. It was a trial run for 2012.

The next step was last fall's bipartisan supercommittee that was supposed to agree on \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction. Republicans believed it offered the president the opportunity to back tax reform to boost the economy. But Obama didn't bite. He didn't get involved at all.

After Obama's September speech, Republicans sensed Democrats on the supercommittee lost their appetite for compromise.

If they reached agreement with Republicans, it would undercut the idea of a do-nothing Republican Congress. Democrats continued to negotiate, even considering a tax reform plan (fewer loopholes, lower rates) proposed by Republican senator Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania. For them to accept it, Republicans would have to let the Bush tax cuts expire. Democrats knew that would kill the deal.

Then came the December announcement, while Obama was vacationing in Hawaii, that he was

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THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

finished with his agenda except for the payroll tax cut and elements of his jobs bill. "The president will have a larger playing field," White House deputy press secretary Josh Earnest said. Washington's role would be minor.

Obama seemed to contradict this a few days later. "I want to look for every possible opportunity to work with Congress to move this country forward and create jobs," Obama said in Shaker Heights, Ohio, on January 4. "I'm going to look for every opportunity to try to bridge the partisan divide and get things done." He mentioned infrastructure and cops and teachers.

The president knows how to get those parts of his jobs bill enacted in a flash. The trick to getting Republicans to go along: Don't attach the jobs measures to an increase in income tax rates that is anathema to Republicans. It's that simple. Don't hold your breath.

What's neglected in all this is the Senate's insistence on ignoring or killing legislation passed by the House. As far as Republicans are concerned, we have a do-nothing Democratic Senate. For instance, the Senate hasn't passed a budget in 1,000 days. In 2011, it voted against the House-passed budget, then declined to offer one of its own. Faced with Republican threats to disrupt the Senate, Reid allowed a vote on Obama's budget. The Senate rejected it 97-0.

The stack of bills the House dispatched to the Senate last year is large. It includes 16 measures to reduce the regulatory burden on various industries, 5 to spur entrepreneurship, and 5 to "maximize" domestic energy production. For those bills, the Senate is a morgue.

As usual, Republicans get no help from the media. *GQ* magazine's recent list of "the 50 most powerful people in Washington" ranked House majority leader Eric Cantor first and Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell second. The implication was Republicans run both houses of Congress. Harry Reid? He didn't make the list. ♦

# They Hate Poor People

The liberals' dirty little secret.

BY P.J. O'ROURKE

**O**n January 1, 2012, Maine became the first state to ban smoking in all low-income public housing. Twelve thousand poor people faced their New Year's Day hangover without the solace of a Marlboro to accompany their aspirin and coffee.

This, of course, was good. Just ask the high-minded, right-thinking progressive elites who, it's safe to say, run Maine's public housing authority. Progressive elites like to run things. They'd run the government, the media, and the entire U.S. economy if they could. Failing that, public housing authorities will do. The Detroit, San Antonio, and Portland, Oregon, housing authorities already ban smoking. Boston's housing authority will do so in September. Los Angeles is expected to follow. And it's no mystery what that highest-minded, most right-thinking, way-progressive elitist Mayor Bloomberg has in mind for New Yorkers.

Smoking is wrong. Progressive elites may be confused about the existence of right and wrong when it comes to wars against genocidal fanatics, market freedom, and the death penalty for mass murderers. But not when it comes to smoking.

Smoking kills smokers, which is about what they deserve for engaging in such lowbrow, wrong-headed, retarded, vulgar activity, except they get sick first and that drives up the cost of a single-payer national health care system, plus their second-hand smoke is worse yet because it is a, yuck, inhalation hand-me-down

from uncouth people who probably haven't flossed, and it kills progressive elites who don't even know anyone who smokes while also releasing greenhouse gases and stinking up the cheery curtains that elites hang in public housing group activity areas to brighten the lives of the underprivileged who are confined to concrete tower blocks with six-by-eight-foot living rooms, seven-foot ceilings, plexiglass windows, and sheet-metal doors with a dozen locks on them. Smoking is wrong.

But poor people don't have a lot of pleasures. Sure, they have more sex than progressive elites. But somehow, for poor people, the sex always ends up in illegitimate children or HIV or some bum of a boyfriend instead of leading to, as it does for elites, a Reichian release of primordial cosmic energy or the wonderful self-fulfillment and midlife reawakening of a new divorce. And, yes, the poor have drugs and alcohol, but these bring them nothing but grief. They're not at all like the subtle and refined delights of a 300-bottle wine cellar or the therapeutic relief from Zoloft, Lexapro, Elavil, Ambien, Halcion, Xanax, beta blockers, Levitra, and Cialis.

And poor people do have a lot of troubles. Sometimes, when you've got a crap job and are going to get laid off from it besides and your crackhead daughter has three kids by four fathers and your oldest son is on the front in Afghanistan and your youngest son can't decide which drug crew to join and the cable company has cut off service and somebody's jimmying the twelfth lock on the sheet-metal door, you'd like to sit down on your

*P.J. O'Rourke is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.*

own damn chair in your own damn kitchen and have a smoke.

Well, forget it. The progressive elites are already charging you \$7 for that pack of king-size filter tips, and pretty soon they're going to add the price of eviction. Because they hate your guts.

The elites who denounce poverty despise the poor. Their every high-minded, right-thinking "poverty program" proves this detestation—from the bulldozing of vibrant tenement communities to the drug law policing policies that send poor kids to prison and rich kids to rehab to the humiliation of food stamps and free school lunches to the loathsome inner-city public schools where those free lunches are slopped onto cafeteria trays.

The federal government has some 50 different "poverty programs." Nearly half a trillion dollars is spent on them each year. That's about \$11,000 per man, woman, and child under the poverty line, enough to lift each and every one of them out of poverty. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2011 poverty guideline for a family of three: \$18,530.) We call them "poverty programs" for a reason. If ordinary people with down-to-earth common sense were spending that half trillion, we'd call them "modest prosperity programs."

Have progressive elites always hated the poor? Teddy Roosevelt did some rough riding with them. But once Teddy got all high-minded and right-thinking you didn't see him hanging around with poor people who weren't cooking or cleaning for him. William Jennings Bryan was in favor of prohibition, the bastard. These days we've got Michael Moore. You wouldn't think he'd hate poor people, having once been one. On the other hand, in dress and deportment, Moore shows every sign of self-loathing. So he's a hater too.

Why do elites hate the poor? It's xenophobia. They don't know any

poor people—except their off-the-books Brazilian nanny and illegal immigrant cleaning lady from Upper Revolta who don't speak English. Modern elites live in bubbles of liberal affluence like Ann Arbor, Brookline, the Upper West Side, Palo Alto, or Chevy Chase. These places used to have impoverished neighborhoods nearby, but the poor people got chased out by young singles living in group homes, hipsters, and urban home-steading gay couples. When elites see



*Get up and read your Chomsky, you wastrel.*

a homeless person in the gutter, they assume he's saving a parking place. And the elites have never been poor themselves. Although there was that time in graduate school, between research grants, when they had to go without sushi for a week.

Elites are irked at the charity they have to give to the poor. Not that elites, personally, give charity to the poor. They get the IRS to do it for them. Which is the way elites like it and why they're in favor of higher taxes. It's worth the price not to come into any actual contact and risk getting poverty cooties. But elites are human like the rest of us,

and paying higher taxes irks them.

The elite resent the poor because, although poor people have few pleasures and many troubles, they also have a lot of fun. You can see it in their music videos. The elites whine and mope. You can hear it on NPR.

America is a meritocracy. Elites think those poor people should earn their fun, the way Bill Clinton did with Monica Lewinsky. And, being that America is a meritocracy, poor people obviously have no merit or they'd be rich and could afford to join the progressive elite.

But the real reason progressive elites hate poor people is fear. What if the poor quit believing in the progressive elite, quit supporting the progressive elite, quit *voting* for the progressive elite? The elite would be out on its ear—impeached, recalled, defeated on the ballots, dismissed from the universities, fired at newspapers and television networks, booted out of nonprofit foundations, and chased away from church pulpits.

The high-minded, right-thinking progressive elite would then be poor people, working crap jobs. And what a mess they'd make of it! Imagine elites manning the drive-through window at Burger King, giving customers all-lettuce, all-pickle Whoppers without buns, cheese,

or burger patties to combat obesity. Or at the 7-11 making change for a twenty the way the Federal Reserve does. "Wait a minute, I've got to go in the back and print some fives." Or convening a yard care seminar and producing a 200-page white paper on sustainable grass maintenance instead of mowing your lawn. Or panhandling in the manner of the U.S. government, "Hey, Buddy, can you spare \$787 billion so's a guy can get a stimulus package?"

Life would be hell if the high-minded, right-thinking progressive elite wasn't elite anymore. We'd better quit smoking. ♦

# Reactors and Bombs

How North Korea and Iran can militarize ‘civilian’ nuclear plants. **BY HENRY SOKOLSKI**

**A**t first blush, our government’s approach to head off Iranian nuclear weapons with tighter sanctions and military threats seems totally at odds with its continued effort to negotiate a disarmament deal with Pyongyang. Yet, in one key respect, both of these approaches and a broad swath of bipartisan expertise are quite unified—namely, they support these countries’ continued construction and operation of light water power reactors (LWR) for generating electricity, viewing these reactors as benign. This is not only mistaken but dangerous, and not just in the case of North Korea and Iran.

In fact, civilian LWRs can be copious producers of plutonium suitable for nuclear weapons. The argument one often hears, that the plutonium these reactors produce is unsuitable for simple weapon designs, is simply wrong. The suitability of the plutonium for weapons depends on how long the plutonium-containing spent fuel stays in the reactor. The longer the fuel stays in the reactor the more optimal it is for power production but the less optimal it is for use in nuclear weapons. The common assumption is that the reactor’s owner would not tamper with commercial refueling schedules. This assumption is simply silly.

Nonetheless, Obama administration officials and many of their critics continue to describe LWRs as a safe proposition, so long as they are inspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and are not accompanied by reprocessing facilities

to extract plutonium from their spent fuel or enrichment facilities to produce fresh fuel. This mistaken view got its greatest boost from George W. Bush. No friend of Iran, Bush in 2005 said the United States had no problem with the Bushehr nuclear power reactor—it was just Iran’s centrifuge enrichment technology that concerned us. Indeed, small centrifuge plants that are claimed by owners to be used for producing low-enriched uranium fuel for reactors are a proper proliferation concern because they could also be used to produce highly enriched uranium for bombs. But building a small clandestine reprocessing plant to extract the plutonium from LWR spent fuel is actually easier than putting up a centrifuge plant. Nonproliferation policy hasn’t been taking this possibility seriously enough.

A case in point can be found in an essay, “Time to Attack Iran,” in the January / February 2012 issue of *Foreign Affairs* by a former special adviser in the office of the secretary of defense, who describes his responsibility as defense strategy and policy on Iran. He lists all sorts of targets significant in terms of Iran’s weapons potential, including a small heavy water reactor under construction. He does not mention the large Bushehr plant as proliferation-significant. Now we certainly do not want to be adding to any target list, but the omission, which presumably reflects defense priorities, is a major blind spot in U.S. thinking about the spread of nuclear weapons.

Another recent instance of the same blind spot was the reaction to North Korea’s November 30 announcement that it is going forward with construction of an experimental light water

reactor and uranium enrichment facilities. U.S. press accounts concentrated on the enrichment story and neglected to note that the small LWR offers a path to bombs, too. More than a few experts and officials pointed out that the planned North Korean LWR (“ostensibly for civilian energy purposes”) would provide North Korea with a rationale for pursuing enrichment technology.

But the more worrisome aspect is that the LWR can be a direct source of plutonium for weapons. One should not underestimate the ingenuity of North Korea’s engineers in tailoring their LWR operation for weapons. Even a small LWR, say one-tenth the rating of a full-size commercial plant, could be operated to produce dozens of pounds of plutonium a year, a significant amount considering that the amount needed per warhead is about 11 pounds.

The concerns about LWR power plants as a possible source of plutonium for bombs, and about both overt and clandestine reprocessing, apply, of course, beyond North Korea and Iran to other countries. That is why the IAEA, which has always inspected these reactors throughout the world, seeks to expand its inspection rights to look for clandestine facilities. This is also why the United States seeks to tighten controls over reprocessing (and, of course, enrichment) technology.

In the most recent nuclear cooperation agreement—with the United Arab Emirates—the UAE pledged not to acquire facilities to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium, period. But efforts in Congress to put the same conditions in prospective agreements have run into opposition from Saudi Arabia and other countries, and from the Obama administration itself, which brings up the hoary argument that if Congress insists on overly strict conditions then other countries’ exporters will get the sales.

That said, even if states that lacked nuclear weapons agreed to such conditions, enforcing their pledges would still remain a chancy matter if only because U.S. administrations have

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*Henry Sokolski is executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center.*

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## African Gem Cutter Makes \$2,689,000 Mistake...Will You?

This story breaks my heart every time. Allegedly, just two years after the discovery of tanzanite in 1967, a Maasai tribesman knocked on the door of a gem cutter's office in Nairobi. The Maasai had brought along an enormous chunk of tanzanite and he was looking to sell. His asking price? Fifty dollars. But the gem cutter was suspicious and assumed that a stone so large could only be glass. The cutter told the tribesman, no thanks, and sent him on his way. Huge mistake. It turns out that the gem was genuine and would have easily dwarfed the world's largest cut tanzanite at the time. Based on common pricing, that "chunk" could have been worth close to \$3,000,000!

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too often succumbed to the temptation to reward friends and prospective nuclear customers. Consider, for example, the generous exception from U.S. nuclear export requirements that Congress carved out for India, freeing it from the law's requirement that it allow IAEA inspection of all its nuclear plants.

In this regard, Saudi Arabia is a particularly worrisome case. It has announced plans to spend \$100 billion on LWRs over the next 20 years. This financial inducement is likely to encourage bargaining over all manner of things, including nonproliferation. Meanwhile, senior Saudi officials have expressed interest in nuclear weapons, at least in the event Iran gets close to acquiring them.

In this regard, the Saudis may learn all too much from Tehran. Iran, we should remember, has been a diligent student of North Korea's nuclear activities, watching carefully what it has been able to get away with in its stiff-arming of the international nonproliferation regime. In short, we cannot treat North Korea—its enrichment, its nuclear weapons efforts, and its LWR—as if it were a separable problem from that of Iran and Saudi Arabia and other would-be bomb makers.

This conclusion should bear directly on the nonproliferation policies of the United States and other like-minded states. At a minimum, it requires looking askance at “peaceful” LWR exports until we find a way to enforce international nuclear nonproliferation rules. It would also help if the Energy Department would stop pushing commercialization of small nuclear reactors that could be mass-produced and—as it advertises—“delivered across the globe.”

Finally, the Obama administration and Congress would do well to leverage and engage each of the world's key nuclear suppliers on how best to limit and condition such sales internationally. The U.S.-UAE nonproliferation conditions could be used as a point of departure. In any case, the goal must be clear—to prevent the emergence of yet more “peacefully” armed North Korea and Iran. ♦

# The Longshot

Can a Republican win a congressional seat in Portland, Oregon? BY MARK HEMINGWAY

*Lake Oswego, Oregon*

About 20 minutes into the speech by Rob Cornilles, the Republican candidate in the special election for Oregon's 1st Congressional District on January 31, the power went out.

There was a loud popping sound from his microphone, and the room went dark. The Lake Oswego Republican Women's Luncheon gasped, but Cornilles forged on with the Q&A. After the waitstaff distributed candles to each table, he cracked a joke about having to wrap up his speech before they “bring out the s'mores.” The women roared with laughter.

Oregon's 1st Congressional District comprises the northwest corner of the state, extending from the coast and encompassing some of the major Portland suburbs, as well as a chunk of the city itself. Portland's reputation as a bastion of liberalism is well deserved, and consequently a Republican hasn't held this seat in 37 years. But there's a growing feeling that Cornilles might pull off a stunning upset at the end of this month.

Earlier this week the Cornilles campaign released the results of an internal poll that showed him down only 4 points against Democratic state legislator Suzanne Bonamici. Normally, when a campaign that's trailing releases an internal poll showing such a favorable result, it is dismissed as a stunt.

But there's ample evidence that Democrats are also seeing surprising support for Cornilles. With less than two weeks to go, national Democrats have dumped more than \$1 million into the race, blanketing Portland's airwaves with attack ads against

Cornilles. The money is coming from Planned Parenthood, Emily's List, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and Nancy Pelosi's super-PAC, among others. The National Republican Congressional Committee has countered with its own, more modest, \$85,000 ad buy.

Democrats haven't done much to engender good will in this race. Cornilles is running to replace disgraced Democrat David Wu, who resigned last year after the *Oregonian* newspaper reported that he had an “aggressive, unwanted sexual encounter” with the teenage daughter of one of his donors. Wu stepped down amid a flurry of erratic behavior that culminated in an infamous photo circulating on the Internet of the congressman posing in a tiger costume. Rumors of his alleged problems with pills and alcohol had been swirling back in Oregon long before they became national news. There's a general feeling among voters that the Democratic party had been covering for Wu for some time.

Making matters worse, Cornilles's opponent, Suzanne Bonamici, is the wife of David Wu's personal lawyer. When the *Oregonian* reported in 2004 that Wu had been credibly accused of rape while an undergraduate at Stanford, it was Bonamici's husband who threatened to sue the newspaper and its source. Though Wu was reelected multiple times after that story broke, the more recent sexual assault allegation has many Oregon voters wishing they hadn't given him the benefit of the doubt.

Apart from any role her husband might have had in defending Wu, Bonamici has not done herself any favors on the stump. She's decried the act of independent groups spending money on campaign ads and railed about the Supreme Court's *Citizens*

*Mark Hemingway is online editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.*

*United* ruling. But on public radio with Cornilles last week, she refused to tell the independent groups running ads against Cornilles on her behalf to stop when pressed. In response to Bonamici, a spokeswoman for the Center for Responsive Politics dryly noted, “there is nothing wrong” with a candidate publicly appealing to independent expenditure groups to stop.

She’s also spooked the business community. Even the *Oregonian* editorial endorsing Bonamici lamented that she was “excruciatingly cautious; it took her months, and the end of the primary campaign, to decide she was actually for the U.S.-Korea trade agreement, which by that time had already passed.”

The 1st District is home to some of Oregon’s biggest and most prestigious employers, such as Intel, Nike, and Columbia Sportswear. The Brookings Institution estimates that 268,000 jobs in the Portland area are dependent on trade, and as such, area employers are wary of Bonamici. Her tepid support for free trade stands in sharp contrast to other Oregon Democrats.

As a result, the business community is much more receptive toward Cornilles today than when he ran against Wu for the seat in 2010 and lost by 13 points. “Intel never had me back to visit with their employees the first time I ran, but this time around they were eager to have me back because with the free trade agreements late last year [Bonamici] just had her finger in the wind the whole time,” Cornilles told me last week.

While the narrative of the race and a lackluster opponent have given Cornilles a slight wind at his back, that’s not to say he deserves no credit for putting a seemingly impossible-to-win seat into serious contention.

Cornilles has a biography that seems tailor-made for crafting a Republican message. In 1995, he and

his wife started a consulting business for professional sports franchises in their spare bedroom that now employs some 60 people. He serves on the board of directors of the Special Olympics of Oregon, the Oregon League of Minority Voters, and the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Centers Foundation, which works to provide health care for low-income Oregonians.

To emphasize free trade, Cornilles’s honorary campaign chairman is Oregon’s last Republican governor, Vic Atiyeh, whose efforts at establishing trade links between Oregon and Asia are responsible for many of the jobs in the 1st District. Cornilles has lived and worked in Japan and speaks the



Rob Cornilles

language, and his wife is the granddaughter of a Chinese diplomat. He points to his business experience and cultural ties when pledging to “champion free trade.”

He’s been campaigning for the seat off and on since 2009, and during that time has honed his message to focus almost exclusively on the economy, taxes, and job creation. At 9.1 percent, unemployment is above the national average—and much worse in certain regions, particularly those dependent on tourism. (Consequently, President Obama has a surprisingly low approval rating, at 48 percent, for such a solidly Democratic district.)

While the rest of the GOP is beset by Tea Party fervor, Cornilles has tried to remain above the fray, publicly identifying himself with the moderate Republicans of Oregon’s past. In his speech to the ladies’ luncheon, he invoked many of the state’s GOP greats, such as Senator Mark Hatfield and governors Tom McCall and Atiyeh, who are still thought of warmly even as the Portland metro area has pushed the state to the left. He doesn’t mention a single Republican not identified with Oregon.

In electoral terms, identifying with

local heroes seems like a canny strategy. Democrats tried for months to brand him as the “original Tea Party candidate,” but he’s beaten self-proclaimed Tea Party candidates in the last two primaries, including the current chair of the Oregon Tea Party. The *Oregonian* has gone so far as to call out the Democrats for wrongly trying to portray him as a Tea Party candidate.

So how conservative is he? Asked what factor social issues play in the race, Cornilles says, “They don’t really come up”—though it’s hard to believe that’s the case with Planned Parenthood and Emily’s List dumping money into the race against him.

It might not be to Cornilles’s advantage to make them an issue as a Republican running in a Democratic district, but his biography says something about his values. Like Mitt Romney, he’s a practicing Mormon. He’s married to his high school sweetheart and has three sons, aged 22, 18, and 15. The oldest two are Eagle Scouts and the youngest is working on it.

A Cornilles victory could say little about national Republican trends and momentum. It might just be a case of a polished and experienced candidate crafting the right message for his district.

Observers have pointed to the special election in New York’s 9th District last fall, previously held by scandal-plagued Democrat Anthony Weiner. In that race, the one-two punch of a notorious congressional resignation and a poor Democratic replacement candidate—both present in Oregon’s 1st District—led to a shocking upset by Republican Bob Turner. It’s also worth noting that the last time the seat was open, during Wu’s first election in 1998, Republican Molly Bordonaro captured a respectable 47 percent of the vote.

While those are hopeful portents, it’s hard not to see Cornilles as the underdog. Still, his candidacy has exceeded expectations thus far. Democrats should be nervous that for the first time in 37 years, it could be lights out for them in Oregon’s 1st Congressional District. ♦

# A New Front in the Fracking War

Ohio's natural-gas bonanza.

BY KATE HAVARD

Starting in March 2011, a series of microearthquakes hit Ohio. The first few registered just above 2.0 on the Richter scale and were not felt by residents. But on New Year's Eve, a tremor hit Youngstown that measured 4.0—still very mild, but noticed. It was the second quake to hit the area in a week, moreover—and both had epicenters within five miles of a year-old storage well for wastewater that is a byproduct of the extraction of natural gas.

While the quakes caused negligible injuries and property damage, they were enough to prompt Governor John Kasich to shut down five storage wells in the vicinity, pending an investigation into any possible connection between drilling and seismic activity. The episode made Ohio more than ever a central front in the struggle over the controversial natural-gas extraction technique called horizontal hydraulic fracturing, better known as fracking.

In ordinary hydraulic fracturing, a mixture of water, sand, and chemicals is blasted into rock at high pressure, fracturing the rock and releasing natural gas. The gas is drawn up to the surface, along with the “flowback water.” The gas is processed, and the flowback fluid is stored in tanks or lined pits before ultimately being recycled or injected deep underground into heavily protected waste disposal

wells. This technique has been used in the United States since the 1950s with little incident.

Now, advances in drilling technology have made it possible to extract oil and natural gas from shale lying deeper beneath the earth's surface. After wells are drilled straight down for 5,000 to 8,000 feet, drilling continues horizontally, within the shale layer. Amy Meyers Jaffe, a fellow in energy studies at the Baker Institute at Rice University, estimates that enough gas is recoverable from shale in North America to fuel the country for 45 years.

Eastern Ohio is rich in Utica Shale, a sedimentary rock located thousands of feet below the Marcellus Shale already being fracked in New York and Pennsylvania. About seven months ago, Ohio began to grant permits for exploratory drilling in the Utica Shale, where state officials estimate that as much as 15.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas are trapped. And in the last month, foreign investors committed more than \$2 billion to shale operations in the state.

According to a study by the Ohio extraction industry's educational arm, exploiting this resource could create more than 200,000 jobs and net the state billions of dollars. Such an explosion of industry in a state with 8.5 percent unemployment might seem like a godsend—but fears about the safety of the process, aggravated by the recent seismic events, stand in the way.

In the last five years or so,

environmentalists have taken issue with nearly every aspect of horizontal hydraulic fracturing, from the location of wells, to the large quantity of water required to frack a well (about 4.5 million gallons from start to finish, roughly the amount a golf course uses in a month), to the possibility that flowback could escape from wells and contaminate groundwater.

Now, waste-disposal wells are being linked to seismic activity. John Armbruster, a seismologist at Columbia University, speculates that drilling a deep-injection well too close to a fault line could trigger an “earthquake waiting to happen.” Some state officials are calling for a blanket moratorium on the shale-exploration enterprise.

“Part of the problem is there's a lot of misinformation out there,” says Heidi Hetzel-Evans of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Hetzel-Evans notes that while horizontal hydraulic fracturing is new to Ohio, wastewater disposal wells are not. There are 176 wastewater wells in the state, many of which have been operating safely since the 1980s.

She adds that “Ohio is four years behind other states when it comes to fracking, so we've had a chance to look at the other states and learn from what they're dealing with. We've already strengthened our rules and doubled our inspection staff.”

As a result, Ohio has some of the stiffest regulations regarding both production and wastewater disposal in the country. “The EPA mandates that injection wells be inspected once a year,” she says, “but Ohio inspects our wells once every 11 to 12 weeks. That makes a big difference.”

Assurances from regulators, however, have not satisfied critics. In November, the Wayne National Forest, in southeastern Ohio, withdrew more than 3,000 acres of federal land from a scheduled public auction of drilling leases, citing the possibility that horizontal fracking would be used on the land.

Squeezed between environmental concerns and the need for jobs, some politicians are hedging their bets. Senator Sherrod Brown takes a “cautionary”



*No fracking way, man*

*Kate Havard is a student at St. John's College in Annapolis.*

AP / MARK STAHL

approach to hydraulic fracturing. On January 7, Brown told a crowd at the University of Akron, “I think [fracking] is going to happen. . . . It’s a lot of jobs. It’s a lot of prosperity. But it’s also our drinking water and it’s also the issue of waste disposal.” Instead, Brown prefers to emphasize green energy. Describing his visit to a local facility that converts waste into energy, Brown said, “Whatever we can do with companies like that, we should.”

Brown is up for reelection in the fall, and his main Republican challenger—state treasurer Josh Mandel—is less reticent about natural gas. He believes Ohioans will not willingly pass up the potential gains of fracking.

“Ohioans want responsible and aggressive exploration of gas in Ohio,” he says. “It’s good for our economy, our citizens, and our national security.”

Mandel associates Brown, a liberal Democrat, with what he says is the Obama administration’s tendency “to methodically vilify our natural resources, to treat them like liabilities and not assets.” Under this administration, the Department of the Interior has tightened its program for oil shale leases, while the SEC has upped its reporting requirements for companies that pursue hydraulic fracturing.

But then, elections have a funny way of changing people’s minds on hot-button issues. The White House’s January 2012 jobs report includes a section on “America’s Natural Resources Boom,” which says that “the potential benefits to the U.S. economy [from natural gas] are substantial” if “appropriate care” is taken with regard to health and safety.

The report continues, “An abundant local supply will translate into relatively low costs for the industries that use natural gas as an input. Expansion in these industries . . . will boost investment and exports in the coming years, generating new jobs.”

After three years of tax hikes on the oil and gas industry, EPA meddling, and other bureaucratic obstruction, voters in Ohio and elsewhere who favor moving ahead on domestic natural gas will have to decide whether to credit this apparent conversion or discount it as empty campaign rhetoric. ♦

# A Radical’s Radical

Ron Paul and his supporters.

BY JAMES KIRCHICK



*Ron Paul bestowing his ‘youthful magic’*

In early May, a little over a week after President Barack Obama ordered the raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, Texas congressman Ron Paul staked out his position on the man who plotted the murder of nearly 3,000 people on American soil: The operation to kill bin Laden, Paul said, was “absolutely not necessary.”

Last week, however, when Fox News’s Bret Baier asked Paul about this statement during the Republican presidential candidates’ debate in South Carolina, the congressman offered evasions. Paul had voted to authorize the use of force following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, he insisted, which would make his stated

opposition to the killing of bin Laden hypocritical, not just stupid.

Then Paul delivered one of the lectures on foreign policy “blowback” that are a hallmark of his debate appearances. What if a Chinese dissident came to the United States, and the Chinese government started bombing American soil in order to kill him, Paul asked, likening the 9/11 mastermind to one seeking only the right to live unmolested by a tyrannical government. America should apply the Golden Rule in foreign policy, Paul declared, and stop its “warmongering.”

The Republican audience booed Paul for statements that would have earned him plaudits from Democrats. Though most criticism of him in the past month has focused on the racist and conspiratorial newsletters

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that he published, to great profit, for many years (and which I exposed in the *New Republic* in 2008), Paul's current views on foreign policy are just as disqualifying.

At the most recent debate, Paul repeated the popular misconception that "the Taliban used to be our allies." But it was the Afghan mujahedeen that the United States supported during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979-89); only later, in 1994, did some mujahedeen go on to form the Taliban. Drawing a distinction between an aggressive al Qaeda and a merely xenophobic Taliban, Paul also said, "Al Qaeda wants to come here to kill us. The Taliban just says, 'We don't want foreigners.'"

Yet the Taliban has welcomed jihadists from all over the Muslim world to fight alongside it and has been heavily funded by Pakistan, strange for a group that supposedly abhors foreign intervention. And it was the Taliban that hosted al Qaeda while it launched attacks on American embassies, the U.S.S. *Cole*, and the American homeland on September 11.

Paul has also tried to reassure voters that he supports America's alliance with Israel, saying that his call to eliminate aid to the Jewish state is in line with his hope of abolishing foreign aid entirely. Besides, "Zionism is based on two basic principles: independence and self-reliance." That's fine, as far as it goes. But to consider Paul "pro-Israel," one would have to ignore the content of his newsletters, which question whether it was in fact the Mossad that bombed Berlin's La Belle discothèque in 1986 and the World Trade Center in 1993, complain that Jewish "lobbyists want people 100 percent dedicated to Israel" serving in the U.S. government, and refer to Israel as "an aggressive, national socialist state." One would also have to ignore the interview Paul gave to Iran's Press TV in which he called the Gaza Strip a "concentration camp" and his general unconcern about Iran's nuclear program, which he rationalizes as a completely understandable response to the "warmongering" policies of the United States and its allies.

For his departures from mainstream Republican prescriptions, Paul has emerged as a favorite among the left commentariat, which relishes his critique of American "empire" and advocacy of "noninterventionism." The *Atlantic's* Robert Wright proclaimed "The Greatness of Ron Paul," asserting that those who fail to sympathize with the Iranian regime's quest for nuclear weapons lack the "moral imagination" that Paul apparently possesses. In the *Huffington Post*, former labor secretary Robert Reich lauded Paul's "youthful magic." Wrote Reich, "The young are flocking to Ron Paul because he wants to slice military spending, bring our troops home, stop government from spying on American citizens, and legalize pot."

Asking "Why Do GOP Bosses Fear Ron Paul?" the *Nation's* John Nichols hailed the candidate's unabashed isolationism. "Paul's notion of foreign policy is in line with [what] conservatives used to believe," he wrote, citing those Republicans who opposed Franklin Delano Roosevelt's policies in the years leading up to World War II. Paul's strident isolationism has inspired that rarity: left-wing praise for the enemies of a president liberals revere as the greatest of the 20th century.

Paul has attracted a particular type of liberal—not mainstream Democrats, but "progressives," precisely the people who would ordinarily be most appalled by the bigotry expressed in Paul's newsletters. In their support for him, these writers routinely note Paul's opposition to America's "empire" as the most stirring part of his candidacy. "Would that we had someone on our side who could make the case against an American empire, or American supremacy, in such a pungent way," wrote the historian Corey Robin, though ultimately dismissing Paul as a vessel for progressive values.

This analysis sees America's unrivaled superpower status, manifested in the presence of U.S. military bases overseas (at the behest of national governments), as the moral equivalent of King Leopold's brutal exploitation

of the Belgian Congo. America may indeed be overstretched, but that's a condition that anyone wishing to maintain the liberal world order that has brought unprecedented peace and prosperity to mankind should seek to *rectify*, not manage into further decline. Ending America's role as hegemon and ceding whole parts of the globe to the likes of Russia and China is no prescription for a more just world.

Either these ostensibly "progressive" individuals are unaware of the Ron Paul newsletters, or they are willing to ignore their contents in promoting a man who shares their analysis of international relations. One suspects the latter, seeing that never has anyone with so pure a Chomskian reading of America made it so far in national politics.

But while Paul's warnings about the costs of American "empire" have gained traction as a result of the global financial crisis and the tenth anniversary of the war on terrorism, his Cassandra-like cries are an old tune. In a December 1989 newsletter, for instance, he predicted that "Japan Will Ally With the USSR" and "The American Republic Will Be Replaced With Democratic Fascism." In 1991, following the coalition victory in the Gulf war, he predicted "hundreds of thousands" of casualties would come to light. When that didn't happen, his newsletter warned, "Although today there's nothing but glory and optimism over the Persian Gulf 'victory,' as time passes, and the suffering and political problems continue for years, we will come to see the war as one giant My Lai."

Ron Paul is a radical, and he has attracted radicals of all stripes to his cause, the only politician to have garnered kind words from David Duke and Louis Farrakhan. In a disquisition on Jewish bankers and the Fed in August, Farrakhan lauded the Texas congressman for "trying his best, but he's like a man crying in the wilderness." Those who support Paul will join him in the political wilderness, which seems an excellent place for them to stay. ♦

# The Obama Way of War

*To the rear, march*

BY THOMAS DONNELLY

**Y**ou can criticize Barack Obama—and fear not, I’m about to—but he has been a consequential president. Obamacare, his signature domestic accomplishment, is a substantial step toward the government-run health care program that Democrats have long desired. It may be hard to get rid of, even with a Republican president and congressional majorities. Undoing the effects of Obama foreign and defense policy won’t be any easier. Beginning with the Libya intervention, the president has been charting a new direction for American strategy and acting with great energy to create a *fait accompli* that will make it difficult for a successor to reverse course. The leading-from-behind Obama Doctrine consists of three main tenets: a smaller, secret, and “silent” approach to the Long War in the greater Middle East; a “Pacific pivot” that would deter China from the temptations of aggression but ask allies to carry much of the burden; and a restructuring of the U.S. military to forestall any future return to a more ambitious—and more traditional—form of American leadership.

## THE SILENT WAR

**E**mbarking on the campaign that would make him president, Barack Obama began with a stinging criticism of George W. Bush’s Iraq war, which he charged was a “dangerous distraction” from the war on

al Qaeda and in Afghanistan. It “should have been apparent to President Bush and Sen. [John] McCain, the central front in the war on terror is not Iraq, and it never was.” Thus, Obama wrote in a July 2008 *New York Times* op-ed, “Ending the war is essential to meeting our broader strategic goals, starting in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where the Taliban is resurgent and al Qaeda has a safe haven.”

Obama has been resolute in viewing the post-9/11 wars

narrowly as antiterror campaigns rather than in the larger context of traditional U.S. strategy across the greater Middle East. A more comprehensive view would consider the 2003 Iraq war as an extension of a trend that can be traced to 1979—the year of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, of the Iranian hostage crisis, of the seizure of the Grand Mosque by a band of Sunni extremists, and of Saddam Hussein’s rise to power in Baghdad. From that time on, the downward spiral of events across the region has made it increasingly difficult for the United States to preserve its previous posture as an “offshore balancer,” working through local regimes and using military force only to tip the scales to preserve “stability” and the flow



*Dismantling armored vehicles in Iraq, November*

of oil. After the Cold War, when the prime directive was no longer to limit Soviet influence, the local regimes themselves were the biggest threat to stability; our “partners” became the problem.

With Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the U.S.-led response in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the offshore balancer came ashore. We had “no opinion” on Arab-on-Arab disputes, “such as your dispute with Kuwait,” as Ambassador April Glaspie unfortunately told Saddam Hussein before he sent his army across the border. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney promised the Saudi king that once

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Saddam's army was expelled from Iraq's "19th province," U.S. troops would return home. But having leapt over the fence, the United States could not go back, even as it was reluctant to go forward. The contradictions of this half-in, half-out posture played out for a dozen years. Even before 9/11, the Clinton-era effort to "keep Saddam in his box" appeared to be in tatters. After 9/11, George W. Bush decided that "pursuing stability at the expense of liberty does not lead to peace," and that the United States had no better choice than to try to provoke a deeper transformation of the political order in the Middle East.

If Bush saw the global war on terror as a way to expand American involvement in the Middle East, Barack Obama's focus on terror is an attempt to limit it. *New York Times* columnist Roger Cohen sees this "radical shift from President Bush's war on terror" and dubs Obama's way of war the "doctrine of silence." Cohen rightly argues that "there has seldom been so big a change in approach to U.S. strategic policy with so little explanation."

The signature instruments of the silent war are remotely piloted aircraft—"drones," as the headline writers love to call them—covert action and special operations forces, and computer or "cyber" attacks. With the withdrawal from Iraq and the drawdown in Afghanistan, U.S. conventional forces will no longer be in the "regime change" or counterinsurgency business but will man an increasingly "offshore" framework with limited strike capability and, if needed, the ability to patrol contested waterways like the Strait of Hormuz.

The administration's love affair with drones has gotten the lion's share of attention. In late December, the *Washington Post's* Greg Miller sketched Obama's "emerging global apparatus for drone killing":

In the space of three years, the administration has built an extensive apparatus for using drones to carry out targeted killings of suspected terrorists and stealth surveillance of other adversaries. The apparatus involves dozens of secret facilities, including two operational hubs on the East Coast, virtual Air Force cockpits in the Southwest and clandestine bases in at least six countries on two continents.

The setup artfully combines military and CIA assets to maximize operational effectiveness and mask the size and scope of the effort. Strikes are "increasingly assembled à la carte," reports Miller, "piecing together personnel and equipment in ways that allow the White House to toggle between separate legal authorities that govern the use of lethal force."

The article's account of the September 30 killing of Anwar al-Awlaki reveals the intricacy of this "toggling" campaign. As the CIA went hunting the American-born cleric whose Al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula organization in Yemen had sponsored a number of attempted

terrorist attacks, including that by "underwear bomber" Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab on Christmas Day 2009, it assembled a fleet of its own Predator and Reaper drones reinforced by those of the Joint Special Operations Command. So seamless was the Awlaki strike that it remains unclear whether a CIA or JSOC aircraft actually delivered the lethal missile, though the administration justified the killing under CIA legal authority. When Awlaki's son was similarly killed two weeks later, however, it was done under authority granted to the Defense Department by post-9/11 legislation.

While the administration's toggling legal posture has provoked criticism from both the liberal left and the libertarian right, Obama's use of drones is generally praised. "What this does is it takes a lot of Americans out of harm's way . . . without having to send in a special ops team or drop a 500-pound bomb," says Sen. Dianne Feinstein, head of the Select Committee on Intelligence. The Bush administration had increasingly employed drones, conducting about 44 strikes in Pakistan and killing as many as 300 Taliban and al Qaeda operatives, according to the New America Foundation. But the Obama administration has become positively addicted to the drone war, having conducted nearly 250 strikes and widening operations to Yemen, Somalia, and surveillance of Iran, as the recent crash there of the larger and more sophisticated RQ-170 Sentinel indicates.

Obama's successes—most spectacularly, the killing of Osama bin Laden—have given him great leeway to continue and expand the silent war, even among liberals looking for an alternative to out-and-out weakness. "Why do I approve of all this?" Roger Cohen asked himself.

Because the alternative—the immense cost in blood and treasure and reputation of the Bush administration's war on terror—was so appalling. In just the same way, the results of a conventional bombing war against Iran would be appalling whether undertaken by Israel, the United States or a combination of the two.

Andrew Cummings of the *Guardian* seconds Cohen's loud cheers for silent war when it comes to Iran. While allowing that a "covert campaign" would be "rife with physical, diplomatic and legal risks, [it] is the lesser of many evils." Because he acknowledges that sanctions are unlikely to prevent Iran from deploying nuclear weapons, but finds a real war equally unappetizing, Cummings hopes that silent war will encourage Iran to reopen the "dialogue" on its nuke program. "Covert action creates the time and space for pressure to build, while"—presto!—"reducing the need for military action."

Even the occasionally sensible David Ignatius of the *Washington Post* can go ga-ga for drones. After the Awlaki killing, he saw a "hint of deterrence" in the Obama way of

war. Especially praiseworthy is that the drone war “recognizes the need for limits”:

We don't have enough drones to kill all the enemies we will make if we turn the world into a free-fire zone. And there's something important in the hint of a deterrence strategy: This is how wars end in the part of the world where al Qaeda arose—through a balance of mutual restraint that makes a de facto truce possible, even between the most bitter enemies.

## THE ASIA PIVOT

The corollary to walking softly and carrying a silent stick in the greater Middle East is the equally ballyhooed strategic “pivot” to Asia—Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's term—that's been a centerpiece of Obama administration rhetoric for the past six months. Prefacing his new “defense guidance,” the “first Pacific president” declared that “as we end today's wars, we will focus on a broader range of challenges and opportunities, including the security and prosperity of the Asia Pacific.”

The Obama administration came to office convinced that a failure to pay sufficient attention to the Asia-Pacific region was the *other* giant strategic blunder of its Bush predecessors. Harvard's Joseph Nye recently captured the fundamentals of administration thinking: “Asia's return to the center of world affairs is the great power shift of the twenty-first century,” he wrote. “But, rather than keeping an eye on that ball, the United States wasted the first decade of this century mired in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.” Nye also agreed with National Security Adviser Tom Donilon's fawning praise of the president: “[B]y elevating this dynamic region to one of our top strategic priorities, Obama is showing his determination not to let our ship of state be pushed off course by prevailing crises.”

Never mind that the Democratic critique of the Bush administration after 9/11 was that it had been too concerned about great-power balances and had not paid enough attention to warnings about al Qaeda. Never mind, either, that until this year the White House had placed its hopes on a renewed effort to “engage” China, emphasizing issues

such as trade and climate change that were supposed to be sources of cooperation rather than conflict. Never mind that it is in the nature of “prevailing crises” to, well, prevail—particularly those that involve a horrendous attack on American soil like 9/11. And, most of all, never mind that the Asia-Pacific region didn't have to be “elevated” to “one of our top strategic priorities” for any previous president, at least from William McKinley onward; America's actions through the 20th century transformed Asia as surely and as profoundly as Europe.

To the degree that the Obama pivot represents a new seriousness in responding to the security challenges of China's rise as a global great power and its provocative military modernization, it's a long overdue development. From the Clinton years onward, the United States has been hamstrung between the Scylla of “engagement” and

the Charybdis of “containment,” at one point leading Zalmay Khalilzad, whose long career as a diplomat and strategist was capped by a tour as ambassador to Afghanistan, to coin the term “congagement.” In its defense guidance pledge to “rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region,” the Obama administration deserves credit for taking a more muscular rhetorical line than either Clinton or Bush. But its promise to “continue to make the necessary investments to ensure that we maintain regional access and the ability to operate freely” in places like the South China Sea where Bei-



*Planting the pivot down under*

jing has become more bossy and intimidating is not borne out in the resources it would provide.

The peak of the pivot campaign came with Obama's trip to Australia, where he announced that about 2,500 Marines would be based at Darwin, in northern Australia. “The United States is a Pacific power,” he told the Australian parliament, “and we are here to stay.” Indeed, for the 21st century, “the United States of America is ‘all in.’”

But Peter Beinart, contributor to the *Daily Beast* and often a channel for administration thinking, sees the Obama Asia pivot as more in line with the offshore balancing approach to the Middle East. “A token deployment of Marines in northern Australia notwithstanding,” he wrote, “the Obama administration's strategy will be

to buttress America's naval presence in the Pacific and aid those nations on China's periphery that fear its hegemonic ambitions." Likewise, Kenneth Lieberthal, a former National Security Council official and longstanding China adviser to Democratic politicians, warns that an all-in approach runs "the longer-term risk that Asia will increasingly become a cost center for the United States (providing security is expensive), while the region will continue to serve as a growing profit center for China (due to its vast economic engagement)."

## CHEAP-SUIT SUPERPOWER

The belief in American decline has become so deeply entrenched among the strategic smart set—which would probably construe the history of the 20th century as one giant "cost center"—that it has become a driving force. It represents much more than an analysis of events: It's an opportunity to force the United States to shake off the sorrows of empire and snap back from imperial overstretch. The Obama administration doesn't just seek a "rebalancing" of U.S. strategy, it intends to make a permanent retreat, by removing the military means of mischief. With a smaller force, we'll resist the temptation to fight wars just because we can.

Tellingly, the commander in chief frames his new guidance to his troops as the strategy we can afford rather than as a strategy for peace (or, God forbid, victory). "We must put our fiscal house in order here at home," says the third sentence of the president's cover letter introducing his "Priorities for 21st Century Defense," and "renew our long-term economic strength." The touchstone is "the Budget Control Act of 2011, [which] mandates reductions in federal spending, including defense spending." It is hardly surprising that Obama has promised to veto any legislation that would exempt the military from the draconian further cuts that sequestration would bring to future Pentagon budgets. Not going to let *this* crisis go to waste.

The administration certainly has profited from the Groundhog Day qualities of the debate about getting the government's fiscal house in order: Washington wakes up to the horrors of the deficit and the debt and decides it's time to make sure that "defense is on the table" along with domestic discretionary programs and that taxes shall not be raised nor entitlements restrained. If sequestration occurs this year, something like \$1.3 trillion will have been chopped out of planned military spending during the Obama years—about \$330 billion through 2010, \$489 billion under the 2011 Budget Control Act, and at least another \$500 billion under full sequestration. The landscape is littered with the corpses of procurement programs terminated early, like

the F-22 Raptor, or killed in the womb, like the Army's Future Combat Systems family of vehicles. The Obama administration has fulfilled Donald Rumsfeld's dream of "skipping a generation" of modernization, but this is a second generation almost skipped.

While these are big numbers in the context of defense spending, they're chicken feed when measured against the debt, the deficit, and the costs of baby boomer entitlements, which are only going to mount from here. The 2011 annual federal deficit was about \$1.3 trillion, with total federal spending about \$3.5 trillion. The 2011 defense budget, including the costs of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, was a little over \$700 billion. The total federal debt has risen to \$15 trillion, roughly the same as U.S. gross domestic product. According to the Congressional Budget Office's June 2011 long-range budget forecast, a failure to tame entitlement spending could double the debt again as the boomers retire en masse. Even eliminating the U.S. military entirely would have no serious effect on the government's balance sheets.

To fully limn the extent of America's defense decline would be a long and lugubrious task, so consider the strategic bottom line: The Obama administration has admitted that the U.S. military will no longer be large enough to fight two wars at once. This has been the standard of American global power since Franklin Roosevelt's time, one observed and saluted by every president since. As Colin Powell put it in 1989, we had put a "shingle outside our door saying 'Superpower Lives Here.'" And while it's true that the active duty forces of the United States have often fallen short of this standard, "two" was the eternal answer to the classic question of defense planning: "How much is enough?"

In leaking this change to the press, an anonymous administration official described Obama's strategy as "spoiling" any second-war act of aggression while fighting the first. And the defense guidance goes on at length about "reversibility" as a "key part of our decision calculus" when defense cuts have to be made. In other words, the Obama Pentagon knows this is a very bad idea to begin with.

## IRREVERSIBLE?

Unfortunately, reversing the effects of the Obama way of war will be extremely difficult. Suppose a new Republican commander in chief were determined to lead a resurgence of American power. Could he easily renegotiate a status-of-forces agreement in Iraq that would allow for the redeployment of U.S. troops to a level that would jump-start domestic reconciliation and diminish Iranian influence? Could he convince Hamid Karzai

or his successor that this time we mean business? What would it take to genuinely change the calculus of the Pakistani army? Would the president have the military means to do more than delay or disrupt Iran's drive to become a nuclear power? To really establish a military posture in the Asia-Pacific that would reassure the Japanese, South Koreans, Taiwanese, Filipinos, Indonesians, Australians, and Indians while deterring China? What defense investments could he make while expecting to see a tangible return in the course of a four-year term?

The Obama administration has been at pains to practice what it calls "smart power," and there is undeniably a consistent and logically coherent narrative to the Obama way of war. On the other hand, history favors the constant more often than the clever. This is particularly the case for Americans; our most successful commanders have not been the most brilliant ones.

Obama's way of war, his "rebalancing" of U.S. strategic priorities, and the damage done to American military power are already being felt in the world. The greater Middle East, never "stable" to begin with, is undergoing an epoch-defining political change—who knows where the Arab revolts will end, or what a nuclear Iran would mean?—while having its American security blanket

ripped away. Our Asian allies, who have been begging for attention as China increasingly muscles its way around the region, may be cheered when the 2,500 Marines arrive in Australia, and be even happier if they pop up around the South China Sea on a regular basis, but they won't see it as an "all in" commitment. And when the up-to-now sole superpower confesses it lacks the means to deter or fight simultaneous crises or conflicts, its assertions of leadership will ring hollow. The president vowed in his defense guidance that the American military will be the "best in the world." That much is true. But the problem, since 9/11, has not been the quality of the force but its quantity.

Nations, like markets, look at both fundamentals and trends. The world's developed and developing democracies, (also known as America's allies) have been and remain eager to invest in the security that the United States provides. It's not a cost center but a profit center for them. It's a profit center for us, too—part of the reason the world invests in America, even with our Greek-like debt-to-GDP ratios and unfunded government liabilities. Barack Obama is seeking to reverse a century-long trend in international affairs—the energetic exercise of American power. And he's well on his way to solidifying this dubious achievement. ♦



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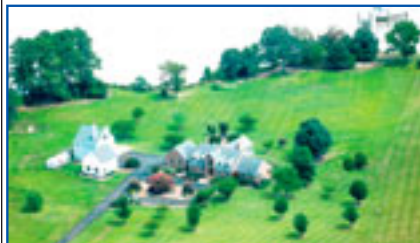


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Tea Party rally, Santa Ana, California (2009)

# Loyal Opposition

*Democracy flourishes with conflict* BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

**W**e have Occupy Wall Street to thank for the already grating tendency among pundits to sort the American people by percentages. The possibilities for such categorization are endless. There are, of course, the 1 percent of Americans who make more than \$516,000 a year and the 99 percent who do not. But there are also the 21 percent of Americans who identify as liberal and the 79 percent who do not; the 28 percent of Americans who hold an undergraduate degree or higher and the

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 by Jeffrey Bell  
 Encounter, 296 pp., \$25.95

72 percent who do not; the less than 1 percent of the population that watches the *O'Reilly Factor* on a given night and the more than 99 percent that does not; and the 39 percent of Americans who attend religious services on a weekly basis and the 61 percent who do not.

One could go on.

And one could add to the list of divisions the 10 to 20 percent of Americans who are active, committed partisans and the 80 to 90 percent who are inactive, uncommitted,

independent, and generally moderate and flexible in their views. These rough estimates come from the Stanford political scientist Morris Fiorina, who in a series of books has argued (seemingly in vain) that the American people are not nearly as politically divided and “polarized” as talk-show hosts and newspaper columnists have made them out to be. The empirical data seem to back him up. As the authors of *Unconventional Wisdom: Facts and Myths About American Voters* put it in 2008: “On most things political, Americans hold a broad and largely moderate consensus.” It is only when you enter the ranks of the actively partisan—the bumper-sticker owners, sign holders, precinct canvassers, phone bankers,

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partisan-media-consumers, small- and high-end donors, and bloggers—that you see major differences on social, economic, and diplomatic affairs.

*The Case for Polarized Politics* is a book by, about, and for this 10 to 20 percent. The author knows his subject. Since he left the Army in the late 1960s Jeffrey Bell has been an activist and analyst of conservative politics whose work in both areas is indispensable. One of the original Reaganites, Bell wrote the California governor's briefing book during his failed 1976 presidential campaign and helped persuade him to embrace the supply-side policies of tight money and low taxes at the outset of his more successful run in 1980. In between those years, in 1978, Bell unseated the liberal New Jersey Republican Clifford Case in a Senate primary. While the Columbia graduate went on to lose to Princeton's Bill Bradley in the general election, Bell's primary win was nonetheless a sign of the coming Reagan Revolution. In the post-Reagan decades, Bell has turned to consulting, served as president of the Manhattan Institute, wrote the excellent *Populism and Elitism* (1992), and published op-ed essays and articles on politics for *National Review* and this magazine. You should read them all.

Bell's thesis in *Populism and Elitism* was that politics is a contest between people who think the average man and woman are capable of deciding things for themselves and people who would rather leave such decisions to nonordinary elected officials, bureaucrats, economists, judges, and social workers. The reason for Reagan's success, Bell argued, was that the fortieth president trusted the average person to make his own choices about where he lived, where he sent his children to school, and how he spent his income. Reagan, and other market populists like Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and William Gladstone, stood for the values and interests of the middle-class workingman against aristocracies of wealth, privilege, power, and credential.

Two decades later, Bell's argument has not changed so much as it has broadened and deepened. He closed *Populism and Elitism* by noting that

“the ability of the Reagan and Bush administrations to change the federal judiciary has been important, but by itself it can only move politics to a new, more intense stage of a values battle that is already a generation old.” Bingo! *The Case for Polarized Politics* traces the development of this clash from the watershed year of 1968 to the rise of the Tea Party and beyond.

On one side are American social conservatives who believe that the central proposition of the Declaration of Independence is true: Every human being is born equal. On the other are the global followers of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for whom “people in the state of nature are completely free, bound by no laws,” and “institutions and laws erected by civilization are inherently a force for repression.” Whereas social conservatives seek a limited government that does not tread on the natural rights of individuals, the global left—whether in America, Europe, or Asia—seeks an expansive, centralized state that levels material inequalities and bulldozes over the institutions and moral codes which purportedly stand in the way of true freedom, happiness, and authenticity.

**W**hy has the left been so much more successful elsewhere than in the United States? Bell's answer is polarization. And the cause of political polarization is the persistence of a social conservatism based on the teachings of the Founders. America, in this view, is exceptional not in the size of our economy or in the scope of our global responsibilities, but in the fact that we, and we alone, are a creedal nation. The American belief in moral truths that apply in every time and every place undermines the left-wing notion that morality is historically determined and subject to revision and relativism. If not for the social conservative movement, there would be no polarization because the left would reign unchallenged. America would undergo “a peaceful social revolution, utterly changing the face of society in ways that would have been both recognizable and pleasing to Rousseau and his heirs.”

The argument that the descendants of Jerry Falwell are the only thing

preventing America from turning into a larger and warmer Denmark may strike some as ironic and others as self-congratulatory. But it is also a less shocking proposition than one might think. Foreign visitors from Tocqueville on have noted the high degree of religiosity among our people. The separation of church and state enshrined in the First Amendment has coincided with, and perhaps fostered, a delirious array of sects and confessions. Decisions by the Supreme Court, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Carter administration in the 1970s prompted millions of people of faith to enter politics, under the auspices of the Republican party, to reverse policies like *Roe v. Wade* and create spaces free from the influence of liberal elites. In so doing, these religiously observant voters became the base of a Republican party that would control the presidency and/or at least one house of Congress for 28 of the last 32 years.

Would there have been an Age of Reagan without this great migration of the faithful? I doubt it. But I doubt, too, that Republicans would have had such success had they not also appealed beyond their base to tens of millions of American independents and suburban moderates who may not be socially conservative and who may be too busy with work and family and community to worry about *Du Contrat Social*. The conditions in which elections take place—the state of the economy, the conduct of wars, the public's attitude toward the future—matter a great deal more than polarization. So do the personalities and qualities of individual candidates.

The challenge for Republican politicians, most of them social conservatives, is to find a way to stand for the values of the American Founding without coming across to the public as overly sectarian or extreme. The political field is littered with Republican candidates who failed this test. Still, readers of *The Case for Polarized Politics*—indeed, anyone concerned with the future of American constitutionalism and limited government—can take comfort in the fact that there are many more candidates who have passed it. ♦



The Gutenberg Museum, Mainz



# The Dawn of Print

*Has the death of the 'physical' book been exaggerated?*

BY JAMES BOWMAN

*It's had a great five-hundred-year run ... but it's time to change.*

So Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com has said of what he quaintly calls the “physical book.” Of course, since his own company’s Kindle is one of several electronic competitors to the physical book now on the market, he has a vested interest in heralding the latter’s obsolescence. Yet few anymore would want simply to dismiss the notion. Last year, Amazon’s sales of ebooks overtook

**The Book in the Renaissance**  
by Andrew Pettegree  
Yale, 440 pp., \$25

those of the ink-and-paper kind, which seems like a portent if anything does.

But a portent of what? Last year John Naughton of the *Observer* asked readers to imagine themselves to be burghers of Mainz in 1472, 17 years after the invention of Johannes Gutenberg’s printing press, who are asked by an anachronistic pollster to rate on a scale of one to five (five being the most likely and one being the least) the probabilities that the

newfangled printed book would

- Undermine the authority of the Catholic church.
- Power the Reformation.
- Enable the rise of modern science.
- Create entirely new social classes and professions.

■ Change our conceptions of “childhood” as a protected early period in a person’s life.

It’s safe to say that not many fives would have been given out.

We are now, or were at the time Naughton wrote, 17 years away from the general availability of the Internet, and equally clueless about what its long-range effects will be. That makes it a good time for Andrew Pettegree’s immensely learned book (new Kindle electronic version now available) to remind us where books came from before they disappear from their usual haunts, and libraries, when they continue to exist at all, become even more museum-like than they already are.

Among other things, Pettegree, a professor in the School of History and head of the Reformation Studies Institute at the University of St. Andrews, reminds us that the invention of printing was not the first technological innovation with profound effects for intellectual life. The transition from scroll to codex in the early Middle Ages was as important in its way as that from manuscript to print in the late Middle Ages. Likewise, the use of parchment

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(that is, animal skins) rather than papyrus was essential to the preservation of learning. He also provides chapter and verse for Naughton's contention about the printing press's having "powered" the Reformation.

In 1522, Duke George, ruler of Ducal Saxony, decided definitely against the Reformation, and prohibited the production or sale of Lutheran texts in his territories. For the publishers of Leipzig this was a dreadful blow. In 1524 a deputation petitioned the Duke, asking to be allowed to publish Luther's writings once again. The books they were now required to print, written by Luther's Catholic opponents, were simply unsaleable, they claimed. Figures for the production of books in Leipzig support their complaints. Between 1515 and 1522 over 1,100 editions were published in Leipzig, an average of 140 titles a year. Following the ban on publishing Lutheran works this fell precipitously, to 43 titles in 1523 and 25 in 1524. To add insult to injury these were the years when printing in Germany reached its zenith, a previously unimaginable output of almost 1,500 editions per year. There was no doubt that Leipzig's printers breathed a sigh of relief when, following the conversion of the Duchy to Lutheranism after the death of Duke George they were able to resume publishing Protestant works.

This suggests something else about the Reformation itself, which must have been driven forward as much by its identification with modernity and (therefore) fashion as it was by the popular passion for its more democratic and antiauthoritarian elements or for "the priesthood of all believers."

Then, as now, "extremism" sold, which might be something to bear in mind when next you hear the moderate complaints about the polarization of political discourse on the Internet. Luther and Calvin were, of course, best-sellers in their day. On the other hand,

Pettegree notes a couple of hundred pages later that Emond Auger managed to stem the Protestant tide in Lyon in 1561, and effect the expulsion from that city of its Calvinist preachers, partly by providing the city's printers with a rival income stream in the form of his own plethora of Roman Catholic sermons and tracts which, with the generation of the Counter-Reformation to work on their appeal, were presumably more lively and readable (and themselves "extreme") than those of the Catholic divines of Leipzig 40 years earlier.

No wonder, then, that the new technology of its time also foreshadowed the Internet in breeding skeptics and

back. If in some sense culture has declined with the advent of printing—Plato, of course, thought that writing itself was destructive of memory, the mother of the Muses—science has advanced. Pettegree tells us, for instance, that the related invention of new means of illustration was crucial to the development of scientific method and technique: "The development of the technical woodcut had important consequences, both philosophical and practical," he writes, because it "helped tip the balance of scholarly investigation towards a science of investigation" and away from the authority of the ancients, though

these (especially Aristotle) in their magic, hand-copied codices remained strong for some time yet to come. Early German leadership in science, especially botany, therefore had its origins in the German expertise in the technique of woodcut. Also, with printing came globes, which forced a greater precision in geography.

Professor Pettegree does not mention what to me seems an equally far-reaching cultural consequence of the printing press;

namely, its contribution to the birth of Cervantean irony and mock-epic out of the democratization of courtly romance. That ironic approach to the heroic is now and has long been the norm, and must be at least partly the result of the sudden availability of many more nonironic romances to stock Don Quixote's library than had ever been available to him and his kind before.

We have seen a further development of the same cultural tradition in a similar cultural shift of our own time with the birth of camp and its contemporary offspring, postmodernism. In both cases, an elite audience for the new, more democratic and egalitarian art forms—popular



doomsayers. Here's Filippo de Strata, a Benedictine monk, urging the Doge of Venice in 1473 to ban the printing press in the Venetian Republic, where its growth and influence had already been phenomenal:

This is what the printing presses do: they corrupt susceptible hearts. The silly asses do not see this, and brutes rejoice in the fraudulent title of teachers, exalting themselves with a song like this (be so good as to listen): "O good citizen, rejoice: your city is well stuffed with books. For a small sum, men turn themselves into doctors in three years. Let thanks be rendered to the printers!" Any uncultured person without Latin bawls these things.

He's got us there too, I'm afraid; but now as then there's no looking

romance in the first instance, film in the second—found a way to make itself superior to the less self-conscious consumers of the new forms as a condition of their acceptance.

The Pettegreean account of the last complete revolution in information management systems has only been made possible by its successor, the most recent such revolution. And its account of that earlier revolution also makes clear that it effected a similar revolution in culture to that which began in the late 20th century with the invention of the microchip. That is to say, both revolutions not only brought about a change in the way information was stored and retrieved, and the efficiency of both operations, but also produced a revolution in the way that people lived and thought about the world. The nature of that revolution is beginning to be a little clearer in the case of the electronic information systems with which we have lately grown so familiar, though I count it interesting that some of the most enthusiastic missionaries for the new systems, like Steven Pinker, are trying to deny this.

In his Note on Sources at the end of this volume, Pettegree writes:

Ironically, it has been the next great information revolution—the Internet—that has allowed this work on the first age of print to be pursued to a successful conclusion. The steady development of online library catalogues in the last twenty years has allowed scholars to draw together data from a mass of libraries around the world to create a master list of editions for each part of Europe—and hence for the whole of the first era of print. This also records, for the benefit of users, where all these often very rare books are to be found. The result is a total repertory of around 350,000 editions, and some 1.5 million surviving copies.

Maybe the ultimate effect of the electronic revolution will be to create huge mines of information into which—even (or perhaps especially) when they contain as many riches as Pettegree's book—fewer and fewer people will ever be inclined to venture. ♦

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# Hello, Libya

*Does the fall of Qaddafi mean the rise of tourism?*

BY ANN MARLOWE



*Leptis Magna*

**T**ripoli Thirty years ago, few Americans were aware that Turkey has nearly as many classical Greek ruins as Greece. Today, Libya's Greek and Roman remains are similarly unknown to Americans.

It's understandable: Americans were banned from visiting Libya from 1981 until 2004 under sanctions that eventually led Muammar Qaddafi to give up his weapons of mass destruction and partially open the Libyan economy. Relations began to be normalized in 2006; the U.S. embassy opened in Tripoli that year. Group tourism, under strictly controlled conditions, was begun; but Qaddafi's initial embrace of tourism proved fickle, and after some charter groups were turned away at the Tripoli airport for not having Arabic translations of their passports, numbers dwindled. The last year of revolution

brought many more foreign visitors to Libya, but it is safe to say that very few American tourists were among them.

Now, in 2012, as it prepares for its first free, universal-suffrage elections, Libya (especially eastern Libya) would make a fine destination for the adventurous lover of classical civilization. And as Libya stabilizes, Americans will have a new country to discover—with nearly a dozen important sites, most within sight of the striking Mediterranean coastline.

As I write, the western part of the country, home to the best-known sites, Leptis Magna and Sabratha, is significantly less stable than the east, known as Cyrenaica. While a visitor should see both areas, the coast between the Egyptian border and the revolutionary capital of Benghazi offers more variety than the west, including the unique Berber site of Slonta. The ruined cities of Cyrene, Apollonia, and Tolmeitha, and the Christian site of Qasr Libya, compare favorably with any Mediterranean destination—even Greece itself.

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Libya has been isolated for decades, and culturally marginal for centuries, but it was central in the classical world. Benghazi, the capital of Cyrenaica (and from February to August 2011 the capital of Free Libya), was the ancient Euesperides, named after the Hesperides, the women guarding the golden apples given to Hera when she married Zeus. The Hesperides are supposed to have lived in a sunken garden, which Richard Goodchild, one of the main mid-20th-century researchers on Cyrenaica, identified with one of the sinkholes that still exist about 10 kilometers from Benghazi. The inland area around Benghazi is supposed to have been the location of the legendary Greek river of the dead, Lethe.

Greek settlers arrived from Santorini to found Cyrene—the namesake city for Cyrenaica—in the 7th century B.C. The city that would later be known as Benghazi, Euesperides, set up a republic around 440 B.C. Alexander the Great tossed the Persians out of Egypt and Cyrenaica in 332 B.C. before founding Alexandria. A few years later, Cyrenaica came under the control of the neighboring Egyptian Ptolemaic dynasty, and was ruled by the Ptolemies or their successors until it was made a Roman province in 74 B.C.

In the Roman years, the Libyan and Roman populations coalesced, and distinctive forms of local architecture sprang up. Libyans sent numerous senators to Rome and gave her an emperor, Septimus Severus, born in Leptis Magna. Inscriptions mingled Latin with Punic, which is related to Phoenician. Christian communities emerged in Cyrenaica relatively early since there was a substantial Jewish presence. Simon of Cyrene carried the cross at Calvary, and St. Mark was a Jew of Cyrene: Local legend holds that he wrote his Gospel in a cave still known as Wadi Marcus near Derna in the Jebel Akhdar Mountains, before going on to become bishop of Alexandria.

Vandal and Arab invasions led to deurbanization and the abandonment of some of the cities of Cyrenaica. Two years after Cairo fell to the Arabs in 641 they entered Libya, and Barca, today's Al Marj, became their administrative

seat. One of the Companions of the Prophet, Rawevfi ben Thabit, was an early governor of Barca. He was buried in 663 at the Great Mosque of Barca, but was later moved to Bayda and a mosque called Sidi Rafa. (Non-Muslims are welcome, but nothing remains of its original construction.) Cyrenaica lapsed into a sleepy irrelevance during the Fatimid period, and when locals rebelled against Cairo in 1040 the Fatimids sent the nomadic Banu Hilal against them. The destruction and desertification they caused ended Libya's cultural significance.

Indeed, it was not until seven centuries later (1705) that Europeans noted

King Idris, the Qaddafi era began. And because the colonel viewed the classical sites as artifacts of a hateful colonial past, he was disinclined to take care of them.

The Cyrenaican sites can be approached from the Egyptian border, or by flying to Benghazi and driving toward Egypt. Either way, it's best to spend at least one night at the seaside hotel in Apollonia, which is built next to the ruins. (Both the four-star Uzu and five-star Tibesti hotels in Benghazi are comfortable, the latter even luxurious.) Benghazi itself is a spirited but badly rundown port, though with the cobalt-blue sea always in the background, and



*Qasr Libya*

the existence of Cyrene again—and the consequences of European attention were far better for the Europeans than the Libyans. In 1861 two Britons, Robert Murdoch Smith and Edwin Porcher, transported nearly 150 statues to the British Museum. Cyrene was systematically explored, beginning in 1913, when Italian workmen accidentally unearthed a masterwork that was then displayed in Rome's Campidoglio Museums but returned to Libya in 2008. The colonial government performed a primitive sort of restoration in Cyrene—indeed, across the Libyan littoral—while simultaneously killing as much as a third of the Libyan population.

Because of the intervening world wars, little additional work was done anywhere in Libya until the 1950s, when Libya gained its independence. Then, after just 18 years under

a way of life centered around drinking endless espressos and smoking endless cigarettes, it feels as much Mediterranean as Arabic. Its classical buildings fell victim to a fourth-century earthquake and nomadic, Vandal, and Arab raids in the early Middle Ages. Extensive bombing during World War II, when the city changed hands five times, finished off most of the Ottoman-era buildings. The oldest structures are from the Italian occupation of the 1920s and '30s, so the lover of antiquity will want to make a speedy getaway to the ruins nearby.

Beginning from Benghazi, the first significant site is Tolmeitha. These ruins may be the largest of any Roman provincial capital, and they are barely excavated. Yet while Cyrene is a world heritage site, the Libyan government's request to obtain the same status for Tolmeitha was rejected by UNESCO.



*Cyrene*

It was certainly the poorest place I saw on the eastern coast, but also potentially the most beautiful, with palm groves next to the sea and acacias a mile inland near the ruins.

The major part of the ruins of Tolmeitha are about a mile-and-a-half inland on a dirt road that leads back from the sea toward the main highway but does not connect with it. In a scene that can have changed little from classical times, shepherds grazed their flocks and a group of rural women strode happily through the groves of pines and acacias. The not-very-evocative remains of the Arch of Constantine are to your left walking uphill away from the sea, but the first major group of ruins at Tolmeitha is the Villa of Columns. This looks from a distance like a public structure, but it was a private home that included a large pool. The renovation here seems to have been minimal, and so the site is much more interesting than Cyrene or Apollonia. Endless scraps of red, sometimes black, pottery everywhere suggest the vast remains still below ground.

After a short walk southwest the small (four-tier) theater faces not the sea, as is more usual, but the pastoral

landscape. And near the theater is the most spectacular part of Tolmeitha: On a small rise is a football-field-sized Greek agora, later a Roman forum. Just a handful of pillars are still standing, but these are much taller than the ones at the Villa of the Columns, and, once you see them, the contrast between private and public spaces is clear. The star attraction, though, is underneath the agora: A huge, well-preserved Roman cistern, the largest in Africa, extends the full size of the forum.

Since Tolmeitha had no fresh water supply, the Romans built a 15-mile aqueduct to provide the cistern with water. In the period of insecurity during the fourth century the aqueduct broke, leading to depopulation; it was repaired by the emperor Justinian. Down a flight of stone steps is a series of linked rectangular rooms, dimly lit by openings to the agora above, and almost as impressive as Istanbul's underground cistern, though not nearly as lofty.

To reach Qasr Libya, literally "Castle Libya," a church built in 539 that houses some of Libya's finest mosaics, I left the coast road and turned in to the mountains. Qasr Libya was known in

Roman times as Olbia, then renamed Theodorais to honor Justinian's wife, Theodora, who grew up in nearby Apollonia. The site was rediscovered by Libyan laborers in 1957. Fifty panels of Qasr Libya's mosaics—which include a scene showing the lighthouse of Alexandria, about 500 miles away—are housed in a small museum, opened in 1972. A voluntary guard proudly showed me that the front door had been welded shut, to prevent looting, shortly after the 2011 protests began. Unfortunately, the tin roof above the sixth-century "western" church is leaking, with damage to the mosaics below. The "eastern" church next to the museum was firmly shut at the time of my visit, but by an easy climb to the roof you can see the severely elegant stone-block interior.

Tolmeitha can be seen in two or three hours, Qasr Libya in another couple of hours if the mosaics are open. From Qasr Libya it's almost an hour's drive east and then inland to Cyrene. Though the original colonists of Cyrene arrived in obedience to a dictate of the oracle at Delphi, much of what can be seen at Cyrene is Roman and dates from the second century A.D. The

town had to be rebuilt after the Jewish revolt of 115 to 117 A.D., in which the large Jewish population destroyed huge swaths of Cyrene, focusing particularly on the pagan temples.

About a half mile from the main Cyrene site the Temple of Zeus, built between 540 and 450 B.C., is the most important Greek monument in Africa, bigger than the Parthenon. Sandro Stucchi points to its “optical refinements . . . the columns all have different diameters, and their inclination is different” to produce a uniform impression on the viewer from any angle. But the temple’s staggering size makes it difficult to focus on these details; it seems more aimed at impressing than inspiring the viewer. But its absence of soul may be the result of crude restoration: The post-revolt construction was mainly destroyed by an earthquake in 365 and the temple savaged by zealous Christians. Many of the statues were cut into pieces.

Another fascinating aspect of Cyrene is the enormous necropolis, one of the largest in the ancient world, which lines the winding road to Susa/Apollonia. Some of the tombs are huge, many are finely worked, but visiting requires some caution when the road is busy. The tombs I was able to get to were filled with litter and graffiti, but others further from the road are more pristine.

Apollonia has the most beautiful site of any of the pentapolis, with some buildings just yards from the sea. The star attractions are the theater, three sixth-century Christian churches that incorporate earlier architectural elements, and a Byzantine governor’s palace discovered by an American team in 1964. (There’s a small prison underneath, which can be entered by those immune to claustrophobia.) Apollonia today lies much closer to the Mediterranean than it originally did: After the 365 earthquake, the sea reclaimed portions of the town. Some ruins are visible in what’s now the modern harbor. A French archaeological team picked up the challenge in 1954 and have worked there, intermittently, ever since. It isn’t clear who did some of the very sloppy restoration work, or when: Crude mortar joins masonry blocks and even half-

columns laid on their side. Cement is slathered in what may have been an effort to prevent water damage.

The Greek theater, renovated under Domitian around 92 A.D., still has its 28 tiers of seats—the biggest Greek theater in Cyrenaica—and a spectacular location looking out to the sea. The Eastern Church, which in its unroofed state looks purely classical and may have been a Temple of Apollo, is the only church where the pillars were still standing when the British began excavations in 1952. There are finely carved crosses in its 18 tall marble pillars—and on their backs, more crudely written *bismillahs*

(the opening verse of the Koran) from the early Arab period. Close to the sea, to the left of the altar as you face it, there is a lovely baptistery, with a cruciform sunken font and a section of marble flooring and baseboard.

But the most mysterious site in eastern Libya is *pre-Greek*, with connections to Berber art in other North African countries. Slonta, or Aslonta, a dismal market town, contains a ruined grotto temple with 25 feet of bas-relief carvings of tremendous force and freshness. First mentioned in print in 1886, and documented in 1911, it was restored as recently as 1993. ♦

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## A Harrowing Tale

*Blood, sweat, and tears at an English public school.*

BY EDITH ALSTON



*Lord Byron as a Harrow schoolboy by William Finden (ca. 1833-34)*

Set amid the historic halls of England’s Harrow School, *The White Devil* plumbs the literal depths of a shambling student residence known as the Lot to uncover a dank and sinister mystery linking one of the school’s most illustrious alumni, Lord Byron, to a malevolent resident ghost.

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**The White Devil**  
*A Novel*  
by Justin Evans  
Harper, 384 pp., \$24.99

Appearances count for everything, when young Andrew Taylor arrives at the school from the States. A long-haired American underachiever with a string of New England boarding school expulsions behind him, he’s been sent there

to redeem himself after the overdose of a friend, and to bring up his grades in a last year before college, when Harrow's only girl student, the cheeky and beautiful Persephone Vine, quickly recognizes the newcomer's striking resemblance to portraits of the famously handsome and flamboyant poet of some two centuries ago, and passes along her observation to the professor Piers Fawkes.

The daughter of a senior faculty member, Persephone is exercising her prerogative to study at the school for her A-levels, and Fawkes is a once-highly respected poet in alcoholic and disheveled decline. Years earlier Fawkes was invited by the school to write a play about Byron which he has never been able to complete; but soon after meeting Andrew, he's off the bottle and writing again, happy for the availability of the American (in spite of his accent) to take the lead role in his soon-to-be-finished work.

High up under the steep gables of the Lot, Andrew has begun making friends among his fellow Sixth Formers, and on his first visit to the basement shower rooms has barely noted a faint atmospheric shift, when a chance walk through a churchyard brings him in sight of a gaunt frock-coated figure with a sickening cough, crouched over the lifeless body of his favorite new classmate, Theo. Then, as suddenly as the pale-haired man has appeared along the path, he is gone.

Is it a murder the American has just witnessed—or has Theo died of the undiagnosed pulmonary weakness that forensic evidence will soon reveal? Rocked along with his fellow students by the school's loss of one of its most popular boys, and thinking that he might be suspected of some role in the death because of his past association with drugs, Andrew at first reveals nothing about the moment in the churchyard, taking refuge in a budding romance with Persephone and preparations for the play. But downstairs in the Lot, in the shower rooms built over the cistern of an earlier building, long ago sealed off, he soon starts to encounter another pale-haired figure—not a man this time, but a sensuous and vulnerable-seeming boy.

In 2008, Justin Evans established his gift for evoking the eerie with his debut novel, the much-praised *A Good and Happy Child*, about a young father who goes into psychotherapy because of deep fears about touching his newborn son, and uncovers memories of a long-forgotten trauma that may or may not be associated with a demonic possession. In another thoroughly modern mashup of mystery genres (Milton was the previous literary tie-in), *The White Devil* is a crossover case of mistaken identity originating in the spirit world, but with a storyline that at first seems more routine. Here, though, nothing is ever very ambiguous about paranormal events. This spook from the beginning is bent on revenge.

Still in search of the focal point for his play, Fawkes is sifting through the archives of Harrow's Vaughan Library when two unearthed names start to align Byron's early writing life with the history of the ghostly figure. Downstairs in the shower rooms, in an atmosphere shifting and nightmarish with candlelight and rats, Andrew has sometimes found the delicate boy in need

of rescue, and sometimes felt enticed toward "an overdose of furtive pleasure," when the story starts to accelerate through a mélange of coming-of-age romance, literary history, and psychosexual boarding school angst. As the encounters grow increasingly hallucinatory, he sometimes feels absorbed into the very identity of the ghost.

The lively rendering of English boarding school life, and an American outlier's view of it (the author was a student at Harrow for a year), extends as far as Cambridge and into a London hospital isolation ward under the threat of a pandemic. But in this era of monstrous figures as the cultural currency for addressing some of life's larger questions—think vampires and zombies and serial killers on TV—the idea of a revenge-minded ghost motivated by little more than the souring of a schoolboy romance seems a bit thin. As the story barrels toward its resolution in exorcism and expiation, it most of all just seems busy. A web search reveals that Harrow's Vaughan Library is real, but there is no student housing known as the Lot. ♦



# Out of the Closet

*New York's museums are mysteriously averse to the New York School.* BY DAVID GELERNTER

**N**ew York's art museums are shirking two crucial civic duties. One is to show major artworks, not just buy them. The other is to serve the community in which they live. Museums in other American cities often do the same, but New York is different: It is still (for the time being) the center of the art world, and it was the

home of one of the most remarkable developments in 20th-century art, the emergence of Abstract Expressionism and the New York School.

On the whole, Europe has America at a radical disadvantage when it comes to art. Only a handful of great painters (and no great architects) who worked before 1850 are decently represented in the western hemisphere, even if you were to lump together every museum from the top of Canada to Tierra del Fuego. But in modern times, the situation is reversed. New York and the New York School dominated art in the second half

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of the 20th century. In this light, New York's unwillingness to exhibit the spectacular New York School paintings that one owns is silly and sinister.

When museums own warehouses full of paintings they have no plans to exhibit, they ought to lend or lease or give them away to museums that want them. More important, New York's museums owe the city and the world an explanation of why Manhattan replaced Paris as the world's leading art center after World War II—so decisively that it still holds the title today, although it no longer deserves it. They owe the world a chance to see for itself what the excitement was all about during the years, roughly 1945 to 1970, in which the New York School flourished and Manhattan glowed with the sheer joy of new art.

The finish earlier this month of the Museum of Modern Art's spectacular de Kooning show reminded New York (or should have) of the failings of its self-important museums. Willem de Kooning was the New York School's most important artist. But good luck seeing his paintings in New York. With the show over, most have gone home to cool their heels in the overstuffed closets of New York's Big Four: the Met, Whitney, Guggenheim, and MoMA itself. (The Frick is a great museum, but owns no modern pieces.)

The New York School erupted like a supercharged geyser in the 1940s. It petered out gradually during the 1970s, although some of its most important artists (Frank Stella, Jasper Johns) are still at it today. New York School art was mainly, but not only, abstract art. What the whole range of New York Schoolers shared on their best days was the clarity, intensity, and power of a sunny sky.

Abstract painting first emerged in Europe during the 1910s, as the inevitable result of the shrinking image-space: The imaginary rear wall of the space represented by the painting had started rolling closer and closer to the front. In 1907, with Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*, space got so tight that the painting's inhabitants shattered like porcelain into cubist shards. Finally the rear wall smacked into the front, and abstract painters crawled cautiously out of their various

wombs to revive the art of pure design on flat surfaces. Meanwhile a fairly obscure painter named Chaïm Soutine made portraits and landscapes that trembled, that nearly exploded, with speechless power.

European abstract art was sometimes lovely, sometimes half-baked, often timid. Its one genius was the constitutionally gentle and soft-spoken Paul Klee. But in 1940s Manhattan, European cubism, abstraction, and a healthy dose of Soutinism laid the basis for a mature abstract art.

Willem de Kooning came to the city from Holland, Jackson Pollock from Wyoming, Mark Rothko (as a child) from Russia. They were the school's



Willem de Kooning's 'Pink Angels' (1945)

presiding geniuses. Stuart Davis (from Philadelphia), Joseph Cornell (from the New York suburbs), and Jasper Johns (Georgia) were nonabstractionists who were also part of the school. Davis the jazz cubist was one of the great colorists of modern history. Johns the lyrical draftsman was the Leonardo of pop art. Cornell built unclassifiable microcosmic shadow boxes that have the murmurous depth, at their best, of Gothic cathedrals.

The beauty and originality of de Kooning's colors (aquamarines with mustard and watermelon, lemon yellows rushing upward in a flood of golden pinks and luminous peach-whites)—and his brilliant drawing, and the sheer power of his personality—the sonic boom when his ideas hit canvas—

place him alongside Matisse, Picasso, and Giacometti as one of the greatest artists of the art-rich 20th century.

New York's was a school of many geniuses; and New York museums own many of their artworks. The Modern currently has just one Pollock on view, and deigns to exhibit one or two spectacular de Koonings and a few Cornell boxes. The Met has no Cornells on display but does well by Stuart Davis, and usually shows a couple of pieces each by the biggest New York School stars. But you never see enough art to understand the school as a whole, or grasp what the excitement was all about.

The Met could easily open a suite of New York School galleries on the lines of (say) its Impressionist or Post-Impressionist or Attic red-figure or 17th-century French knick-knack departments. The Whitney and Guggenheim are smaller, but own some of the most important modern paintings ever to be locked away in closets. The Modern owns loads of New York School masterpieces but is tired of being an art museum and has decided to be a shopping mall instead.

The problem is partly a failure of imagination, a failure to grasp the symphonic power of these pieces when they are allowed to play together. But partly (and ominously), the failure is ideological. Stylish young curators are brought up to believe that art is a branch of academia, that art is argument by other means, that art for art's sake is sophomoric, that beauty is embarrassing. And the unrestrained sensuousness of the greatest New York School pieces makes the stylish young curator's skin crawl. This is a wickedly prudish era.

The solution is obvious. Let someone buy a few adjacent townhouses not too far from midtown. Knock out some walls and make a new, small-scale museum. (The one fault in the Modern's de Kooning show was the overscaled height of the walls in the new galleries, which made enormous paintings look puny.) Let the big museums each lend some of their New York School pieces. They'll never miss them. (They barely know they've got them.) And then stand back and let the art speak for itself. ♦

**"This race has degenerated into an onslaught of negative and personal attacks not worthy of the American people and not worthy of this critical time in American history."**

**—Jon Huntsman, January 16, 2012**

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# Huntsman: Rally Behind 'Scum' Still Seeking GOP Nomination

**SUPPORTS  
'ALL THOSE IDIOTS'**

*Befriends vagrant,  
nearly misses bus*

BY ALLISON KLEIN  
AND JASON WEIL

Jon Huntsman, who dropped out of the race for the Republican party's presidential nomination on Sunday, continued his efforts at unifying the fractured party this morning, speaking to a small crowd outside the Myrtle Beach Greyhound station while waiting for his 9:47 a.m. bus back to Salt Lake City.

"This campaign has become toxic. It is time for Republicans to unite behind whatever vile, sub-human scum is still in the race for the nomination," Huntsman told the crowd of about 17, who either live in the bus station or were stuck there waiting for a bus to Richmond that was running late.

"There are plenty of good choices left in the race," Huntsman declared, as much of the crowd read *People* magazine or nodded off in an alcoholic stupor. "Take frequent adulterer Newt Gingrich, who helped Republi-



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"They're garbage, but they're *our* garbage": Huntsman in Myrtle Beach.

cans take back Congress. Or Rick Santorum, a solid social conservative, who, okay, yes, creeps a lot of people out. But not as many as Ron Paul, who really is a man of principle, even if those principles are bat-[expletive] crazy."

As the Richmond-bound bus arrived, and vital swing-state voters began to load up their baggage, Huntsman made sure to echo his endorsement of the race's putative frontrunner. "Yes, I've endorsed Mitt Romney. Now, is he a fast-talking corporate raider with

a tiny, ice-cold heart of stone? Perhaps. If you shake his hand out on the campaign trail, should you check to make sure you still have your wristwatch? Probably," he said, now jogging awkwardly alongside the departing bus. "But he has the experience to lead our country and to win independents, even if he is a Mormon—and not the good kind of Mormon, like me, but, well, I don't know if you've seen the show "Big Love"—

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