the weekly Standard

OBAMA VS. CONGRESS
FRED BARNES • JAY COST
JAMES C. CAPRETTA & LANHEE J. CHEN

The Spiritual Shape of Political Ideas

BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

How it is that we once again find ourselves rooting out sin, shunning heretics, and heralding the end times

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COVER BY DAVE CLEGG

A 'Hell of a Story': More Obamacare Lies

It was obvious earlier this year that something odd was happening with Obamacare's enrollment numbers. In May, the White House claimed that over 8 million people had signed up for insurance through Obamacare exchanges after an unexpected and much-hyped "last minute surge" in enrollment—but this was only after the initial enrollment period was extended. Nonetheless, liberal pundits high-fived each other, and Obama held a defiant press conference in which he all but pointed fingers at people who doubted the law would be a success. Shortly afterwards, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced it would no longer issue monthly updates on the number of people enrolled.

That's no doubt because enrollment quickly started to decline. In September, federal officials testified before Congress that there had been attrition but that 7.3 million Americans were still enrolled in Obamacare—comfortably surpassing the stated goal of enrolling 7 million in the first year. On November 10, HHS secretary Sylvia Burwell announced that there were still fewer enrollees at the end of October, putting the figure at 7.1 million.

Well, it turns out that's not right either. The House Oversight Committee revealed last week that HHS included 400,000 people with standalone dental coverage in their most recent estimate. In other words, after much misdirection and lying about the supposed triumph of hitting the magic number, we now know that Obamacare fell short of its enrollment goal.

Again, if you were paying attention in the spring, it already looked like the administration was cooking the books, and many right-leaning commentators said as much. Still, liberal pundits had a field day accusing Republicans of being, in the words of Media Matters, "Obamacare enrollment truthers." When it was first announced Obamacare enrollment surpassed 7 million, MSNBC host Ed Schultz actually mocked the doubters by pointing at a screen with the triumphant 7 million number on it, saying, "If that's not the truth, we got a hell of a story on our hands."

He wasn't wrong. Even liberal wonks are now upset at the dishonesty here. Combined with the damaging revelation of several videos of Obamacare architect Jonathan Gruber talking about how deception and a lack of transparency were intentional aspects of the law, it's fair to assume Americans were intentionally lied to about the enrollment numbers as well. It stands to reason that somebody at the White House thought padding the numbers was a risk they had to take. Had the failure of Obamacare to hit its enrollment goal been a talking point two months before instead of two weeks after the election, it might have made Democrats' weak showing at the ballot box even more disastrously bad.

Aside from the dishonesty, the enrollment numbers point to bigger problems with the law. Assuming the initial 8.1 million enrollment figure is correct—a big assumption—the attrition rate is astonishing. Since the enrollment period ended, approximately 1.1 million Obamacare enrollees have dropped their coverage, as have an astounding 700,000 of the 1.1 million initially enrolled in Obamacare dental plans. That suggests people are dropping coverage after they use it to cover their immediate medical expenses—behavior that the law enables and that undermines insurance markets—or perhaps signing up for it and then failing to pay. Another no less troubling explanation is that enrollees are put off by Obamacare's high deductibles and limited doctor networks.

The high attrition rate goes a long way toward explaining why HHS also dramatically lowered its enrollment goal for next year from 13 million to 9 million. Even after lowering the bar, at this rate The Scrapbook won't be surprised if they miss that goal as well. And we'll be even less surprised if they attempt to lie about it—again. ♦

Doctors Yearning to Breathe Free

"Brain drain" is a phrase that first appeared in the 1950s, when London's Royal Society expressed concern about the number of British scientists, engineers, and physicians being lured to the United States. Its concern was not misplaced: The Second World War had essentially bankrupted Britain, and in the wake of postwar privations and the nationalization of health care, the number of British professionals crossing the Atlantic to affluent America was substantial.

Since then, the phrase has been applied retroactively: The arrival of German Jewish refugees—novelists, scientists, scholars, composers—during the Third Reich was a "brain drain" for Germany but an unexpected bonus for us. So imagine The Scrapbook's surprise, if you will, when the *New York Times* revived the term in a November 16 editorial ("A Cuban Brain Drain, Courtesy of the U.S.").

Only this time it wasn't about Scottish engineers taking high-paying jobs in Texas, or Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany for their lives. It was in reference to the Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program, an eight-year-old U.S. immigration measure that puts Cuban health professionals who choose to defect on the fast track to American citizenship. And the *Times* is against it.

Since Cuba is a closely organized Communist police state, it has an educated population with limited opportunities to practice their professions. The typical bartender in a Havana tourist hotel (no Cuban

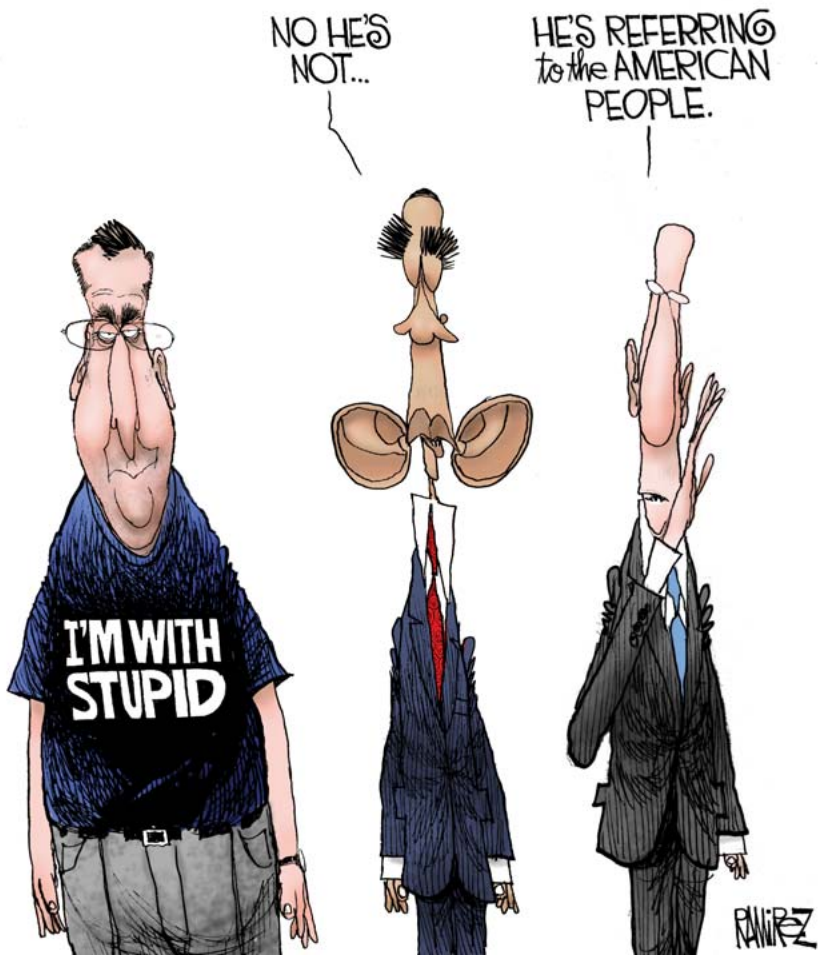
customers allowed) holds a master's degree in electrical engineering. The same is true for the health sciences. Cuba trains a large number of nurses, technicians, and physicians, but the products of these programs are coerced into overseas service to generate foreign currency. Cuba trades health workers for oil from Venezuela, for example; more than a few Cuban physicians are treating Ebola patients in West Africa, and Havana seizes the bulk of their income.

The fact that many Cuban health workers might resent this state of affairs—and consider their overseas labor a form of indentured servitude—is self-evident. Even the *Times* acknowledges that "some doctors who have defected say they felt the overseas tours had an implicit element of coercion and have complained that the government pockets the bulk of the money it gets for their services." Yet the editorial sympathy of the *Times* is extended not to exploited doctors—whose annual incomes, after a recent government raise, are a stupefying $720 a year—but to the Cuban government. The *Times* complains that the Castro dictatorship trained these health workers, and now the United States is offering them a life of freedom and prosperity!

The language of the *Times* editorial is telling. The author of the Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program was the "hard-line Cuban exile" Emilio González, who headed the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services during the Bush administration. And "the Cuban government has long regarded the medical defection program as a symbol of American duplicity."

The Scrapbook begs to differ with the *New York Times*. The program is a lifeline for people who have dedicated their lives to health care and wish to practice their profession in freedom and dignity. It also undermines the coercive power of a dictatorship and illustrates why America remains a beacon to the world.

There is one word to describe those who sit comfortably in Manhattan—well paid, highly educated, free to speak their minds—and would shut the door on doctors and nurses who seek the basic freedoms American journalists take for granted. That word is "grotesque." ♦



Who Didn't He Rip Off?

If you're not already keeping score at home, star CNN talking head Fareed Zakaria has been embroiled for months in a widening plagiarism scandal. The *Week* provides a useful summary. Zakaria's "many ethical lapses have been chronicled by the pseudonymous bloggers @crushingbort and @blippoblappo," with the result that "seven of his *Newsweek* columns . . . one *Slate* column, and four *Washington Post* columns . . . have been affixed with editor's notes essentially admitting to acts of plagiarism. Among Zakaria's current and former employers, that leaves only *Time* and CNN that have yet to respond to the latest charges."

The Scrapbook can now reveal that an apology may be forthcoming. We are in receipt of what look like excerpts from a script ready for insertion into the *Fareed Zakaria GPS* teleprompter. Readers will have to judge the authenticity for themselves.

"FZ: So I'd just like to take a moment, before we wrap up today's show, to address the latest charges of plagiarism that have been leveled against me. To my supporters out there, to those who doubt me, to those who just aren't

sure, I have prepared some remarks—and I assure you, I alone prepared these remarks. These are, completely and fully, my own words, my own thoughts, just me, Fareed Zakaria. . . . To be, or not to be? That is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. My fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. I'm no good at being noble, but it doesn't take much to see that the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill o' beans in this crazy world. There's no liberal America or conservative America; there's the United States of America. When I'm watching my TV and a man comes on to tell me how white my shirts should be, but he can't be a man 'cause he doesn't smoke the same cigarettes as me. . . . I can't get no . . . satisfaction . . . no, no, no. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall. Grape Nuts. I've tried Grape Nuts. I've bought the box, put 'em in the bowl: no grapes, no nuts, what's the story? The only thing we have to fear is fear itself. Camptown ladies sing this song, doo dah, doo" [transcript cuts off]. ♦

Dept. of Corrections

Christopher DeMuth writes: "My article 'A Constitutional Congress?' (Oct. 27) mistakenly said that the 1974 Budget Act was enacted over Richard Nixon's veto. I was following secondary references, and have been straightened out by a sharp member of the Senate historian's office. Nixon signed the bill on July 12, 1974, when his congressional support was crumbling but he was still holding out hope of avoiding impeachment (the Smoking Gun Tape was released Aug. 5 and he resigned Aug. 9). He had strongly opposed the Budget Act, but it had passed the House by 401-6 and the Senate 75-0. It was not the time for a symbolic act of defiance." ♦

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BPA WORLDWIDE

The Dakota Directive

I couldn't make a snowball to save my life. Not that my need was actually desperate, this time around—although it might have been, if my life were a Robert Ludlum thriller. *The Snowball Identity. The Winter Deception. The Coldland Conundrum*. Anyway, even in a small town, snowballs are nice for splattering the garage in a kind of Jackson Pollock painting, if the man had ever painted with ice. Or knocking icicles off the rain gutters. Or using for a cruel game of fetch with the dog. *Where'd it go, Spot? Where'd it go?* But out here in the Black Hills, after the first real blizzard of the season, the snow just wouldn't hold its shape.

The morning after the storm, the snow was six inches deep, and the temperature had risen to a balmy 21 degrees—to be followed by a low that night, unfortunately, of 8 below. This is the Hills, after all. The particular snowball problem, however, was that the humidity was holding around 10 percent and hadn't been especially high even while the snow was falling.

A combination like that makes for great skiing. Alta, Snowbird, Park City—the resorts in the Wasatch Mountains, up the different canyons around Salt Lake City—all advertise their particular powdery snows as the very essence, the quintessence, of winter sport. Light, dry snow of the kind that swirls up, trailing clouds of glory, behind the photogenic skiers as they slalom around the moguls and down the mountainside.

You don't see those skiers throwing many snowballs, though. Kids from Buffalo to Albany could fight off a bear with snowballs made from the wet, heavy stuff that falls in upstate New York. Utah's skiers would make a tasty snack just before hibernation.

Temperature has a lot to do with good snowballs. Too warm a day, and the slush smushes down into dripping iceballs: excellent for breaking a car window but not usually counted as fair in a snowball fight. Too cold a day, though, and the snow won't pack down at all. No snowball fights at the North Pole. The physics just won't allow it, whatever the maudlin elf in the Bermuda shorts told you after a couple drinks at that dive bar in Orlando, homesick for the workshop.

JORI BOLTON

Despite the many websites that (who would have thunk it?) convey misinformation on the topic, the heat from your hands is not what makes the snow melt and cohere. If it were, every snowball would have a hard outer crust holding a loose interior. Rather, pressure from your squeezing is what shifts the snow in your hands just a smidgen up on what physicists—well known for their wintery humor—call a pressure/temperature phase diagram, melting enough flakes throughout the snowball that, when you remove the pressure of your hands, minute amounts of water refreeze to hold the whole thing together.

Anyway, our snow here in the Black Hills is more like the Utah stuff. Thin, dry flakes, with less water in a flake than the rich snows elsewhere. Add in a cloudy day, no sun to raise the temperature of even the surface snow, and I couldn't make a snowball to save my life.

Back in 1986, the Japanese thought they would avoid retaliation from other nations, always a risk in a protectionist scheme, by enacting a product-safety rule that required skis sold in Japan to be thick and heavy in a way that only skis from the out-of-date Japanese manufacturers still were (the American and European ski-makers having found new designs and materials that let them make lighter skis). Caught in a wave of negative publicity, the Japanese government defended itself on the grounds that Japanese snow was "different from snow in other countries." In the predictable international mockery that followed, Japan eliminated the product-safety rule the next year, with the Japanese Ski Regulation enduring as a standard case study in business-school textbooks.

The funny thing is that the Japanese were wrong about their skis; the whole thing was a sneaky ploy by the ski-makers that the government didn't even know about until called on to defend it. But the Japanese were right about the snow. Or potentially right, anyway. I don't actually know what the local snow is like. Maybe the Japanese are lucky the country doesn't have any grizzlies, or maybe it's great snowball stuff.

But the truth is that snow really does differ, place to place and time to time. Call it *The Snowball Identity. The Winter Deception. The Coldland Conundrum*. In a tense Ludlum-like standoff, you have to know your ground—if you're going to save your life with a snowball, that is.

Joseph Bottum

the weekly Standard

With Israel, Against Terror

The *New York Times* editorial board took a break this past week from its usual practice of blaming Israel for being the cause of assaults against her. On Wednesday, after the terror attack on Jews praying in a synagogue in Jerusalem, the *Times* editors ruminated:

> There is no comprehending the murder of four men, including three rabbis, at a synagogue complex in a neighborhood of West Jerusalem on Tuesday. They were civilians, unarmed and at prayer in a religious sanctuary when two Palestinians, residents of East Jerusalem, went on a bloody rampage with a gun, knives and axes before being killed in a shootout.

We're pleased the *Times* managed to refrain from blaming the victims of terror for the terrorist act. But we're a bit befuddled by the *Times*'s profession of incomprehension. Really, what's not to comprehend? The Palestinians wanted to kill Jews. They did so, brutally and savagely. This is not the first time this has happened in recent months, years, or decades. It is not exactly something new in the annals of the modern Middle East, or of the world.

And the particular incitement for this particular attack isn't mysterious either. Palestinian officials have been falsely claiming that Israel plans to eject Muslims from the Temple Mount. Mahmoud Abbas, a man of peace according to President Obama, personally encouraged the violence three weeks ago by celebrating a would-be murderer as a "martyr" who would "go to heaven . . . defending the rights of our people." Abbas's "martyr" was killed in a firefight with the IDF after carrying out a drive-by shooting in Jerusalem. Abbas called it a "vicious assassination" by Israeli "terrorists." From Abbas to Fatah leaders to PA officials, the airwaves and the Internet and the Palestinian street have been full of calls for bloody action. Bloody action is what ensued.

It's not all that difficult to comprehend. And it shouldn't be difficult to see that *tout comprendre* is not, and should not be, *tout pardonner*. Quite the contrary. In this case *tout comprendre, c'est tout condamner*.

The corruptions of modern liberalism are deep, though. For those educated by its votaries and living in its orbit, condemnation is difficult. But most Americans haven't acquiesced in the atrophy of their moral sense that today's liberalism demands.

They comprehend. They condemn. And they wonder why we can't also act.

The latest terror attack took place in West Jerusalem, making clear—once again!—that the goal of many Palestinians is not to adjust borders but to eliminate Israel, getting Jews out of the one place in the Middle East they remain. Given that, Americans and the members of Congress who represent them should ask: What is the reason for further delaying the move of the American embassy to Jerusalem, the capital of Israel since 1948? What is the rationale for the State Department not recognizing Israel as the land of your birth if you're born in West Jerusalem? Why shouldn't at least some of the aid to Abbas's Palestinian Authority be suspended and made contingent on their stopping incitement against Israelis and Jews? Why should U.S. taxpayers continue sending money to the Palestinian Authority as long as that entity continues to provide funds to support the families of terrorists?

For that matter, why should any sanctions on Iran be lifted as long as that regime continues to arm and support terrorists? Why does the administration add fuel to a dangerous fire by denouncing Israel every time an apartment building is constructed in a neighborhood that everyone agrees would be part of Israel if there were to be a peace agreement? Why do statements come from the podium of the State Department that can be construed as incitement against Israel? When will Congress make clear that on this subject, the administration doesn't speak for the American people?

Congress can't bring about "peace" between Israel and its enemies. But it can help bring about relative quiet and stability. One way it can do so is to tell the administration to stop making things worse with the "peace process," which has become a terror process. An obsession with the "peace process" encourages Palestinians and their backers around the world to think that with a little more pressure—ranging from terror to boycotts—Israel can be forced to make concessions. But having pulled out of Gaza, and having tried time and again to respect Palestinian wishes and demands (God forbid Jews should intone prayers themselves on the Temple Mount!), Israel is not now going to make further concessions under pressure. Nor should she.

America has the misfortune to have an anti-Israel president for two more years. America has the good fortune to have a pro-Israel Congress for that same period of time. It should be a priority for that Congress, through speech and deed, to signal unequivocally to Israel and its enemies that terror and pressure against Israel will not succeed, and that America stands with Israel in our common fight against terror and barbarism.

—William Kristol

A Bad Deal Gets Worse

As we go to press, the White House has reportedly offered Iran a deal regarding its nuclear program, a framework agreement with details to be worked out in the coming months. However, even as the interim agreement is set to expire November 24, it seems the Iranians have not responded to the Obama administration's offer. And why would they? The White House has made it clear it wants a deal more than the Islamic Republic does. Under the circumstances, why wouldn't Tehran wait to see how many more U.S. concessions it can extract?

There appears to be compromise on a number of major issues, like the number of centrifuges Iran will be able to keep (around 5,000). Other details, like the pace of sanctions relief and addressing the possible military dimensions of the program, seem to be where the Iranians are trying to force the administration to bend. All we know for certain is that the Obama White House is a long way from where it was a year ago, and not in a good sense.

Back then the administration told Congress not to worry about oversight—it was going to get a good deal or walk away from the table. No deal at all was better than a bad one. Last year, the slogan was "stop, shut, and ship," which meant the Iranians would have no choice but to cease their weapons program once and for all. Now, the deal would compel the Iranians only to disconnect centrifuges, which would leave them in a position to restart activities promptly—and, without a proper verification regime, secretly.

The administration is said to be happy to have bargained Iran down to around 5,000 centrifuges—a number low enough that the international community would have approximately six months' notice if Iran tried to break out. This assumes transparency—that Washington and its allies can accurately assess the state of Iran's nuclear weapons program. However, the revelation over the last decade of secret Iranian facilities—at Natanz, then Fordow—is evidence that our window into Iranian nuclear activities is cloudy. It assumes further that if we could forecast a breakout, the international community would have the will to stop Iran, that it would be possible, for instance, to get a resolution through the United Nations Security Council in a timely fashion. It assumes therefore not only the acquiescence of allies, like Germany, already eager to do business with a post-sanctions Iran, but also the agreement of Russia and China, who in fact would be certain to stall, if not block, action at the U.N.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the preceding conditions are applicable only in a best-case scenario, in which the White House might really have six months to act. It is much more likely that the administration will have no margin of error—which is to say, if we are talking about activities at a clandestine facility, the breakout time will be measured not in months but in weeks.

As David Albright, founder and president of the Institute for Science and International Security, explains, one of the major issues dividing the two sides is the issue of how PMDs (the term of art for possible military dimensions) affect the verification regime. The International Atomic Energy Agency, Albright said on a conference call last week organized by the Israel Project, needs to know the history of Iran's nuclear program. Without that, he said, "we simply cannot understand if Iran . . . has hidden parts of [a] past nuclear weapons program, perhaps even nuclear material. And so the IAEA simply cannot give the assurance that there's not some secret part there unless they understand the history and know who did what, where it was done, and then have assurance that those people and those activities at those facilities have stopped, and they've not been moved someplace else."

In other words, if Iran can already undermine the organization responsible for verifying compliance with the agreement, then it can certainly do so in the future as well. Indeed, as Albright explains, "it would be a lot easier in the future, when there are no . . . major economic and financial sanctions that can leverage Iran to cooperate." Presumably, this is the item the Iranian side is most eager to see the White House concede: to hollow out the verification regime and thereby help Iran keep aspects of its program out of the spotlight of IAEA inspectors.

Maybe the Obama administration was simply naïve to have believed that Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei would give newly elected president Hassan Rouhani a lot of room to maneuver in nuclear talks. Perhaps the White House was arrogant to think that sanctions relief would get Rouhani, as some administration officials put it, "addicted to cash" and force him to make concessions on the nuclear program in order to revive the Iranian economy.

If it wasn't simply naïveté and arrogance, then the White House misled the American people and their representatives in Congress as well as U.S. allies. Either way, the end result is an empowered Islamic Republic and a further crumbling of the American-brokered order in the Middle East.

The White House prides itself on the notion that its nuclear negotiations with Iran will have prevented an otherwise inevitable war. The truth is the opposite. In lifting sanctions and yielding repeatedly to an expansionist Iran, the Obama administration has brought America and its allies to this pass: Either Iran will get a nuclear bomb, or war will be the only way to stop it. Worse, the administration has increased the chances we might get both outcomes at once.

—Lee Smith

How to Rebuke a President

Censure-plus.

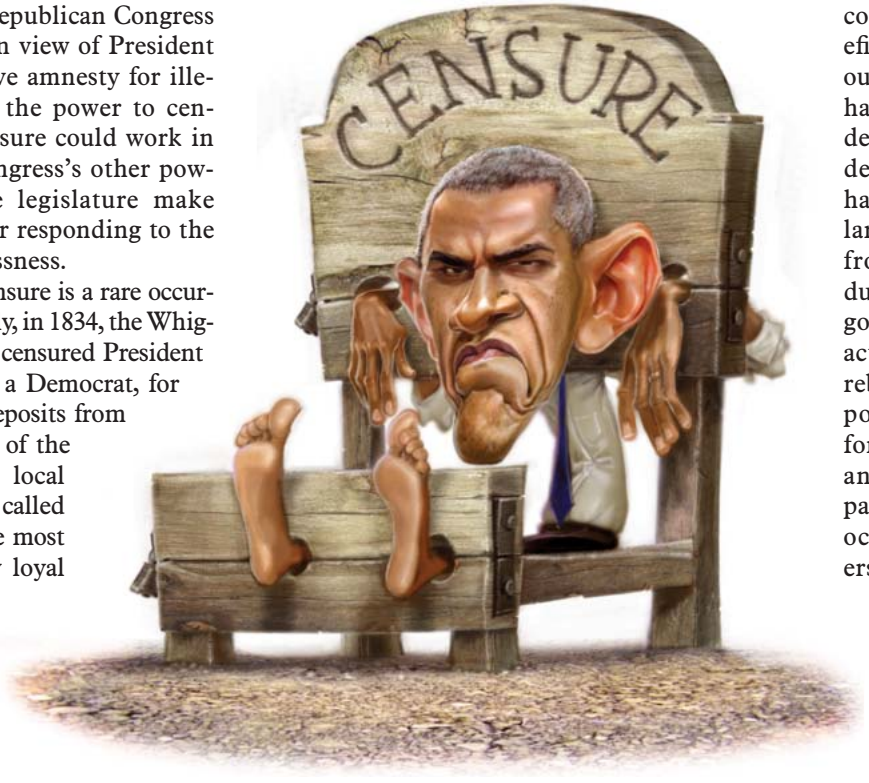
BY JAY COST

For responding to a president who defies his constitutional limits, Congress is said to possess four powers: to impeach, to defund, to investigate, and to withhold confirmation of nominees.

But there is a fifth recourse, which the new Republican Congress might consider in view of President Obama's executive amnesty for illegal immigrants: the power to censure. In fact, censure could work in tandem with Congress's other powers, helping the legislature make the moral case for responding to the president's lawlessness.

Presidential censure is a rare occurrence. Most notably, in 1834, the Whig-controlled Senate censured President Andrew Jackson, a Democrat, for moving federal deposits from the Second Bank of the United States to local banks, derisively called his "pets" because most were operated by loyal Democrats.

Jackson's legal justification was dubious at best. Under the law, only the secretary of the Treasury could initiate such a transfer, and then only if the funds were deemed insecure. But the Bank had been impeccably run since Nicholas Biddle became its president in 1822. An investigation had ascertained that the funds were perfectly safe, and the House had voted overwhelmingly to affirm that fact. Treasury Secretary William Duane, moreover, refused to remove the money or to step down so Jackson could install somebody who would.



GARY LOCKE

Jackson fired Duane, replacing him with Roger Taney without Senate confirmation. Taney's cronies would go on to grossly mismanage funds in Jackson's pet bank in Baltimore.

This series of actions added up to a severe presidential encroachment. So the Senate—led by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster—censured Jackson by passing this resolution: "Resolved, That the President, in the late Executive proceedings in relation to the public revenue, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the Constitution and laws, but in derogation of both."

The censure wounded the president's bountiful pride, so much so that in 1837, Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton, a fierce Jackson loyalist, had the resolution stricken from the record.

The facts surrounding Obama's amnesty of illegal immigrants parallel those of Jackson's deposit removal scheme. In both instances, we see a president circumventing the traditional and proper constitutional pathways to confer a partisan benefit, creating a dangerous precedent. Jackson had no right to remove deposits that Congress deemed safe; Obama has no right to exempt large classes of people from laws that were duly authorized by the government. Jackson's actions were meant to rebuke Biddle for supporting Henry Clay for president in 1832 and, later, to supply patronage to pro-Democratic bank managers; Obama's action is a blatant attempt to curry favor with a sought-after voting bloc and make his partisan opponents look bad in comparison. Both presidents' unilateral measures admit of no limiting principle; the law is abrogated simply because the president finds it politically inconvenient. If this became a norm, it would destroy our system of government.

Indeed, Clay's denunciation of Jackson's deposit removal rings true today: "We are in the midst of a revolution, hitherto bloodless, but rapidly tending toward a total change of the

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pure republican character of the government, and the concentration of all power in the hands of one man." Obama, like Jackson before him, seeks to aggrandize the executive branch at the expense of the legislative branch, unbalancing the constitutional regime and justifying censure.

Censure alone, however, would be a meek gesture. Devoid of substance, it would signal legislative impotence; perversely, it might even strengthen Obama's hand. Something similar happened in 1834 when, after the Senate censured Jackson, nothing changed. The money stayed in the pet banks, and all that Clay really managed to do was offend Jackson's sense of honor. As historians David and Jeanne Heidler rightly note, "Clay won this battle, but Jackson won the war."

Thus, censure should be wielded in conjunction with other legitimate legislative powers.

Recent news reports have suggested that Republicans have a plan in mind. As Byron York wrote in the *Washington Examiner*:

> Republicans will work on crafting a new spending measure that funds the entire government, with the exception of the particular federal offices that will do the specific work of enforcing Obama's order.
>
> Republican sources liken the contemplated action to Congress's move to stop the president from closing the terrorist detention facility at Guantánamo Bay: In 2009, lawmakers denied Obama the money he would have needed to proceed. Guantánamo remains open.

This is all to the good. And a denial of funds could go hand-in-hand with more intensive oversight of the agencies charged with carrying out the president's lawless decree.

In policy terms, this seems an appropriate response, but in terms of public relations, it might fall short. Will the public understand the stakes of the battle if Congress responds to Obama's breach of the constitutional order with a squabble over line-items in the budget for Citizenship and Immigration Services? If symbolism devoid of substance is useless, substance not made vivid by appropriate symbolic acts might leave the people unaware of the stakes and less likely to join the cause.

Accordingly, Congress might consider combining budgetary and oversight actions with a censure, which would signal to the public the gravity of the president's actions.

A censure, after all, is a moral statement—and if the Republican Congress intends to respond to the president's executive overreach, it needs to make a strong moral claim. The Republicans' political failure in the last two government shutdowns (1995 and 2013) had a moral dimension: Republicans never explained convincingly why the actions they took were appropriate. A public statement by Congress akin to the Whig Senate's 1834 resolution could supply the moral link between the president's actions and Congress's response.

Censure, moreover, would force red- and purple-state Democrats in the Senate to take a stand. They could either defy their president or risk their constituents' wrath by letting him get away with his unpopular maneuvers.

During the Lewinsky scandal of the late 1990s, the left-wing group MoveOn.org asked Congress to "Censure President Clinton, and move on." Congress refused and pushed ahead with impeachment. In the present situation, impeachment would be too strong a response, while a MoveOn-style censure without follow-through would be too weak. Instead, Congress should censure the president, then move *forward* with a targeted denial of funds and more aggressive oversight. ♦

Lessons from the 1995 Strategy

Tactics and an agenda for the new Congress.

BY JAMES C. CAPRETTA & LANHEE J. CHEN

The Republican victory in the midterm election was decisive. Now the victors must chart a sensible course for the next two years—one that demonstrates they can be trusted as America's governing party and sets the table for 2016.

The landscape is more treacherous than it looks. The Republican majority is strong in the House but surprisingly thin in the Senate. Even with 54 Republican senators (if Rep. Bill Cassidy is victorious in his runoff against Mary Landrieu in Louisiana), there will be precious little room for maneuver, as a few defections on any given vote would give Democrats the upper hand. Moreover, Democrats are sure to hold together at least 41 senators, and probably more, on critical votes. That gives them the power to filibuster most legislation pushed by Republicans, which can only be overcome with a supermajority of 60 votes. Then there is the problem of the presidential veto. If Republicans somehow manage to get a piece of legislation through both chambers, the president can still kill it. Rounding up enough votes for a congressional override under these circumstances would be the longest of long shots.

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At the same time, there is much pent-up frustration among conservatives that is already turning into high expectations for the incoming Congress. The GOP's core supporters have watched with increasing dismay and alarm as the president has implemented his agenda, often with arguably unlawful executive actions, and they will expect a Republican Congress to put a stop to it. Complaints about the limited power of one branch of government are unlikely to go over well.

So a Republican Congress will have to balance the need to make tangible progress in rolling back the Obama agenda against the very real obstacles it will face in trying to achieve that goal.

To navigate this difficult terrain, it will be important for Republicans to clearly set expectations and articulate their goals at the outset. The first temptation for the new Congress will be to follow the 1995 road map. After the Republican sweep of 1994, the House spent the first months of 1995 passing the legislative provisions of the Contract With America. Although important symbolically, these bills were not consequential in terms of reforming government. The real work in early 1995 was taking place behind the scenes, as House speaker Newt Gingrich, House Budget Committee chairman John Kasich, and the key committee chairmen plotted out a balanced budget plan that incorporated just about every feature of a conservative vision for governance: tax cuts and reforms; major changes in entitlement programs; welfare reform; elimination of scores of programs and agencies; and significant spending reductions.

The idea was to lay out a comprehensive agenda that contrasted sharply with the plans of President Bill Clinton, precipitate a confrontation of some sort, and then use the power of public opinion to force the president to accept a substantial part of the Republicans' program. It was also important that the budget process, and especially budget reconciliation, allowed this plan to move forward in the Senate without any supportive votes from Democrats.

The 1995 strategy did not work as planned, to put it mildly. It took nearly a year for the Republican leadership to draft and pass its agenda. During that time, very little else was considered in Congress, as the entire GOP agenda was wrapped up in the budget process. Democrats spent the year regrouping and attacking the politically weak points of the Republican approach. In the confrontations with the Clinton administration that ensued, it was the Republican Congress, not the president, that suffered the most in public opinion. President Clinton's standing with voters improved dramatically as the confrontation dragged on into 1996, and he won reelection handily over Sen. Bob Dole.

In the end, Republicans did secure enactment of welfare reform in 1996—a major achievement. But

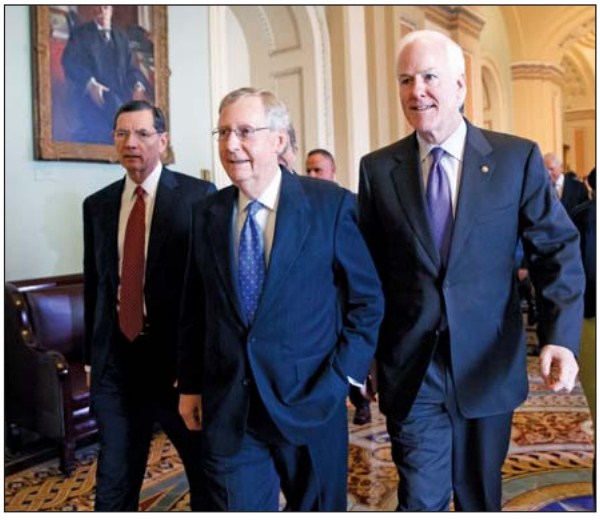
little else from the 1995 reconciliation effort made it into law, save for the creation of child tax credits.

In 2015, Republicans should resist the temptation to pursue a 1995-style maximalist agenda, which would very likely squander valuable time and ultimately put the party in a worse position heading into the critical election of 2016.

A better approach would be to start with politically sensible first steps, and build from there. At the beginning of the year, Republicans should identify straightforward legislation that is targeted, understandable, achieves an important objective, and is a clear political winner. The prototype is legislation repealing the employer mandate in Obamacare. Democrats included this mandate in Obamacare out of an anticorporate, populist impulse. But now, even many liberals are realizing that imposing new costs for "full-time" employees (those working at least 30 hours per week) is a recipe for fewer jobs and lower pay. Bringing up repeal of the employer mandate for a vote early in 2015 in both the House and the Senate would put Democrats and the administration on the defensive. In fact, such legislation would likely garner some bipartisan support. And if it were ultimately filibustered by Senate Democrats, Republicans would benefit from forcing the issue and holding the Democrats accountable for blocking it. Other candidates for early action include rolling back costly and ineffective regulations, restoring fast-track trade authority, authorizing (again) the Keystone XL pipeline, and allowing Americans to reenroll in the insurance plans canceled by Obamacare.

Rather quickly after scoring some legislative victories, however, Republicans in Congress will need to lay out a plan for passing a budget. Virtually all Republicans have called for a balanced budget, so a GOP-led Congress will need to pass a plan that reaches fiscal balance within the next decade. And that plan will need to be built on a foundation of broad-based tax and entitlement reform. Those are the pillars of conservative governance.

But a distinction needs to be made that wasn't in 1995. It is possible for a Republican Congress to lay out a vision for governing in a budget plan and not proceed to consider all of the component parts in actual legislation. The budget plan will be considered in the form of a budget resolution, which does not get sent to the president for approval. Consequently, the House and Senate can write a general budget plan, and it cannot be vetoed. In 1995, Republicans followed up the budget resolution with implementing legislation—called a reconciliation bill. Reconciliation bills are critically important legislative vehicles because they cannot be filibustered in the Senate and thus can pass with a simple majority vote. The 1995 reconciliation bill became the centerpiece of the GOP's agenda, and the main target for Democratic attacks.



Mitch McConnell, center, with fellow GOP senators John Barrasso and John Cornyn

AP / J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE

It does not have to be that way in 2015. Among other things, the Republican budget plan could assume structural reform of the Medicare program, along with other entitlement reforms, but there's no reason these changes have to be taken up and passed as part of a reconciliation bill. The president would engage in his usual demagogic attacks, and the issue would become highly politicized again. It is very likely that the Republican nominee in 2016 will embrace at least the concept of structural entitlement reform, and so it would be better to allow the debate to occur during the presidential campaign—without the baggage of a specific proposal considered in Congress serving as an easy target for Democrats.

Republicans instead should use the reconciliation process to advance targeted budgetary items that constitute fiscal progress, but also pose more political risks for Democrats than Republicans. For instance, reconciliation could be used to make targeted changes to Obamacare that lay the foundation for repeal and replacement of the law. Among other things, excessive subsidies for insurers could be eliminated, the tax on going uninsured rolled back or eliminated, the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) repealed, and states could be freed to pursue creative reforms without the need of a waiver from the Department of Health and Human Services. All of these changes unite Republicans and divide Democrats.

It will be particularly important for a Republican Congress to approach Obamacare rationally. It will not be possible to repeal and replace Obamacare without a Republican president. Moreover, moving a full repeal bill without an accompanying replacement plan is politically risky for the GOP. The public is not interested in returning to the pre-Obamacare status quo, which was flawed. But repeal without a clear replacement plan implies returning to just that, in addition to removing insurance protection from several million people now on Medicaid or

enrolled in insurance plans offered on the Obamacare exchanges.

It will be far more effective for Republicans to use the reconciliation process to begin rolling back Obamacare as much as possible and to enact aspects of a replacement plan that have broad support, such as enabling the cross-state purchase of health insurance or giving states greater freedom to fashion creative health care solutions that lower costs and expand coverage.

Beyond their efforts on the budget and Obamacare, Republicans should also use the next two years to demonstrate their depth in policy areas that traditionally haven't been the focus of the party's attention. That includes passing legislation to make higher education more accessible and affordable, enhancing choice in K-12 education, particularly for kids in failing schools, and reforming the federal government's approach to antipoverty programs. The impending exhaustion of the Social Security Disability Insurance Trust Fund in 2016 presents another opportunity for Republicans to advance systemic reforms that will benefit the party's nominee in the upcoming presidential election.

These legislative initiatives are not a substitute for action on the core economic concerns of middle-income Americans, particularly job growth. That must remain the top focus for Republicans going into 2016. But a robust agenda that addresses other top concerns of middle-class families will go a long way toward convincing voters that Republicans can govern effectively and with an eye toward helping working families improve their standing.

Republicans won a resounding victory in the midterm election in November 2014, but that was just the beginning of their work. To be trusted with control of the White House in 2017, Republicans will need to demonstrate that they have the strategic vision, tactical skill, and ability to execute on a coherent agenda between now and the next presidential election, which is less than two years away. ♦

NEWSCOM

Failing to Rise to the Challenge

What the FDA should learn from Ebola.

BY MICHAEL ASTRUE

Luciana Borio of the FDA, at right, testifies before Congress regarding Ebola, October 2014.

In the froth and frenzy surrounding Ebola reaching America, a surprisingly unprepared Department of Health and Human Services, particularly the Centers for Disease Control, largely failed to rise to the challenge. The FDA contributed to, and continues to contribute to, that lack of preparedness. Both HHS secretary Sylvia Burwell and President Obama's Ebola "response coordinator" Ron Klain need to intervene.

In 2007 Congress passed legislation to spur drug development for tropical diseases. Congress authorized the FDA to award transferrable "priority review vouchers" to any company that successfully developed a drug for a list of neglected tropical diseases. Given the increasing sluggishness of FDA approval reviews, this type of incentive has proven to be popular and effective. The FDA awarded its first voucher under the statute earlier this year.

The new law listed a number of diseases, including malaria, dengue fever, cholera, and African trypanosomiasis. Oddly, it did not specifically include Ebola, but it gave the FDA authority to designate additional diseases.

The FDA response to this statutory change was so desultory that in 2009 Congress directed the FDA to issue guidance to the industry on the statute. The FDA dithered until July 2014, when it finally issued brief guidance on the topic. Despite the concurrent hysteria, the FDA did not even mention Ebola.

What's worse is that the FDA, although theoretically acknowledging that it could approve a drug for a neglected tropical disease based

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on data from nonrandomized trials, essentially made it impossible to do so. Many of the countries that suffer horribly from tropical diseases simply do not have the infrastructure to run classic randomized trials for diseases that spring up on an unpredictable basis; it would also be unethical in many cases to run such trials. In other words, the FDA guidance responded to congressional concerns—and the people who suffer from those diseases—with the back of its rubber-gloved hand.

To be fair, once there was intense public and political pressure to treat public health professionals with investigational drugs, the FDA went to the limits of its authority to respond to that pressure, including apparently authorizing use of at least one drug that had been tested only on animals. The basic science for these investigational drugs was mostly familiar and low-risk, the specific animal data were supportive of safety and efficacy, and the mortality risk for the infected patients was very high. As far as I can tell from limited public data, there is no reason to do anything but enthusiastically applaud the FDA's rare risk-taking for recent Ebola patients.

From there, the story goes downhill. Although on its website the FDA touts in detail the specific investigational diagnostic products it allowed to be used for Ebola testing, it inconsistently withholds under inapplicable legal authorities any details about the investigational drugs it allowed to be used. The FDA won't even disclose how it approved those investigational drugs, although one official strongly implied to me that the agency relied, perhaps for the first time, on the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act of 2013 rather than customary "expanded access/compassionate use" laws, which allow emergency use of investigational drugs. That information, and medical data on safety, dosing, and efficacy that could almost certainly be obtained from consenting companies, would be enormously helpful to medical professionals who must respond quickly to new Ebola outbreaks.

All of the companies making serious efforts on Ebola are small ones subject to SEC requirements mandating disclosure of significant FDA actions relating to their programs; several of them are hardly publicity-shy. Ron Klain, the president's point man on Ebola, needs to cut through the FDA's traditional nontransparency and call together the heads of the FDA and the CDC, top experts at NIH, and the CEOs of all the Ebola companies to work together to create the best possible repository of clinical experience with the new drugs. Any treating clinician should be able to access these data immediately when the next patient appears at an unpredictable time and place.

The alternative to a constantly updated repository is forcing suddenly stressed clinicians to piece together the pros and cons of treatment alternatives primarily from fragmentary disclosures on the Internet. After that delay, they would have to petition one or more companies and the FDA without even being sure which regulatory framework the FDA will use—*or how quickly*. Delays in the first critical hours and days will inevitably cause deaths; yet the FDA stubbornly hoards information that could prevent those deaths.

The FDA should perceive its Ebola-related inconsistencies as a case of *déjà vu*. In the mid-1980s HIV activists pushed the agency into using expedited reviews to approve the early HIV drugs in record time and with far less data than the one-size-fits-all template on which the FDA too often relies.

Once the HIV activists won their war with the FDA, David McIntosh, who led Vice President Quayle's Competitive Council, provoked a moral and medical debate within the Bush administration. He argued, persuasively, that there was no moral or medical difference between patients dying from HIV and patients dying from other diseases for which there were no approved therapies. Despite fierce resistance from the FDA, the Bush administration issued the first accelerated drug approval regulations in 1992. Shortly thereafter, the FDA used those regulations to approve drugs—*drugs that would have been rejected in the past*—for a variety of diseases, including rare cancers, multiple sclerosis, and fatal protein deficiencies of children. It is no overstatement to say that McIntosh's crusade benefited millions of Americans.

Despite the success of McIntosh's initiative, the FDA doggedly continued to undermine those regulations, which caused an angry Congress to pass corrective legislation many times on a bipartisan basis. For Ebola, as with HIV in the 1980s, the FDA needs to look at its choices allowing the use of investigational drugs and ask if it is applying the same principles to less high-profile patients dying of untreatable diseases.

A recent example of the FDA's indefensible inconsistencies is its October decision to demand more data yet again—without clear, science-based standards—for companies seeking approval for several new drugs that should be available *now* to patients with the fatal disease of Duchenne muscular dystrophy. What makes the muscular dystrophy pronouncements worse is that there are signs that they are driven by the FDA's worst cultural tendencies: retaliation behind closed doors, "leveling the playing field" for competing companies by slowing down the company in the lead, and improperly relying on outside advisers with a strong financial interest in the outcome of its decisions. As the new Congress establishes its oversight priorities, this shameful mess should be high on its list.

The FDA should learn from its mistakes. It needs to be more proactive with guidance on the standards for approval of drugs for Ebola and other tropical diseases, more transparent about the safety and efficacy of investigational drugs for Ebola, and more understanding about why randomized trials for rare diseases are often not feasible. When it comes to children dying of muscular dystrophy, the FDA needs to show more of the urgency it displayed when approving investigational Ebola drugs for heroic public health workers. ♦

First a Memorial, Then a Museum

Remembering the victims of communism.

BY JONATHAN V. LAST

Ninety-seven years ago this month, Bolshevik troops stormed the Winter Palace at Saint Petersburg in the *coup de grâce* of the Russian Revolution. As much as any other event, this triumph of communism would dominate and shape the remainder of the century. To get a sense of scale, consider that the great conflagration of World War I claimed about 18 million lives. Somewhere between 40 million and 60 million were killed in World War II. The death toll from Communist tyranny? One hundred million people.

Yet the advent, destruction, and passing of communism has for the most part dropped down the memory hole. There are a handful of museums and memorials in Eastern Europe marking its evils. There are none in America. Washington, D.C., has vast museums commemorating spies, newspapers, textiles, the Postal Service, urban planning—there is even a "science" museum devoted to "climate change." But when it comes to communism, there is nothing.

Or almost nothing. Seven years ago, on a tiny triangle of land six blocks north of the Capitol, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation unveiled America's first and only monument marking communism's toll. Now they're about to embark on a project to build a museum in the nation's capital.

The VCMF began as the dream of Lee Edwards and Lev Dobriansky in 1990. Edwards was a historian at the Heritage Foundation and Dobriansky was a professor of economics at Georgetown. The two men were friends and had been, for three decades, cold warriors par excellence. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the Soviet empire, they decided to build both a memorial and a museum in the nation's capital. In 1993, working with Edwards and Dobriansky, a bipartisan group in Congress crafted a bill authorizing the creation of a foundation to pursue those goals. It was passed unanimously and signed by President Clinton. And thus the VCMF was born.

The Victims of Communism Memorial, Washington, D.C.

D.B. KING

The foundation is a curiosity by Washington standards because it refuses to take money from the American government. The VCMF is adamant that it will never take funding from U.S. taxpayers.

It thus took 13 years of planning and fundraising to build the memorial, and that was with everything breaking the right way. The National Park Service donated the little parcel of land where New Jersey and Massachusetts Avenues cross. The sculptor Thomas Marsh donated a 10-foot-tall bronze replica of the statue inspired by Lady Liberty that the Chinese students erected in Tiananmen Square in 1989. But obtaining the various approvals and permits was a slog. "It's going to take longer than you think," a Park Service official warned the foundation at the outset. And more money, too. By the time the memorial was dedicated by President Bush in 2007, $1 million had been spent.

The list of donors who brought the memorial to life is a charming hodgepodge of America: from the Knights of Columbus to individuals in the Vietnamese-American community, from the Pew Charitable Trusts to the nations of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Hungary. It's a modest little memorial, but powerful. On the back of the pedestal is an inscription that reads, "To the freedom and independence of all captive nations and peoples." As you stand there, looking at those words, you can see the Statue of Freedom atop the Capitol dome.

Earlier this year Marion Smith took over for Edwards as director of the foundation, and he's now focused on the museum. The plans are ambitious: 55,000 square feet of exhibit space near the National Mall, an auditorium to show films, and resident scholars pursuing research and

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writing on communism's legacy. The museum, it is hoped, will be backed by an endowment to pay for operations indefinitely. The price tag, Smith says, is $100 million.

As fundraising goes, that's a heavy lift. But unlike vanity projects—think the barren National Postal Museum or the insipid Newseum—the Victims of Communism Museum will have something to say. "Ideas have consequences," Smith explains. "There's a direct line from Marxism to the killing fields of Cambodia." People sometimes—often—forget this fact. "We aim to be the source of record for communism," Smith says.

This may be the right moment to begin the project in earnest. Smith points out that we are now 25 years from the fall of communism, and it was in the early 1970s—about 25 years after the conclusion of the Second World War—that most of the Holocaust memory projects began. The VCMF hopes to begin its capital campaign later this year and break ground in 2017.

Yet the biggest danger for the project isn't money, but partisanship. The reason people are so comfortable denouncing Nazis these days—when was the last time you heard a congressman call someone a Stalinist?—is that, with a handful of individual exceptions, neither of the political parties in America was an apologist for Nazism. In America, the Democratic party was never pro-Communist—many of the best cold warriors were Democrats. Yet in addition to real, live Communist sympathizers on the American left there have always been precincts of liberalism that can be most charitably described as anti-anti-Communist. And it's important, both for the museum and the body politic, that the Democratic party feel comfortable turning its back on those elements.

"We have a problem in that the word 'communism' is sometimes used in a hyperbolic way," Smith says carefully. "And that's not right, because it's a real and serious thing. But at the same time, there are Marxist professors who teach actual apologias for communism." Countering those Marxist professors while seeking support of Democrats and liberals shouldn't be difficult; yet sometimes it is. Funnily enough, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation's greatest asset might be the fact that it was signed into existence not by George W. Bush, but by Bill Clinton.

Its other great asset, sadly, is the world's misfortune: more than a billion Chinese are still trapped under the rule of a Communist apparatus. The Communist party in Brazil has grown such that it was recently made part of the governing coalition. And in Russia, where the Communist party has tripled in size in recent years, the state is attempting to prosecute Lithuanians who dodged military service during the Soviet years.

In the end, the most worrisome aspect of communism's legacy is that it might not yet be finished. ♦

Gabriel Naddaf speaks after receiving a World Jewish Congress award, January 2014.

An Israeli Priest Defends Israel

The case for Jewish-Christian collaboration.

BY MARK TOOLEY

Father Gabriel Naddaf, a Greek Orthodox priest in Yafia, near Nazareth, made news in 2012 when he publicly urged Israeli Christians of Arab descent to join the Israel Defense Forces. Since then, he's become a lightning rod for encouraging Christians to integrate themselves into Israeli society rather than maintain an Arab identity that typically entails hostility to their country. In the United States in recent days, Naddaf spoke to pro-Israel groups, urging Christians to support the Jewish state against anti-Christian, anti-Jewish Islamists throughout the Middle East.

Of Israel's 1.3 million Arabs, 160,000 are Christians, Naddaf told one Washington audience. Shifting seamlessly from Aramaic to Arabic to Greek while an interpreter provided English translations, he recounted how the Arab conquest 1,400 years ago "erased" the identity of what was then a mostly Christian population. Tall, bearded, and imposing in his black clerical garb, with a large gold cross around his neck, Naddaf urged Christians in Israel to embrace the Aramean ethnicity, which the Israeli government recently recognized.

Many Arabs in Israel denounce Naddaf. His teenage son, who plans to join the IDF, was attacked with a metal rod last year and now has a bounty of $300,000 on his head. Two Catholic priests who joined Naddaf's initiative reneged when threatened, but father and son are undeterred.

Israeli Muslims and Christians are not required to perform national service. But since Naddaf's campaign began, Christian volunteers for the IDF have increased from about 35 recruits a year to 150, 90 percent of them for combat units.

"In the Middle East today, there is one country where Christians are affectionately granted freedom of expression, freedom of worship, and security," Naddaf told his Washington audience. "In Israel, Christians enjoy good education, employment, welfare, health care, and high socioeconomic standing. In Israel, Christians have freedom, which no Muslim power has ever offered us."

The Christian population of Israel was only 57,000 in the 1970s. Its rapid growth reflects the fact that "Christians in Israel believe the safest place for them is Israel," Naddaf said. He urged skeptics to "come and check for yourself," to expose themselves to something besides the "lies and propaganda in the media." Those with a religious vocation have a special obligation to do this, he said. "A religious man needs to say the truth first because he reads and believes the words of God. If he won't say the truth, who will?"

Naddaf explained his vision of Jewish-Christian collaboration in theological terms; his own calling was prompted partly by the heavy toll the Arab Spring took on Christians. "We and the Jews are partners," he said. "Christianity was born from Judaism. Jesus came to continue the religion, not replace it. Jesus was born in a Jewish town, Bethlehem. Our faith is a joint faith with the Jews. Jews were persecuted throughout history, and today the same is true for Christians. Our fates are the same and we must join hands and work together."

Naddaf emphasized that Christians fear Islamic rule more than Israeli rule. He cited the continuing exodus of Christians from the Palestinian Territories: Only 1,500 remain in Gaza under Hamas, and Bethlehem is down to 2 percent Christian. If Israeli occupation were so terrible, surely the Muslim majority would be in flight. "Why," he asked, "are the only people fleeing the occupation Christian and not Muslim?"

Western and global apathy toward Christian suffering is a "historic sin," in Naddaf's view. "I expect the Christian world to support the minority being persecuted," he said. "I expect

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the world that flies the flag of human rights not to support Islamic states." He inveighed against foreign aid that ends up buttressing Islamist indoctrination and terror.

The stakes couldn't be higher. "If terror infiltrates Israel and makes Israel fall, it will be a disaster for the world," warned Naddaf, who sees the present conflict as a "war of ideology and religion" that "wants to make the whole world bend to *sharia*."

Naddaf cited a poll by the University of Haifa showing 75 percent of Christians in Israel support their own greater integration into Israeli society. He speculated that the remaining 25 percent were nominal Christians, uninformed about their faith: "When you call yourself Christian but oppose what's written in the Bible, you are in opposition to Christianity."

Jihadist Islam, which prefers martyrdom to life, cannot be accommodated, Naddaf insisted. "I want to love them, but I won't let them kill me," he said. He complained that too many nonextremist Muslims in Israel and throughout the region are silent. He implored his hearers to help Israel and Middle Eastern Christians.

"If Christians grow, Israel becomes stronger," he said in conclusion. "Don't weaken Israel. Don't boycott. If you don't support Israel you're signing a death warrant for the Middle East and all Christians in the Mideast." ♦

He Never Learns

Obama stands alone, alas.

BY FRED BARNES

Obamacare becomes law, March 2010: Count the Republicans.

There's a lesson from President Obama's first term that he should have learned long ago. It's simple: On an issue that affects many millions of Americans, it's best—even necessary—to have bipartisan support in Congress. Going forward in a purely partisan fashion is bound to cause national discord, increase polarization, and heighten distrust in Washington. Worse still, it means the issue will be controversial for years to come.

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The enduring unpopularity of Obamacare—indeed, the Republican commitment to repeal it—is an example of what can happen when bipartisanship is spurned. In this case, Obama and congressional Democrats made no effort to attract Republicans. They declined to compromise, offering Republicans zilch. They were mesmerized by their huge majorities in the Senate and House.

Now they own Obamacare, including all its troubles. Republicans own none. And the health care law lacks full legitimacy. Four years after it was enacted, Democrats are still suffering politically. For them, Obamacare is a drag.

The same is likely to occur with Obama's executive amnesty for millions of illegal immigrants. It is doubly doomed to be regarded as illegitimate—first, because it stretches presidential authority beyond the breaking point, and second, because it has no bipartisan backing. Obama's action is supported by many (but not all) Democrats in Congress but zero Republicans.

The president should have known better. In 2009 and 2010, Democrats dominated the Senate and House. To pass Obamacare, legislative maneuvering was required, but not Republican votes. So they didn't recruit any. The upshot: Opposition to Obamacare is a thorn in the side of Democrats and will continue to be.

Obama and Democrats repeated the mistake with the Dodd-Frank financial reform bill. It got a total of six Republican votes in the Senate and House—not enough to qualify as bipartisan. At one point, Democrat Max Baucus, then chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, sought to negotiate a compromise with Republican Bob Corker. That effort was short-circuited by the Obama White House and other Democrats, who weren't interested in concessions or compromise. Now Republicans are eager to kill major parts of Dodd-Frank, if not all of it.

On these measures and the new executive order on illegal immigrants, Obama is bucking the rule of

thumb that favorable public opinion and especially a bipartisan majority are vital to public acceptance of a major initiative.

This rule has a long history. In 1965, immigration laws were liberalized with strong bipartisan support in Congress. In 1986, immigration laws were strengthened, again with bipartisan backing, and three million illegal immigrants were granted a path to citizenship.

Bipartisan backing has made entitlements sacrosanct. In 1935, Social Security was approved by a large majority of Democrats and Republicans. Doctors opposed Medicare and Medicaid in 1965, but both passed with support from nearly all Democrats and half the Republicans.

There's more. All the civil rights bills were passed with bipartisan majorities. So was the legislation establishing the interstate highway system in 1956. Federal aid to education and No Child Left Behind had bipartisan backing. But the Economic Opportunity Act, the anti-poverty bill, passed with only 10 Republican votes in the Senate and 22 in the House. Not surprisingly it remained controversial.

On immigration reform, Obama is acting from an awkward position. As a candidate in 2008, he promised to push for its passage during his first term. But he dawdled and failed to propose a bill. With large Democratic majorities in the Senate and House in his first two years in office, the president could easily have gotten it through Congress, probably with some Republican support. Why did Obama balk? The best guess is he feared a volatile issue like immigration might jeopardize his reelection.

However, he's accepted no responsibility for the delay. "Everybody agrees our immigration system is broken," he said in a video on his Facebook page last week. "Unfortunately, Washington has allowed the problem to fester too long." True, it has festered. But it wasn't Washington that postponed Obama's announcement until after Election Day so it wouldn't harm Democratic candidates in the midterm voting. It was Obama.

Nor does Obama acknowledge that he repeatedly told supporters of immigration reform that he didn't have the presidential authority to, in effect, legalize so-called undocumented immigrants. His defenders have claimed he was merely doing what President Reagan and the first President Bush had done. The difference is Reagan and Bush did only what Congress had specifically authorized them to do.

Obama may think he's acting in a noble cause. He's right about that. But he's doing it in a manner that can only make his immigration policy all the more polarizing and unacceptable to a majority of Americans. And he's assured that it won't go away any time soon. ♦

The Spiritual Shape of Political Ideas

How it is that we once again find ourselves rooting out sin, shunning heretics, and heralding the end times

By Joseph Bottum

1. THE RETURN OF ORIGINAL SIN

Every day she must search her conscience. Every day she must confront her flaws—discern the dark that dwells within her, seek the grace to turn toward the light. Oh, she is a moral person, she believes: good willed and determined to do good deeds, instructing us all about the heart's deep iniquity. But even she, Kim Radersma, a former schoolteacher now preaching our bondage to sin—even she still feels the fault inside her. Even she must struggle to be saved. And if someone like Kim Radersma has to fight the legacy of inner evil, think of all that *you* must do. Think how far you are from grace, when you do not even yet know that you are lost and blind.

In another age, Radersma might have been a revivalist out on the sawdust circuit, playing the old forthright hymns on a wheezy harmonium as the tent begins to fill. In a different time, she might have been a temperance lecturer, inveighing in her passion-raw voice against the evils of the Demon Rum. In days gone by, she might have been a missionary to heathen China, or an author of Bible Society tracts, or the Scripture-quoting scourge of civic indifference—railing to the city-council members that they are like the Laodiceans in Revelation 3:16, neither hot nor cold, and God will spew them from his mouth.

But all such old American Christian might-have-beens are unreal in the present world, for someone like Kim Radersma. Mockable, for that matter, and many of her fellow activists today identify Christianity with the history of all that they oppose. She wouldn't know a theological doctrine or a biblical quotation if she ran into it headlong. And so Radersma now fights racism: the deep racism that lurks unnoticed in our thoughts and in our words and in our hearts.

The better to gird herself for the struggle, she gave up teaching high-school students to attend the Ph.D. program in Critical Whiteness Studies at Ontario's Brock University. But even such total immersion is not enough to wash away the stain of inherited sin. "I have to every day wake up and acknowledge that I am so deeply embedded with racist thoughts and notions and actions in my body," she testified to a teachers' conference on white privilege this spring. "I have to choose every day to do antiracist work and think in an antiracist way."

Radersma is hardly alone in feeling this way (except perhaps for the peculiar bit about racist actions in her body). Discussions of the kind of racial privilege that she hates have been much in the news. A Princeton undergraduate named Tal Fortgang, for example, received considerable notice for a student newspaper column in which he recounted the Holocaust suffering and hard work of his family, all to explain why he rejected Ivy League demands that he identify himself as racially and economically privileged. Television host Bill O'Reilly mocked a "Checking Your Privilege" orientation program at Harvard, claiming to be exempt from white privilege himself because he had to find jobs while he was young. And the response from any number of commentators was that Fortgang and O'Reilly just didn't get it. Just didn't grasp the insidious way the shared guilt of racism appears in the form of white privilege. Just didn't see their own sinfulness.

So profound is the sin, in fact, that not even its proponents escape. The more they are aware of white privilege, the more they see it everywhere, even in themselves. "There is not space here to list all the ways in which white privilege plays out, but it is clear that I will carry this privilege with me until the day white supremacy is erased," admitted University of Texas professor Robert Jensen in an essay assigned to Wisconsin high-school students in 2013. At the *Daily Beast* website, columnist Sally Kohn added that

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"racial bias is baked" into American history. "It's just something we all learn to do." She did note the nearly universal condemnation that met explicitly racist comments from the likes of Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy and California billionaire Donald Sterling this year. But all that, she insisted, actually distracts from awareness of the real racism that dwells in every white American heart.

Some of this, of course, derives from the perception of actual economic and social effects still lingering in the long aftermath of racial slavery and segregation. But taken just as a concept, considered purely in its moral shape, white privilege is something we've seen before—for the idea is structurally identical to the Christian idea of original sin. Indeed, the relation involves more than just a logical parallel, the natural contours of any idea about shared guilt and inherited fault. Historically and genealogically (as Nietzsche taught us to phrase such things), there is a clear path that leads from original sin, in which the most advanced Americans once commonly believed, to the idea of white privilege that they now assume.

Campus protest, 2007

In my book *An Anxious Age: The Post-Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of America*, I note that the Protestant churches in early America were widely divided on theological and ecclesial issues—and yet they somehow joined to form what Alexis de Tocqueville would call the nation's "undivided current of manners and morals." We can debate how long-lasting and all-encompassing that central Protestantism really was, but many of those churches would eventually coalesce into the denominations of the Protestant mainline, and the collapse in recent decades of the mainline churches (from around 50 percent of the nation in 1965 to under 10 percent today) remains one of the most astonishing cultural changes in American history.

And with that mainline collapse, a set of spiritual concerns, once contained and channeled by the churches, was set free to find new homes in our public conflicts. We live in a highly spiritualized age, I argue, when we believe that our ordinary political opponents are not merely mistaken but actually evil. We live with religious anxiety when we expect our attitudes toward social questions to explain our goodness and our salvation. The anxiety appears today on too much of both the left and right, but it's hard to imagine a clearer case of the theological origins of this spiritualizing of secular politics than the perceived guilt of white privilege.

From the Puritans to the nineteenth century, the central current of American culture held a generally Calvinist view of original sin as injuring the whole of human nature. *In Adam's Fall / We sinned all*, as the old *New England Primer* taught generations of schoolchildren. Corrupted with concupiscence and pride, expelled from the garden, we lost the ability to do the good with proper motives, even if weakened reason were able to discern what that good might be.

Early in the twentieth century, however, the main denominations of liberal American Protestantism gradually came to a new view of sin, understanding our innate failings as fundamentally social rather than personal. Crystallized by Walter Rauschenbusch's influential *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), the Social Gospel movement saw such sins as militarism and bigotry as the forces that Christ revealed in his preaching—the social forces that crucified him and the social forces against which he was resurrected. Not that Christ mattered all that much in the Social Gospel's construal. Theological critics from John Gresham Machen in the 1920s to Reinhold Niebuhr in the 1950s pointed out that the Social Gospel left little for the Redeemer to do: Living after his revelation, what further use do have we of him? Jesus may be the ladder by which we climbed to a higher ledge of morality, but once there, we no longer need the ladder.

Millions of believing Christians still populate the United States, of course: evangelicals and Catholics and the remaining members of the mainline churches. Demographically, America is still an overwhelmingly Christian country. But the Social Gospel's loss of a strong sense of Christ facilitated the drift of congregants—particularly the elite and college-educated classes—out of the mainline that had once defined the country. Out of the churches and into a generally secularized milieu.

They did not leave empty-handed. Born in the Christian churches, the civil rights movement had focused on bigotry as the most pressing of social sins in the 1950s and 1960s, and when the mainline Protestants began to leave their denominations, they carried with them the Christian shape of social and moral ideas, however much they imagined they had rejected Christian content. How else can we understand the religious fervor with which white privilege is preached these days—the spiritual urgency with which its proponents describe a universal inherited guilt they must seek out behind even its cleverest masks? Their very sense of themselves as good people, their confidence in their salvation

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from the original sin of American culture, requires all this.

In order to believe in white privilege, however—in order to feel the universal guilt of it—we must also believe in the necessary ground for the idea: a widespread American racism, however unrecognized, that is the current form of the same old social sins that gave us slavery and segregation. It "drives me nuts," writes Sally Kohn, that "to avoid acknowledging racial bias in America, conservatives have taken to accusing those of us who point out racial bias as being racist." Kohn's example comes from the reaction to congresswoman Barbara Lee's claim that a "thinly veiled" racism lurks behind descriptions of cultural problems in black neighborhoods. Lee was promptly attacked by several commentators who pointed out that she was exhibiting her own kind of racism, exempting blacks from the cultural analysis that would be directed at any other group.

The trouble is that those commentators seem right almost by definition: It surely *is* racist to single out a particular racial group for special treatment. Or, at least, Lee's comments appear racist within a particular way of understanding racism as the reduction of social, political, and cultural issues to matters of race.

So why does someone like the liberal activist Sally Kohn complain that the conservative reply to Lee is an "insult" and an "Orwellian" abuse of language? Mostly because she too is right about racism. Or, at least, she is right if we accept her spiritualized way of understanding the idea. Even while she writes that she does not assign "blame or guilt or punishment," Kohn sees race in America much as Kim Radersma and Robert Jensen do, with racism shaped into inherited sin: a moral blight in the American mind that "consciously or unconsciously" creates racial bias even in the absence of explicit racism. "Racial bias is like the proverbial water in the fish tank," Kohn points out. "It's there all around us, always, whether we realize it or not."

We could call all this a clash of paradigms, except that mutual incomprehension rarely qualifies as a clash. Consider the opposing views on the Supreme Court. "The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in a 2007 school-districting case. And this April, in her dissent to an affirmative-action decision, Justice Sonia Sotomayor replied: "The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to speak openly and candidly on the subject of race, and to apply the Constitution with eyes open to the unfortunate effects of centuries of racial discrimination." To think otherwise "works harm, by perpetuating the facile notion that what makes race matter is acknowledging the simple truth that race does matter."

Within the paradigm Sotomayor dismisses as facile, it is contradictory to increase race consciousness in order to eradicate race consciousness. But in the 1988 academic essay to which the *New Yorker* recently traced the phrase "white privilege," a key sign of such privilege is that, having mostly erased from themselves the race consciousness necessary for racial slavery and segregation, whites no longer have to notice race in the way that blacks and other racial minorities still must. "One of the privileges of being White is not having to see or deal with racism all the time," as a 2012 manual for training the military's equal opportunity officers put it. And thus the manual's corrective command to military officers: "Assume racism is everywhere, everyday."

Without that faith in universal and pervasive guilt, it would be perverse to require post-segregation Americans to re-create in themselves the race consciousness they were taught to congratulate the nation for leaving behind.

That conservative complaint, however, entirely misses the spiritual shape and religious logic of white privilege in the hands of people from Kim Radersma and Robert Jensen to Sally Kohn and the Princetonians who commanded young Tal Fortgang to "check his privilege." The auto-da-fé—the self-abnegation with which activists confess their own interior guilt—suggests that current use of the idea of white privilege has more to do with a religious impulse than it does with the realities of economic or social formation. The path to escaping racial consciousness really does run through increasing racial awareness—if the idea works the way the idea of original sin does.

"All have sinned," writes St. Paul in the fifth chapter of his letter to the Christians in Rome, even those who have "not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." And so too are we all guilty of racism, even those who have never harbored an explicitly racist thought or said an explicitly racist word or performed an explicitly racist deed. "We have to get away from this idea that there is one sort of racism and it wears a Klan hood," as Berkeley law professor Ian Haney-López explains. "Of course, that is an egregious form of racism, but there are many other forms of racism. There are racisms." Racisms under which we all suffer.

Just as, for Paul in Romans, "the law entered, that the offence might abound," so our awareness of our own racism massively increases when we realize that we are utterly formed as racists in America. And just as, for Paul, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," so it is that only from this overwhelming awareness of racism can we hope to escape racism.

The doctrine of original sin is probably incoherent, and certainly gloomy, in the absence of its pairing with the concept of a divine savior—and so Paul concludes Romans 5 with a turn to the Redeemer and the possibility of hope: "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Think of it as a car's engine or transmission scattered in pieces around a junkyard: The individual bits of

Christian theology don't actually work all that well when they're broken apart from one another.

Which is why it shouldn't be much of a surprise that an infinite sadness often haunts expressions of the white-privilege notion that we must become more aware of race in order to end the inherited sin of being aware of race. If we cannot escape it, then how can we escape it? When Prof. Jensen cries out in his chiliastic pain, "I will carry this privilege with me until the day white supremacy is erased," he's speaking in tones once reserved for the moral solution that only the Second Coming could provide. The strangeness of the isolated concept can be discerned in its unendingness, its never-satisfied ratchet. Discerned as well, I would suggest, in some of the disturbingly salvific terms with which President Obama's campaign and election were first greeted.

Of course, however Christian the idea of white privilege may have been in origin, it emerged in contemporary America stripped of Christ and his church, making it available even for post- and non-Christians. For that matter, an explicit anti-Christianity is often heard alongside rejections of white privilege. At Radersma's race conference, a fellow presenter named Paul Kivel defined white privilege as "the everyday pervasive, deep-seated and institutionalized dominance of Christian values, Christian institutions, leaders and Christians as a group, primarily for the benefit of Christian ruling elites."

But that, too, is typical of much post-mainline moral discussion in America: the Church of Christ Without Christ, as Flannery O'Connor might have called it (to use a phrase from her 1952 novel *Wise Blood*). The mainline congregations may be gone as significant factors in the nation's public life, but their collapse released a religious logic and set of spiritual anxieties that are still with us—still demanding that we see our nation and ourselves in the patterns cast by their old theological lights.

When University of Texas professor Robert Jensen cries out in his chiliastic pain, 'I will carry this privilege with me until the day white supremacy is erased,' he's speaking in tones once reserved for the moral solution that only the Second Coming could provide.

2. CLOSE YOUR EYES IN HOLY DREAD

In May at Lincoln Center, in Avery Fisher Hall, the audience began to hiss—and more than hiss: actually boo—before the New York Philharmonic could even begin its rendition of Mahler's Third Symphony. But the hisses and the boos proved not to be, in fact, a judgment of Mahler. They were a reaction to the recorded pre-concert voice that came over the hall's loudspeakers, asking for cell phones to be turned off. The voice was that of actor Alec Baldwin.

National Review's Jay Nordlinger was at the concert, and as he noted afterward, Baldwin would seem to have credentials appealing to that generally liberal audience of New Yorkers. He's served on the board of the leftist People for the American Way, for example, and he's been a strong supporter of PETA's animal-rights activism. For that matter, a vocal Democrat, he's been on the receiving end of pressure from the conservative side, forced to apologize in 1998 after making an ill-advised political joke about stoning congressman Henry Hyde to death and murdering the wives and children of Hyde's Republican colleagues. Even more to the point, Baldwin has given the Philharmonic enormous sums of money, sat on its board, and hosted its radio series.

But none of that proved enough to overcome his use of an obscene antigay slur to chase off a paparazzi photographer outside his apartment in November 2013, as first reported on the gossip pages of the *New York Post* and then spread through thousands of Twitter and Facebook feeds. Despite his apologies, Baldwin quickly lost the liberal talk show he hosted on MSNBC and became a much-mocked figure. No narrative about media stars is ever tidy, and mixed into his firing from MSNBC were the usual elements of bad ratings and old resentments, together with the network's perception that Baldwin was having a very public meltdown—as indeed he was. Still, this much is true: Alec Baldwin was once recognizable to New York's symphonygoers as the voice of a generous supporter of the Philharmonic. And now he is recognized mostly as the voice of bigotry.

"The modern world is full of the old Christian virtues gone mad," G.K. Chesterton wrote back in 1908—virtues "isolated from each other and wandering alone." And he meant the ways in which, to use one of his examples, the intellectual humility demanded in the Middle Ages reinvented itself as the kind of utter, self-immolating skepticism that his contemporary H.G. Wells proposed for their post-Enlightenment age.

It's a clever thought, developed in Chesterton's characteristically clever prose: paradox as the hammer and awl of common sense. But the description doesn't seem quite right for our cultural experience in recent decades. These are the years in which the mainline Protestant churches, those Tocquevillian props of the later years of the American experiment, tumbled into irrelevance and inconsequentiality. And as the post-Protestant generations

gradually rose up to claim the high places formerly occupied by their mainline grandparents, what they carried with them was the mood and structure of once-coherent ideas of Christian theology, rather than the personal behaviors of Christian morality. What escaped the dying mainline denominations was not so much the old virtues as the old concepts, isolated from each other and wandering alone.

Back in 2005, columnist George Will used a Chestertonian account of mad virtues for comic effect, as then-president Lawrence Summers was being chased out of Harvard for noting the apparent difference in "standard deviation and variability" between male and female math scores. Interestingly, Summers was defended by the popular psychologist Steven Pinker with a traditional distinction between the institutions of reason and the institutions of faith: "Good grief, shouldn't everything be within the pale of legitimate academic discourse, as long as it is presented with some degree of rigor?" Pinker complained. "That's the difference between a university and a madrassa."

But the overwhelming reaction was one of horror that Summers had mentioned in public the statistics that dare not speak their name. MIT biology professor Nancy Hopkins, for example, told the *Boston Globe* that, listening to Summers, "I felt I was going to be sick. My heart was pounding and my breath was shallow." If she had not fled the room, she said, "I would've either blacked out or thrown up," because "this kind of bias makes me physically ill." Later, appearing on the *Today* show, she added that she didn't know if she could bear even the thought of having a make-up lunch with a contrite Summers. And in his column, Will compared Hopkins's reaction to outrage at violation of the old-fashioned virtue of innocence: "Is *this* the fruit of feminism? A woman at the peak of the academic pyramid becomes theatrically flurried by an unwelcome idea and, like a Victorian maiden exposed to male coarseness, suffers the vapors and collapses on the drawing room carpet in a heap of crinolines until revived by smelling salts and the offending brute's contrition?"

And yet, funny as all that was, Victorian innocence doesn't quite capture, say, the annual festival of protested commencement speakers and honorary-degree recipients at American universities. The spring of 2014 alone saw Condoleezza Rice chased away from Rutgers, Christine Lagarde from Smith, Ayaan Hirsi Ali from Brandeis, and Robert Birgeneau from Haverford, all of them declared too conservative (or at least insufficiently radical) to be allowed to address the new and impressionable college graduates.

Plenty of the spiritualizing of American social politics occurs on the political right. In the libertarian elevation of the idea of individual freedom above all or in the tendency of Tea Party members "to be excessively confident in their righteousness" (according to conservative academic Jon A. Shields), one can sometimes discern dissociated Christian ideas. It's in the air, and no one in public life entirely escapes breathing it.

But most of the recent cases of banned speakers and censored heresies seem to come from the radical side of things—unsurprisingly, perhaps, given the left's dominant position in academia and the media, and its claim to possess now the moral authority once held by the mainline liberal consensus. Think of it in terms of the old Christian idea of shunning. Or, rather, think of it in terms of the shape and tone of the idea of shunning, set free from its constrained place in a general theological scheme. Think of shunning as it lives now, in the Church of Christ Without Christ that produces so much of our current social discourse.

Meidung, the Amish call the practice, meaning avoidance. Disfellowshipping is the Jehovah's Witnesses' term. There's a parallel in the old Jewish juridical practice of *herem*, but the Christian form of shunning takes its cues primarily from Paul in his first letter to the Corinthian Christians: "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner." Indeed, we are "not even to eat" with such people. (Remember Nancy Hopkins's hesitation about having lunch with her offender, Lawrence Summers?)

The key lies in the word "brother." Shunning is not aimed at the unconverted; in undertaking the Great Commission of Matthew 28:16–20, Christians should be willing to sit with the publican and the tax collector and the fornicator, in hope of their conversion. Shunning is instead the means by which fellow Christians are disciplined for their public sins and the congregation is kept unsullied by the scandals of its members. It is excommunication, of course, but also something more than being barred from the sacraments—something particularly important in the non-sacramental forms of Protestantism: a removal from the church itself, the community of believers, until remorse and repentance have been demonstrated.

In 2014, an Internet campaign by gay activists successfully harried Brendan Eich into resigning from Mozilla, an Internet software company he had cofounded, for the sin of having donated $1,000 to the California campaign for heterosexual-only marriage in 2008. And while part of the purpose was clearly to punish him, it is hard to deny that part of the purpose was also to define as profane any opposition to same-sex marriage. Profane, here, in the root meaning of the word: *pro fano*, in front of—and thus outside, not admitted to—the temple.

A parallel effort was attempted this June, in response to a George Will column that accused colleges and the Department of Education of mistaking "the ambiguities of the hookup culture" for an epidemic of sexual assault on

American campuses. The condemnations were overwhelming, from the leftist website *ThinkProgress*, to the St. Louis newspaper that canceled Will's syndication, to angry letters from members of Congress. His writing was "a hateful message" that "re-traumatizes victims," thundered the National Organization for Women. "It is actively harmful for the victims of sexual assault when that kind of man writes a piece that says to assault victims, 'it didn't happen and if it did happen you deserve it.'"

To read the column that way requires something a little deliberate, a little willful; Will may have been less than precise, but his meaning was clear enough to a charitable reading—and it certainly wasn't that rape is unreal or acceptable. Still, a moment of imprecision (and the separation of shunning from charity and all other old pieces of Christian moral theology) made vaguely plausible the attack on Will, and so it came.

Of course, if the effort was to shun Brendan Eich and George Will—to exclude them from contact with the congregation—there remains the question of what constitutes the congregation and its temple. We could do some history here, tracing the ways in which the public square itself, in an interesting transformation of the idea of Christendom, became a kind of temple of right opinion in the two centuries that followed the First Great Awakening in America and the Methodist Revival in England: Even as the Victorians grew less and less confident about the old, thick medieval view of the theological foundation of culture, they retained a Christian moralism about social and political life and a strong will to banish sinners from that moralized life. But the point is our current sense of the public square as a temple, inherited perhaps from the Victorians but focused now more on opinions than on actions and entirely separated from any coherent theological system. To shun these days is to take away from sinners any access to the forums of public life.

And the result, curiously, is to turn the effect of shunning in on the congregation: What once concerned primarily the disciplining of the erring brother, keeping him outside the temple until repentance, now seems to concern mostly the disciplining of the community itself by making sure no one dares join him in his sinful opinions. Examining the attacks on George Will for his column on sexual assault, the law professor Ann Althouse was similarly drawn to the idea of shunning. "The argument 'George Will is toxic' works even on people who think George Will makes a persuasive argument," she noted on her blog, for people have "a psychological need to be accepted by others and not shunned"—and thus, even if you agreed with Will, you might reject him "out of a desire to be thought of as one of the good people."

And so we expel the guilty and close our eyes in holy dread. But what then? With the idea of shunning now entirely free from its old theological context, we offer no clear path back for the shunned sinner. The words with which, for example, Alec Baldwin savaged his pursuer, like the scatological attack on Sarah Palin for which the leftist MSNBC commentator Martin Bashir lost his job in 2013 under pressure from conservatives, were so vile that these men may well deserve their public censure. But how shall they atone? And how shall they return from the symbolic place of sinfulness in which they have been set?

As with Alec Baldwin and the like, we expel the guilty and close our eyes in holy dread. But what then? With the idea of shunning now entirely free from its old theological context, we offer no clear path back for the shunned sinner.

Our social and political life is awash in unconsciously held Christian ideas broken from the theology that gave them meaning, and it's hungry for the identification of sinners—the better to prove the virtue of the accusers and, perhaps especially, to demonstrate the sociopolitical power of the accusers. Moreover, in our curious transformation from an honor culture into a full-fledged fame culture over the past century, we have only recently discovered that fame proves just as fragile as honor ever was, a discovery hurried along by the lightning speed of the Internet. Twitter and Facebook may or may not be able to make someone famous, but they can certainly make someone infamous in the blink of an eye. And because sinners' apologies never receive the same publicity as their sins, the Internet both casts its targets from the temple and leaves them out there, lost among the profanities.

And yet, even this broad understanding of modern shunning needs at least one more expansion before it matches the full weirdness of public discourse in America today. If we are to discipline the community with shunned symbols of the sins of wrong expression, then we must also protect the community from exposure to the sins of wrong thought. And so, in addition to shunning, we require new forms of defining and excluding heresy.

I take as a kind of shunning the protests that aim to prohibit heterodox college commencement speakers. But how are we to understand, for example, the San Jose State University professors who in May 2013 thought it would be a good idea to distribute a picture of themselves burning books that express doubts about global warming? Or the

young woman who in June 2014 had herself photographed burning a copy of Christina Hoff Sommers's *The War Against Boys*, in protest against its perceived antifeminism?

"Error has no rights," as Pope Pius IX is often quoting as saying in his 1864 *Syllabus of Errors* (although he didn't, in fact). Or as Pius XII actually did put the thought in a 1953 address to Italian lawyers, "That which does not correspond to truth or to the norm of morality objectively has no right to exist, to be spread, or to be activated." And similarly, in contemporary postmainline America, we are beginning to build a new list of banned ideas and censored texts—a new *Syllabus of Errors* and a new *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*.

As the *New York Times* reported in June, at many colleges including Bowdoin, Vanderbilt, and the 23 campuses in the Cal State system, administrators are removing official recognition from Christian prayer and reading groups, mostly for these groups' refusal to accept non-Christians in leadership positions. This might be taken as covered primarily by the idea of shunning, but it contains an element of prohibited opinions and banished books as well.

Or, to take yet another example in the news (from England, but too memorable not to mention), University College London barred a reading group from campus. The students' Nietzsche Club wanted to meet and discuss books by philosophers who, according to the Union Council, have sometimes been appropriated by right-wing politicians. Which means that reading Nietzsche could possibly encourage fascism and thereby endanger the student body. So out they must go, say the fanatics—another term we derive from *fanum*, the Latin word for temple, the fanatics being the people who refuse ever to step outside the holy spaces, lest they be tainted and corrupted.

"Trigger warnings" were also in the news, when Oberlin College joined several others in announcing a policy that expected professors to warn students when an assigned reading might "recall a traumatic event to an individual." Experiencing a trigger, the faculty handbook helpfully explained, will "almost always disrupt a student's learning and may make some students feel unsafe in your classroom."

What Chesterton derided as the great "Victorian Compromise" required a cleansing of texts, either at the printer or in the author's own mind—a self-censorship that kept explicit mention of bodily functions off the page. The Victorian Compromise was already a decline from a richer Christian view of the body, visible in something like the bawdiness of Chaucer (and expurgated versions of *The Canterbury Tales* were legion in the nineteenth century). But even the faint connection to Christian theology in 19th-century bowdlerizing is lost in our own age's mad self-censorship of almost everything heterodox. We know we aren't those awful Victorians, we congratulate ourselves, because we're so open about sex. But the least uncensored word about what we actually do hold sacred sends us into a tizzy that puts the Victorians to shame.

A banning or stigmatizing of words that might somewhere, somehow, offend someone in the temple of right opinion: This is what "Error has no rights" looks like when it is freed from its old theological foundation and wanders, isolated and alone. This is what the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* looks like today.

3. THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH

There's a usefulness to the idea of the apocalypse. A psychological comfort, for that matter, and a moral clarity. If the end really is nigh, then all our petty grievances, dreary compromises, and sad unfulfillments are revealed as simply that: petty, dreary, and sad; to be left behind unmourned as we enter the Valley of Armageddon. If the sea really is about to boil and a pale horseman rides the earth, then all the ordinary can be brushed aside. And our lives, in whatever brief time remains, possess a deep and satisfying meaning. An extraordinary moral structure and a profound ethical consequence: *My Lord, what a morning, / when the stars begin to fall*.

Of course, we have a name for the sum of those grievances and compromises, the sheer normality of life lived among other people. We call it civilization. Culture, society, the workaday interactions of ordinary time. The apocalypse stands outside all that, and perceiving the coming end of things means an escape from bothersome public order, irritating social manners, and annoying political concession. It is the last, the greatest, simplification. And who, at some level, doesn't want that?

I met a man once over in Wyoming, when my car sputtered to a halt on a nearly deserted highway. Call him "Bob," since he would hate publicity. Whether he's typical or not of survivalists, I don't know, but Bob was a fascinating combination of the most helpful, most capable person you'd ever want to meet when your fuel line is clogged, and a complete and utter nutball.

Oh, he had none of that white supremacist stuff with which those who prepare for the collapse of civilization are sometimes tarred. No militant militia ties, no membership in a church led by a prophet preaching an exact date for the Second Coming. Bob merely thinks that Western civilization is about to fall down, and a sane and competent man ought to prepare, ought to stockpile, unto the day—which Bob has done, I saw, when I visited his sprawling sagebrush ranch the next time I was through that section of the country. He's got fuel tanks to run his four-by-fours, and horses, for when the gasoline runs out. He's got wind-powered well pumps, a basement full of long-shelf-life food, a few years'

worth of gun supplies, and bows and arrows, for when the guns' ammunition runs out.

There was a strangely admirable and clean simplicity to it all—a comfortableness that Bob has found, even though every time he sees a contrail in the sky, he wonders if it's a Chinese bomber in flight for the final battle. The thing is, it just doesn't bother him all that much. He's made his peace with the failure of America. "The Founding Fathers had a vision," he told me with a great and equable acceptance. "The churches, the citizens: After the Revolution, there was this picture of what could be. But we've run through all that and come to the end of it." Economically, politically—morally, for that matter—it was bound to happen.

And maybe Bob is right that the collapse is barreling down upon us. Who can say that it isn't? But we have to admit that we've seen all this before—if not the specific content, then at least the shape of the idea. The fall of Rome, and thus the fragility of civilization, has been a small but persistent ghost in the American imagination since the Founders themselves. And even more, there has been a sense in the American imagination, straight out of the Book of Revelation, that maybe we deserve this. That maybe we need the fire to come and scour the land of all its filth and iniquity, all its dithers and vacillations, all its failures to see and act on what matters.

Michigan global warming protesters, 2007

So much of our social discourse—so much of the spiritual shape of our political ideas—is an inheritance from the consensus of the Protestant churches. And the notion of a looming apocalypse is no exception to the rule that, even without much explicit Christianity, the public square is filled with once-Christian ideas. As it happens, the search for immediate application of the Book of Revelation—the fretful reading of the signs of the times—was found more often in the Bible churches of the radical Reformation than in the magisterial Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican denominations that would form the nation's Protestant mainline. And perhaps that's why, even in its secularized, post-mainline form, the apocalypse has tended to remain on the fringes of national politics.

Still, the quick impatience of the apocalyptic mood, the exasperation, the demand that we step outside the ordinary and act now on what matters: You can see some of it in the online writings of Bob's fellow survivalists, who respond with individual preparation. And you can see it as well in the even larger set of modern millenarians: the radical environmentalists, insisting on immediate public action. They are, in their way, Bob's mirror image. As the extreme survivalists are out on the edges of the right, so the extreme environmentalists are out on the edges of the left.

We must "set the world on a fundamentally new course," Bill McKibben wrote in the June 5 issue of *Rolling Stone*, for the cataclysm is upon us. The future will not wait, the hard rain will not be put off, and we have no time for the ordinary luxuries of cultural indecision, social debate, and political compromise. If a dictatorship of activist scientism is what it takes to halt 300 years of the Industrial Revolution's destruction of nature, then so be it.

A number of activists reject such attempts to sell the apocalypse, however worried they are about climate change. "If you were looking for ways to increase public skepticism about global warming," the environmentalists Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger warned this April in the *New York Times*, "you could hardly do better" than to rage about the end of the world. Such doom-saying, Nordhaus and Shellenberger insist, actually lessens public confidence in the honesty of the kind of serious and effective climate policy they think we need.

Nevertheless, the literature of those screaming for repentance seems endless. Human beings are a cancer on the Earth, they tell us. The rising tide will flood our cities, and the rising heat will burn our farms. As Wen Stephenson wrote for the *Nation*'s website on Earth Day 2014, "Stop pretending that the crisis can be 'solved,' that the planet can be 'saved,' that business more-or-less as usual—what progressives and environmentalists have been doing for forty-odd years and more—is morally or intellectually tenable." Stephenson's piece might be taken as the archetype of all the apocalyptic emotion of recent times. "Let go of the pretense," he shouts, "that 'environmentalism' as we know it . . . comes anywhere near the radical response our situation requires."

And maybe Stephenson is right that the collapse is barreling down upon us. Who can say that it isn't? But I always find myself doubtful, always suspect the disingenuous, when people who clearly desire a particular outcome insist that a contemporary situation somehow uniquely mandates the changes they would have wanted anyway. It's a species of what statisticians call confirmation bias. If you despise the busy industry and messy artificiality of modern times—if you hunger for a return to a Rousseauian state of benign nature and the innocence before the Fall—then you're

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probably deceiving even yourself when you claim that somehow, this time, people who think the way you do must be put in charge of everything.

Besides, we really have seen all this before, in both its Christian shape and in the pressing anxiety that takes every event in the world as somehow encapsulating the dread augury. To read the pages of the Communists' *Daily Worker*—from the 1950s all the way back to the 1919 "Emergency National Convention" at which the newspaper began—is to see the Comintern's urgent sense that every passing political moment was fraught with significance for the coming revolution, and every small turn of industrial policy was a violent threat to the existence of the working class.

Of course, the Communist party was often described by its detractors in those days as a sort of mongrel religion: a re-creation in Soviet Russia of a fantasy of what the medieval church would have been like if it had possessed absolute rule. We had the scholasticism of Marxist texts and the party theoreticians as its theologians. We had the cardinals in the Kremlin and the return of the Inquisition in the secret police and Moscow show trials.

So, for that matter, is environmentalism often derided by skeptics of global warming as an ersatz religion. It has a clerisy of well-connected advocates, the mockers note. A willingness to treat even the least deviation as a sign of heresy. Choirs of true believers who will sing *Amen!* at the end of every sermon. A raging avowal of the wrongness of doubt.

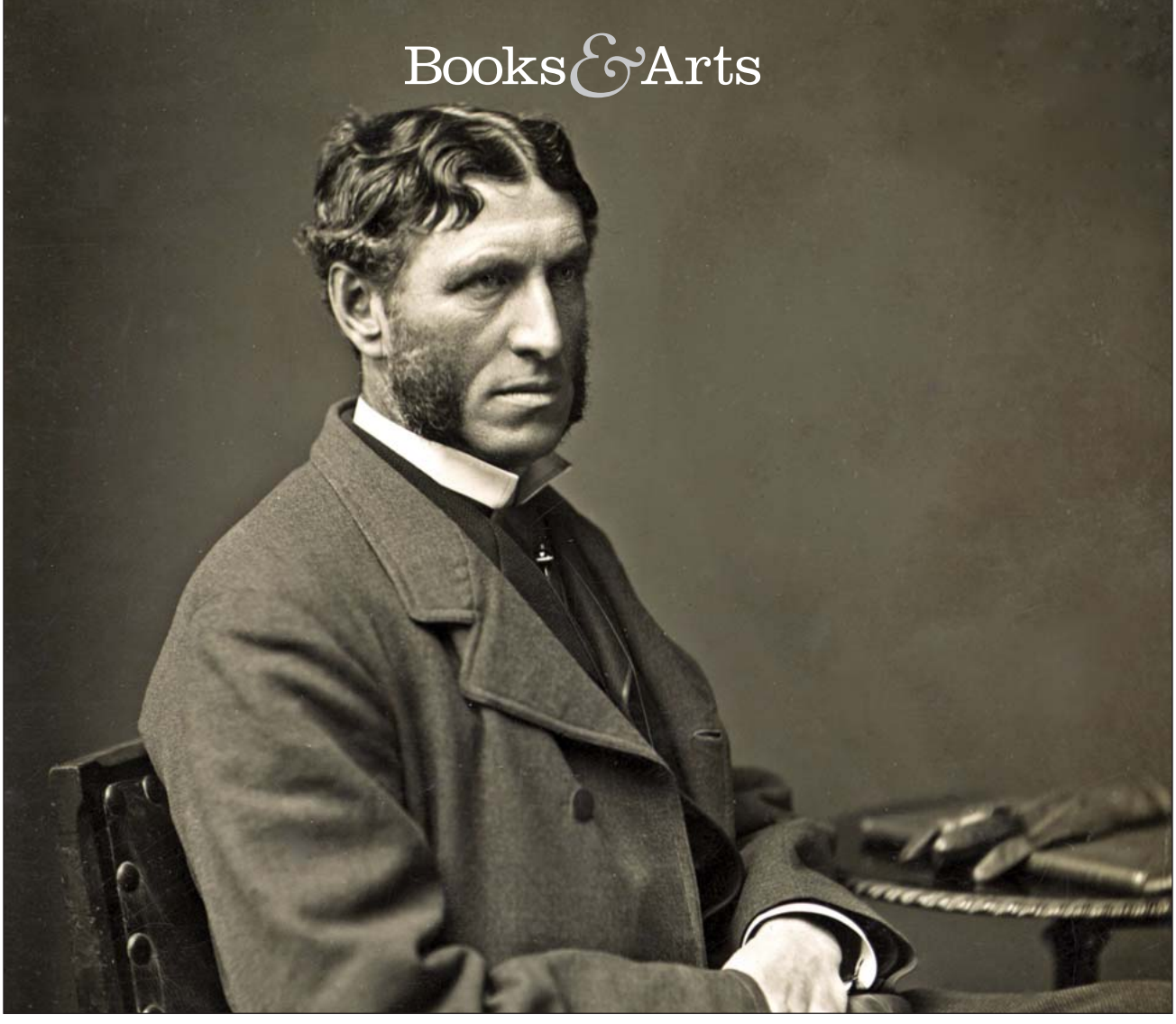
I wonder, though, whether these global-warming critics have seen all the way to the bottom of their analogy—for much of radical environmentalism has, in fact, the shape of a Christian worldview. Or, at least, what a Christian worldview would be if it lacked any role for the gospel. This is a supernaturally charged history: We have an Eden, a paradise of nature—until the Fall, with the emergence of sentient human beings as polluters. We then have a long history of the gradually increasing immorality of smog and litter, all aiming toward the apocalypse of the final injuring of the Earth beyond repair. Strong environmentalism is, in essence, an unknowing recapitulation of St. Augustine. Or, at least, the dark half of the theologian: what Augustinianism would look like if you stripped away the idea that there might be salvation. What Augustinianism would look like if you had just the human stain, without human redemption. Environmentalism often comes to us these days as a political idea with a particular spiritual shape. It comes to us as Christianity without Christ.

Interestingly, as a political idea, the more apocalyptic forms of environmentalism often verge on the brutal. On the *Powerline* website in recent months, the conservative commentator Steven Hayward has been collecting examples of rhetorical extremism from climate alarmists. Dozens and dozens of them. He notes, for example, that Lawrence Torcello, a professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology, is only one of many who have demanded legal prosecution of those who oppose the climate change agenda. "My argument probably raises an understandable, if misguided, concern regarding free speech," Torcello admitted this March, but nonetheless, "the charge of criminal and moral negligence ought to extend to all activities of the climate deniers." Following Torcello's lead, Adam Weinstein made it explicit on the *Gawker* website: "The purulent pundits, paid sponsors, and corporate grifters" must be stopped. "They should face jail. They should face fines. They should face lawsuits."

And Torcello and Weinstein are right enough, aren't they? Right, at least, within the circle cast by their apocalyptic lights. An impending disaster really would justify imprisoning our opponents, running roughshod over democracy, and making things actually happen for a change—because . . . well, because it's just so damn important. Literally damn important. And because an apocalyptic age stands outside culture, society, and ordinary life. "These are crimes. They are crimes against the Earth, and they are crimes against humanity," as Wen Stephenson writes in his jeremiad, and "our global crisis—not merely environmental but moral and spiritual—is fundamental: it strikes to the root of who we are. It's a radical situation, requiring a radical response. Not merely radical in the sense of ideology, but a kind of radical necessity."

Perhaps it's unfair to subject Stephenson to this kind of close reading when he doesn't seem to have given his column all that close a writing, but his Earth Day essay is so quotable, so fulfilling of its millenarian kind. *Let us not talk falsely now, the hour is getting late*, as Bob Dylan sang back in 1967, in one of his most apocalyptic songs. "Stop lying to yourselves, and to your children," Wen Stephenson's version runs. "Any discussion of the situation must begin by acknowledging the science and the sheer lateness of the hour." Indeed, he writes, as though he were St. John on the Isle of Patmos, "I am engaged in a struggle—a struggle—for the fate of humanity and of life on Earth."

But then, it's always the fate of humanity that is at stake when the prophet calls us to repentance, and an apocalypse always provides to its diviners and their listeners a sharp and wonderful clarity. In this, at least—in the shape of their shared idea—the radical environmentalists are brother to the radical survivalists: co-congregants, co-believers in the Christian apocalypse, albeit without much Christianity. Armageddon comes to us these days as an idea, a powerful moral intuition, that has finally broken free from its old theological constraints to wander, isolated and alone. It is the last, the greatest, simplification of all the messiness of life. And who, at some level, doesn't want that? ♦



Matthew Arnold, circa 1877

HULTON ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES

Culture's Champion

On rereading 'Culture and Anarchy.' BY GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

It was by chance that my first reading of *Culture and Anarchy* with my students coincided with the centenary of its publication. But it was not by chance that I chose to read it then, in 1969, at the height of the culture war. Anticipating that war by more than a century, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) wrote a passionate defense of culture—high culture, we would now say—against the prevailing low culture that he saw as tantamount to "anarchy."

Arnold's culture is high indeed. It is nothing less than the pursuit of "sweetness and light" (Jonathan Swift's epigram for beauty and intelligence), "total perfection," "the best which has been thought and said," and the "right reason" that comes from the "best self" rather than the "ordinary self."

His countrymen, unfortunately, were animated by quite the opposite principle: "doing as one likes" and "saying what one likes." Perhaps out of deference to John Stuart Mill, Arnold did not cite *On Liberty* to that effect (the book had appeared, to great acclaim, only a decade earlier). Instead, he quoted a Mr. Roebuck, a Liberal member of Parliament who was fond of asking, "May not every man in England say what he likes?"—asserting that this was the source of England's greatness. To which Arnold replied that culture requires that "what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying—has

Gertrude Himmelfarb is the author, most recently, of The People of the Book: Philosemitism in England, from Cromwell to Churchill.

good in it, and more good than bad." Anything short of that is an invitation to anarchy, for it lacks "the much wanted principle" of authority that governs the culture as well as society.

Culture and Anarchy (1869) was not well received. One critic mocked the author as the "prophet of culture," another as the creator of a "new religion called Culture . . . a sort of Eleusinian mystery," still another as an egotist who wanted to "make the world a more agreeable place for Mr. Matthew Arnold to live in by multiplying images of Mr. Matthew Arnold." Rejecting his conception of culture, they also denied the charge of anarchy—denied, in effect, that there was a culture war.

A century later, my students, in the midst of their culture war, recognized in Arnold's culture the oppressive great-books mentality they were battling in the university. So far from rejecting the charge of anarchism, the more militant of them accepted it. What Arnold praised as authority, they denounced as authoritarian, and what he decried as anarchy, they took to be liberty at its best—the perfect liberty that was the antithesis of the perfect culture he celebrated.

It is almost with nostalgia that I now reread *Culture and Anarchy*—nostalgia for the old culture war that had not yet confronted such truly subversive forces as multiculturalism, postmodernism, deconstructionism, and the like. An Arnoldite, like myself, confesses to having lost that war. But a new reading raises the prospect of another war that is more ominous.

If *Culture and Anarchy* may be read as "culture vs. anarchy," so "Hebraism and Hellenism" (the title of one chapter) may be read as "Hebraism vs. Hellenism." The antithesis seems to be unambiguous: "The governing idea of Hellenism is *spontaneity of consciousness*; that of Hebraism, *strictness of conscience*" (italics in original). "The uppermost idea with Hellenism is to see things as they really are; the uppermost idea with Hebraism is conduct and obedience." "The Greek quarrel with the body and its desires is that they hinder right thinking; the Hebrew quarrel with them is that they hinder right acting." Hellenism is comfortable in the "pursuit or attainment of perfection"; Hebraism, obsessed with sin, sees only "the difficulties which oppose themselves" to perfection.

This is a powerful theme, and a disturbing one, especially now, when England is experiencing a recurrence of antisemitism. In this context, even the word "Hebraism" may be suspect, all the more when it is pitted against that worthy cause, Hellenism. Yet a more careful reading may allay that anxiety, for the "Hebraism and Hellenism" of this chapter is not analogous to the "culture and anarchy" of the title. Hebraism may be criticized for being insufficiently appreciative of culture, but not, surely, for being anarchic. A creed whose "uppermost idea" is "conduct and obedience," "right acting," and "strictness of conscience" can hardly be accused of "doing and saying what one likes."

Matthew Arnold replied that culture requires that 'what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying—has good in it, and more good than bad.'

"Hebraism and Hellenism," it turns out, are just that—not "Hebraism *vs.* Hellenism" but "Hebraism *and* Hellenism." The two are not so much opposed, Arnold points out, as "divergent," animated by "different principles" but having the "same goal" and "aiming at a like final result." Both are "*contributions* to human development—august contributions, invaluable contributions." Both "arise out of the wants of human nature, and address themselves to satisfying those wants." The aim of both is the same: "man's perfection or salvation." Moreover, it is by alternating the two, "a man's intellectual and moral impulses," that "the human spirit proceeds; and each of these two forces has its appointed hours of culmination and seasons of rule."

The last proviso, about the "appointed hours" and "seasons," is at the heart of the matter, for this is what made the issue urgent for Arnold. "Now, and for us," his preface asserts, "it is a time to Hellenise, and to praise knowing; for we have Hebraised too much, and have over-valued doing." Yet this was followed immediately by the cautionary note: "But the habits and discipline received from Hebraism remain for our race an eternal possession; and as humanity is constituted, one must never assign to them the second rank today, without being prepared to restore them to the first rank tomorrow."

The final chapter even foresees a time when the two great principles would be in accord.

> For is not this the right crown of the long discipline of Hebraism, and the due fruit of mankind's centuries of painful schooling in self-conquest, . . . that when in the fullness of time it has reason and beauty offered to it . . . it should at last walk by the true light with the same staunchness and zeal with which it formerly walked by its imperfect light? And thus man's two great natural forces, Hebraism and Hellenism, will no longer be dissociated and rival, but will be a joint force of right thinking and strong doing to carry him on towards perfection. This is what the lovers of culture may perhaps dare to augur for such a nation as ours.

This is an auspicious conclusion, and a reassuring one. So far from lending itself, as I had feared, to anything like antisemitism, *Culture and Anarchy* might almost take its place in the annals of philosemitism.

We may also be encouraged, after yet another rereading, to reconsider the culture war itself. Perhaps that war has not been irrevocably lost, perhaps postmodernism has played itself out, and culture, Arnold's culture, will capture the imagination and enliven the spirit of a new generation. ♦

B&A

Her Fifteen Minutes

The truncated, self-destructive history of Valerie Solanas. **BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN**

Valerie Solanas (1936-1988) is remembered by most people only as a name—the name of the woman who shot Andy Warhol. On the day of the shooting, June 3, 1968, Warhol was at the pinnacle of his fame, first as a pop artist, and then, as the 1960s progressed, a cinematic auteur. Warhol's innumerable home-movie-style films, hastily and sloppily put together at his Manhattan studio, the Factory, and starring the beautiful and minimally talented hangers-on of both sexes, acquired a cult following among trendsters of the time.

Solanas, who had had a bit part as a butch lesbian (more or less herself) in one of those films, *I, a Man* (1968), was in a running dispute with Warhol, who she claimed had either stolen or lost a play she had written called *Up Your Ass*, the sole manuscript of which she had turned over to him in the hope that he would produce it. At the time, her main claim to fame—if it could be called such—was *SCUM Manifesto*, a violently antimale tract that she had worked on for several years and finally self-published via mimeograph in 1967. "SCUM" was said to be an acronym for Society for Cutting Up Men—although Solanas repeatedly denied it. Maurice Girodias, whose Olympia Press had published such *succès de scandale* as Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* and the American edition of *The Story of O*, published a commercial edition of *SCUM Manifesto* in early 1968 that Solanas complained made substantial changes to the text that she had never authorized.

She invaded the Factory in the late afternoon of June 3 armed with a .32 Beretta automatic, plus a .22 Colt revolver as backup. (She had earlier shown up at Girodias's office with the guns, but he was not around.) She fired three shots at Andy Warhol. The first two were misses, but the third bullet passed through his abdomen, severely damaging most of his internal organs and nearly killing him. She aimed two more shots at Mario Amaya, an art magazine editor who was meeting with Warhol: The first shot missed him, and the second, entering just above his hip, did only minor damage. Solanas fled the building but turned herself in to the police a few hours later. Within hours, a grand jury convened to indict her on two counts of attempted murder, plus some related charges, including illegal possession of a firearm.

Her photograph was plastered onto the front page of nearly every newspaper in New York and elsewhere, and it probably would have stayed there for weeks were it not for Robert Kennedy's assassination three days later. Most people promptly forgot all about Valerie Solanas. In any event, a judge deemed her too unstable to stand trial, and she disappeared for more than a year into a series of jail wards and public (mental) hospitals. Paranoid schizophrenia seemed to be the diagnosis.

Finally, the following June, a lawyer negotiated a three-year prison sentence for Solanas, with credit for time served, on a single charge of assault with intent to harm. "You get more for stealing a car!" musician Lou Reed, a friend of Warhol, shouted when the judge read out the sentence. (Warhol himself had declined to testify.) By this time, Solanas's 15 minutes of fame—the phrase, of course, is of Warhol's coinage—had long expired, and the *New York Times* relegated the news of her sentencing to its back pages. Those were the early days of "women's liberation," as it was called at the time, but even the feminists who had made her a heroine in their war against patriarchy ultimately rejected her, largely because she had managed to alienate most of them with her abrasive and out-of-control personality.

This is the first full-length biography of the enigmatic, deeply troubled, and mostly ignored 1960s figure. Author Breanne Fahs is the director of the Feminist Research on Gender and Sexuality Group at Arizona State University—a title that made me groan, although not so much as at the titles of her previous volumes, *Performing Sex* (2011) and *The Moral Panics of Sexuality* (2013). And I wish I didn't know that Fahs is the professor at Arizona State who recently gained notoriety by offering extra credit to her male students for shaving off their body hair and to her female students for growing theirs.

Still, she has produced an admirably researched (including interviews with surviving Factory alumni and Solanas family members), mostly ideology-free, and touchingly sympathetic portrait of a woman whose ability to cope with reality was compromised from the very beginning and steadily deteriorated through her 52 years of a hard life made exponentially harder by her talent for self-destruction. In Fahs's retelling, Solanas was neither quite the lesbian nor quite the man-hater that she seemed to be—she had several loyal boyfriends—but she certainly was insane, following a classic schizophrenic pattern that began in adolescence.

Valerie Solanas was born in Ventnor City, on the Jersey Shore. Her father was a bartender and a handsome devil; her mother was a dental assistant and very pretty. (Solanas herself

Valerie Solanas
The Defiant Life of the Woman Who Wrote SCUM (and Shot Andy Warhol)
by Breanne Fahs
Feminist Press, 352 pp., $22.95

Charlotte Allen is a frequent contributor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

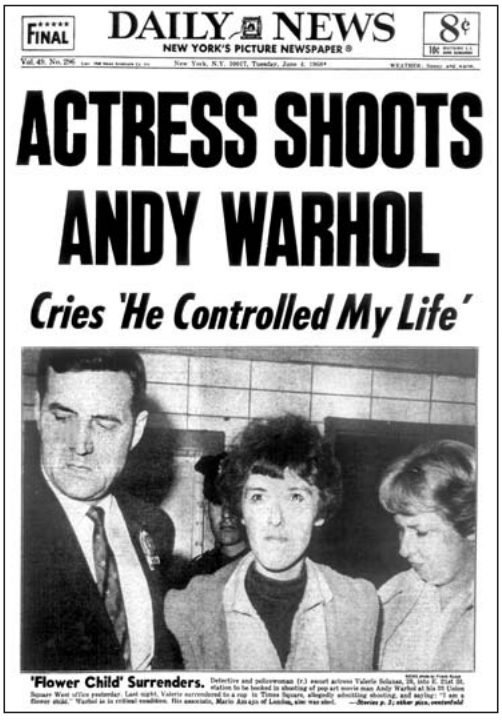
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES

was quite good-looking, despite her best efforts to look otherwise in adulthood via mannish jeans, unkempt close-cropped hair, and an ugly newsboy hat that won her the sobriquet "Barge Cap" among the fastidious Factory set.) Their marriage didn't last, thanks to Louis Solanas's drinking and taste for pornography. The couple separated when Valerie was 4, and she and her younger sister lived, off and on, with their mother (plus boyfriends and, eventually, two subsequent husbands) and various other relatives. Her sister later wrote in a memoir that their father had sexually molested Valerie, but another relative interviewed by Fahs categorically denied this, and Solanas remained close to her father, at least by correspondence.

Solanas's childhood and adolescence were chaotic, to say the least. She excelled academically and read voraciously but also skipped school, shoplifted, assaulted a nun at a Roman Catholic institution she briefly attended, and had gotten pregnant twice by the time she reached age 15. Her mother raised one of the children, a daughter, pretending that the girl was Valerie's sister; the other, a boy, was adopted by a couple in Washington, D.C., who agreed to let Valerie live with them and to pay her tuition at the University of Maryland.

College was more of the same. Majoring in psychology, Valerie made the honor society and worked for one of her professors in an experimental animal laboratory. She also fought—physically—first with her dormitory mates and then with her roommates in an off-campus apartment. She supported herself by working off and on as a cocktail waitress and a prostitute. Her love life incorporated both women and men. It also included a six-month marriage to a Greek classmate who wanted to become an American citizen.

At the same time, she began to display a distinctive talent as a writer. Her specialty was lengthy, witty letters to the *Diamondback*, the Maryland student newspaper, that showed off her nascent feminism with a Jane Austen-esque flair: "Do I detect a touch of male arrogance and egotism in the astute report which Mr. Parr so thoughtfully prepared for us?" she wrote in response to a classmate's suggestion that University of Maryland women were mainly interested in getting their MRS degrees. The letters won her a weekly slot on a local radio chat show in which she dished out irreverent advice to callers with dating and marriage problems.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DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER

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ACTRESS SHOOTS ANDY WARHOL

Cries 'He Controlled My Life'

'Flower Child' Surrenders.

After graduating in 1958, Solanas's life became more disjointed. She entered and dropped out of two different graduate programs. She hitchhiked restlessly across the country and back. Then she decided to become a writer and, in 1962, moved to New York.

Around that time, she started writing *Up Your Ass* (full title: *Up Your Ass, or From the Cradle to the Boat, or The Big Suck, or Up from the Slime*). The play, produced for the first time in 2001, 13 years after her death, features a foul-mouthed lesbian named Bongi, a Solanas alter ego. Solanas also went to work on *SCUM Manifesto*. She had almost no money, and she lived sometimes in the boho-chic Chelsea Hotel (until she got locked out for failing to pay her bill), sometimes in other people's apartments, and sometimes on rooftops or on the street. She ate at the seedy cafeterias that have all but disappeared from today's Manhattan: Needick's and the Automat, where she would finish what was left on other people's plates. She panhandled and prostituted herself to the men she claimed to hate so she could buy cigarettes or a hot meal.

Still, she had a remarkable gift for insinuating herself into the highest levels of New York's Greenwich Village counterculture. In 1966, she succeeded in getting an article published in *Cavalier* magazine, a sort of second-tier *Playboy*. The article —"A Young Girl's Primer, or How to Attain the Leisure Class"—brashly advised girls how to survive in the city "flat on your back." She used mimeographs and advertisements in underground newspapers for relentless self-promotion: setting up an actual SCUM society, holding rehearsals in a Chelsea basement for *Up Your Ass*. In 1967, she went on *The Alan Burke Show* to talk about her life as an open lesbian. Burke was a kind of television precursor to Rush Limbaugh: The two started calling each other names, Solanas tried to hit him over the head with a chair, and she got booted off the show.

She ingratiated herself with Paul Krassner, editor of the beatnik magazine the *Realist*. Krassner invited her to a class he was teaching at the Free University, where she electrified his students by explaining why SCUM needed to wipe men off the face of the earth.

A 1967 interview in the *Village Voice* led to her meeting Andy Warhol. To Warhol, Solanas was another eccentric in his collection of "superstars." To Solanas, Warhol was her chance to get *Up Your Ass* sold and produced. But she and the Factory proved to be a bad fit: The Factory regulars, narcissistic and supremely fashion-conscious, looked down on the ill-groomed Solanas, and she, for her part, called them "stupidstars." Meanwhile, she had signed a contract with Girodias,

who was notorious for chiseling his authors, and she began to feel nervous and paranoid. In January 1968, Warhol informed her that he had lost interest in producing *Up Your Ass*. She fled to her sister's house in San Mateo, California, where she arrived filthy and with a carton of *SCUM Manifesto*s, which she sold on the streets of San Francisco. She wrote letter after enraged letter to Warhol and Girodias.

By this time, she was "spinning with psychological imbalance," Fahs writes, yelling at her sister, wearing every piece of clothing she owned at once. She took a bus back to New York, somewhere along the way acquiring two guns. Once back in Manhattan, she launched tirades against all of her former literary connections—Krassner, the editors at *Cavalier* (who had turned down a rambling column of hers about how all men were pigs), and, above all, Warhol and Girodias. By mid-May, Warhol had stopped taking her calls and she was talking to a friend about shooting somebody.

Solanas was released from prison—actually a state hospital for the criminally insane—on June 16, 1971. She promptly returned to Greenwich Village, where, penniless, she lived mostly on the streets and in a welfare hotel. She continued to issue threats to Girodias and others. In November, after she showed up with an icepick at the office of Barney Rossett, publisher of Grove Press, she was recommitted to a mental hospital, where she stayed until late 1973.

After that there were some good years, of sorts. She found a state-paid apartment and a steady boyfriend, Louis Swiren (although her relationships with women continued), and she even got a job, writing and editing for a feminist magazine called *Majority Report*. Of course, she couldn't resist picking fights with other feminists—and with just about everyone else who could help her career. A "corrected" version of *SCUM Manifesto* that she self-published (with help from *Majority Report*) did not sell well, and she had the remaining copies destroyed. She was becoming overwhelmed by schizophrenic fantasies about "the Mob," as she called Girodias and other enemies. In late 1979, she broke up with her boyfriend, left her apartment, and resumed living on the streets and panhandling.

Then she disappeared, resurfacing in 1981 on the streets of Phoenix, Arizona. She became a local fixture among the city's homeless population. The police would find her bathing naked in a downtown fountain, sleeping on park benches, trolling trash bins for food, and sometimes sitting on a curb digging at her body with the tines of a fork. By 1985, she had found her way to San Francisco, where she occupied a room at the Bristol, a welfare hotel, and banged out pages on a typewriter. She had stopped using the name Valerie Solanas. On April 25, 1988, Bristol employees discovered her dead body, covered with maggots, inside her room. A coroner's report listed the cause of death as pneumonia, probably brought on by emphysema. Warhol had died of cardiac arrhythmia the previous year.

Solanas's mother had her buried in a Catholic cemetery known as Our Lady of Sorrows in Fairfax Station, Virginia, near her mother's home. "Our Lady of Path-Blazing, Hell-Raising, Truth-Telling Sorrows," Fahs writes. Well, maybe. I think, for Valerie Solanas, it was just plain sorrows. ♦

B&A

Happy Warriors

The burden of command, lightly borne, in the classical world. **BY J. E. LENDON**

Our generals today don't seem to enjoy war very much. They usually appear grumpy on television, although distrust of their political masters might well have something to do with that. But even in a friendly biographical piece or autobiography, today's generals appear somber and dutiful, more like Presbyterian clergymen than laugh-in-the-face-of-death *beaux sabreurs*. George Patton may have been the last American general to admit that he enjoyed battle, and even in the 1940s, his contemporaries thought him a bit mad. I blame grim old William Tecumseh Sherman, with his perpetual moaning about war being hell: He set a dismal example for those who came after him. The 13-years-older Robert E. Lee—if we can believe the line attributed to him—seems to have looked back to the more cheerful world of Napoleonic warfare: "It is well that war is so terrible, or we would grow too fond of it."

Masters of Command
Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, and the Genius of Leadership
by Barry Strauss
Simon & Schuster, 320 pp., $16

But perhaps we should not be too surprised at the grave and tired faces of our generals, because they have much to do. The U.S. Army staff departments usefully define a general's functions: personnel, intelligence, operations and training, logistics, civil-military operations, communications, IT, and resource management. Those functions—eight in number, like the tentacles of an octopus—however reconceived and reordered by each succeeding generation, have slowly been strangling the general's joy in battle since the 17th century.

J. E. Lendon, professor of history at the University of Virginia, is the author of Song of Wrath: The Peloponnesian War Begins *and* Soldiers and Ghosts: A History of Battle in Classical Antiquity.

As *Masters of Command* reveals, perhaps the most important thing to understand about leading an army in the world of the Greeks and Romans is how much *less* there was to do, and how much more fun the Great Captains had doing it. Ancient armies did not have IT departments to supervise. An ancient army tended to move not divided into many parts but as a single large blob. "Intelligence" consisted of finding the enemy blob—which was usually not hard to do, because enemy forces perpetually threw off deserters who were happy to help. "Operations" consisted of marching towards the enemy (with or without the famous celerity of an Alexander or a Julius Caesar) and fighting a battle. The deployment of an army for combat was usually stereotyped—the same or similar in every fight—consisting of a line of battle regulated by the relative precedence of units (as in Alexander's or the Roman Army) or, in a Greek confederate army made up of allies, the precedence of city contingents.

In battle, armies tended to act as vast entities, advancing to combat or breaking into flight as single organisms. Once the two opposed armies began to move towards each other, a leader's attempt to redirect a wing or contingent was an act so fraught with peril that it was rarely tried. So "communications" on the battlefield usually came to little: A shield raised on a stick sufficed to order the advance.

Modern historians often anachronistically find far more modern generalship in ancient warfare than actually existed. Perhaps the widest-spread misconception is that, as in a modern army, logistics was a constant anxiety, the commander being concerned about the procurement and transport of every clasp on his soldiers' armor and every calorie his soldiers consumed. But reading the ancient texts without mentally inserting into them what is absent shows, instead, that supply was only an occasional concern for the ancient general; it was something to be dealt with mostly when he settled upon an eccentric move like marching before the spring harvest or trying to cross a desert.

In a low-tech world, any village blacksmith could make and repair armor and weapons. And rather than ancient generals having to plan for the gathering and transportation of food, during the normal campaigning season, an ancient army tended to be (in enemy territory as in friendly) besieged by farmers and carters eager to sell the troops things to eat, because a passing army offered the farmer vastly higher prices for his produce than he would ever get at the local market. An army, particularly a successful army like that of Alexander or Hannibal or Caesar, was a tremendous concentration of expendable capital.

Bust of Alexander the Great, St. Petersburg

To ask Alexander, "How do you feed your army?" would have struck the Macedonian king as no less preposterous than a reporter today asking the mayor of New York, "How do you feed all the people in your city?" Food naturally seeks money.

Paying the troops and providing them with regular opportunities to loot was, for the most part, the full logistical responsibility of an ancient general. And if eager local farmers could not fill the soldiers' bellies, an ancient army was accompanied by rich men who bought its loot at low prices and had the capacity to carry that loot to where they could sell it for profit. Julius Caesar, in a rush as usual, once sold 53,000 captives as slaves on a single day in Gaul. The middlemen's ability to buy slaves on that scale, and feed them all the way to the slave markets of Italy, could be transformed in an instant into the ability to feed Caesar's army.

Without the multitude of modern staff functions to supervise, the relationship between the inspirational leader and his devoted soldiers was the ancient commander's prime concern. When they did not confine themselves strictly to tactics, ancient military treatises—Xenophon's *The Education of Cyrus* (4th century B.C.) and Onasander's *The General* (1st century A.D.), for example—focused on the leader's comportment, his presentation of himself to his troops, and his management of his soldiers' morale. The general's conduct and the morale of his soldiers were closely linked, because an ancient general did not shout orders to his subordinates over the radio from a point safe in the rear.

In the Greek tradition adopted by Alexander the Great, the commander fought heroically in the front rank with his troops, serving as a model for them to compete with; in the tradition of later Hellenistic command—Hellenistic being the period after Alexander and the world he conquered—to which Hannibal and Caesar were heir, the commander rode close behind the battle line with his bodyguard, not to be able to organize dynamic tactical maneuvers but, rather, to serve, when he saw the morale of his troops beginning to flag, as a dose of fast-acting human Prozac, to rush into the fighting and raise the spirits of his troops by his presence and by partaking of their danger.

Masters of Command is a history of leadership in ancient warfare, masterfully interweaving the stories of Alexander, Hannibal, and Julius Caesar. It seeks to be of use to students of leadership, "from the war room to the boardroom." But the irony of our own times is that ancient-style leadership of souls—joyful, heroic, charismatic, inspiring—is far more likely to be found in a Silicon Valley CEO than in an Army general. ♦

LVOVA ANASTASIYA

B&A

Canine Therapy

On the dog as a catalyst among humans.

BY SOPHIE FLACK

This wonderfully perceptive memoir follows Matthew Gilbert's transformation during his first year as a reluctant dog owner. A neurotic, death-obsessed, and socially uncomfortable television critic for the *Boston Globe*, Gilbert describes his evolution into a more open-hearted, playful person, thanks to his yellow lab, Toby, and the cast of characters who frequent the Armory Dog Park in Brookline, Massachusetts. Despite his initial efforts to distance himself, Gilbert not only becomes friends with the dog park freaks, he surrenders to becoming one himself.

While *Off the Leash* largely takes place in the dog park, its focus is primarily on human interactions and on Gilbert's development as a dog owner: how his paternal instincts kick in when Toby is attacked by an aggressive dog; the awkwardness of seeing his sweet puppy being mounted by another dog for the first time; the politics of ball-sharing and picking up after your dog; coming to terms with the grim reality that he will probably outlive his beloved (canine) companion. It's not until Gilbert embraces the playful recklessness of his dog that he's ultimately able to open himself up to the messiness of human relationships.

The dog park breaks down social barriers by corralling a random circus of owners with whom one wouldn't ordinarily come in contact. Gilbert takes care in describing the "streak of dried toothpaste" on one owner's bottom lip, and how the same woman wears cotton pajama bottoms even during the dead of winter. Cell Phone Lady mentors counselors at the nearby halfway house during her lunch break, and Claude the House Painter recites *Macbeth* verbatim as her dog, Panda, romps around the park.

Mixed in with the oddball regulars are heartwrenchingly vulnerable characters who bring real weight to the mainly lighthearted volume, such as the burly, despondent construction worker going through a painful divorce who tears up when discussing the loyalty of his mutt, Mia. And then there's Saul, the octogenarian with "spotty shaving skills" who continues to drive himself to and from the park for a few minutes of daily companionship and casual, rambling conversation—despite his declining eyesight and the fact that he doesn't, in fact, have a dog. There is a collective sense of dread among the regulars when Saul disappears from Armory, and after some snooping, they learn that his driver's license has been revoked because of a minor traffic accident.

Gilbert playfully describes characters in dog-like terms: A woman who pulls her car over to pet Toby looks like "a wheaten terrier with her dirty blond bangs and calm, freckly face," and he describes himself as having a "big snout." His years as a TV critic also leach out onto the page: He likens those who pass through the park once or twice to "guest stars, like on a sitcom." Gilbert is also quick to create new terms to describe dog park behavior and even includes a tongue-in-cheek glossary at the conclusion. My favorite term is *poop mime*: "You do it after your dog poops, when others are watching you. 'See,' says your thought balloon as you very conspicuously hold your bag and bend over, moving like a silent-film star, 'I'm a good citizen.'"

Gilbert gives as much credence to the rhythm of a sentence as to his word choice. And his bebop cadence feels fresh and relatable, even playful. There's a wonderful description of how walking Toby as a puppy was like maneuvering a Hoover: "I sometimes felt as though I was leading a vacuum cleaner bumpity-bump down the sidewalk, and watching the on-comers choose their approach." In describing his park pal Hayley's desperate attempt to woo her uninterested crush—fellow park regular Drew—Gilbert employs the whimsical image of "a knight wearing metal gloves, trying to knit a dainty little mitten."

Despite his occasionally poetic language, the subject matter grounds the book, and Gilbert is appealingly self-deprecating about his own inadequacies. In the chapter titled "Dookie," he discusses dog feces as the great equalizer: "At Armory, I saw owners conversing daily—sometimes about big life decisions and philosophies—while holding bags of poop in their hands." And dog owners will certainly appreciate his paranoia over the questionable porousness of poop bags and the subsequent abuse of hand sanitizer. Then he'll swing us back around again and make an analogy between getting dog filth on your hands and interacting with anonymous strangers, and how the dog park breaks down those invisible barriers. ♦

Off the Leash
A Year at the Dog Park
by Matthew Gilbert
Thomas Dunne, 240 pp., $24.99

MATTHEW GILBERT

Toby, Matthew Gilbert

Sophie Flack, author of Bunheads, *has contributed to the* Wall Street Journal, *the* Boston Globe, *and* Ballet Review.

B&A

Born to Rant

The temptation is to laugh at Bruce Springsteen and his admirers. **BY RYAN L. COLE**

In the fall of 2012, a few days after Hurricane Sandy touched ground, Chris Christie received a phone call from Air Force One concerning New Jersey's relief efforts. On the other end were two very important Americans: One was, of course, the president, Barack Obama; the other was the Boss, Bruce Springsteen. If it's difficult to determine who outranks whom in a conversation among the president, the governor, and the Boss, it might be due to Springsteen's inexplicable eminence.

He is less a rock star than a statesman. He and his posse, the E Street Band, do not simply play concerts, but, in the words of Bernard Goldberg, stage revivals. His music is not offered up for mere entertainment, but as necessary listening for processing national traumas. He was, according to *Slate*, the "poet laureate" of 9/11. His blessing is sought and occasionally received, depending on party affiliation, by would-be and sitting presidents.

The Boss's latest gift to the world is *Outlaw Pete*, a graphic novel coauthored with cartoonist Frank Caruso and based on a song of the same name. Rock critic and Springsteen spaniel Dave Marsh calls it "a modern legend of a criminal who starts out in diapers and confronts the roughest edges of adulthood." To correspond with the publication of this profundity, the *New York Times* printed a rhapsodically received list of the rocker's favorite reading material. To nobody's surprise, he admires Leo Tolstoy and Gabriel García Márquez, and found inspiration in Andrew Ross Sorkin's *Too Big to Fail* (2009). This was followed by an article about *Boss*, a new e-journal cataloguing academic references to Bruce Springsteen's songs, which, according to the *Times*, "parallel psychological techniques used to promote moral development."

If you're surprised that every utterance and observation of the singer of "Dancing in the Dark" is so seriously scrutinized, don't be. He was the subject of an exhibition of "artifacts" at the

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National Constitutional Center: "Millions of listeners have found their experience of the American dream reflected in his songs about the lonely, the lost, the unemployed, immigrants, and military veterans," read the show's didactics. And he was the topic of a theological seminar at Rutgers, a semester-long contemplation of "Springsteen's reinterpretation of biblical motifs, the possibility of redemption by earthly means (woman, cars, music) . . . that casts the writer as a religious figure whose message does not effect transcendent salvation, but rather, transforms earthly reality."

The literature on the subject casts the Boss in similarly reverent terms. "Bruce Springsteen appeals to the best in all of us," Jack Newfield sermonized back in 1985. "He asks us to forgive the sinner but to remember the sin." Almost clear-eyed in contrast, Hendrik Hertzberg reasoned that "Springsteen . . . is acutely aware of the moral responsibility entailed by the moral authority he has happened to earn." More recently, David Brooks, enthralled by his hero's songs of "teenage couples out on a desperate lark, workers struggling as the mills close down, and drifters on the wrong side of the law," confessed that the Boss was a mentor of sorts: "Springsteen would become one of the professors in my second education," he wrote in the *New York Times*. "In album after album he assigned a new course in my emotional curriculum."

Clearly Bruce Springsteen, not just for rock critics but for our cultural poobahs as well, is some kind of civic saint. And a heartthrob: "He remains dispiritingly handsome, preposterously fit," David Remnick panted in the *New Yorker*. "His muscle tone approximates a fresh tennis ball."

At this point, Bruce Springsteen agnostics might ask what other public figure—in entertainment, in politics, even the clergy—is written or thought about in such terms. With the exception of a slain civil rights leader or two, and possibly Abraham Lincoln, the answer is: nobody.

High Hopes, Springsteen's 18th studio album, released earlier this year, did little to explain why. Other than the addition of the grating guitar of Tom Morello, formerly of Rage Against the Machine (a Harvard-educated, Los Angeles-based band that mixed equal doses of heavy metal, hip-hop, and Howard Zinn), the Boss still travels those same forlorn highways, still studies the lonely, the lost, the unemployed, and everybody else who has been beaten down by America.

He still visits sleazy bars full of redeemable losers ("Harry's Place"), still warms himself by migrant campfires ("The Ghost of Tom Joad"), and still laments the Vietnam war ("The Wall"). *Rolling Stone*, giving *High Hopes* four-and-a-half stars out of five, described it as "finely drawn pathos bound by familiar, urgent themes (national crisis, private struggle, the daily striving for more perfect union)." In other words,

Ryan L. Cole is a writer in Indiana.

Lincoln's second inaugural with guitars.

His 1973 debut album, *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.*, and its follow-ups, *The Wild, The Innocent & The E Street Shuffle* (also 1973), and *Born to Run* (1975), featured songs about Jersey boardwalks, open roads, slamming screen doors, and other assorted bits of romanticized American life, written with a verbosity that would make Bob Dylan tip a leopard-skin pillbox hat (*Countryside's burnin' with Wolfman fairies dressed in drag for homicide*, Springsteen croaks in "Lost in the Flood"). But around the time of his fourth LP, *Darkness on the Edge of Town* (1978), and likely influenced by Jon Landau, the former *Rolling Stone* editor who has served as Springsteen's producer, manager, and muse since the mid-1970s, the songs increasingly turned to blue-collar angst, and the singer was progressively positioned as the culmination of rock 'n' roll: Elvis Presley with a social conscience.

Springsteen embraced the imagery, iconography, and gestures of the genre. He threw on a leather jacket, sculpted his sideburns, and posed broodingly in Corvettes and Cadillacs. Then he name-checked John Steinbeck and Flannery O'Connor, sang of American decay and inequality, and rebuffed Ronald Reagan, whose reelection campaign had the nerve to assume that "Born in the USA"—a gloomy song about a homeless Vietnam veteran dolled up with a misleadingly anthemic chorus and sold with imagery of Springsteen draped in Old Glory—was actually a statement of patriotism. Which is not to say that Springsteen isn't a patriot. It's just that he articulates progressivism's brand of national pride: America is noble in theory, nightmarish in reality; cool around the edges, but rotten to the core.

James Wolcott, writing in *Vanity Fair*, once quipped that it was almost as if Springsteen was "built to rock-critic specifications." Others, such as Fred Goodman in *Mansion on the Hill: Dylan, Young, Geffen, and Springsteen and the Head-on Collision of Rock and Commerce* (1997), have suggested that his career since partnering with Landau has been one long and meticulously plotted public relations exercise to present the Boss as a rock 'n' roll holy man.

If that's the case, it has worked: Springsteen has sold and continues to sell millions of albums, and his shtick is catnip to baby boomers. In fact, a standard component of Springsteen hagiography is the breathless recollection of that moment, long ago, when the author, young and searching for truth, first stumbled across the Boss's magic. For David Brooks, it was February 1975, when he caught a live performance on WMMR in Philadelphia. For David Remnick, it was November 1976, from his perch on the balcony of New York City's late Palladium. It was heady stuff, no doubt—and it forged four decades of adoration, which often gives the impression that some writers view Bruce Springsteen the same way young boys do, say, Superman.

And yet, despite the comparisons to Elvis Presley, as well as to Chuck Berry, both of whom created music that was an amalgamation of prior American styles, Springsteen's work is strikingly inorganic. With its fist-pumping chord changes, cluttered arrangements full of guitars, runaway xylophones, and honking saxophones, layered behind his maudlin, over-emoting voice, with its affected "heartland" accent, Springsteen's music is meticulously processed and choreographed, akin to ersatz rock show tunes conceived by a committee of rock critics and Broadway producers.

Moreover, it presents a view of this country, its working classes, and its music, that plays out like a Sergio Leone film: spaghetti Americana, in essence. This is a fantasized view of a world that does not exist in the starkly black-and-white terms in which Springsteen depicts it, and that many of his greatest cheerleaders—white, white collar, highly educated, and happily employed—romantically mistake for the America they only visit when driving to and from the airport.

Springsteen's songs, in fact, often overlook how dynamic this land truly is: In his telling, untouchable corporations, cruel lawmen, and lawless leaders inevitably block the working folks' access to the American Dream. You need not turn a blind eye to America's deficiencies to see how incomplete this picture is, as summed up by "The River," the title track from Springsteen's 1980 album. Its young protagonist takes his love down to the aforementioned river and impregnates her. Then comes the shotgun wedding and the union card (*I got a job working construction for the Johnstown Company / But lately there ain't been much work on the account of the economy*). As Springsteen sings, *Man, that was all she wrote*. But isn't the Boss's success and fortune—he is, after all, the son of a working-class father, as his admirers never tire of pointing out—evidence against the inevitability of his own narrative?

That's unlikely to register, since Bruce Springsteen's medium is melodrama, not irony. Like Bob Dylan, he plays a character; he sticks tightly to a script. But unlike Dylan—who, for better or worse, has always been contrarian and sufficiently self-aware to change costumes from time to time—the Boss is the Boss. There is no daylight between the man and his role.

As a result, with a few slight deviations and dips into Appalachia and Pete Seeger territory, Springsteen's records all sound the same; his polemics never change or surprise. Sure, there are cleverly crafted pop numbers, energetic rockers, and a few evocative mood pieces. But the same could be said of Meat Loaf. Springsteen's act would be easier to comprehend if his three-chord tunes were not treated as something akin to a rock 'n' roll *Goldberg Variations*, and his musings were not mistaken for those of a modern John Locke.

But he carries on, still singing about "The Queen of the Supermarket" (*As the evening sky turns blue / A dream awaits in aisle number two*). The *New York Times* still marvels that "his peerless muse has neither boundaries nor fatigue"; museums treat his blue jeans and leather jacket as sacred relics; scholars at prestigious institutions ponder his spiritual significance; and journalists contemplate the luminosity of his flesh—all while he huddles with the president aboard Air Force One. It's tempting to laugh it off, but that would be sacrilege. ♦

B&A

Brush to Pen

The daily, sometimes hourly, thoughts of artists.

BY TARA BARNETT

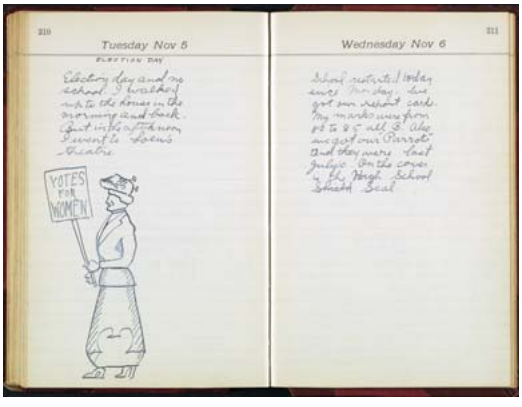
A Day in the Life
Artists' Diaries from the Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Museum of American Art
Through February 28

On April 15, 1865, the painter Rubens Peale received "sad news of the murder of President Lincoln." On April 23, Peale was afforded "a fine opportunity of viewing the corpse and decorations of the hall, which was totally covered with black cloth except the statue & portraits of General Washington & wife." The corpse, of course, was Abraham Lincoln himself. Peale's diary and its observations, both grand and personal, are currently on display in this exhibition.

For the connoisseur of American art, it features quite a few gems. Peale, for example, was a notable still-life painter who is perhaps even more famous for having sat for his brother, Rembrandt Peale, the great painter of presidential portraits. At the other end of the spectrum is Joe Hollier, whose attempts to elevate the Graphic Interchange Format (GIF) to an artform is included as a video diary, commissioned for this show.

The more traditional paper diaries are arranged in a variety of thematic cases. Some are staged to highlight the development of artistic techniques, while others were selected to show the childhood of the artist. Some focus on specific dates—such as January 1, the traditional day of false promises—or dates of historical significance. On September 11, 2001, Janice Lowry drew a sketch of the Twin Towers and an airplane, and wrote, "The only solution is for me to do ordinary things, just regular things."

Lowry's diary is full of color and clippings, appropriate for a visual artist known for assemblage. But even though the diaries here are primarily written by visual artists, it is striking how many of them are mostly text. The selection of the diary, the handwriting of the artist, perhaps even the choice of pen reveal to the expert a hint of personality. But to most viewers these are just so many illegible words, made important by placards highlighting interesting stories.



Suffragette in the diary of Reginald Marsh (1912)

So what makes a diary exhibition exciting? The answer is so obvious, and so trite, that it hardly bears mentioning: Through exhibits such as these we may peruse at our leisure the private lives of others. The exhibition catalogue claims that "reading an artist's diary is the next best thing to being there." Diaries, the forbidden tomes of lovers, best friends, and teenage children, offer a peek into the mysterious, unguarded thoughts of those we think we know. We have access, and the access itself is of interest.

This exhibition plays with the line between public and private, as well as its relationship to life and death. Joe Hollier, for example, is alive and well, and his experimental video diary is strikingly public. So perhaps now is a time when we no longer associate our daily record with privacy. But the more important question, for many of the artists here, is this: Once dead, do we still have a right to privacy? Is privacy anything the deceased deserve?

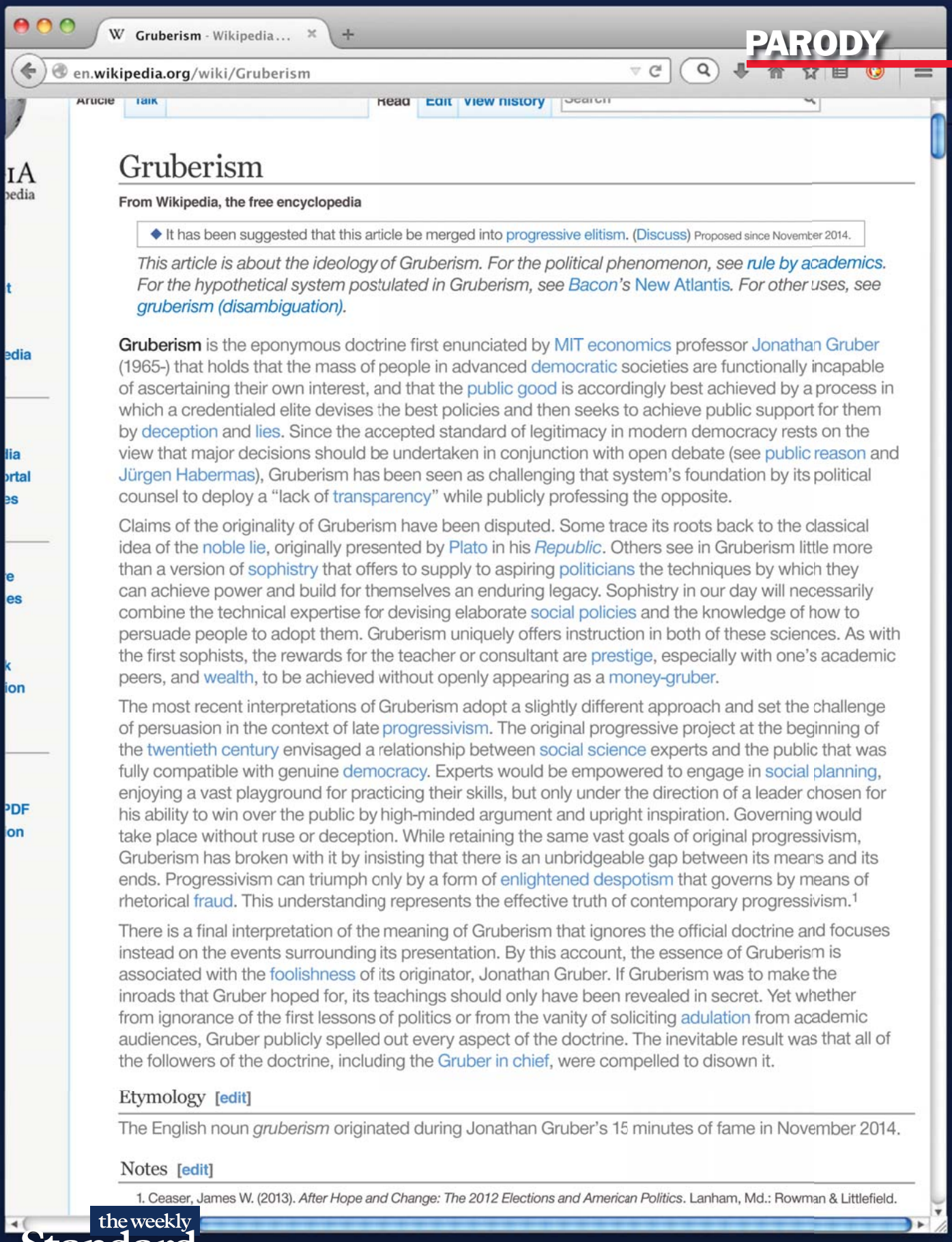
What is curious about "A Day in the Life" is its cheeky flirtation with exactly that issue. We enlightened observers are the basest gossips and, under the cloak of scholarship, snoops of the highest order. The tradition of *nachlass*—the academic term for a collection of a scholar's papers left after death—allows us to know a scholar more comprehensively, or so we believe, through a lifetime of text. A diary is a permanent, fixed portrait of a human life as lived.

But for the living, what responsibilities does it entail? Consider the blown-up artwork overlooking the exhibit from its place of honor on the wall. It is a page from the travel diary of Maryette Charlton, an artist of various media, whose charming scribble of the Leaning Tower of Pisa gives as much information about the artist as any words written on the page. This is all that we desire from an artist's journal: notes by the hand that made art, and fragments of the art made by that hand. But a quote adjacent to Charlton's magnified diary addresses a darker concern: "This book is not intended for other eyes than the writer's, and when they are forever closed, I hope this book will be laid in the fire." This is not from the Charlton diary but from the journal of Blanche Lazzell, a printmaker. And her diary is found among the lovely cases of open books.

We are sometimes shamed by our desire to see these objects, but our motivation, surely, is not entirely bad. We seek to know other souls in a way not easily attained in our guarded interactions. The living can deceive, but diaries lie only as the self lies to self. Diaries offer a hint of the real. Is that not, in itself, art? ♦

REGINALD MARSH PAPERS / ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART / SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Tara Barnett is a writer in Washington.



Gruberism - Wikipedia...

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gruberism

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Gruberism

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

◆ It has been suggested that this article be merged into progressive elitism. (Discuss) Proposed since November 2014.

This article is about the ideology of Gruberism. For the political phenomenon, see rule by academics. For the hypothetical system postulated in Gruberism, see Bacon's New Atlantis. For other uses, see gruberism (disambiguation).

Gruberism is the eponymous doctrine first enunciated by MIT economics professor Jonathan Gruber (1965-) that holds that the mass of people in advanced democratic societies are functionally incapable of ascertaining their own interest, and that the public good is accordingly best achieved by a process in which a credentialed elite devises the best policies and then seeks to achieve public support for them by deception and lies. Since the accepted standard of legitimacy in modern democracy rests on the view that major decisions should be undertaken in conjunction with open debate (see public reason and Jürgen Habermas), Gruberism has been seen as challenging that system's foundation by its political counsel to deploy a "lack of transparency" while publicly professing the opposite.

Claims of the originality of Gruberism have been disputed. Some trace its roots back to the classical idea of the noble lie, originally presented by Plato in his *Republic*. Others see in Gruberism little more than a version of sophistry that offers to supply to aspiring politicians the techniques by which they can achieve power and build for themselves an enduring legacy. Sophistry in our day will necessarily combine the technical expertise for devising elaborate social policies and the knowledge of how to persuade people to adopt them. Gruberism uniquely offers instruction in both of these sciences. As with the first sophists, the rewards for the teacher or consultant are prestige, especially with one's academic peers, and wealth, to be achieved without openly appearing as a money-gruber.

The most recent interpretations of Gruberism adopt a slightly different approach and set the challenge of persuasion in the context of late progressivism. The original progressive project at the beginning of the twentieth century envisaged a relationship between social science experts and the public that was fully compatible with genuine democracy. Experts would be empowered to engage in social planning, enjoying a vast playground for practicing their skills, but only under the direction of a leader chosen for his ability to win over the public by high-minded argument and upright inspiration. Governing would take place without ruse or deception. While retaining the same vast goals of original progressivism, Gruberism has broken with it by insisting that there is an unbridgeable gap between its means and its ends. Progressivism can triumph only by a form of enlightened despotism that governs by means of rhetorical fraud. This understanding represents the effective truth of contemporary progressivism.[1]

There is a final interpretation of the meaning of Gruberism that ignores the official doctrine and focuses instead on the events surrounding its presentation. By this account, the essence of Gruberism is associated with the foolishness of its originator, Jonathan Gruber. If Gruberism was to make the inroads that Gruber hoped for, its teachings should only have been revealed in secret. Yet whether from ignorance of the first lessons of politics or from the vanity of soliciting adulation from academic audiences, Gruber publicly spelled out every aspect of the doctrine. The inevitable result was that all of the followers of the doctrine, including the Gruber in chief, were compelled to disown it.

Etymology [edit]

The English noun *gruberism* originated during Jonathan Gruber's 15 minutes of fame in November 2014.

Notes [edit]

1. Ceaser, James W. (2013). *After Hope and Change: The 2012 Elections and American Politics*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.