the weekly Standard

THE NEW CAMPUS ORDER
PETER AUGUSTINE LAWLER

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Was the Civil War a Second American Revolution?

BY ALLEN C. GUELZO

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1963 and All That

Philip Larkin began one of his better-known poems with the arresting observation that *Sexual intercourse began / In nineteen sixty-three / (which was rather late for me)— / Between the end of the* Chatterley *ban / And the Beatles' first LP*. Larkin was born in 1922, and so would have been in the middle of middle age in 1963: too old, probably, to benefit from the evolving public morality of the era; too young to have known the *douceur de vivre* that the pre-1914 generation liked to talk about.

Most Americans might make the same rough calculation, perhaps mentioning the Kennedy assassination (November 1963) as a signpost of the times, along with the Beatles' first appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* (February 1964). But The Scrapbook would push things back a few months to the summer of 1963 and the Profumo Affair, which very nearly brought down the British government of the day and was the first British political scandal to be avidly chronicled in the American press.

By today's standards, the scandal was comparatively tame. A rising politician, Minister of Defense John Profumo, had engaged in an extramarital affair with a showgirl named Christine Keeler, who counted among her lovers the Russian naval attaché in London. It was the Soviet connection that raised red flags, as it were. Speaking to the House of Commons, Profumo denied any "impropriety" in his relationship to Keeler. But his deception was exposed a few months later, and he resigned in disgrace: partly for the indiscretion of sharing a mistress with a Soviet diplomat, but largely for lying to Parliament. In politics, then as now, it's not the crime but the cover-up that gets you into trouble.

What made the Profumo Affair unique in its time, and probably appealed to its American audience, was the extent to which it was counterintuitive: It revealed that underneath the staid exterior of old England was a swinging new England of randy politicians, loosened standards, and high society hijinks. But of course, as with all such symbols of an era, the Profumo Affair was both more and less than it seemed: Society did undergo a revolution of sorts in the 1960s, but not everything changed.

The Scrapbook was reminded of all this the other day by the news that Mandy Rice-Davies had died, age 70. Rice-Davies was one of the secondary figures in the Profumo Affair: She had been the London roommate of her fellow showgirl Christine Keeler, and was reportedly the mistress of Viscount Astor, at whose stately home the various Profumo-Keeler-Ivanov-etc. assignations had taken place. When, as a trial witness, she was told that Lord Astor had denied their affair, she famously responded: "Well, he would, wouldn't he?"

In contrast to her old roommate's, Mandy Rice-Davies's subsequent life was comparatively happy and prosperous. The first of her three rich husbands was an Israeli businessman, with whom she opened a series of clubs and restaurants in Tel Aviv. She acted in movies with the likes of Lou Ferrigno; she sang and recorded songs; she published a novel; at her homes in the Caribbean, she was always available for interviews.

One comment late in life, however, struck The Scrapbook as poignant—and revealing, too. "If I could live my life over," she once explained, "I would wish 1963 had not existed." She was always at pains to point out that she and Keeler had been dancers and good-time girls—precursors of Philip Larkin's Swinging London, to be sure, but nothing more: "I have to fight the misconception that I was a prostitute, and I don't want that passed on to my grandchildren. There is still a stigma." ♦

Just What Jucos Need: More Marx!

An article in last Sunday's *New York Times*, "Raising Ambitions: The Challenge in Teaching at Community Colleges," caught The Scrapbook's eye. At a time when higher education is prohibitively expensive and more than a little dysfunctional, community colleges are often underappreciated. However, the *New York Times* being the *New York Times*, the publication took this potentially revealing subject and turned it into a grand adventure in missing the point.

Though it purports to be a big-picture feature, the *Times*'s report boils down to a profile of Professor Eduardo Vianna at LaGuardia Community College in Queens. According to the *Times*, Vianna has had success engaging marginal students where others have failed, as evidenced by this choice anecdote:

> Mr. Rifino was working as a cashier at a Gap in a mall on Queens Boulevard, and feeling despondent about it. Dr. Vianna then introduced him to Erich Fromm's writing on Marx, and something in Mr. Rifino ignited, as he began to examine his own sense of alienation. He quickly finished his work at LaGuardia, and transferred to Hunter College in 2012. In the fall he began a doctoral program in psychology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

We wish Mr. Rifino the best, but we're pretty sure American employers are not clamoring for psychology doctorates. Nor does inculcating strong opinions about Karl Marx vis-à-vis the supposed immiseration of mall workers, who are not exactly

industrial revolution wage slaves, strike us as a persuasive argument for directing more resources to community colleges.

Vianna has made it his mission to expand inchoate minds in a leftward direction. "The thing about the 1 percent owning 40 percent of the wealth, they were shocked," he told the *Times*. Indeed, "Most students were, if not transformed in every instance by what they had learned, at least unsettled, and by the end of the semester they could challenge one another's beliefs based on what they had absorbed in class, arguing for example about whether it was hard work or native talent that drove success," notes the *Times*. After all, what good is college if it doesn't cause students to question basic assumptions, such as the value of hard work?

Speaking of hard work, the *Times* is very concerned about teachers like Vianna. "His course load leaves little time for reflection," they note. "Dr. Vianna teaches five classes a semester, which is typical of instructors at two-year colleges; as a tenured faculty member at a top private college he might be required to teach two." The problem, of course, is not that a good many college professors are underworked. It's that Vianna has to be in class teaching 15-20 hours a week.

Instead of a leg up in the job market or new vocational skills, the important thing at a community college is apparently acquiring a sense of intellectual complexity: "If they come here with the goal of doing something very specific—to become a stewardess, or a makeup artist—they may think, 'What's the point?'" Exactly! Students who go to college to learn something useful and productive might even start resenting the fact that they're paying a lot of money to learn from people who spend most of their time sitting around contemplating discredited economic theories.

It should be obvious to the *Times*, but if left-wing cant were a recipe for setting minds aflame, we would have seen an American renaissance over the last 50 years. Instead, American education and labor markets are in crisis. Community colleges are valuable precisely because they're less hamstrung by ivory tower pretensions and are more directly accountable to students. But if the *Times* and Professor Vianna have their way, community colleges will soon join their overpriced liberal arts competitors in a race to the bottom. ♦

The Power of Green

The Scrapbook has never expected the Obama administration to be on the right side of history when it comes to free trade. However, when the administration quietly announced the week before Christmas that it was imposing massive new tariffs on certain Chinese goods, we admit to being astonished, despite our capacious sense of cynicism about what motivates this White House.

"The Obama administration will set duties on solar products from China and Taiwan that combined could exceed more than 200 percent, adding fuel to a renewable-energy clash between the U.S. and China," reported Bloomberg. Now, if you believe that climate change is an urgent, nay, eschatological priority, wouldn't you want to encourage as many people as possible to start using solar panels to lessen our dependence on carbon-based energy?

How does drastically raising the price of solar panels do that?

It doesn't, of course. Huge new tariffs are, however, yet another way to subsidize domestic "green energy" firms—and even some firms that aren't domestic. The Commerce Department issued the new tariffs in response to a complaint from SolarWorld AG, a German company that owns a factory in Oregon. SolarWorld's stock jumped about 10 percent the day after the tariffs were announced. And it isn't just the Commerce Department that's doing SolarWorld favors. The company got $4 million in subsidies this past October from the Department of Energy.

Unsurprisingly, SolarWorld spends a lot on lobbying—over $1 million in 2012, during Obama's reelection campaign. While they aren't on par with Big Oil yet, green energy companies have become a formidable lobbying force. As far as we can tell, SolarWorld is just playing the Washington game, and playing it well. There is, of course, ample precedent for a solar energy company buying influence with this White House.

This late in the Obama administration, the name Solyndra almost seems quaint. Despite the undeniably scandalous facts surrounding that particular company and its political donations—and the hundreds of millions in federal guarantees it burned through before bankruptcy—a flurry of stories in November claimed that the Department of Energy loan program that enabled Solyndra was actually turning a profit. Liberal journalists took a victory lap, though it emerged that the claim the loans were making money was wrong. Donald Marron, a former acting director of the Congressional Budget Office and director of economic policy at the nonpartisan Urban Institute, wrote a thorough debunking of the erroneous analysis that the loans were profitable. Almost no one in the media bothered to correct their stories saying otherwise.

The Scrapbook doesn't doubt the sincerity of many global warming activists, even if we often dispute their facts. But unlike the accuracy of complex climate models, there's just no debating that "green energy" has become a crony-capitalist racket. When it comes to making solar panels, the Obama administration had a choice between doing what's right for the environment and rewarding their lobbyists. They made their choice, and their priorities are perfectly clear. ♦

The Law Is an Ape

From time to time, our contributor Wesley J. Smith has warned in these pages that many animal rights activists are after something more than improving animal welfare—a worthy cause, to be sure. They seek, rather, to elevate animals to equal moral and legal status with humans. See, for example, Smith's "Habeas Chimpanzee," December 16, 2013, in which he predicted that animals might be given standing to bring lawsuits (assisted by human counsel, to be sure) and that one day soon we might see courts issuing writs of habeas corpus for great apes and other nonhuman primates.

Such is certainly the declared goal of the Nonhuman Rights Project, which made headlines recently when it sued in New York to open that state's courts to chimpanzees. The group has been unsuccessful in trial courts and on appeal. But we feel obliged to add the qualification "so far," now that an Argentine judge has granted habeas corpus to an orangutan and ordered it freed from a Buenos Aires zoo (to an ape sanctuary), owing to its being a "nonhuman person."

Animals as persons, in a world where human fetuses aren't? Ordinarily, The Scrapbook is pleased to highlight the prescience of this magazine's contributors. Not so, in this case. The drive to have apes—and eventually other animals—declared "persons" would subvert Western civilization's core principle that human life has unique dignity and moral worth. To say the least, we wish that effort every failure. ♦

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The Lord of Misrule

Christmas doesn't really begin until Christmas—Christmas Day itself, that is. And I don't mean just in the way the Christian churches lay out the season: the whole 12-days-of-Christmas thing, if you remember. And I know you do, because everyone remembers the song about the partridge in a pear tree, which is what our loves would give us on the first day of Christmas, if they were true.

Personally, I'm still suspicious, because I've never found seven swans a-swimming, six geese a-laying, or even five gold rings under the Christmas tree. But as long as we've mentioned the ecclesial calendar, let's get that part straight. Christmas Day is the end of the four weeks of Advent—and the beginning of the 12 days of Christmas, which run till January 5. Or Twelfth Night, as that last Christmas evening is called: the night before Epiphany and traditionally a time for skits and celebration, with a Lord of Misrule appointed to lead the festivities.

That's why Shakespeare called his play *Twelfth Night*, even though it has nothing to do with Christmas. Nothing, that is, except that it's joyous, comic, contains in the misruly clown Feste what may be one of Shakespeare's few self-presentations, and was first performed in 1602 on Candlemas. And Candlemas, the Feast of the Presentation, marks the absolute, final, pack-it-all-up end of the Nativity season—40 days after Christmas, 28 days after Twelfth Night—by which point the Christmas decorations had to be taken down to avert bad luck.

Now, all that's distinct from the Octave of Christmas in the Catholic church, running the seven days from Christmas to a week later and called an octave because people who speak Latin count in odd ways. And things work differently in the feasts of the Eastern Orthodox churches, based in part on whether those churches keep to the old Julian calendar, in which case the Nativity falls on what's January 6 for the rest of the world. Things work differently, as well, in the stricter of the Protestant churches, which don't really do feasts—and, in the case of the Puritans, actually tried to ban Christmas celebrations.

DAVID CLARK

Through the Christmas season, we have the feast of St. Stephen, which is called Boxing Day in England, Wren Day in Ireland, and December 26 in the rest of the world. And the feast of the Holy Innocents, the children slaughtered by King Herod. The feast of the Holy Family. The feast of St. Sylvester on New Year's Eve day, which the Scots call Hogmanay. The Solemnity of Mary, and the feast of the Holy Name, and . . . it's a mess, isn't it? Even in the church calendar, the run from the first day of Christmas through to Epiphany and on to Candlemas has no clarity of narrative, no firmness of organization, and no sharpness of lesson.

Except, perhaps, in the sheer messiness of it all. Despite all the advertisements and canned carols that begin even before Thanksgiving, Advent is structured as a clean and penitential time. Christmas itself is the chaos. It's there in the clutter of the unwrapped presents. There in the fridge full of leftovers. There in the burned-down Advent candles. There in the disordered piles of sheet music on the piano. There in the pine needles falling on the carpet. There in the jumble of ornaments. There in the fireplace ashes. There in the unshapely mounds of shoveled snow.

Christmas doesn't come to us as a neat and tidy thing. It is not, as C.S. Lewis would have put it, a tame holiday. Even secularized into "holiday trees" and reindeer and snowflake designs, it will not hold still—as who could imagine that it would?

Apart, of course, from the designers of glossy catalogues, none of whom seem to realize that white furniture, delicate ornaments, and outrageously expensive glassware won't survive even a single day of Christmas with actual people in it. Sometimes, glancing through a Williams-Sonoma catalogue or the upscale advertisements in the Sunday *New York Times*, I picture the breakage that would follow an old-fashioned Lord of Misrule, leading wild children on a Christmas dance through the oh-so-tasteful settings. It's a small thing, I know, but it adds to my Christmas joy.

And Christmas joy is the point, isn't it? The theological point, the psychological point—and even the sociological point. Christmas is the untamed, all messy and unruly, set outside ordinary time. It smashes through our ordered experience, and it lasts for days. Twelve of them, in fact. Or maybe forty. A good long while, anyway.

Joseph Bottum

the weekly Standard

The More the Merrier

The more the merrier, so bless me God!
Our love can thrive in company great;
our honour more and never less.
—from "Pearl," late 14th century

The Republican presidential nominee is likely to win the White House in 2016. Since 1952, with the only exception being "Reagan's third term" in 1988, voters have ousted the incumbent party after eight years. Indeed, the candidate of the eight-year incumbent party always does considerably worse in his election than the incumbent running for reelection four years before. Obama won with only 51 percent of the vote in 2012. That's a bad sign for the 2016 Democratic nominee, who, if history is a guide, is likely to end up with about 45 percent of the vote. So the 2016 GOP nominee has a good shot to be president.

But who, you might ask, should that be?

Good question. And we don't have an answer. With Friedrich Hayek, we believe in the limits of central planning and foreknowledge. With Adam Smith, we believe in the merits of wide-open competition. With Joseph Schumpeter, we believe in the utility of some creative destruction. With Peter Thiel, we believe that it's very hard to know ahead of time who can make the leap from zero to one.

But could they all fit on one stage?

So our holiday message to Republican primary voters is simple: Take your time before making your choice. Take a good look at all the candidates. Don't rule individuals in or out because of your own or others' preconceptions, or because pundits say this or donors say that or the media say God-knows-what. Give each of the candidates a chance to make his or her case, and don't rush to make up your mind either about who has the best chance to win or who would do best at governing.

And our holiday message to possible Republican candidates is also simple: Seize the day. If you think you would be a good president of the United States, run. After all, if not now, when? The election of 2016 is not only winnable. It will be the most consequential since 1980. The country's future is at stake. This is no time for anyone who thinks he or she has something to contribute to equivocate, to hold back, to calculate the odds for 2020 or 2024.

So, channeling Thomas Paine, we say to John Bolton, Jeb Bush, Ben Carson, Chris Christie, Ted Cruz, Carly Fiorina, Lindsey Graham, Mike Huckabee, Bobby Jindal, John Kasich, Pete King, Mike Pence, Rick Perry, Mitt Romney, Marco Rubio, Paul Ryan, Rick Santorum, Joe Scarborough, Scott Walker, and Allen West: "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." Each of you would be a better president than Hillary Clinton. You would deserve the thanks of man and woman if you beat her. And if your name is not on this list, don't feel slighted. Rather, feel free to volunteer. Dick Cheney, Tom Cotton, Mitch Daniels, Joni Ernst, Newt Gingrich, and Rudy Giuliani—you're also more ready than Hillary. If you think you're the right person . . . go for it.

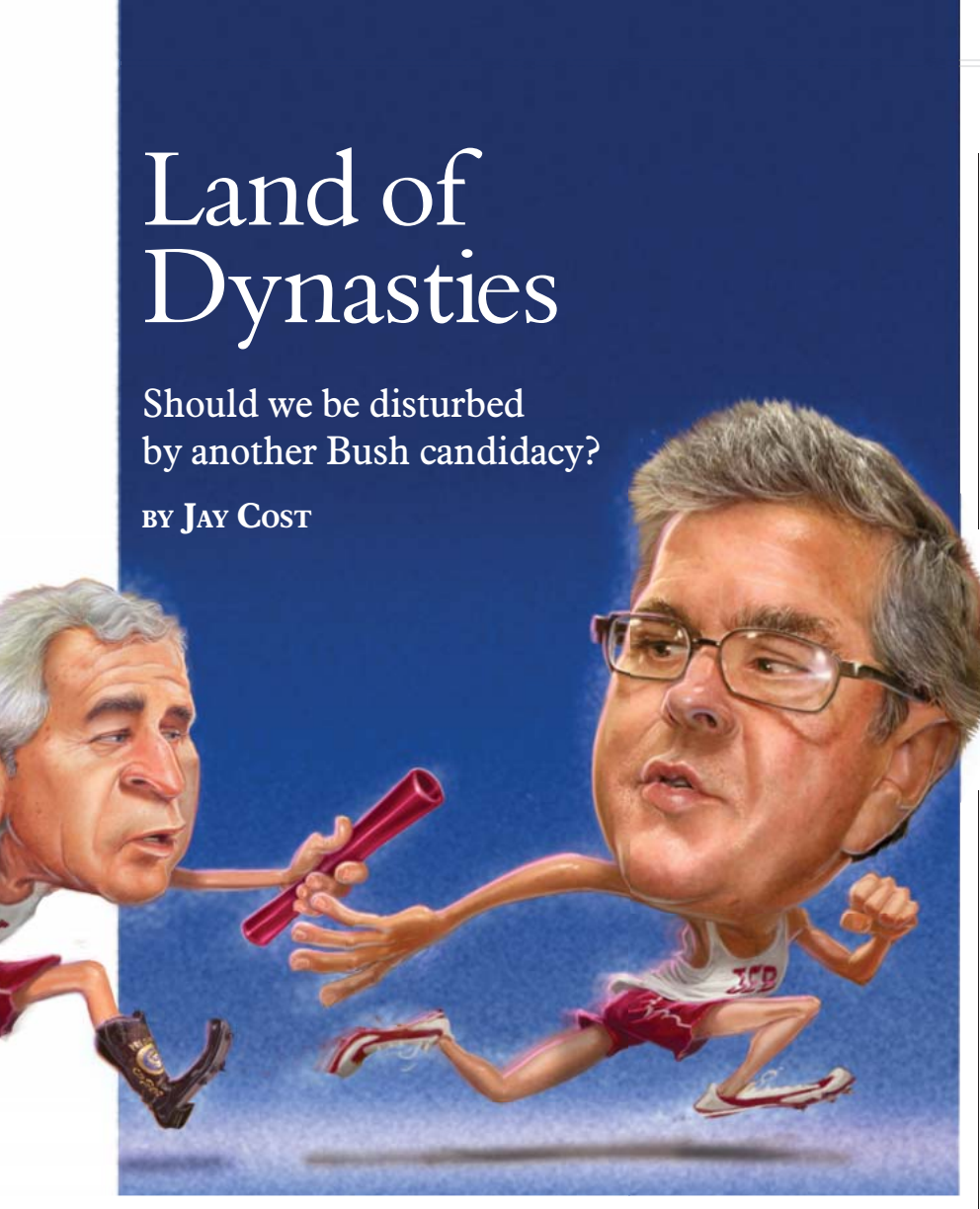
Some may say we're taking "the more the merrier" to ridiculous lengths. Perhaps. But the winnowing process, once it begins in late 2015, will be merciless. The field will narrow soon enough. So while Democrats face the prospect of a forced march to a lackluster coronation, Republicans, at least for the next several months, can let a hundred flowers bloom. "Our love can thrive in company great; our honour more and never less."

—William Kristol

Land of Dynasties

Should we be disturbed by another Bush candidacy?

BY JAY COST



In mid-December, Jeb Bush announced his intention to explore a presidential bid. If he runs and wins the Republican nomination and then the election, he will be the third President Bush in 25 years. That unprecedented prospect has left many wondering: In a republic like ours, is it proper for one family to fill the executive seat so often?

The Bushes are not the first family to send multiple members to the White House. They join the Adamses (father John and son John Quincy), the Harrisons (grandfather William Henry and grandson Benjamin), and the Roosevelts (cousins Theodore and Franklin). But the Bushes are in a class by themselves for the speed with which one succeeded another—just eight years apart. And if the third Bush wins the top job after another interval of eight years, that will only make the exception more pronounced.

While we might fret about this for cultural reasons, we must acknowledge that it has not come about by accident. In fact, dynasties make a lot of sense for practical politicians. Acquiring the presidency is enormously challenging, and political dynasties ease at least some of the difficulties either in securing the nomination or in winning the general election. To put it bluntly, dynasties endure because they are politically useful.

Not surprisingly, then, political dynasties have actually been quite common in American history, though not always family-based. From the early 19th century into the 20th, there were three state-based political dynasties that were even more dominant than the Bushes.

The Virginia dynasty dominated the presidency for the first quarter of the nineteenth century. President Thomas Jefferson (1801-09) was succeeded by James Madison (1809-17), then James Monroe (1817-25). Strictly on merit, Jefferson's and Madison's elections were eminently sensible—but Monroe's less so. While he served with distinction as secretary of state and secretary of war during the War of 1812, his main qualifications for the presidency were residence in Virginia, the largest Southern state, and unflinching loyalty to Jefferson.

The initial purpose of the Electoral College was to distance the presidency from the factionalism of politics without resorting to life tenure. But this ideal was short-lived. To defeat John Adams in 1800, the Jeffersonians transformed battles for state legislatures into proxy contests for Electoral College votes—especially in New York and Pennsylvania. Thereafter, the Jeffersonian congressional caucus selected the party's presidential nominee, who was virtually guaranteed victory thanks to a weakened Federalist party. This is how Monroe came to be president: By 1816, selection of the nation's chief executive was an insider's game, and Monroe was the ultimate insider.

After 1824, nominating power shifted to state parties, but dynasties persisted. From the Civil War until the Great Depression, the Republican party regularly nominated Ohioans, while the Democrats usually selected New Yorkers.

During this period, presidential elections were closely contested, and with corruption a prominent issue, neither party could afford to nominate anyone tainted by venality. For the Republicans, Ohio was a natural place to turn. The Buckeye State was an electoral-vote-rich, must-win battleground (even then!), and the

GARY LOCKE

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Ohio GOP was (reasonably) free of corruption, unlike its counterparts in New York and Pennsylvania. New York state Democrats, meanwhile, who won statewide elections usually lined up against New York City's corrupt Tammany Hall, which allowed them to present themselves as credible reformers. That, along with the Empire State's 40-plus electoral votes and inevitably tight final margins, made it an obvious place for the Democrats to look for nominees. Between the Civil War and the Great Depression, the Republicans nominated Ohio politicians for president seven times, and the Democrats nominated New Yorkers seven times. Of these, six Ohio Republicans and two New York Democrats served as president.

That's three dynasties in a little more than a century, from Virginia, Ohio, and New York.

Fast-forward to the modern era. The contours of the nomination battle and the general election have changed dramatically, but the difficulty of becoming president of the United States remains. Today, would-be presidents have to raise an extraordinary amount of money, and they must fight for the support of "low-information" voters, those whose knowledge of and engagement in the political process is limited. And here, a family dynasty helps: Each aspirant can build on the successes of his or her predecessors.

Take Jeb Bush. He enters the race with an extensive network of wealthy donors cultivated over decades by his father and brother. And his family name is a useful signal for voters who lack the ability or inclination to sort out for themselves which candidate best fits their worldview. Even the least-informed voter has a general sense that the Bushes stand for a relatively expansive social welfare state, a muscular foreign policy, and a reduced tax burden.

Bush's early frontrunner status for the nomination probably signifies little more than the advantages of dynasty. Hillary Clinton possesses identical assets on the Democratic side.

So, while the spectacle of another Bush running against another Clinton might make us uneasy, it really should not. It has little to do with creeping elitism, the decaying republican character of the government, or a monarchical impulse in the people. Rather, it is rooted in the practical realities of politics: Running for president is awfully hard; it is less hard for some candidates; and parties naturally gravitate to such candidates.

The process is not closed to alternative candidates, of course, and being a member of a dynasty is not a sufficient condition for victory. It wasn't in the nineteenth century, and it is isn't today. Hillary Clinton, after all, lost to an upstart junior senator from Illinois in 2008. Jeb Bush will surely face the most crowded and talented Republican field in a generation. His pedigree might give him an edge, but he will still have to prove himself capable.

Far from fretting about what Jeb's putative candidacy means for the republic, conservatives should welcome him to the fray. More candidates should mean a better debate about the country's future, and maybe in the end a better nominee. ♦

White House protest, November 2011

The Pipeline and the Damage Done

Obama's Keystone Kops routine.

BY FRED BARNES

For a symbolic issue, the Keystone pipeline has sure caused a lot of damage—to Canadian-American relations, to Democrats, to President Obama. And it feeds, underscores, or reflects a variety of political divisions, some of them quite bitter.

I'll get to Keystone's victims shortly, but first the explanation of why the issue is purely symbolic. If the pipeline is built, it will carry oil from northern Alberta to refineries on the Gulf Coast. If it is not built, the crude oil will be transported either to Canada's west coast or to New Brunswick, a maritime

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NEWSCOM

province in the east, where it will be refined for export.

The point is the oil won't remain underground. It will be extracted, turned into gasoline, and keep cars running all over the world. That means blocking the pipeline, should the president decide to do that, will have no effect on greenhouse gases. That appears to make little difference to the environmental movement. It opposes fossil fuels and anything that facilitates their use, period.

There's another reason the green lobby has exerted enormous pressure to kill Keystone. It's a power play. If it works, the political clout of the movement will grow. And environmentalists are already a forceful special interest in Washington.

In 2011, Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper got a telephone call from Obama. Earlier, the State Department had studied the environmental impact of the pipeline and concluded it would be minimal. Now, the president told Harper, a new environmental study was required to make sure an aquifer in Nebraska wouldn't be affected.

The president assured Harper that the pipeline was only being delayed. Harper was irritated and said to be worried the pipeline was in jeopardy. But the problem of the aquifer was solved when the pipeline's promoters agreed to change its route. Obama continued to postpone a decision.

That Keystone matters enormously to Canada is putting it mildly. It's important to their economy. The alternatives to Keystone would be less efficient. Both major political parties—Liberals and Harper's Conservatives—support developing the country's natural resources. And there aren't many better places to do it than northern Alberta. I've been there. It's pretty desolate. Edmonton, the nearest city, is 274 miles away.

Canada happens to be America's closest ally and biggest trading partner. And Canadians are understandably sensitive to how Big Brother to the south treats them. Keystone is a test of our friendship. By dragging his decision into a sixth year, Obama has treated Canada shabbily, Harper in particular. Relations haven't ruptured, but they've taken a hit, especially now that Obama appears ready to oppose the pipeline officially.

Except for warding off the wrath of enviros, Democrats on Capitol Hill have done themselves no favor by opposing the pipeline. Keystone is popular. A *USA Today* poll last month found 60 percent of Americans want it built. Only 25 percent don't.

In November, Democratic senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana learned that opposing the pipeline was more critical to her Democratic colleagues than boosting her slim chance of reelection. A big Democratic vote for Keystone, which she supports, would demonstrate her influence. But only 14 of 54 Democrats voted with her. In the House, 31 of 201 Democrats did. A few weeks later, she lost her bid for reelection, 56 to 44 percent.

Except for warding off the wrath of enviros, Democrats on Capitol Hill have done themselves no favor by opposing the pipeline. Keystone is popular. A *USA Today* poll last month found 60 percent of Americans want it built. Only 25 percent don't.

For his part, Obama has shown a poor grasp of economics in downplaying the pipeline's benefits. It would help Canada send oil everywhere except the United States, he has said repeatedly, so "it doesn't have an impact on U.S. gas prices." The *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page corrected him: "Oil markets are global, and adding to the global supply might well reduce U.S. gas prices."

The president normally touts the job-generating power of large infrastructure projects. But in the case of Keystone, he has suggested construction of the 1,179-mile pipeline would create few jobs. The State Department's projection, however, is that it would create 42,000 jobs and add $3.5 billion to the economy.

Meanwhile, until it's built or canceled, Keystone will be involved, directly or indirectly, in political rifts. There's Obama's controversial practice of being tough on allies, soft on adversaries. In December, he was easy in normalizing relations with Communist Cuba, dropping the precondition that all Cuban political prisoners be released. In contrast, he was brusque with Canada, implying its motive for the pipeline is bigger profits for Canadian oil companies.

Keystone has become a partisan and ideological issue. So who is against it and who is for it? Liberals are opposed, conservatives in favor. More precisely, "gentry" liberals are against, the working class for. We know environmentalists oppose it. The pro-business crowd wants it. Most Democrats want to kill Keystone. Nearly all Republicans are eager to build it.

If you favor blocking the use of fossil fuels at every opportunity, you surely oppose the pipeline. If you prefer to wait until green energy can replace oil, coal, and natural gas, you're eager to build it. Opponents of free trade oppose it, I suspect. Thus, most free traders favor Keystone. If you're comfortable with Obama's long delay, you're probably against the pipeline. If you wanted a quick decision in 2009, you're pro-Keystone.

Yes, these categories overlap. And some are more serious than others. And here's one that may be a stretch. Do you like Obama's tactic of leading from behind? If so, I'll bet you're anti-Keystone. If you like up-front leadership, my guess is you wish construction had begun in 2009.

The overall impact of Keystone has been to sow discord. Worse, opposing it has become a moral cause. Protesters chain themselves to the White House fence. They've staged a "die-in" in the street. Obama has been no help. Should he kill the pipeline, he'll need to provide Harper with better reasons than he's been offering the rest of us. Or it will be an embarrassing conversation. ♦

American fighter planes in formation over the USS *Missouri*

Planes Filled the Sky

Remembering the Battle of the Bulge.

BY WARREN KOZAK

Exactly seventy years ago, Allied forces in Europe experienced an all-too-common occurrence in war: a huge intelligence failure that led to a surprise attack, followed by a horrific battlefield disaster. That it was transformed into victory by the Allies was due, in large measure, to the incredible bravery of young Americans, who were outnumbered, outgunned, and fighting in some of the worst physical conditions of World War II.

Seventy years later, the Battle of the Bulge is not as celebrated as the D-Day invasion or Iwo Jima, but it was far deadlier than either of those battles. Indeed, it was the costliest encounter for the United States in the entire war. More than 19,000 Americans were killed in the thick Ardennes forest between December 16, 1944, and January 25, 1945, 62,000 were wounded, and more than 26,000 were either captured or missing.

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It was the last great offensive by Germany, which attempted to cut the Allied armies on the Western Front in half. A large part of its initial success came from the complete secrecy in which it was orchestrated. There were signs that should have been picked up beforehand—the code-breaking machine Ultra provided cables that might have tipped off the Allies, and there were even intelligence officers who predicted a counteroffensive at that time. Neither was taken seriously by the high command. The Allies had pushed through France and into Belgium in just six months following the Normandy invasion, and GIs talked about the possibility of being home for Christmas.

The reason it is called the Battle of the Bulge is that an obvious "bulge" was created on the maps that many people followed daily back home. The Germans had a two-to-one troop advantage in the initial assault, and they had more tanks and artillery as well. That part of the front was lightly defended by the Allies. The Germans, however, had fewer troops in reserve, which would prove consequential. It was the equivalent of a Hail Mary pass, and it almost succeeded.

One key factor that should have worked against the Germans was the almost complete control of the skies that the Allies commanded over Europe by that point. That domination came at a high price after two years of horrific air battles. But even that worked in Germany's favor at the start of the Bulge because the weather turned awful. Heavy overcast followed by bitter cold temperatures grounded practically every plane in Europe. With complete surprise, superior numbers, and terrible weather, the Germans devastated everything in their path.

In some cases, strict orders for utmost speed led to massacres, the worst of which took place in the small Belgian town of Malmedy. There, a unit of the First SS Panzer Division, commanded by Joachim Peiper, could not be bothered with prisoners. In a snow-covered field, SS troops machine-gunned 84 Americans to death. This led to vicious, take-no-prisoners fighting on both sides over the next month. Peiper was convicted of war crimes in a military tribunal in 1946 and sentenced to death. The order was later commuted because of efforts by both governments to move past the war, and he was released after 12 years in prison. In 1976, after careers at Volkswagen and Porsche, Peiper, a Nazi hardliner, was shot to death by unknown assailants, and then his home was burned to the ground. No one has ever taken responsibility.

One of America's most courageous moments—and it was truly heroic—came at Bastogne with the 101st Airborne. Vastly outnumbered and running low on everything from food and medical supplies to ammunition, the paratroopers held their ground and the strategic city never fell into enemy hands. That stand is one of the few parts of the Bulge that has been re-created by Hollywood, first in the 1949 classic *Battleground*, starring Van Johnson and James Whitmore, and, more recently, in the HBO series *Band of Brothers*.

Although some green troops placed

at the front, and even some with combat experience, completely folded in the wake of the massive German onslaught, there were Bastogne-like stands throughout the Bulge that were crucial in slowing the German advance. Just as critical were American supplies, which, once they started moving again, seemed limitless. It was almost exclusively a German-American fight, and it was the Americans that eventually gained the upper hand. Afterwards, Winston Churchill said, "This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory." Churchill was wrong on his last thought; other battles have surpassed the Bulge in our national memory.

In a long war filled with great drama, there was one moment that should always be remembered, especially during the congressional debates on military spending that have taken place in every year since 1945. When the weather finally broke, America's Army Air Force was unleashed. On December 24, Christmas Eve, the United States flew 1,138 tactical sorties (fighters) and an astounding 2,442 heavy bomber sorties.

Most wars are fought individually or in small groups. Rarely do participants see or even understand the grand scope and design swirling around them. Just witnessing this vast air armada had a huge psychological effect on the soldiers below on both sides. Few people in history have ever seen anything like it—before or since—and one of them was my late father, Capt. Sidney P. Kozak.

Like the other men of that era, my father kept most of his stories to himself, but he shared one that still gives me chills. On that day when the skies cleared, he said the men around him heard and even felt the sound before they understood its source. Then, suddenly, the entire sky filled with planes from one end to the other. He actually waved his arm across some imaginary horizon to add emphasis. And they were all flying in one direction.

"I couldn't believe one country could build that many airplanes," he told me years later, still in awe (and he had no concept of the massive numbers flying over the Pacific at the same time). Then he paused in his story and shared a very personal moment with a son who rarely, if ever, heard anything personal from this man.

"It was the most religious experience of my life," he said, looking far off and not at me.

It is impossible to quantify the impact of a sight like that on an individual, especially given the situation. But watching wave after wave pushing across the sky, flying in strict, regimental formation, with their contrails streaming behind them for miles, electrified the men below and gave them courage. These young Americans were no less cold and hungry and miserable than their forebears at Valley Forge on another Christmas 167 years earlier.

And they were no less their equals. ♦

A Little Bird Told Them

The warbler in evidence.

BY GEOFFREY NORMAN

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology produces a smartphone app that does an excellent job of assisting in bird identification. I use it when I am in unfamiliar territory and trying to put a name to a bird of no special distinction.

I also get the Cornell Lab's emails, and before Thanksgiving, I received one informing me that the prothonotary warbler had been voted "the winning warbler to be featured in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's centennial mural."

I didn't remember voting, but if I had, my vote certainly would have swollen the prothonotary warbler's majority. After all, no other little bird has played a part on the stage of American history anywhere near as big as this creature's role in the extraordinary mid-20th-century drama of the Hiss/Chambers case.

The case involved espionage—specifically, Americans, including U.S. government employees, spying for the Soviet Union in the decade leading up to World War II—but it was also about much more. In the long run, it might not have mattered so much whether Alger Hiss had been a member of the Communist party; whether he had given Whittaker Chambers, then himself a Communist spy, government documents to be conveyed to Moscow; or whether as a State Department official he had had some sort of malign influence at the Yalta conference. By the time his crimes were exposed in the late 1940s, Hiss was protected by the statute of limitations. But his treason made a large and lasting difference to the man who had reluctantly exposed him under questioning.

Above, the Chambers family, 1949; below, Hiss before a grand jury, left, and his warbler, right

Chambers, a top editor at *Time* magazine, persevered through congressional investigations, a suit for libel, remorseless public scrutiny, and vicious attacks. He ultimately made the Hiss case central to his remarkable book, *Witness*, which is a memoir, a confession, and an account of a political odyssey that has no equal in American literature.

The crucial events of the Hiss/Chambers case were very old news by the time I read the book, in the 1980s. But the literary tension it achieves is such that Chambers's account reads like a crime novel, in which everyday details turn out to be vital to establishing guilt and innocence.

The case for Hiss's guilt hung on much indirect evidence, but it would have collapsed completely had it not been possible to prove that Hiss had known Chambers in the 1930s. Hiss denied it. Chambers, grilled by a congressional committee for proof, provided the kind of intimate detail about Hiss and his family that only someone close to him could have known—the gift of a rug, Hiss's term of endearment for his wife, the sort of car he drove. In answer to one question, Chambers said that Hiss and his wife "both had the same hobby—amateur ornithologists, bird observers. They used to get up early in the morning and go to Glen Echo, out on the canal, to observe birds. I recall one day they saw, to their great excitement, a prothonotary warbler."

So the trap was laid. Chambers had given this testimony behind closed doors. A few days later, Hiss was questioned in public session. An ambitious young congressman named Richard Nixon asked:

Q: *What hobby, if any, do you have, Mr. Hiss?*

A: *Tennis and amateur ornithology.*

Then someone else who was in on the sting asked Hiss:

Q: *Did you ever see a prothonotary warbler?*

A: *I have, right here on the Potomac.*

It was so crudely done that you wonder if it would work in a Grisham novel. But it sandbagged Hiss and helped send him to jail for perjury.

The case made a name for Nixon, divided intellectuals and political thinkers into rival camps, and eventually marked the fault line between, on the one hand, Nixon and his "silent majority" and, on the other, a liberal

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intellectual and academic elite. Despite Hiss's conviction, supporters continued to believe he had been framed until Allen Weinstein published *Perjury* in 1978. Weinstein had begun his research believing Hiss was innocent, but instead the evidence convinced him of his guilt. Even so, a few bitter clingers still hold that Hiss was an innocent man, victimized by public hysteria and the vindictive ambitions of Nixon.

Some defenders of Hiss argued that seeing a prothonotary warbler was a big enough event in the life of any birdwatcher that he would have bragged about it. Chambers, in his supposed devious campaign to frame Hiss, would have learned of this from Hiss's friends and then used it before the committee as proof of his own intimacy with the Hisses.

What is undeniable, after all these years, is that the Hiss/Chambers case was a magisterial event, with a tragic dimension and with a great and haunted writer as one of the protagonists. By comparison, today's scandals seem thin and parochial.

The email from the Cornell Lab sent me back to the books, especially *Witness*, which Ronald Reagan placed among the works that had influenced him most. The book holds up, but requires some prior knowledge of the intellectual and spiritual stakes of the time.

The email also sent me back, in memory, to my own experience with a prothonotary warbler. Before paddling through the Okefenokee Swamp a few years ago, I consulted the standard guide books and learned I might see two birds I had only read about, the warbler and the sandhill crane, which had once come so close to extinction that I might never have had a chance to see it. I saw them both—the smaller bird only fleetingly, but its color was sublime and included a shade of yellow as brilliant and rich as can be found in nature.

It is an exquisite little bird—not gaudy, like the Baltimore oriole. It deserves its landslide win in the Cornell Lab's plebiscite, as well as its place in American political history and the annals of treason. ♦

Washington, D.C., passenger Shira Lebow passes a taxi during an UberX ride in April.

Taxi Deregulation Happened *Where?*

A rare, worthy reform, made in Washington.

BY ELI LEHRER

Mary Cheh, who represents a leafy, affluent, embassy-filled section of Washington, doesn't fit anyone's image of a free-market reformer. A member of the D.C. Council since 2007, the sixty-something's dress and manner are those of the Harvard-educated law professor she is. Many of her legislative priorities—free breakfast programs and green energy—could come from the playbook of any urban progressive.

Her latest accomplishment, however, is a model in managing economically disruptive forces in a way that balances capitalist principles with traditional institutions. She led an overhaul of the District's ridesharing and taxi regulations, creating a level playing field for conventional taxis and their rival upstart transportation network companies (TNCs) while responding to residents' legitimate gripes about a system with serious shortcomings.

Cheh's transportation reforms have won plaudits from free-market groups for creating a sensible legal framework to regulate fast-growing TNCs like Uber, Sidecar, and Lyft. The companies have to procure insurance, check their drivers' backgrounds, and ensure cars are in working order, but they can otherwise charge fares and maintain service as they please.

Most of the nation's big cities now allow ridesharing services to operate without huge burdens, with New Orleans, Las Vegas, and Houston notable exceptions. What distinguishes Washington's regime is that it also maintains a largely free market for taxicabs that has been *enhanced* under the legislation that opened things up for the TNCs. The District never issued

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tradable medallions like New York and Chicago, which serve to enrich lucky medallion owners while limiting the supply of cabs for consumers. Deregulation in the late 1990s and early 2000s under former insurance commissioner Larry Mirel also made taxi insurance more affordable than it is in other big cities and let local insurance companies write most of the coverage.

Nonetheless, D.C.'s taxi system was never copacetic. While anyone with a full-sized car who passed a fairly simple test could drive a cab in Washington, an antiquated zone system made it difficult even for locals to figure out fares but downright easy for cabbies to cheat out-of-towners. Price controls also ensured that D.C.'s cab fleet remained dingy and decrepit.

There are good reasons that, in most places, taxis tend to be heavily standardized. If fares had to be negotiated each time a customer hailed a cab, cabstand lines would grind to a halt and street hails would block traffic. Because consumer choice has always been limited, most cities have required that taxis be full-sized cars with room for four adults and their luggage; that they maintain a uniform livery "trade dress," with black cabs in London and yellow ones in New York; and that they have basic amenities like air conditioning and seatbelts.

But starting in 2008, through several successive waves of reform, Washington's taxi regulations moved toward a far simpler structure, replacing zones with conventional meters and allowing more adjustments for gasoline prices. This made it possible for cabbies and companies to buy newer, better cabs.

Cheh's bill went further in the direction of deregulation. If they're hailed by a smartphone app, D.C. taxis now can set prices based on market forces of supply and demand, just as TNCs do. Alone among major U.S. cities, therefore, the nation's capital now has something close to a free market for on-call transportation. So long as they follow some basic rules, just about anyone can drive for hire in the District and, in many cases, charge almost any price the customer is willing to pay.

The reforms haven't all made cabdrivers happy, though. In October, hundreds of them staged a protest on the city's Freedom Plaza, blocking traffic for hours while honking their horns loudly. While the protest, organized by the Teamsters-affiliated Taxi Operators Association, probably backfired on the cabbies themselves—the *Washington Post* reported that it was "unlikely to have endeared the taxi driving community to their riders"—it did raise legitimate issues. The city, for example, now requires drivers to use credit card readers that charge relatively high fees and take, the Teamsters say, "a very long time to get drivers their money."

And some measures that haven't been all that controversial might still be bad ideas. Evidence from over 50 years of car inspections indicates there's very little they do to improve safety, but D.C. still requires them for both taxis and TNC vehicles. The requirement for a uniform trade dress for taxis—with no similar requirements for TNCs—may go too far and drew protests from cabbies, especially those driving the recognizable cars of the Yellow Cab Company, when it was announced. (The District ended up mandating it for new vehicles rather than making all cabs get new paint jobs.)

Of course, ardent libertarians object to any sort of ride-for-hire regulation—even basic insurance requirements—and predict confidently that the market alone can work out a decent system. That may well be true in the long run, but Washington is showing that transparent and equitable regulation that doesn't blow up the existing market can work exceptionally well. D.C. maintains far more taxis in service (over 6,000) than either comparably sized San Francisco (which has fewer than 2,000) or much larger Chicago (which has around the same number as D.C.). All of this has been possible in a city with an extensive rail system, lots of buses, subsidized bike sharing, and three major car-sharing services.

While taxi business is down by all accounts, some cabdrivers have switched to driving for the TNCs, which are flourishing. Insiders at leading TNCs say the District is among their most profitable markets, although there, too, fares have been heading downward, thanks in large part to intense competition between Uber and Lyft, which may eventually erode profits.

Areas of the city historically underserved by taxicabs, particularly the poorer areas east of the Anacostia River and better-off but low-density areas in northwest Washington, have much better service than they did before. Uber, in fact, has located one of its major operational bases for the city in Anacostia. On a Sunday afternoon in late December, the two largest TNC operators reported more cars and a shorter response time near a church in Anacostia than a home on ritzy Foxhall Road in the northwest quadrant.

It's not a capitalist's dream by any standard, but transportation in Washington is moving toward a more market-friendly reality. It's an excellent example of how even progressives in a very liberal city can move free-market causes forward a few miles at a time. ♦

Protesters in Florida, March 2005

The Schiavo Case Revisited

Why you may be hearing about it in 2016.

BY WESLEY J. SMITH

Now that Republican Jeb Bush has made all the noises of a man running for president, expect the former governor of Florida to be attacked for trying to save the life of Terri Schiavo.

The first such criticisms have already been launched in the left-wing media. *ThinkProgress* quoted Terri's widower Michael—who had two children with his now-wife while still married to Terri—warning: "If you want a government that's gonna intrude on your life, enforce their personal views on you, then I guess Jeb Bush is your man." In *Harper's*, John R. MacArthur criticized Bush for "outrageous meddling . . . to 'rescue' brain-dead Terri Schiavo." (Terri wasn't "brain dead," but what do facts have to do with leftist advocacy?)

Bush did indeed use his office in an effort to save Terri's life. But he wasn't alone. Nor were Republicans exclusively supportive of the cause. Contrary to popular memory, the effort to save Terri Schiavo was broadly bipartisan.

Schiavo suffered catastrophic brain injury in 1990 after an unexplained cardiac arrest. Michael and her parents, Bob and Mary Schindler, worked together for a time to seek rehabilitative care. They became estranged eventually, and when Michael petitioned a Florida court in 1998 seeking permission to stop Terri's tube-supplied nutrition and hydration, Bob and Mary fought him in court, offering to provide their daughter's care for the rest of her life.

The case burst into international headlines in 2003 after the Schindlers uploaded videos of Terri to the Internet, including one of her seeming to smile broadly at her mother's greeting. Over the next two years, the Terri Schiavo case became the most heated bioethical controversy since the days of Jack Kevorkian and, indeed, it continues to roil public attitudes to this day.

By October 2003, Michael had cleared every judicial hurdle and ordered Terri's feeding tube removed. After she had gone six days without food or water, the Florida legislature, at Bush's urging, passed "Terri's Law" allowing the governor to take control of her care. Bush ordered sustenance restored, but the law was ruled unconstitutional by the Florida supreme court in September 2004, seen widely as a major defeat for Bush.

Schiavo's feeding tube was again removed. Now, the public storm moved to Congress. In the Senate, Majority Leader Bill Frist and Minority Leader Harry Reid cooperated on a bill that required a federal court to review alleged irregularities in the state's judicial proceedings—an extraordinary, unprecedented proposal to grant federal jurisdiction over a legal matter the U.S. Supreme Court had already refused repeatedly to consider.

Time was of the essence as each day without sustenance, Terri grew closer to death. Getting the bill to the Senate floor before Terri died required unanimous consent. In other words, if even one senator refused, the Schiavo case was over except for the dying.

The bill was explosively controversial. What did the Democrats' likely 2016 nominee, Hillary Clinton, do? Typical of her notorious angle-playing approach to politics, she said nothing one way or the other publicly—and along with every other senator, quietly consented to the bill receiving a floor vote. The federal "Terri's Law" quickly passed, becoming one of the most bipar-

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tisan laws enacted during George W. Bush's presidency. (Besides the unanimous voice vote in the Senate, it gained the support of about 45 percent of House Democrats.)

The rest is sad history. After a perfunctory review, the federal court found no irregularities and refused to halt the dehydration. Terri Schiavo died on March 31, 2005, at age 41.

When postmortem polls showed that the public opposed the federal involvement, many Democrats—Clinton among them—disparaged the very effort in which they themselves had cooperated. For example, at a 2006 fundraising appearance in Florida, Clinton hypocritically decried Republicans for "exploiting the tragedy of Terri Schiavo."

Back when a catastrophically disabled woman's life hung in the balance, Jeb Bush took a principled, if unpopular, stand. Contrast that with Clinton, who went along with the legislative effort to save Terri Schiavo, but in a politically calculated way: If the law had been popularly embraced, she could have taken credit for being on board. When it turned out that the law was generally unpopular, she pointed fingers.

Democrats are undoubtedly smiling at the prospect that Jeb Bush's Schiavo effort will give him a bad odor among moderates—even as his positions on immigration and support for Common Core have conservatives holding their collective noses. But if trying to save Terri Schiavo from a slow death reduces Bush's viability as a presidential candidate, then so too should it count against Hillary Clinton. ♦

It Takes a Pirate . . .

Bring back letters of marque and reprisal.

BY JOSHUA GELERNTER

Any leverage Washington has over North Korea has been invested in stifling their nuclear program; so you might think the U.S. government has just two available responses to the Hollywood hack: Do nothing or declare war. But, happily, there's a third option, and it's firmly grounded in the Constitution.

Hacking from North Korea is a longstanding nuisance for South Korea; it's a new problem for the United States, though it may become a more serious one. Over the last few years, North Korea has doubled its supply of military hackers. According to the Hewlett-Packard Security Research blog, it now has the largest cyberwarfare establishment outside the United States and Russia. But it's not the most serious cyberthreat. As part of Russia's Freudian efforts to compensate for its Cold War emasculation, Russo-hackers have damaged American utilities, stolen technical data, and absconded with private banking info. But the Russians aren't the most serious threat, either. China is.

According to a 2011 report of the National Counterintelligence Executive, "Russia's intelligence services are conducting a range of activities to collect economic information and technology from U.S. targets," but "Chinese actors are the world's most active and persistent perpetrators of economic espionage. U.S. private sector firms and cybersecurity specialists have reported an onslaught of computer network intrusions that have originated in China."

The Chinese government denies being involved in hacking and says

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"such reports and comments are irresponsible and are not worth refuting." Consequently, they haven't been refuted. The problem persists. According to an American government official who spoke to Reuters, "China may have helped North Korea carry out the hacking attack on Sony."

Unless America plans to give up mocking dictators, we can't respond to the Sony hack by doing nothing. Since we're not going to bomb Pyongyang, and we don't want a cyberwar, or a trade war, or a real war with China, we have to reconsider the middle ground.

According to the National Counterintelligence Executive, "tens of billions of dollars of trade secrets, technology and intellectual property are being siphoned each year from the computer systems of U.S. government agencies, corporations and research institutions." This month, tens of millions of dollars have been siphoned out of our film industry. According to the Chinese and North Korean governments, neither was involved in those hacks.

Armed with letters of marque, American programmers working for American companies would be able to follow hackers back to their servers of origin—and to sack and pillage whatever they could, using, sharing, or selling what they found.

So Chinese and North Korean hackers (among others) are operating beyond national boundaries, floating around on the high seas of the Internet; if they are working, as their governments say, without government sanction, I say that makes them pirates. And as it happens, We the People are equipped to deal with pirates.

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution enumerates the powers of Congress, which include the power "to define and punish Piracies" and to "grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal."

Letters of marque and reprisal are writs issued by governments for private parties to attack enemies, and to respond to attacks, without direct government oversight. They're thought of as creating privateers. But strictly speaking, a letter of marque permits a merchant ship to arm and defend itself against attacks, from warships or pirates, and, in the process, to take prizes.

Congress should use its power to define piracy to define cyberpiracy, and issue letters of marque to hacked companies, licensing them to defend themselves. American programmers working for American or America-resident companies would then be able to follow hackers back to their servers of origin—and to sack and pillage whatever they could, using, sharing, or selling what they found. (They would be expected, of course, to be discreet in handling American intellectual property and trade secrets, in exchange for their letters of marque: quid pro quo.) I suspect there would be plenty of patriotic software engineers willing to do some hacking for sport, profit, and the national interest.

This is a rational response to theft and harassment. All we need to get going is an interested member of Congress. Last week, Rand Paul took the opening of Cuba as a chance to set himself up as nonmilitary nonisolationist. Letters of marque should be right up his alley, particularly if he wants to recover some of the ground he lost by picking the wrong side of an argument with Marco Rubio. Of course, that argument set Rubio up as the serious conservative's alternative to Rand Paul (among the junior senator set). So this could be a good issue for Rubio, too.

It's been a couple of hundred years since Congress availed itself of this particular power. If it means to take cyberthreats seriously, now would be a good time to revive it. ♦

Lincoln's Drive Through Richmond by Dennis Malone Carter (1866)

Democracy and Nobility

Was the Civil War a second American Revolution?

By Allen C. Guelzo

Americans love revolutions. Our national identity began with a revolution, and a revolutionary war that lasted for eight years; and we cheer on other people's revolutions, as though we find satisfaction in multiplying our own. "I hold that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing & as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical," wrote Thomas Jefferson. "No country should be long without one." An excited James Garfield, in his maiden speech in the House of Representatives in 1864, asked whether his colleagues "forget that the Union had its origin in revolution." Ralph Waldo Emerson thought of revolution as the authentic instinct of humanity. "Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution," he said in his Harvard Divinity School address of 1838. "The old is for slaves."

But sometimes our enthusiasm for revolutions blinds us to what *is*, and what is *not*, genuinely revolutionary. The English geologist and traveler George Featherstonhaugh took the temperature of American revolutionary fervor and dismissed it as mere patriotic puff, designed only to "stimulate that national vanity and self-sufficiency which are often so conspicuous in young countries, and to cherish in his fellow-citizens that inflated feeling of superiority over other nations." So let us be clear about what a revolution *is*: A revolution is an overturning, a reversal of polarity, a radical discontinuity with what has gone before. It means, as the sociologist Jeff Goodwin wrote, "not only mass mobilization and regime change, but also more or less rapid and fundamental social, economic and/or cultural

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change, during or soon after the struggle for state power."

Stacked against that definition, our founding revolution, and the revolutions that succeeded it, may not be so revolutionary after all. At first, the American Revolution presents us with a whopping set of discontinuities: The king of England disappears and is replaced by a notion of sovereignty residing in the people; democratic governments emerge in the new American states and coalesce in an unprecedented piece of formal statecraft, the Constitution; the property of prominent American Tories is confiscated; law-codes must be rewritten, and a major debate takes place over whether English common law should still retain authority or be superseded by legislative statute. But much of this revolutionary reshaping happened simply by elevating the revolutionaries' already-in-place experiments in self-government to permanent status. "We began our Revolution, already possessed of government, and, comparatively, of civil liberty," said Daniel Webster. "Our ancestors had from the first been accustomed in a great measure to govern themselves" and "had little else to do than to throw off the paramount authority of the parent state. Enough was still left, both of law and of organization, to conduct society in its accustomed course, and to unite men together for a common object."

In 1843, when one of the last survivors of Lexington and Concord was interviewed by an overanxious antiquarian about his reasons for revolution, Captain Levi Preston of Danvers replied simply, "Young man, what we meant in going for those Redcoats was this: We always had governed ourselves and we always meant to. They didn't mean we should." In other words, our revolution was a revolution *against* a revolution, and in defense of an already-existing (albeit de facto) democratic order. The real revolution, we might say, was the attempt of the king of England to meddle in those arrangements.

This ambivalence about revolutions has never been more of a problem than when we speak of the American Civil War—as we often do—as a "second" American Revolution, and especially when we are situated near the end of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. James Garfield said in 1864, "Our situation affords a singular parallel to that of the people of Great Britain in their great revolution of the seventeenth century." Thaddeus Stevens hoped that Union forces would "free every slave—slay every traitor—burn every rebel mansion," and make the war "a radical revolution." And nearer our own time, Progressive historians of the 1920s and 1930s warmed to the notion of the Civil War as a revolution in which (according to Charles Beard, who first applied "second American Revolution" to the Civil War) "an industrial and commercial nation following in the footsteps of Great Britain" was transformed by "the power of capital, both absolute and as compared to land."

Certainly there exists quite a long list of discontinuities with the American past that the Civil War opened up in American life—in the technology of war, in law and politics, in social relations and economics, and culminating in the abolition of slavery. But do these discontinuities amount to a *revolution*? Are they really even discontinuities?

After the battle of Stone's River, Union major general William S. Rosecrans calculated that 20,000 rounds of artillery fired had managed to hit exactly 728 men; even more amazing, his troops had fired off 2 million rifle cartridges and inflicted 13,832 hits on rebel infantry.

The most obvious of these discontinuities in the Civil War have to do with the war itself, or rather the technology of war, since the received wisdom in military history for the past half-century has been that the seemingly endless casualty lists of Civil War battlefields were the product of unimaginative officers attempting to use the outdated tactics of Napoleon against the decimating wonder of the newly invented rifled musket and rifled artillery. And this technology really was remarkable in many ways. Unlike the trusty old British "Brown Bess" musket of the 18th century (which was useless at ranges greater than 80 yards), the Civil War-era rifle musket could hit an 11-inch bull's-eye at 350 yards and could penetrate 6 inches of pine board at 500 yards.

But the rifle musket was not exactly a novelty by the time the American Civil War broke out. It received its first practical tests in North Africa in 1846, in the Crimean War of 1853-56, and in the North Italian War of 1859, and it had attracted quite enough use and attention for two American officers—George Willard and Cadmus Wilcox, both of whom fought at Gettysburg—to write handbooks on its use.

And for all the improvements in range and accuracy created by the rifle musket, it was still a black-powder, paper-cartridge muzzle-loader which required a cumbersome sequence of nine separate steps (known as "load in nine times") to load. Although the optimum firing-rate was three rounds per minute, the practical reality under battlefield conditions was closer to one round every four to five minutes. Moreover, its fabled improvements in accuracy were also fatally limited: The rifling in the barrel which gave its bullets a self-correcting spin also slowed its velocity

significantly from that of the old Brown Bess—from 1,500 to 1,115 feet-per-second—and allowed the bullet to drop as much as 14 feet over 300 yards. This, in turn, required the installation of back sights on the various brands of rifle muskets, which forced the shooter to raise the rifle upwards before firing. In effect, the bullet was not so much fired as it was dropped (and this dropping is echoed in numerous Civil War descriptions of combat in which bullets are said to have "dropped in showers"). So, whatever was gained in terms of pinpoint targeting had to be paid for by continuous mental adjustments for the movement of targets—and the actual environment of combat was not conducive to careful mental adjustments. "What precision of aim or direction can be expected," asked one British officer, when "one man is priming; another coming to the present; a third taking, what is called, aim; a fourth ramming down his cartridge," and all the while "the whole body are closely enveloped in smoke, and the enemy totally invisible?"

The answer, of course, was *not much*. After the battle of Stone's River, Union major general William S. Rosecrans worked out a general estimate of how many shots needed to be fired to inflict one hit on the enemy, and came up with the astounding calculation that 20,000 rounds of artillery fired during that battle managed to hit exactly 728 men; even more amazing, his troops had fired off 2 million rifle cartridges and inflicted 13,832 hits on rebel infantry. In practical terms, this was still the sort of combat where men could stand upright on the battlefield with a fairly healthy margin of safety; the staggering length of the casualty lists was the result not of modernized weapons, but of the inexperience of both volunteer officers and soldiers in charging home with the bayonet and the consequent bogging-down of lines of battle in motionless exchanges of fire. The real revolution in weapons technology would occur not in the Civil War, but with the adoption of breech-loading rifles as standard infantry arms in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. In that respect, far from being revolutionary, the weapons of the Civil War made it the last of the Napoleonic Wars rather than a revolutionary harbinger of the Western Front.

It has been argued that the Civil War was a revolution in warfare thanks to railroad transportation and the electrical telegraph. But once again, the military application of neither the railroad nor the telegraph was an innovation of the American Civil War. Both were put to their first practical test by the British Army in the Crimean War, and in 1859 Napoleon III took the railroads one step further, using them for troop transportation into northern Italy against the Austrians. French railroads moved 76,000 men in just 10 days, and in the run-up to the battles at Magenta and Solferino, it took some of Napoleon III's regiments only five days to reach their concentration point in northern Italy from Paris.

The last resort for promoting the Civil War as a technological revolution is the famous combat of the two ironclad warships, *Monitor* and *Virginia* (earlier known in the U.S. Navy service as the USS *Merrimack*) at Hampton Roads in the spring of 1862. One point for revolutionary novelty does get scored by the battle at Hampton Roads—it was the first time that two ironclad warships fought each other. But the decades between Trafalgar and Hampton Roads had seen at least five different innovations in naval technology—the use of steam power to replace sail, the use of explosive shells rather than solid shot, the screw propeller, and rifled guns, in addition to iron armor—none of which originated in the United States, much less in the Civil War. During the Crimean War, both France and England constructed flotillas of ironclad "floating batteries" for use against their Russian antagonist, and in 1860, the British launched the first full-size, seagoing ironclad warship, HMS *Warrior*. It was with *Warrior* that the age of the iron warship really arrived. Even *Monitor*'s ingenious revolving turret followed the lead of the British gunnery expert Captain Cowper Coles, who had patented a design in 1859 for an armored "cupola" on a turntable and conducted trials on a prototype in September 1861.

If the Civil War was not exactly a "revolution in military affairs," then perhaps it was such in law and politics. And again, on first opening the box, the Civil War does seem to have achieved three vital reconstructions of the old Constitution, namely, the abolition of slavery by the 13th Amendment, the definition of citizenship in the 14th and 15th Amendments, and the first use of presidential "war powers" by Abraham Lincoln. But the 13th Amendment abolished an institution whose extinction, as Lincoln and many others had been at pains to demonstrate, was already in the constitutional cards at the time of the founding; and the 14th and 15th Amendments involved repairing an oversight in the original Constitution (which, oddly, contained no definition of citizenship) and overturning the attempt of the Supreme Court to impose one in *Dred Scott* v. *Sanford* in 1857.

Lincoln's claim to possess, by virtue of his constitutional designation as commander in chief, certain unenumerated war powers was a constitutional novelty; and in the minds of the Democratic opposition who had their newspapers shut down and their leaders arrested and tried by military tribunals acting under those war powers, they seemed like a monstrous aberration. But one has to say, on the whole, that the volume of civil liberties violations during the Civil War pales by comparison with those which occurred during the two World Wars and even into the war on terror. Not until after World War II would the United States gradually slide towards a semipermanent state of military mobilization and the creation of what has

unflatteringly been described as the national security state.

That has not discouraged the more ambitious among us from claiming that in fact a bright line can be drawn between Lincoln's use of executive power and what is often construed as a centralizing revolution in federal government authority. Since the hallmarks of a centralized nation are (according to the libertarian political philosopher Murray Rothbard) "strong central government, large-scale public works, and cheap credit spurred by government"; and since Lincoln's administration was also built on "high tariffs, huge subsidies to railroads, public works"; then, ergo, Lincoln was the forerunner of figures as various (and presumably nefarious) as Otto von Bismarck, Franklin Roosevelt, and Karl Marx. "Lincoln," concludes libertarian writer David Gordon, "like his Prussian contemporary Otto von Bismarck . . . sought a powerful, centralizing state."

If this was indeed Lincoln's intent—to stage a quiet overthrow of the old Constitution and substitute the template for a *Wohlfahrtsstaat*—this *would* be a genuinely revolutionary development. But the attempt to portray the Lincoln administration, even in the midst of the Civil War, as the New Deal before its time strains credulity. True, the U.S. federal budget swelled from $76.8 million in 1860 to an astounding high of $1.9 billion in 1865; but it plummeted immediately thereafter to $424 million, fully half of which involved the payment of soldiers' pensions, and by 1880, the federal budget was only 16.7 percent of what it had been in 1865. The federal civilian workforce rose from 40,000 in 1861 to 194,997 in 1865; but it, too, dropped precipitately by 1871, to 51,000. If this amounts to a revolutionary centralization of government, then we have begun to lose our grip on what we mean by a revolution.

Curiously, where a debate over the revolutionary nature of the Civil War really came to center stage was in the justification the Southern states offered for their attempt to leave the Union—the right to *secede*. Lincoln never questioned the right of the Southerners to stage a revolution: "Whenever" American citizens "shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it." But one thing they could not do, Lincoln added, was pretend that the Constitution gave them authority to leave the Union and proceed as though they had changed nothing in the process. "The States have their status in the Union, and they have no other legal status," Lincoln insisted. "If they break from this, they can only do so against law, and by revolution."

The irony of this is that the one thing the Southerners would not dare to do was to claim that their attempted departure from the Union was revolutionary, because in that case, all legal bets would be off—the status of contracts, court systems, postage stamps, state constitutions, and, above all, property would come into doubt, just as they had done after the triumph of the American revolutionaries in 1783. And property would include slave property. So the Confederates were compelled to claim that their movement was not a revolution, but a secession, and thus keep up the appearances of continuity with the past, rather than run the risks involved in revolution. If the Civil War was a revolution even in this constitutionally arcane sense, it was a revolution in which the protagonists were surprisingly intent on denying that any revolution was occurring.

But certainly we should say that the Civil War was revolutionary in one overwhelming respect, and that was the emancipation of 3.9 million black slaves. And here, we do strike a genuinely discontinuous, revolutionary note, for the Civil War not only violently excised all legal traces of slavery from the Constitution, but practically destroyed all the wealth invested in it, to the tune of nearly $3 billion.

But was the overall goal of emancipation actually a revolutionary one? We tend to think of slavery today almost purely in terms of race, as a racial offense and a racial injustice, to be remedied only by full social and political equality. And in that sense, emancipation was a revolution, for in the long history of Western society, it was without precedent for a slave population of such magnitude to be absolutely and immediately emancipated, without compensation to its owners, and then boosted at once into the realm of citizenship.

But in the eyes of the emancipationists, racial redemption was not, in fact, the principal goal. The fundamental offense posed by slavery in their eyes was that it represented a step away from a democratic political order, and its replacement with the kind of Romantic aristocracy that reestablished itself in Europe after the French Revolution. What Lincoln hated in slavery was not just its racial injustice, but the reemergence in America of the old demon of monarchy, where some people were born with uncalloused hands, booted and spurred and ready to ride on the backs of everyone else, who had to work. Owning slaves, Lincoln complained, "betokened not only the possession of wealth but indicated the gentleman of leisure who was above and scorned labour," and it appealed to "thoughtless and giddy headed young men who looked upon work as vulgar and ungentlemanly." Slavery's tendency to promote aristocratic habits and attitudes made Lincoln regard it as "the one retrograde institution in America"—not because it was racially unenlightened, but because it was "fatally violating the noblest political system the world ever saw."

So if a revolution was taking place in the Civil War years, it was a revolution by the slaveholding aristocrats

of the South against the principles of the Declaration and the Constitution. This was not just Lincoln's perception, either. Ulysses S. Grant was moved by the fear that democracy in America was regarded as a fragile and unwelcome experiment "up to the breaking out of the rebellion, and monarchical Europe generally believed that our republic was a rope of sand that would part the moment the slightest strain was brought upon it." At the other end of the chain of command, Wilbur Fiske, who enlisted as a private in the 2nd Vermont Infantry, likewise believed that "slavery has fostered an aristocracy of the rankest kind," and unless it was rooted up, it would choke the last stand of democracy. Walt Whitman, the "good, gray poet" who found part-time government work in Washington so that he could serve as a nurse in the army hospitals, wrote in 1863 that a divided America would reduce the world's greatest experiment in democracy to the level of a banana-republic, which would then lie prone at the feet of England and France. "The democratic republic," groaned Whitman, has mistakenly granted "the united wish of all the nations of the world that her union should be broken, her future cut off, and that she should be compell'd to descend to the level of kingdoms and empires." So long as the war raged, Whitman believed, "There is certainly not one government in Europe but is now watching the war in this country, with the ardent prayer that the United States may be effectually split, crippled, and dismember'd by it."

Newly freed slaves in war-ravaged Richmond, 1865

The prevailing ideal in the eyes of Lincoln—and almost every other opponent of slavery worth itemizing—was to stuff the evil genie of slavery back into the Southern box so that it could not spread, and then transform the society of the old South into a competitive society of small businesses and benevolent churchgoers. "The whole fabric of southern society must be changed," urged Thaddeus Stevens, who was impatient of any result of the Civil War that did not induce discontinuity. But the discontinuity he had in mind was the establishment of continuity with the capitalist democracy of the North. "How can republican institutions, free schools, free churches, free social intercourse exist in a mingled community of nabobs and serfs? . . . If the South is ever to be made a safe Republic let her lands be cultivated by the toil of the owners, or the free labor of intelligent citizens." The South thus would be re-made—into the image of a New England landscape, with small factories, free enterprise, banks, schools, and wages. "I look to a popular education so advanced that under . . . impartial law all creeds and all tongues and all races shall be gathered with an equal protection," Wendell Phillips explained. "The great trouble of the South lies in its ignorance. Awake it to enterprise."

The promoters of emancipation were not bent on promoting a revolution so much as they were intent on snuffing one out—a backward-looking, aristocratic revolution—in order to put the South back on the track it should have been on from the beginning of the republic.

The search for a revolution inside the Civil War is sometimes simply a search after something novel to say about an American event. Sometimes, however, the search for a "second American Revolution" is the offspring of a question that bedeviled Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and that bedevils historians of a Marxist persuasion today, the question posed by Werner Sombart a century ago: *Why is there no socialism in America?* Why, in other words, is there, in the land of the American Revolution, no interest in a social revolution of the classes? The answers on offer since then have been many and various. But one answer to Sombart's question that has been overlooked may be Lincoln and the Civil War itself.

Lincoln and the Civil War imparted to the idea of democracy a nobility and a moral grandeur that democracy has sometimes lacked. After all, democracy assumes that the humblest of citizens is competent to participate in governing; if the humblest citizen turns out to be a boor, a simpleton, or a redneck, democracy will quickly begin to lose its luster. But the victory of the North over slavery was a moment in which democracy shed any appearance of the commonplace and the ho-hum, and was borne up on the wings of courage, self-sacrifice, and the soaring eloquence of one humble but extraordinary president. Democracy can be dreadfully ordinary, because it is about the interests of ordinary people, rather than about knights in armor and royalty in gold carriages; Lincoln and the Civil War gave democracy the strength of giants and put into its hand the shining sword of freedom. Perhaps, in looking for a revolution, people have mistaken the means for the end, for in the Civil War, what we got was not revolution, but freedom. And freedom is worth having, by revolution or any other means. ♦

NEWSCOM

Campus Security

Reflections on current outrages

By Peter Augustine Lawler

Thanks to *Rolling Stone* and Lena Dunham, a big and sensational media issue today is rape on campus. Both the magazine and the author/actress appear to have published false accounts of rape that were written to fit a preconceived liberal or feminist agenda. Vulnerable women are raped by "a Republican" (Dunham) or gangs of fraternity boys who think it is their white, patriarchal privilege to treat women like chattel. The editors of *Rolling Stone* were so pleased with the latter narrative that they didn't check the most obvious facts, although it would seem that anyone should be suspicious of a story that fits their prejudices so seamlessly.

In their malpractice, the sophisticated liberal/feminist media have ended up instead publicizing the counternarrative of their foes: To wit, the politically correct mainstream media, campus affairs staffs, and Department of Education are waging a war against men. Based on sketchy or false data, the Department of Education and its allies in the media have caricatured our campuses as a kind of state of nature where there is no effective check on the lawless aggression of men. Extraordinary means that bypass ordinary standards of due process must therefore be deployed to cast predators off campus. The goal is rarely to lock them up—that could only be achieved by the police and courts—but to purge them from the academic community. Our campuses need a different kind of a policing that aims to make them utterly safe spaces, freeing students—especially women, gays, and other marginalized groups—from any perception of risk. Discomfort is to be banished from interpersonal experience, whether in the dorm room or the classroom, by regulating every interaction with detailed rules concerning what constitutes "affirmative consent," supplemented by "trigger warnings."

The real outrage, so the counternarrative goes, is not that women are subject to sexual assault and rape on campuses (which are far safer than society at large), but that men's rights are far less protected there than they are beyond the walls of the institutions of higher education. The same goes for the rights of those who dissent from the reigning political correctness, including political and religious conservatives.

What may be surprising to those far removed from campus life is that one can find elements of truth in both narratives of outrage, the one grounded in political correctness and the other in individual rights. Ours is both a libertarian and securitarian time. Americans, especially the young, seem to want to be liberated from every vestige of religious moralism found in our public policy. But they also seem to be more obsessed with protection from danger than ever before. There's an intensifying paranoid, puritanical, and prohibitionist impulse when it comes to health and safety risks, fueled by the experience of intensified personal contingency that comes with the atrophying of the various safety nets that institutional authority once provided.

You may object that libertarian securitarianism is more than a bit of an oxymoron, but that's the point. We live in a time of conflicting impulses. Our characteristic self-indulgence is the thought that we can have a sustainable society that maxes out both liberty and security.

At first glance, our residential campuses are bubbles, artificial environments that insulate students from the life of the competitive marketplace. The more exact truth is that our campuses offer students the privileges of liberty without the corresponding responsibilities. They can do what they please, whenever they please, as long as they respect the minimalist principles of safety and consent. When it comes to sex, they're not only allowed but encouraged to express themselves freely, as long as they do so in safe and consensual ways. Such a bubble culture flourishes because the natural, relational roles that structure life—being a husband or wife, mother or father, son or daughter—and that force us to recognize the limits of individualism in defining who we are, aren't features of "liberated" campus life.

The campus instead can be close to a consumer-sensitive libertarian and securitarian paradise, where students are offered a comfortable, "no worries" environment in health-club dorms with gourmet food, recreational facilities, student-affairs staffs that function like concierges, and

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classes that are virtually impossible to flunk. Students are remarkably free to frolic with each other in the service of pure enjoyment. Sure, that's an exaggeration and not true at all about some campuses. But like any good exaggeration, it points to an inconvenient truth—this one about privileges without responsibilities.

But not only is this paradise a really expensive product of social engineering, it's a luxury cruise that's not to everyone's liking. The dorms are often pretty much "no rules." That's because students are allegedly being treated as autonomous adults. More exactly, they are, as consumers, being catered to, with little asked in return. The resulting freedom might actually be more of a burden than a delight for many women and some men. The strong among them, for example, "hook up," while the weak are condemned to "sexile"—finding themselves homeless in paradise. And the whole world of coed dorms, we know, from Plato's *Republic*, originated as a male fantasy that dismissed the more feminine desire for privacy and intimacy—or respect for relational boundaries and natural sex differences.

Free condoms at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Two of 31 female students who filed a 2014 complaint against the University of California, Berkeley, claiming it violated federal anti-discrimination laws by failing to protect them against sexual harassment and assault

Another important feature of the unnatural state-of-nature that is campus life is, especially at liberal arts college, a dearth of men. It's sometimes argued that political correctness and the excessive consumer sensitivity of our colleges have made them rather infantile places, places unworthy of men. From a broader view, however, it's also easy to see that men are not faring as well in society these days, and sometimes, in the age of empowered single moms, they can even seem rather superfluous. Our educational system from grade school to graduate school seems to fail many boys. And our corporate workplaces, which increasingly favor compliant employees who can work quickly and sensitively off scripts prepared by others, are pretty much, as C. S. Lewis said, for "men without chests."

Well, that whiny observation isn't really fair to women, who are surely, in aggregate, as spirited as men. But who can deny that women generally are better at faking it than men, meaning they are more relationally adept and have better control over their smiles and the tone of their speech? At Chick-fil-A, for example, employees are told to say "my pleasure" in response to every customer request, no matter how rude or unreasonable. Those words almost always ring hollow from the mouths of men, who, we know, would rather say, as used to be permitted, "no problem" with a bit of edge, meaning you, the inconsiderate and ungrateful customer, have needlessly caused me a problem.

Women servers probably share those male preferences, but they, as Tocqueville says, are better attuned to knowing what it costs both to please and not please. To take all this from the dining room to the classroom, women are often better "collaborative learners" than men. They're better, often, at using the "team" to their advantage, even though men typically pride themselves in thinking they are team players.

Still, the increasing scarcity of men on the residential (and especially residential liberal arts) campus is a headache for administrators, who know that if the disparity grows too large it will discourage applications from young women who want a normal social life. The "enrollment management" news at my college has recently been quite good, with the exception that the gender disparity crept beyond the 60-40 mark that is thought to be a comfort zone. Part of our "war for more men" has been to add a number of new sports, which, it's hoped, will make the campus more "manly" in the inoffensive, basically athletic sense. This approach worked

TOP, AP / WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL / JOHN MANIACI; BOTTOM, NEWSCOM

the year football was introduced, with the coach having to recruit a roster of more than 100 guys. With a student body of a little over 2,000 undergraduates, that got us, for the moment, to 50-50. But, I think, only for the moment, as the early returns this year already show signs of reverting to being light on men.

I have no idea why men not interested in sports but very interested in women do not flock to most of our residential liberal arts colleges. I thought the most effective recruitment brochure we ever had featured a single man holding forth on a great book surrounded by eight enthralled (or seemingly enthralled?) women. The fact is that the median man at my college is not as relationally mature or quite as well prepared and just maybe not quite as smart as the median woman. That might be because there's a slight de facto preference in recruiting for the scarcer gender, and it certainly is because that's the way things are with men and women of college age throughout our population. Someone sent me a complaint found on Rate My Professor that I tended to give women A's, while for men my grading system seems a game of chance. My only semiserious response: That's because I really grade on merit.

So men show up at the typical liberal arts college to see comparatively few of their kind and an abundance of women, many or most smarter, more mature, and more attractive than they are. That these women are stuck with being interested in them can't help but cause an undeserved self-esteem surge, one which just might not enhance their best personal qualities. The sexual marketplace on campus therefore isn't anything like "real life" or what nature intends. And the state-of-nature or privileges-without-responsibilities characteristic of campus life detaches sexual relationships from their biological and civilizational imperatives as described by Mr. Darwin. This detachment, I will boldly say, is more repulsive to the more mature women than it is to the men, who are often (not always, of course) big kids.

Relational life in college is therefore more likely to be disappointing to women than men. They often don't find anyone in college worth marrying or even with whom to have a "committed relationship," and they are frequently surprised by how much their relationships improve after college. I'm not saying that this leads to a huge amount of sexual assault, but it does lead to a lot of "unwanted" or disappointing sex that takes place outside the confines of the trust established through love and mutual respect. Some women adapt to this situation better than others, and some even flourish. But many experience it as a threat to their self-esteem and personal identity. Some men do, too.

Now, the official doctrine is that there are techniques that can make sex equally safe for both men and women, overcoming a double standard given to us by nature. Safe sex means liberated sex, or sex detached from the constraining biological imperatives of birth and death (and disease). Everyone has a right to "hook up" safely and consensually—or without the fear that pervades sex in the state of nature.

This may be a right, but it's one that men can usually exercise a lot more easily than women. For most women, to be reasonably fearless (as opposed to the false sense of well-being that can come with being liquored up) requires either earned personal trust or confidence in the possibility of very effective law enforcement. The securitarian impulse overwhelms the libertarian claim to absolute personal autonomy.

That's why the libertarian campus—where students are treated (except when it comes to health and safety) as perfectly autonomous adults—produces a "politically correct" reaction. Peter Wood has observed that most assertive students on campus these days are either libertarian or politically correct. The libertarian students, we can guess, are those satisfied with what they perceive as the secure freedom of campus life. They're perhaps not thoroughgoing theoretical libertarians, all about succeeding as unencumbered entrepreneurs. (The genuinely innovative and disruptive founders of tech startups and such usually flee from constraining dogmatisms of campus life well before graduation.) But they do want to be freed from all forms of moralism to do as they please. They think the politically correct stuff they hear in class is an offense against freedom and common sense, but they don't take it seriously, just as they don't take seriously the politically correct rules generated by intrusive administrators.

Lots of campus libertarians—or more precisely, so as not to offend libertarian intellectuals, libertarian-securitarian slackers—tend to be jerks who flirt with hedonistic nihilism. When they read Ayn Rand, they do it in the perennial spirit of immature young men, rationalizing their untutored perception that they're better than the relational institutions that have raised them. They're like the young men who enjoyed hearing Socrates go after the respected elders of Athens for not really knowing much at all; that enjoyment, as Socrates' accusers rightly alleged, is hardly the wondrous pursuit of wisdom that animates future philosophers. It's usually not even "critical thinking."

The politically correct students, meanwhile, also want to do as they please, but they think they need much more intrusive protection from potential rapists and bullies. They really do feel insecure in displaying their personal identities, and they're very touchy when it comes

to the perception of aggression in what should be their safe spaces and comfort zones. They feel put upon by patriarchy, privilege, and power everywhere, and so they demand not to be judged in word or deed by anyone who's critical of who they are and what they do.

It's easy to mock the politically correct faculty and administrators who prey upon such fears, but it's both mean and unrealistic to deny that the fears are somewhat warranted. We learn, for example, that the self-indulgence of campus life is especially hard on earnest and naïve first-generation college students, and it might really be true that our campuses are more distorted by "classism" than "sexism." Campus life, in the absence of a shared moral orientation, really is a war of all against all for the scarce resource of status, and that war diverts everyone from the real purpose—the good that should be shared in common and the source of a high form of friendship—of higher education. (The last observation includes faculty and administrators, too.)

The good old days: 'twist parade' as part of fraternity initiation, Hyannis, Massachusetts

The college or university is also too often a place where the rare natural predators (sociopaths and such) can run amok undeterred by, at best, unreliably enforced rules. The enforcement process—detached as it often is from the practiced investigative eyes of the police and lawyers—leads too often to the illegal extremes of cover-ups at the expense of the accuser and lack of due process for the accused.

The somewhat justified paranoia that animates both the accusers and the accused on our campuses today might be traced to an environment that's too much about autonomy and not enough about cultivating trust based on shared responsibilities and loves. A community cannot be formed by no rules or no virtuous expectations beyond safety and consent. The residential liberal arts college was structured to be a genuinely aristocratic experience that develops the kind of friendships that come with cultivating the moral and intellectual virtues described by Aristotle, in many cases modified but not obliterated by biblical faith. Without some community agreement on the goods that should be shared in common by mature adults, the adult environment allegedly secured by reducing shared virtue to autonomy produces the opposite of the adult behavior presupposed at the foundation of genuinely liberal learning.

Our libertarianism and our political correctness share the same roots in a rather extreme philosophy of autonomy. And it's not the toughly rational and judgmental form given to us by Kant, but the soft or more self-indulgent form shared by John Rawls and Robert Nozick and many of our public intellectuals. We have to think outside the "autonomy box" to be open to the possibility that our campus life is demeaning, rooted in a theory that portrays free and relational persons as much less than they really are. That theory is not a proper foundation for higher education and especially not for the "experience" of the residential college.

It's not true, of course, that all students on campus are either libertarian or politically correct. There are those science, technology, engineering, and math majors lost in their theories and experiments, often lacking the social confidence to be libertarian, and completely clueless when it comes to the angry concerns of the politically correct. And there are the religiously observant, who conscientiously object to the moral claims—or moral emptiness—of the social and political worlds that surround them. There are also plenty of students who remain decent and relatively unassuming men and women primarily interested in acquiring the skills and competencies required to enter the world of work to support their families. Last but hardly least, there are still pockets of students animated by real books and music and all that. Our most sustainable residential campuses, it seems to me, are those that intentionally work to provide safe spaces or facilitate friendly environments for these nonlibertarian and nonpolitically correct purposes of higher education. My Berry, in fact, is one of those genuinely countercultural colleges.

The point of the residential college campus is to allow students to spend some time apart from—to rise above—the rather ignoble libertarian securitarianism that deforms our time. For now, too many campuses seem in perverse ways to be even more libertarian and more securitarian than the rest of our country, even its most sophisticated precincts. Those residential colleges without a point, it seems to me, aren't worth the big cost (funded too often by student loans) required to sustain them. So they probably don't—and shouldn't—have much of a future. ♦

AP / BETTMANN / CORBIS

James Laughlin and Ezra Pound in the hills above Rapallo (1937)

Gentleman of Letters

The hits and misses of James Laughlin. BY MARJORIE PERLOFF

When I first met James Laughlin (1914-1997) in 1974, he was 60: tall, handsome, elegant, witty, and highly regarded as the founder and publisher of what was, to many of us, the great poetry press in the United States—New Directions. From the 1930s on, he had published all the key volumes of Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, H. D., and such of their followers as George Oppen, Denise Levertov, and Robert Creeley. He was also the leading publisher of great European poets in translation, beginning with Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Mallarmé. The famous black-and-white covers of NDP books, originally designed by Laughlin himself, were legendary. Moreover, the publisher was himself an original and gifted poet, an important anthologist, and—on the side—a passionate skier, whose Alta Lodge in Utah is still a Mecca for skiers.

Who could resist the charms of James "J" Laughlin, a man who, as an heir to the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation in Pittsburgh, might

"Literchoor Is My Beat"
A Life of James Laughlin, Publisher of New Directions
by Ian S. MacNiven
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 592 pp., $37.50

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have sat on his hands but, instead, devoted his life to the promotion of the new talents he was regularly discovering, as well as to his own significant literary *oeuvre*.

Ian S. MacNiven, the author of this scrupulously researched and engaging biography, uncovers the real—and very fallible—man behind this myth. Not that MacNiven isn't himself under Laughlin's spell, admiring his literary acumen, his taste, and his ability to rebound from various publishing crises and make New Directions succeed. At the same time, MacNiven does not gloss over Laughlin's difficulties and weak points. In his verse memoir *Byways* (2006), the poet-publisher himself described his wealthy family as follows:

> *They built*
> *Big houses on the hills of*
> *Pittsburgh. God-fearing people who*
> *Married their own kind, until there was*
> *Too much money. It spoiled most of them.*

Too much money—but frugal Scotch-Irish as his parents were, they gave their son little for his projected publishing business. His father, Hughart, was a playboy-sportsman-philanderer not infrequently hospitalized with bouts of the bipolar illness his son was to inherit. Mother Marjorie was pious, distant, and cold: J, as he was always called, and his brother were raised primarily by servants and were then sent to the elegant LeRosey boarding school in Switzerland. There, J became fluent in French, and his subsequent education at Choate, where he studied with Dudley Fitts, turned him into a lifelong passionate classicist. Fortunately, he also had a family benefactress: Aunt Leila Laughlin Carlisle, whose estate at Robin Hill in Norfolk, Connecticut, became the seat of New Directions for at least a half-century.

But the legacy of J's dysfunctional family took its toll. He was himself to become a philandering husband (especially to his first wife, Margaret Keyser) and a distant father to his four children, one of whom, Robert, inherited J's mental illness and later committed suicide. Socially agile, charming, and popular, J had a gift for friendship and conducted affairs with dozens of young women—affairs that were, in his later years, more imaginary than real but which prompted outbursts of erotic poems. Yet there were always dark spells, and in old age, despite the many honors bestowed upon him, J felt increasingly bitter and isolated, especially after the death of his second wife, the indomitable and gifted Ann Clark Resor, who, for more than 30 years, ran Meadow House in Norfolk and organized J's life with the greatest

New Directions logo

aplomb. Then, too, in his later years, J came to find the publishing routine merely wearisome, and hence found it difficult to follow Pound's early shrewd advice, which he himself loved to cite with a chuckle:

> EP: *Jaz, you're never gonna be any good as a poet. Why doncher take up something useful?*
>
> JL: *What's that, Boss?*
>
> EP: *Why doncher assassernate Henry Seidel Canby?*
>
> JL: *I'm not smart enough. I wouldn't get away with it.*
>
> EP: *You'd better become a publisher. You've prob'ly got enough brains fer that.*

Stories like this one are familiar to readers of Laughlin's own lectures and memoirs. But what *is* new here is the account MacNiven provides of Laughlin's relationship with the narrow and bigoted social milieu of upper-class WASP America in the 1930s. All the Laughlin men, for instance, attended Princeton; when J broke with this precedent and opted for Harvard, his father complained to a friend that "J's deserting Princeton for the college of the Jews & Beaconhillites." Such remarks were routine in the Laughlin household, and some of it rubbed off on young James, who referred to the editor Gorham Munson (in a letter to Pound) as "a very nice chewish chennlmn inteet."

J's early politics were hardly admirable. "Hitler," he wrote Aunt Leila, while on a summer trip after his freshman year at Harvard in 1933, "is as perfect an idealist as he could be."

> His intentions for Germany are even finer than I had imagined. Surely with his leadership Germany may recover from the terrible wrongs done by avaricious powers at Versailles. . . . And the Nazis are not violent to the Jews. What we read in our papers was all exaggeration and tabloid falsification of the worst sort. Violence was done only to Communists, no-goods of the worst sort.

In all fairness, J's perception was not so different from that of another Harvard undergraduate, John F. Kennedy, who on his 1937 tour of Germany wrote in his diary, "Fascism? The right thing for Germany. . . . What are the evils of fascism compared to communism?" Condoning the German "experiment" was common enough in Laughlin's circle, but whereas others came around after the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939, J was still insisting that "American participation in the European conflict would be a mistake." In 1942, J was finally called before his draft board, but he was pronounced 4-F and thus more or less sat out the war, skiing avidly at Alta and working hard for New Directions, which was beginning to make real profits.

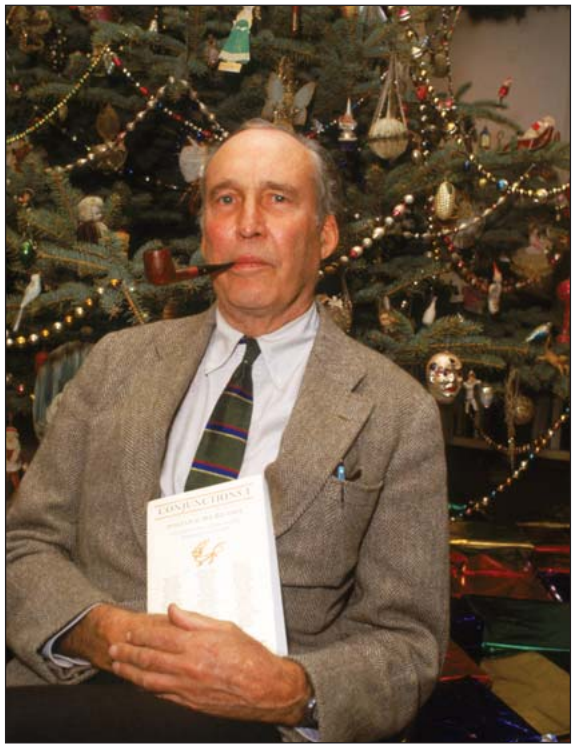
By this time, however shallow his understanding of the war effort, Laughlin had quite publicly abjured the antisemitism of his family and class, and he repeatedly warned Pound to change his ways, though to no avail. MacNiven's chapters on Pound's threatened treason trial are especially interesting, containing as they do much new information gleaned from

J's unpublished correspondence. In November 1945, when Pound arrived in Washington to stand trial, he evidently gave his lawyer Julien Cornell "a small suitcase of manuscripts" for Laughlin—a bag that contained "the penciled notebooks of the 'Pisan Cantos' and the revised copy typed by Ezra. . . . 'To my thinking,' J wrote later, 'this is about as important a literary manuscript as we have in our times.' He immediately began referring to these as 'The Pisan Cantos,' and the name stuck." J thus deserves credit not only for naming *The Pisan Cantos* but also for having an immediate sense of the volume's significance. Today, despite the uproar when the *Cantos* won the Bollingen Prize, the book is widely acknowledged to be a modernist classic.

MacNiven's account of the Laughlin-Pound correspondence makes clear that, far from being held at St. Elizabeth's (where he was committed upon an insanity plea for 13 years) against his will, the poet actually wanted to stay there. In 1947, Julien Cornell thought he had a good chance of obtaining Pound's release, but the poet's wife, Dorothy, fearful that if he returned to Italy it would be to live with his mistress, Olga Rudge, withdrew the appeal. As for Ezra, he was biding his time, content to be able to work without financial worries on his *Confucian Odes* and other projects, and to receive visitors from around the world. As Ezra boasted to J, "Jas, I will only come out of here with flying colors . . . and a letter of apology from the President . . . and a statement that I was right all along."

Needless to say, this never happened, and Pound's return to Italy in 1958 led to the depression and silence of his late years. Still, if Laughlin had done nothing at New Directions aside from discovering, nurturing, and publishing Ezra Pound—and Pound's then hugely underrated poet-friend William Carlos Williams—his place in American letters would be secure.

At the same time, this biography doesn't quite make its case for Laughlin as the great disseminator of odernist and avant-garde writing in America. J's favorites—the writers with whom he actually spent his time—were less Pound and Williams, who were, after all, of an earlier generation, than Henry Miller, Delmore Schwartz, Kenneth Rexroth, Thomas Merton, and, later, Tennessee Williams. Except for Tennessee Williams, who has never been considered avant-garde, these writers are not exactly in everyone's pantheon, certainly not in mine. J, as MacNiven recounts, missed the boat on Samuel Beckett: *Watt* had been offered to him early on, but, as J admitted, "the light did not come on," and he lost *Waiting for Godot* to Grove Press's Barney Rossett. Again, despite his early admiration for Gertrude Stein, J never actively tried to become her publisher; to the end, he insisted that her prose was largely a case of automatic writing. He paid little attention to Wallace Stevens or Marianne Moore, much preferred Dylan Thomas to W. H. Auden (whom he actively disliked), and expressed scant interest in Louis Zukofsky. In the 1950s and '60s, he studiously ignored Frank O'Hara and John Ashbery as well as the John Cage circle. This neglect might be thought homophobic, but then, J was very keen on Robert Duncan, who had the advantage of being a Pound disciple.



At Christmastime (1981)

BERNARD GOTFRYD / GETTY IMAGES

All told, Laughlin's taste was more idiosyncratic than his biographer suggests. Ironically, he was much more sure-footed when it came to foreign writers. J published the Ralph Mannheim translation of Céline's *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (1933) at a time when the French novelist was reviled in many quarters, and Blaise Cendrars and Guillaume Apollinaire were first known in the United States through their New Directions selections. Laughlin was, and remains, the American publisher of Octavio Paz and Federico García Lorca, and of many titles by Jorge Luis Borges and Pablo Neruda. In the 1940s, he brought back into print James Joyce's *Stephen Hero* and *Exiles*, and published Harry Levin's excellent short introduction, *James Joyce*. The list goes on and on.

Accordingly—and this is a happy circumstance—Laughlin was able, as few publishers of the last century have been, to ensure that his legacy would remain intact after his death. The New Directions of the 21st century has placed its central focus on discovering foreign fiction writers like W. G. Sebald, Roberto Bolaño, Javier Marias, Clarisse Lispector, and Yoko Tawada, along with a small list of distinctive experimental poets, many of them women, like Susan Howe and Ann Carson. The whole, in this case, is much greater than the sum of its parts, and despite James Laughlin's often troubled personal life, recounted in great detail by MacNiven, his devotion to "literchoor" was to make a real—and permanent—difference in American letters. ♦

B&A

Once and Future Kings

A vertebrate's tribute to our numerous cohabitants.

BY TEMMA EHRENFELD

Ant on a leaf

How easily the small eludes the big. We say that bugs will inherit the Earth, as if it wasn't theirs already. Bugs *made* the Earth. Long ago, tiny spineless creatures with legs arrived on the wet shoreline, probably to escape predators at sea, and made land habitable for plants. The simultaneous accommodation and war between plants and insects, the six-legged descendants of those first crawlers, would shape the terrestrial ecosystem.

Early in *Planet of the Bugs*, Scott Richard Shaw, who is a professor of entomology and curator of the Insect Museum at the University of Wyoming, takes us on a drive through the Wind River Canyon. The exposed rocks are a kind of display case of geological history, with the ages of animal life identified by road signs. Near the canyon's entrance, one of them marks the first rocks from the Cambrian period, the "age of invertebrates." In the next half-hour, drivers pass through the Ordovician, the "age of fishes," the Silurian (land plants), the Devonian (amphibians), the Carboniferous (swamps), the Permian, and onward to the Mesozoic era (reptiles and dinosaurs), which preceded the "age of mammals." It's all tidy—and wrong, Shaw says. The "age" labels attached to geological periods are a mere "human-centric mythology" that he'll pick apart as he takes us through the eons. Shaw, our erudite and passionate guide, makes bugs the star. Give him a few hours and you may briefly escape our species bias.

Planet of the Bugs
Evolution and the Rise of Insects
by Scott Richard Shaw
Chicago, 256 pp., $27.50

For example, the signature fossils of the Cambrian are the trilobites, a part of the larger category of arthropods, which today includes insects, spiders, lobsters, shrimp, millipedes, centipedes, and scorpions. All have a segmented external skeleton and several jointed legs. As Shaw quips, calling the Cambrian "'the age of invertebrates' is a bit like calling it the 'age of no humans.'" The very word "*in*vertebrate" means no spine, or "not us." Why not, instead, tout the evolution of exoskeletons, the big biological advancement of the age, and call the Cambrian the "age of trilobites" or the "age of arthropods"?

As you observe the segments on a lobster's tail, think of the segments of your spine. They're not so different, except that our bones are inside. It's easy to see the advantages of outer bone, which provides support and protection against the elements and predators; we need shoes and coats because our exteriors are soft. The advantages of an internal skeleton might be flexibility and a sensitive surface (shells don't feel much). But arthropods gain flexibility from segmented bodies and sensitivity from exterior sensory spines. Yes, it's tough to keep growing if you live inside a suit of armor, so arthropods periodically molt, shedding their shells temporarily. According to Shaw, the only real vertebrate advantage is that we can grow continuously, which has allowed us to grow to bigger sizes and evolve big brains. No ant is writing about me, after all. Yet when it comes to survival, small size is generally a plus.

In the Cambrian, we find the first vertebrate: a one-and-a-half-inch-long wormlike creature with a primitive spine called Pikaia. Pikaia may not have been abundant and could easily have disappeared without leading to much at all, Shaw argues. These fossils vanish at the beginning of the Ordovician, perhaps because Pikaia turned into fish or the last Pikaia was gobbled by one. However, calling the Ordovician the "age of fishes" is another case of bias, he says, pointing out that, by the mid-Ordovician, there were only five families of fish but 50 families of cephalopods (large predatory squids with coiled shells). A better label, therefore, would be the "age of cephalopods."

LUKE ELSTAD

Temma Ehrenfeld is a writer in New York.

Because trilobites gradually became less diverse, it's sometimes thought that they lost an evolutionary battle with fish. This would have been a significant triumph for vertebrates. But trilobites didn't disappear for another 250 million years, at the end of the Permian. Over that time, arthropods such as crustaceans and multi-legged myriapods developed more efficient molting methods, and new predators—squids (an invertebrate) and sea scorpions (an extinct arthropod)—appeared in the waters. Fish were there, too, but they weren't the main act.

Next we come to the Silurian, when arthropods—scorpions and myriapods—took those first steps on land. Like modern scorpions, these ancient land pioneers seem to have been predators and probably ate other myriapods and worms, small fish, and molting trilobites trapped in shallow pools at low tide. They thrived on land for millions of years before plants arrived. Shaw thinks that even the focus on land is biased and that the great biological development lay in the ocean, in the first coral reefs, which were populated by scorpions, lampshells, and shelled squids—plus fish. It took another 40 million years before our lungfish ancestors made it to the beach, during the Devonian.

By the late Carboniferous, insects had developed wings. Tall forests grew up,

> a glittering fairyland of curious flying insects: banded, spotted, and net-winged paleodicytoperans; dragonfly-like griffenflies … ancestral mayflies; and even sundry forms of flying roaches that fluttered and glided among the treetops.

Insects would rule the air for 150 million years, long before the first bird descended from the dinosaurs.

We look down on bugs, wrongly, because they're small and mostly at the bottom of food chains. Of course, smallness can serve even in one-on-one competition, as anyone who has failed to swat a fly knows. Bugs live in tiny ecological niches and succeed as stealth predators. Humans certainly haven't prevailed over our most numerous rival: Despite our best efforts, we have yet to eradicate any insect we consider a pest. Measured by biomass, diversity, and fortitude in adverse conditions, insects easily beat us. By good citizenship, too: If all insects became extinct, the Earth's land ecosystem would collapse.

In fact, when Shaw imagines extraterrestrial life, he sees more fascinating bugs: "If this were to all play out again on another planet, it seems to me highly improbable that soft-bodied species with internal skeletons would develop first or become successful over the long run." Rather than fantasizing about big-brained friends, we should be grateful that we're here at all.

I'm all for gratitude, but this went too far. If vertebrates are so feeble, why are we the top predators in so many ecosystems? I sent an email to the author, and he answered, "Even top predators have lice and fleas, so who is the top predator really? What's so great about being a top predator anyway? You are then dependent on all that is below." I asked why we see so many plant-eating vertebrates all over the world. Shaw's reply: "Sure, there are plant-eating vertebrates, but the insects have more biomass. Here in Wyoming we have lots of big vertebrates, like deer, elk, moose, and antelope, but the grasshoppers consume more plant material than all those vertebrates combined."

These arguments didn't seem to me to answer the question. The success of insects, even superiority by important measures, doesn't cancel the success of vertebrates in the sea, on land, and in the air—of soft-skinned whales, lions, and hawks. Shaw has, however, done justice to the claim in his title, *Planet of the Bugs*. ♦

B&A

Sword vs. Pen

In the Age of Terror, the status of journalists is evolving. **BY GABRIEL SCHOENFELD**

Journalists these days are regularly being beheaded. The two most recent cases were the work of the Islamic State, which this past summer, as shown to the world on slickly produced videos, dispatched freelancers Steven Sotloff and James Foley. Such atrocities at the hands of Islamic fanatics are not novel. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, formerly of al Qaeda, now of Guantánamo, began the practice when he personally beheaded *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002.

Along with these and other murders, journalists around the world over the last decade-and-a-half have, in record numbers, been shot, kidnapped for ransom, imprisoned, tortured, and subjected to various other depredations. What accounts for these horrific developments, and what do they mean for the future of news reporting? These are some of the questions taken up here by Joel Simon. As executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists, an organization devoted to protecting "the right of journalists to report the news without fear of reprisal," Simon has been a close observer of infringements on press freedom worldwide. A former foreign cor-

The New Censorship
Inside the Global Battle for Media Freedom
by Joel Simon
Columbia, 248 pp., $27.95

Gabriel Schoenfeld is the author, most recently, of A Bad Day on the Romney Campaign: An Insider's Account.

respondent himself, Simon examines not only violence against journalists, but also such topics as Internet freedom and government surveillance.

Simon argues—persuasively—that the videographed beheadings reflect the changing nature of terrorism. Until not long ago, radical groups—including even the most bloody-minded ones—found journalists to be an indispensable channel by which they could communicate their goals to the world. This gave a measure of protection to news-gatherers: "Their inherent usefulness was their best insurance policy." But the advent of the Internet changed the equation. Journalists were no longer an essential conduit. Instead, to groups like al Qaeda and the Islamic State, they could be dragged into the show, to be used as "hostages and props in elaborately staged videos designed to convey a message of terror to the world."

Exacerbating the vulnerability of reporters has been the ever-blurrier line separating them from activists. In a world in which anyone can call himself a journalist, and in which social media outlets have become a major alternative to the institutional press, the distinction "between journalists and nonjournalists has broken down . . . dramatically," observes Simon. Weak governments contending with insurrections seldom have the disposition to separate the wheat from the chaff. The result: Journalists end up in jail, or worse. War zones, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, are even more problematic. American soldiers on patrol were frequently compelled to make an instant decision: Is that object being pointed at me a camera or a gun? If it is a camera, is he a journalist or an enemy spotter? An incorrect answer was often a matter of life or death for all concerned.

Simon explores in some detail the question—controversial within news organizations—about how best to respond to kidnappings of reporters. A common practice has been to institute a "news blackout," with the aim of denying the kidnappers their goal of publicity and to avoid increasing the value (to them) of their victim. Thus, when David Rohde of the *New York Times* was seized by the Taliban in 2008, the *Times* managed to suppress coverage of the incident for eight months, until Rohde succeeded in escaping.

The trouble here, of course, is that the same newspaper that takes such care of its reporters has been quick to publish ultra-sensitive intelligence secrets that the United States government contends place the lives of Americans at risk. Worrying about the double standard and other drawbacks, Simon opposes news blackouts, arguing that they undermine the credibility of news organizations while there is scant evidence that they contribute to favorable outcomes in kidnappings.

If nonstate actors have been a menace to the media, states (or at least some states) are not lagging far behind. Turkey turns out to be the world's worst offender in at least one doleful category: The country hailed by President Obama as a "strong, vibrant, secular democracy" incarcerates more journalists—most of them Kurdish—than any other country in the world. In Russia, independent journalists regularly confront violence, sometimes lethal violence, while the mass media are held on a tight leash as an integral part of Kremlin control. In China, there is no independent journalism at all, only a landscape of repression and government control of the Internet by means of technology known as the Great Firewall of China.

Joel Simon does a creditable job of describing the variety of problems afflicting journalists around the globe. For anyone interested in the state of free expression in the many corners of the world where the First Amendment does not reach, this book is a useful primer. Unfortunately, its strengths end there.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Peter Theo Curtis in the custody of al Qaeda

Frequently in its analysis, and especially in its recommendations, *The New Censorship* does not have much of anything sensible to say.

For one thing, it is replete with judgments that do not seem to be thought through. Simon maintains that the American military was "callously indifferent" to independent journalists reporting in Iraq, with some 16 dying as a result. The high toll, he writes, was "the inevitable consequence of the deployment of overwhelming firepower and the failure to take into account the possible presence of journalists in the combat environment." But should the American military sacrifice its effectiveness—and therefore the safety of

its own men and women—because of the "possible presence" of journalists on the battlefield? Perhaps there is an argument for such a policy. If there is, Simon does not make it.

On the issue of government surveillance, Simon's analysis falls short in a different way. On one hand, Simon provides an eye-opening portrait of the way authoritarian regimes engage in surveillance to suppress their subjects. But he also joins the chorus of voices warning of the dangers posed by the eavesdropping capabilities of the National Security Agency being used on an "unprecedented—perhaps unimaginable—scale," and which we only know about thanks to Edward Snowden. Simon urges citizens to stand up against such activities and "to keep the pressure on governments, authoritarian and democratic alike."

But Simon is here eliding a fundamental distinction. Authoritarian regimes engage in surveillance to destroy freedom. Democratic governments do so to protect it. Of course, democratic governments have at times overstepped in this activity; but to conflate authoritarian and democratic regimes in this way disserves the very cause of freedom that Simon aims to defend.

Finally, Simon places an absurd degree of stock in the ability of international institutions such as the United Nations to address the problems he describes. He calls for the clarification of the fuzzy provisions in international law that forbid "incitement to violence" against members of the media, and he applauds the U.N. Security Council for establishing an "International Day to End Impunity" for attacks on journalists, calling it a major "victory for journalists and press freedom advocates around the world."

None of this is going to save a single journalist from being beheaded or imprisoned. Press freedom is not divisible from freedom in general. Expanding the zone of freedom in the world may not be a simple proposition, but empty U.N. declarations, enacted with the concurrence of all the world's worst dictatorships, are not the way forward. ♦

B&A

Learning Curve

Self-esteem is up while knowledge is down.

BY JONATHAN MARKS

Late each summer, soon after excited new students arrive at four-year colleges across the country, deans try to sober them up. Some warn that successful students spend "three hours studying outside of class for each hour spent in class." For at least one moment, students get the impression that they must work hard—more than 40 hours per week—to succeed.

But a funny thing happens on the way to graduation. The average student spends approximately 27 hours per week on academic work and receives high grades anyway. The students profiled here by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa graduated "with an average of a 3.33," a little better than B-plus, "despite low levels of academic engagement." Such students have reason to think that they have accomplished much and to be optimistic about their futures. But because little has been asked of them, many are ill-prepared for post-college life. As one recent graduate says, "I'm feeling OK about the way my life is going. It would be cool if I had a job."

She is no outlier. "Almost one quarter of the college graduates" Arum and Roksa followed in their research are "living back at home with their parents two years after finishing college"; but a "stunning 95 percent reported that their lives would be the same or better than those of their parents." Graduates "who were working in unskilled jobs, and even those who were currently unemployed, were as optimistic as their counterparts who were working or employed in better jobs."

Arum, a professor of sociology at New York University, and Roksa, a professor of education at the University of Virginia, are not so optimistic. They have already contributed to the higher education debate with *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (2011). Arum and Roksa used the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), "a measure of critical thinking, complex reasoning, and written communication," to determine how much students improve in those skills over the first two years of college. The answer, at least for the more than 2,300 students at 24 colleges and universities they considered, was "uh oh."

Take an incoming student who scores in the 50th percentile on the CLA. Two years and $50,000 later, sit him down with a group of incoming freshmen similar to those he first sat with. He will now be in the 57th percentile. That's underwhelming; and, of course, others gain less. At least with respect to the kind of learning the CLA measures, gains were "exceedingly small or empirically nonexistent" for many students. *Aspiring Adults Adrift* follows part of the *Academically Adrift* cohort up to graduation, and two years beyond, in order to learn how they are doing in a poor economy and how "post college outcomes [are] associated with collegiate experience and academic performance."

The news is still bad. By the end of senior year, the average student has made only modest progress in the

Aspiring Adults Adrift
Tentative Transitions of College Graduates
by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa
Chicago, 264 pp., $18

Jonathan Marks is professor of politics at Ursinus College.

critical thinking and writing skills the CLA measures. Recall where we left our example student at the end of his sophomore year: not good enough to break out of the middle of a pack of recent high school graduates. Four years of college have moved him into the 68th percentile of a similar pack.

Low CLA scores, even after controlling for other factors, such as institutional selectivity and major, are associated with negative job market outcomes. Low-scoring graduates, compared with high-scorers, are more likely to be unemployed, more likely to lose a job if they have one, and more likely to work in an unskilled occupation. Senior CLA performance is "associated with the likelihood of success in the job market two years after . . . graduation."

Of course, it's possible that colleges can't do more to teach the skills the CLA measures. Perhaps critical thinking, like IQ, is hard to budge very much. But Arum and Roksa come as close as one can to demonstrating that we can do better. Students who attend highly selective colleges improve more on the CLA than students who attend less selective ones, "even when models are adjusted for students' background and academic characteristics." Moreover, Arum and Roksa note, education researchers Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini have presented strong evidence that critical thinking gains in college a few decades ago were, on average, about double what they are now.

That decline may be related to another decline. Labor economists Mindy Marks and Philip Babcock have shown that the number of hours college students spend on academics has dropped dramatically: "Students in 1961 devoted 40 hours per week to academics, whereas full-time students in 2004 invested about 27 hours per week." This finding cannot be explained by changes in the composition of student bodies. Study time has fallen "for students from all demographic subgroups . . . for students who worked in college and those who did not," and "at four-year colleges of every type." Indeed, the average student in Arum and Roksa's sample "studie[d] alone little more than an hour per day."

Yet even "students who reported studying alone less than five hours per week had a 3.2 grade point average." Arum and Roksa think colleges have lowered standards for several reasons. First, a "student service" approach, in which "social engagement, extracurricular activities, and group learning" promote "social sensitivity, sociability, and interpersonal competencies," has existed since the 1920s. More recent trends, including the "broader cultural adoption of a therapeutic ethic," "changes in college financing" that leave colleges competing to satisfy student preferences, and the use of course evaluations, which imposes costs on demanding instructors, have helped crowd out "rigorous academic study."

Although Arum and Roksa emphasize skills and devote a chapter to jobs, they are at least as concerned with character development and the "larger lessons learned and internalized through student experiences with school structure, relationships with educators, and interaction with adult authorities." When adults accommodate the preferences of the young rather than challenging them, and when teachers "reward minimal effort with high grades," they leave their charges adrift in more ways than one.

Arum and Roksa do not, for the most part, blame professors and administrators who are swimming with very powerful currents, including "[w]idespread cultural commitment to consumer choice . . . self fulfillment and sociability." The "serious promotion of student learning" under these circumstances requires considerable "courage and commitment."

I share Arum and Roksa's view that "many stakeholders" are already fully engaged in the effort to "commit their institutions to programs to improve student learning." But others may need their spines stiffened. In 2004, Princeton, responding to substantial grade inflation, sought to limit the proportion of A-range grades awarded to 35 percent. Princeton is not tuition dependent and has no serious competition for attracting America's best students. It can do what it wants. Yet a faculty committee has recommended (with the support of university president Christopher Eisgruber) that the 2004 policy be rolled back, in part because students dislike it. It adds "a large element of stress to students' lives, making them feel as though they are competing for a limited resource of A grades."

Heaven forbid. ♦

ALEX MILAN TRACY / SIPA USA / NEWSCOM

Students protesting tuition increases, University of California, Berkeley

B&A

One Writer's Message

'Any kind of integrity helps in this world, and I have my own kind.' BY JAMES SEATON

This volume includes 566 letters, less than one-fifth of those that have been preserved, but it seems clear that the ones chosen by the editors are representative. This is not a sanitized selection. A number reveal that Willa Cather (1873-1947) was not always able to transcend the prejudices of her time; in an 1897 letter, she praises her boss by telling him, "You're a white man sure," and complains in 1924 that black maids—"nice little darkies"—too often "get tired of working and 'go South.'" She writes to her brother Roscoe in 1916 that her close friend Isabelle McClung "has married a very brilliant and perfectly poisonous Jew," and, in 1922, she refers to John Galsworthy's "new Jew play."

The willingness of the editors to include letters with such distasteful expressions suggests that the reader is able to take the portrait of Cather provided by the letters as a whole at face value. Many demonstrate the intensity and loyalty of Cather's feelings for those she admired and cared about. In a 1905 letter, she declares that Isabelle McClung has been her moral guide, since Cather had "never known her to do one thing unkind or ungenerous or ignoble. . . . If I contemplated doing anything base or ugly, she is the one who would detect it first and feel it most keenly." Jan Hambourg, the "perfectly poisonous Jew," eventually gained her respect and affection. After Isabelle McClung Hambourg died in 1938, Cather wrote to Edith McClung, Isabelle's sister, praising "Jan's absolute devotion to her [Isabelle] during her long illness," noting especially the way Jan would "give her her bath, lift her when it was hard for her to rise, and by so many delicate attentions disguise her actual infirmities from everyone."

The Selected Letters of Willa Cather
edited by Andrew Jewell and Janis Stout
Vintage, 752 pp., $37.50

Cather's feelings for her family, especially her parents and her two brothers, were equally long-lived and intense. She wrote to her mother in 1919: "I find myself loving to do things with you now, just as I did when I was a little girl." And in a 1925 letter, she deprecates quarreling, saying, "I can't quarrel. . . . I couldn't be angry with you now if I tried. I think one of the consolations of growing older is that one comes to understand one's parents better. I am too much like you in many ways to criticize you." Her brother Douglass died unexpectedly in 1938, a few months before the death of Isabelle McClung Hambourg. She wrote to a friend: "With Douglass and Isabelle both gone out of my life, I scarcely know how I shall go on." In 1945 she wrote to the widow of her brother Roscoe that Roscoe "was my best critic. . . . He knew me better than I knew myself. . . . The fact is that now I have no one to judge me, no one to tell me if I am off the true pitch—no other judgment that I care a bang about."

Only a few of the letters touch on politics. When the United States first entered the Great War in 1917, Cather believed, with Woodrow Wilson, that the cause was just, writing to her sister Elsie that "the United States has never had such a chance before; no country ever has. We can literally save Democracy—or lose it—for the whole world." When the armistice was declared, Cather was certain that something magnificent had been achieved. She wrote to her aunt, whose son G.P. Cather had been killed in action, "Think of it, for the first time since human society has existed upon this planet, the sun rose this morning upon a world in which not one great monarchy or tyranny existed."

Only a few years later, however, the world transformation she had hoped for had not happened. In a 1922 letter, she wrote, "It seems to me that everything has gone wrong since the Armistice. Why they celebrate that day with anything but fasts and sack-cloth and ashes, I don't know."

Claude Wheeler, the main character of Cather's *One of Ours* (1922), was based on the life and death of her cousin G.P. Cather. Numerous letters testify to her continuing admiration and affection for the soldiers themselves. She proudly exclaimed to her brother Roscoe, "Aren't the American boys *some soldiers*!" In December 1918, she wrote:

> I don't do much now but run about to see wounded soldiers. They are nearly all fine fellows—I don't see how one country can have so many nice ones and so few rottens. . . . After dinner I went to the theatre with six of them who had landed that morning—six western boys alone in New York on Christmas Eve. We had some time, I can tell you! No, I don't do anything but run about with soldiers.

Cather's great novel *My Ántonia* (1918) and some of her best stories, such as "Neighbour Rosicky" (1930) and "The Bohemian Girl" (1912), feature Czech immigrants. Thomas Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia, became one of her favorite correspondents. In 1939, six months after the Munich Agreement, Cather despaired, writing, "What is the use? Hitler entered Prague last night. President Masaryk was an old friend of mine. He was a scholar and a

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lover of letters. In my childhood I had many Czech friends. I love their way of life. And what about 'British honor,' which I have always believed in?"

British honor, however, was not dead after all: In 1943, Cather wrote to Dorothy Canfield Fisher, "Isn't Churchill a great old boy? Isn't England a great old land?" She fortified herself, she told her brother Roscoe, by making "a game of having my four o'clock tea every afternoon *with Winston Churchill*!" She needed any consolation she could get. It was "bad enough to have all our splendid young men die," but she especially regretted that "so many of the boys from my own little town in Nebraska have been shunted out to those terrible Pacific Islands, where the hardships are so much greater than they can be anywhere in Europe. To be killed may be uncomfortable, but to lie in slime and be eaten up by bugs is a punishment no boy deserves."

Cather did what she could. In 1943, she was "wearing my right hand in a brace again—result of having to answer too many letters from splendid soldier boys."

The personal toll of the second great war of her lifetime, and the deaths of many lifelong friends, led Cather to declare, in October 1945, "I don't care about writing any more books. Now I know that nothing really matters to us but the people we love." Back in 1923, she had felt differently. She complained to Dorothy Canfield Fisher that the attention she was receiving was keeping her from writing. It seemed as though "people don't in the least want one to write." No doubt they meant well, but "if they devil me so I can't write," Cather emphasized, "they destroy my game, my fun, my reward, the whole splendor and glow of life—all there is for me."

During the Great Depression, Cather was attacked by critics such as Granville Hicks for her failure to deal with current social problems. She was certain, however, as she put it in 1934, that "they [her books] do more for more people than I could personally do if I were as strong as iron and devoted my whole life to good works. I don't write 'em with that purpose, but they have that result. *Any kind of integrity* helps in this world, and I have my own kind."

Despite, or rather because of, her own commitment to the craft of writing, Cather thought it was "sheer nonsense to teach 'Creative Writing' in colleges," especially since colleges seemed to be failing in the more fundamental task of teaching their students "to write passably clear and correct English"—perhaps because the professors themselves could not "write passably clear and correct English." Cather confided that "more than half of the twenty-eight professors who have written to me within the last few months were quite unable to use 'which' and 'that' and 'would' and 'should' correctly."

Today, many professors writing on Willa Cather insist on categorizing her as a lesbian writer. That there is no evidence that Willa Cather ever had sex with anybody, man or woman, is not a problem; Sharon O'Brien, a leading Cather scholar, is typical in rejecting "genital sexual experience with women" as a criterion of lesbianism in favor of "a more broadly conceived focus on 'woman-identified' experience." According to O'Brien, Cather's writings express "a lesbian identity," at least according to this broader definition.

The 566 letters in this collection indeed reveal a woman who cared deeply for her friends, most of whom were women, but also a woman who loved her family, was a patriot who revered her country's soldiers, and (most important for us today) wrote stories and novels informed by a quiet integrity expressed in a total commitment to the highest standards of her art. If these qualities constitute a "lesbian identity," then Willa Cather can, indeed, be categorized as a lesbian writer. On the other hand, it is also possible to think of her simply as a great writer—and an admirable, if imperfect, human being. ♦

B&A

The Real Thing

Richard Estes and his photographic vision.

BY AMY HENDERSON

This exhibition is eye-popping. Richard Estes's hyperrealistic art is somehow *more than* real. In the introductory panel, Estes himself sets the stage by teasing, "What is real?"

Co-organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Portland Museum of Art, the retrospective explores Estes's 50-year career, and it is the most comprehensive exhibition of his paintings ever. Like Andy Warhol, Estes began working as a commercial artist in New York in the 1950s; like Warhol, he was significantly influenced by the visual culture of the "Mad Men" era. These were the years when Madison Avenue and the new medium of television combined to transform America's identity as a consumer nation. Commercial television depended on advertising, and Madison Avenue merrily invented endless ways to pitch products into living rooms.

By the early 1960s, America's marketing phenomenon was setting off cultural earthquakes. Social critics like

Richard Estes' Realism
Smithsonian American Art Museum
Through February 8

Amy Henderson is a historian in Washington who writes about media and culture.

Daniel J. Boorstin warned about the rise of a culture based on "simulation" and "illusion" rather than on reality. In his landmark *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (1962), Boorstin pointed an angry finger at "Madison Avenue, Washington bureaucracy, the eggheads" for turning America into a land dominated by "pseudo-culture."

The idea of "simulation" had an impact in the art world as well. Warhol, after establishing himself as a highly successful commercial artist, began making "replications" of consumer products such as Brillo boxes and Campbell's Soup cans. He displayed his first sculpture, *Brillo Boxes*, in 1964. They were not merely copies of the cardboard consumer product, but constructed silkscreened replicas made out of plywood. By blurring the lines between commercial art and high culture, Warhol took direct aim at high-art snobs and proclaimed: We live in a supermarket world!

When Richard Estes ventured away from commercial art in the mid-to-late-'60s, he, too, carried the Mad Men brand with him. According to the exhibition catalogue, pop art amused Estes, but as "witty commentary more than art." Instead, his lifelong love of photography led him to anchor himself in photorealism. The sense of simulation and illusion that were instrumental in his earlier career as a commercial artist would reemerge as central tenets of his photorealist art.

This exhibition of 46 paintings shows the range of Estes's work, from such early examples as *Bus with Reflection of the Flatiron Building* (1966-67) to later cityscapes like *Columbus Circle at Night* (2010). There are a number of landscapes, particularly of Maine, where he owns property, and of such European locales as London, Paris, and Venice.

'Jone's Diner' (1979)

But the art that makes Estes special are the cityscapes. He paints them with intricate, jaw-dropping detail. Yet what elevates his work from craft to art is the magic by which he transforms "captured moments" into dazzling reflections of those moments. To create his New York street scenes, he wandered through the city on Sundays, when the streets were empty. He took myriad photographs, then sifted through his stash to find appealing subjects. Ultimately, the highly layered reflections he created from these shots reveal themselves on canvas as more real than the actual sites he had photographed.

Reflections dominate his best work. They convey his idea of reality dipped in wonder and evoke his sense of playful delight. The catalogue essay ("Richard Estes' Realism"), by curator Patterson Sims, quotes Estes in 1968 explaining that, with reflections, "you're looking at what isn't there—the tactile and the visual reality do not coincide—they overlap. Since all objects reflect—glass and chrome only more so—perhaps you show the ways things look the less you show how they are or how we think they are."

Storefront façades are a favorite Estes subject, notably *Horn and Hardart Automat* (1967), *Central Savings* (1975), and *Times Square* (2004). As Sims points out in his essay,

> The business storefront is Estes' original and defining urban motif. It exemplifies the city's essential fuel of commerce and displays the enormous range of what one can see. . . . His storefronts turn viewers into ocular consumers.

Bridges are also a theme, but they are always used in a context that connects them to cities, as in *Accademica, Venice* (1980), *Pont Neuf, Paris* (1985), and *Tower Bridge, London* (1989). The most powerful of these paintings, unsurprisingly, is *Brooklyn Bridge* (1991), in which the enormous structure becomes a muscular conduit feeding directly into New York's maw.

Estes's work is fascinating because of his awesome skill, but also because he is such a good storyteller: We identify with his art because it conveys shared experiences, from walking city streets to window shopping. One of the best examples of his storytelling is his portrait of customers at a candy store shopping in a last-minute crush for Valentine's Day, *Checkout* (2012).

Unlike many art exhibitions that inspire little conversation and encourage quick walk-throughs, the Estes exhibition galleries are crowded with viewers who linger and fill the air with delighted chatter. They seem to have taken the artist's introductory words to heart and, with each painting, wonder, "Is it real?" ♦

RICHARD ESTES / MARLBOROUGH GALLERY, NEW YORK

B&A

A Star Is Born

By any measure, you won't forget Gugu Mbatha-Raw.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Who is the best young actress in the movies? The obvious answer is Jennifer Lawrence, all of 24 and with a deserved Oscar to her credit for *Silver Linings Playbook* and a second she should have won for her supporting role in *American Hustle*. (She's also the most popular, with her third *Hunger Games* movie, *Mockingjay Part I*, yet another smash.) But this year, Lawrence was given a run for her money by two others.

One is Shailene Woodley, another box-office dynamo in her early 20s, who was heartbreaking in *The Fault in Our Stars* and compelling in a *Hunger Games* knockoff called *Divergent*. The other is someone you likely have never heard of, though it's possible she's the best of the three. She's a 31-year-old Briton with the unlikely name of Gugu Mbatha-Raw. In just the past year, she's given two wildly different and utterly bewitching performances that suggest she has the kind of range only truly great screen actresses possess.

The first of her triumphs is available on demand through your cable box. *Belle* is a sumptuous costume drama about an illegitimate child of mixed race (in real life, Mbatha-Raw's father is black, her mother white) who lives with her father's aristocratic family in late-18th-century England, where she is both beloved and treated as an inferior. *Belle* is very watchable, though it is prettified and bowdlerized, and it ends like an afterschool special. But what makes it memorable is the coiled brilliance of Mbatha-Raw, whose character must maintain exquisite poise and perfect manners even as the essential existential injustice of her life becomes ever more clear to her as she grows into an adult.

Beyond the Lights
Directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood

The second of her triumphs is now in a few hundred theaters nationwide, so you will have to hunt for it (or keep it in mind when it hits VOD). *Beyond the Lights* is a sophisticated and sharp portrait of a troubled pop singer. Ignore the awful title: This remarkable piece of work, by a 45-year-old writer/director named Gina Prince-Bythewood (herself of mixed race), is a subversive stab at the workings of pop culture from deep inside, one of the best and richest portraits ever presented of the soullessness and immorality of show business.

Mbatha-Raw plays Noni, the daughter of a bitterly determined teenage mother (Minnie Driver, in a knockout performance) who has driven Noni from the London slums where she was raised to the verge of superstardom. Noni begins the movie as a 12-year-old, singing a soulful Nina Simone song at a talent contest where she happily places second; her mother insists she throw the trophy away because she didn't win.

Flash forward 15 years, and Noni is winning a Billboard Music Award for the song she has cut with her boyfriend, a star white rapper. The first we see of the adult Noni is her gyrating on a bed in a music video, her surreally fit body moving in time to the utterly generic music and lyrics she is singing. The awards ceremony is the most important night of her life, and she caps it off by entering her hotel room alone and climbing onto the railing of its balcony, ready to hurl herself to the street.

She is saved by a young and equally attractive off-duty cop (Nate Parker), who is working as her security for the evening. He is appalled by the way her mother and her record label and everyone else are determined to cast her suicide attempt as merely an act of drunken excess. Noni isn't explosive, or incendiary, or bipolar. She's mostly not there, walking through her own life in a daze, her mother's perfectly realized image of a contemporary sexual fantasy in the Beyoncé-Rihanna-Nicki Minaj manner.

And that is what is so extraordinary about *Beyond the Lights*. Prince-Bythewood is a surprisingly subtle filmmaker; she doesn't hammer away at the soul-crushing effect of converting a living person into an object of masturbatory desire. But as the movie goes on, it's clear that what we are seeing in the making of Noni's superstardom is a journey into a kind of hell from which she has every reason to seek a desperate escape.

Noni and the cop begin a touching and fiery romance of a classic Hollywood type that is all but gone from the contemporary cinema—gorgeous people with real chemistry in beautiful settings, the kind of thing that made people fall in love with moviegoing in the first place and that you barely ever see onscreen anymore. Noni begins to emerge from her fog and into real life, with real wants and real needs and real feelings—and real, unextended, unironed, curly hair. The movie is too long, and the love affair a little too attenuated, but *Beyond the Lights* works beautifully in making you care about the last person on earth you'd ever think you'd give a fig for.

Mbatha-Raw can sing, she can dance, and she never hits a false note. It's a dazzling annunciation of a major talent in the way that Bette Midler's *The Rose* was back in 1979. *Beyond the Lights* has been disastrously marketed; had it been better handled and given more of a showing, Mbatha-Raw would be a frontrunner for this year's awards. It's a crime that she's not, but Gugu Mbatha-Raw and the prodigiously talented Gina Prince-Bythewood aren't going anywhere but up. ♦

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

"North Korea is proposing a joint investigation with the U.S. to look into the massive cyberattack against Sony Pictures Entertainment."
—USA Today, December 20, 2014

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EARLY MISSTEPS HAMSTRING U.S.-NORTH KOREA TALKS

Regime Demands Access to Supercomputers, NSA Files

By DAVE SKYLARK

WASHINGTON — Shortly after the U.S.-North Korean Joint Commission launched its investigation into the Sony hacking scandal, the two sides were divided on a pressing matter—when and where to take their lunch break.

According to an American member of the commission, U.S. officials suggested a 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. lunch break, to which their counterparts asked, "What is lunch?" The North Koreans scoffed at the notion of consuming three meals a day and rejected the idea of dining at a local Cheesecake Factory. As one North Korean scientist put it, "Our factories make missiles. But yours make cheesecakes? I cannot picture a greater symbol of Western decadence than that!"

Location and access to computer hardware have also become stumbling blocks. Although the commission is currently working at a neutral site near Washington, D.C., the North Koreans insist the best way to find the Sony hackers is by relocating to Fort Meade, Md., home to the National Security Agency. They have also requested access to several Cray supercomputers with the possibility of shipping them back to Pyongyang for further analysis.

The North Korean commission members also said they were eager to track down the hackers to show they are not linked to the DPRK. "We can prove our innocence without resorting to torture, as what the CIA does," said one North Korean. "Oh, and by the way, is it possible to obtain several vials of Polonium-210?"

Mike Matus

North Korean general Kim Park takes a break from the joint commission to inspect a nearby Cheesecake Factory. He found the size of the menu 'troubling.'

Reached on his extended vacation in Hawaii, President Obama said he remains hopeful that a solution can be found. "Nobody likes a cyber-vandal. So it's really in the world's best interest that we find who committed this heinous act of cyber-vandalism and bring them to justice." When questioned about this unprecedented cooperation with the DPRK, the president replied, "I believe that we can do more to support the North Korean people and promote our values through engagement. After all, these 60 years have shown that isolation has not worked. It's time for a new

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