the weekly Standard

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AGAINST HATE SPEECH LAWS
SAM SCHULMAN

Taking Ben Carson Seriously

FRED BARNES
on the 2016 campaign's most interesting long shot

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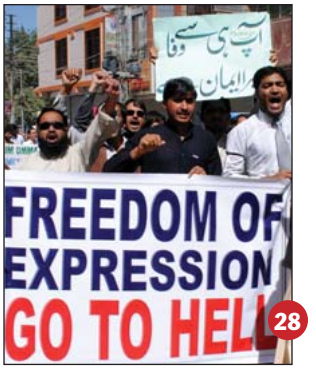


Books & Arts

COVER: CHRISTY BOWE / POLARIS / NEWSCOM

The Scrapbook vs. the Secret Service

The Scrapbook was recently witness to a harmonic convergence. It began the other evening as we set out, on foot, from The Weekly Standard offices to dinner at a restaurant two blocks east of the White House. It was a cold night and, wrapped securely against the wind in overcoat, scarf, gloves, and tweed cap, The Scrapbook strode confidently across the infamous K Street, along nearby Farragut Square, and then turned left at H Street to cut through Lafayette Park.

Just as we passed the 34-year-old antinuclear encampment across from the White House, we proceeded to step onto Pennsylvania Avenue (closed to automobile traffic since 1995) toward the Treasury Department. At that moment, distant voices could be heard bellowing in our direction and, turning around, we realized that two angry uniformed Secret Service guards (fully armed) were screaming at The Scrapbook! Pedestrians, it would seem, had been banned for the evening from setting foot on the asphalt.

As we quickly retreated onto the sidewalk, and headed for the restaurant, we were greeted by yet another armed guard at the corner of Madison Place and Pennsylvania Avenue: "You can't go there!" he exclaimed. This was especially discouraging to The Scrapbook: We were already late, and with the nearby Treasury building bathed in light, and Pennsylvania Avenue desolate and deserted, we could see our object—the Old Ebbitt Grill—shimmering in the distance.

But now we retraced our steps, trudged the three extra blocks to 15th and G streets—and noticed that (apart from the aforementioned guards) the entire vicinity of the Treasury and White House was devoid of human activity: No tourists, no automobiles, no reporters, no deliverymen. What was going on? The Treasury building seemed empty, nearby traffic was light, and no evidence could be seen of the usual cause for downtown lockdowns: an Obama fundraiser. Still, The Scrapbook thought it wise not to trouble the uniformed guards with our questions.

A typical day on Pennsylvania Avenue, with the U.S. Secret Service, uniformed division

The next morning, as we reflected on the evening's adventure, we turned to the front page of the *Washington Post* (Jan. 15) and saw this headline—"Secret Service to remove four senior leaders"—and read this sentence: "The departures of six out of the agency's eight assistant directors follows a scathing report last month by a [Department of Homeland Security]-appointed panel that concluded the agency is suffering from low morale among the rank-and-file and is 'starved for leadership.'"

Of course, The Scrapbook cannot say whether the rank-and-file of the Secret Service suffers from low morale—it was difficult to gauge the mood of those bellowing guards—but it is fair to say that the nation's capital has been suffering low morale at the hands of the Secret Service. "Security" now guarantees that pedestrians cannot walk from one place to another without being barred, at some point, from proceeding; and downtown traffic is daily paralyzed by banana republic-sized motorcades and widespread lockdowns. The lives of working Washingtonians, official and unofficial, are routinely disrupted—held hostage in traffic or rudely corralled—so that Joe Biden or Valerie Jarrett gets to lunch on time.

Will this latest housecleaning make any difference, or cause the Secret Service to reflect on the balance it must strike between safety for the president and dignity for citizens? Probably not. We take some comfort, however, in one minor detail in that *Post* story: According to the acting director, if the four senior leaders "do not resign or retire, they can report for a new assignment with the Secret Service or its parent agency." A permanent assignment to the Plains, Georgia, field office sounds about right. ♦

This Little Piggy Got Banned

Given the general debasement of Western culture it seems that nothing in the 21st century is sacred—nothing, that is, except what might potentially incite violent Muslims. As we are learning after the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre, the intellectual cowardice on this matter is immeasurable. The latest news is that Oxford University Press has issued guidelines instructing authors of children's

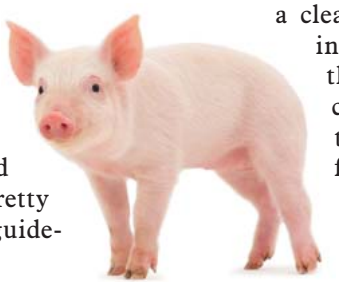
UPI/NEWSCOM

books to avoid references to pigs, sausage, or anything else that might be construed as porcine for fear of offending Muslims.

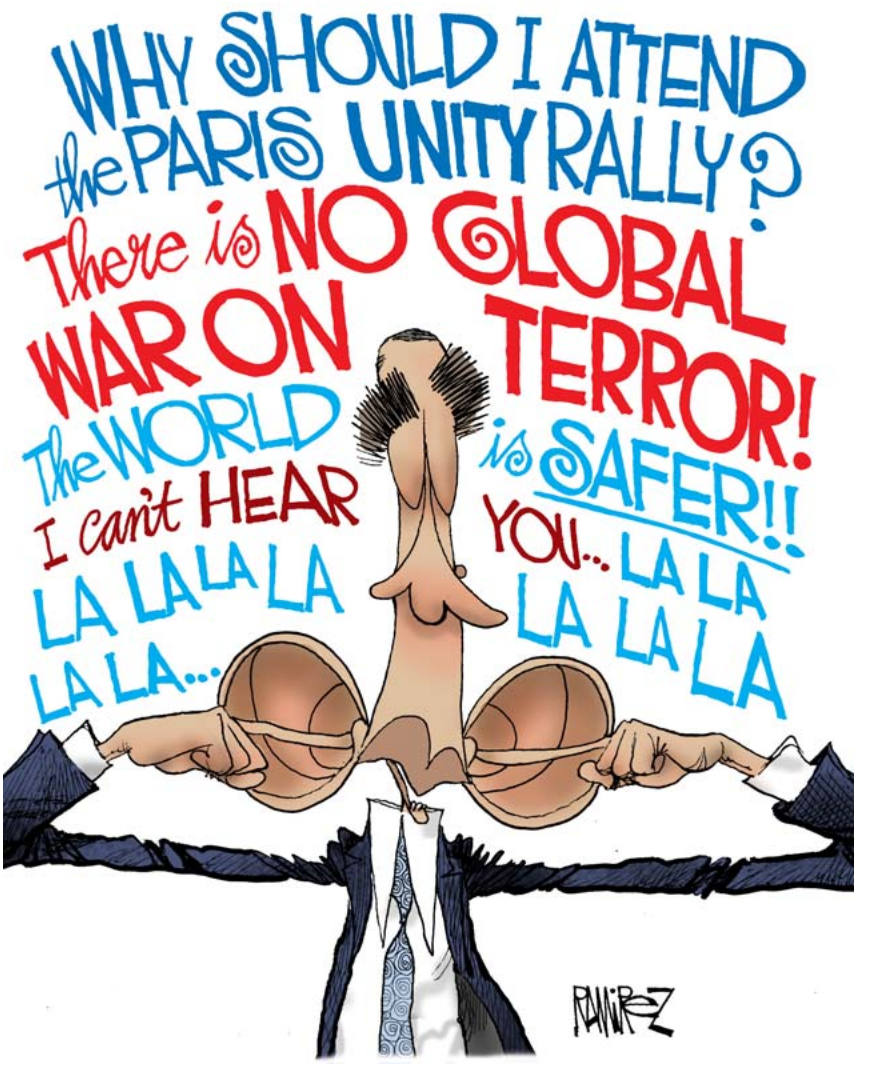
"Now, if a respectable publisher, tied to an academic institution, is saying you've got to write a book in which you cannot mention pigs because some people might be offended, it's just ludicrous," observes BBC Radio 4 presenter Jim Naughtie. "It is just a joke."

Indeed. Imagine the impact if we retroactively applied this self-censorship to beloved children's literature. We'd tell our kids the story of the Three Little Something or Others. *Charlotte's Web* would require redactions that would make the editors of CIA reports blanche. And most ironic of all, imagine what this would do to *Animal Farm*. The allegorical tale is many a young student's introduction to the horrors of totalitarianism. Recall that the character of Napoleon the pig was based on Joseph Stalin. Stalin may have been an atheist, but he knew a thing or two about killing people who said things that offended him—so he's at least got that in common with Islamic terrorists.

For their part, Oxford University Press has made a pretty transparent and disheartening attempt to justify their policy. "Our materials are sold in nearly 200 countries, and as such, and without compromising our commitment in any way, we encourage some authors of educational materials respectfully to consider cultural differences and sensitivities," a spokesman told the *Telegraph*. If Oxford University Press is so keen on not offending religious sensibilities, we would like to see the specific policies they have issued instructing authors not to offend Christians. We're pretty confident no such guidelines exist.



BIG STOCK PHOTOS



The timing of this policy is also alarming. Muslim objections to pork are dietary, not literary. And they are hardly new, so why now? Undoubtedly because we have seen a significant uptick in threats and violence against Western publishers in recent years. Oxford University Press can equivocate all it wants; it's impossible to argue it isn't sending a clear signal that threatening publishers is a tactic that works. Such craven cowering will only invite threats and attacks in the future.

While we have little faith in our cultural elites' ability to defend Western civilization, our hope is that Oxford University Press's belly-flop down the slippery slope toward *sharia* compliance may rouse others out of their complacency. In their own way, pigs are a rare combination of adorable and delicious, and they're absolutely worth fighting for. At the very least, you'll have to pry The Scrapbook's bacon from our cold, dead mouth. ♦

Sentences We Didn't Finish

'On January 6, the [University of Chicago] Committee on Free Expression released a report addressing the issue of freedom of expression on campus. The committee consists

of seven professors at the University who were appointed in July to draft a statement that articulates the University's 'commitment to free, robust, and uninhibited debate and deliberation among all members of the community.' The statement itself says that the role of the University in fostering freedom of expression should be to help members of the community debate 'in an effective and responsible manner.' We agree with this central idea—that the University must protect open discourse. However, . . ." ("Land of the free?" the editorial board of the *Chicago Maroon*, the student newspaper of the University of Chicago since 1892, January 9). ♦

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Brickenomics 101

If you are an American man born after 1945, you have almost certainly played with Legos. Earlier generations had Lincoln Logs, Tinkertoys, and Erector Sets, but Legos began taking over the world of building toys in the early 1970s. Meaning if you are under the age of 70, you likely played with them either as a child or as the parent of a child. If you are in your 30s or 40s, there is a good chance that you have played with them in both capacities.

The tiny, plastic Lego building blocks are made by a Danish company called the Lego Group. It was founded in 1949, but modern Lego pieces weren't invented until 1958. In the years since, many thousands of types of Lego pieces—they're referred to as "bricks"—have been manufactured, and they are all compatible with one another. Because the bricks are very nearly indestructible, they provide the happy possibility that a man who kept track of the Legos from his boyhood could later commingle them with the Legos belonging to his son.

What has changed a great deal is the culture of Legos. For instance, while a father can use his old Legos to play with his children, the presence of children is no longer strictly necessary as a pretext for a grown man to play with Legos. But then, I *would* say that. The Lego Batmobile that sits in my office—it's set #7784-1; Lego sets are referred to by their model numbers—was built long before I found myself in a family way.

For a grown man like me, one of the mitigating benefits of children is that they make a Lego habit more respectable. Respectability meaning, in the practical sense, a liberation to spend more money on Legos. Which is why my Batmobile is now kept company by an X-Wing Fighter (#75032) and the Millennium Falcon (#75030).

Yet you could do worse than spend money on Legos.

One of the quirks of the Lego Group is that the company uses limited windows of production for its sets. The typical Lego set is manufactured for somewhere between four and six years, after which it is retired. This policy has created a brisk secondary market. Very brisk.

DAVE CLEGG

For instance, in 2008, Lego produced a set called Perils in Peru (#7628-1) that featured a cargo plane, a jeep, and assorted minifigures tied to the Indiana Jones series. The set originally sold for $49.99, but was retired by Lego slightly earlier than normal. Today Perils in Peru sells for $127, for a CAGR of 14.25 percent.

What is a CAGR? The acronym stands for compound annual growth rate, and it's the measure that Lego investors—a class of people known as "brickpickers"—use to evaluate the financial performance of sets. There is an entire universe of these brickpickers out there sifting through sales data and looking for the Legos with the biggest return on investment. They will often buy two copies of a given set—one to play with and one to sell. More serious investors will take more significant positions, buying, say, 10 or 20 sets of models they believe are likely to do well after retirement.

For instance, with 5,922 pieces, the Lego Taj Mahal (#10189-1) was the largest set ever produced. Beginning in 2008, it sold for $299.99. Once it went out of production, the price shot up. Today the average Taj Mahal sells for $2,293.63 on the secondary market, giving it a CAGR of 33.72 percent. If you care about that sort of thing.

I don't especially care about the financial aspects of Legos, myself, except as they pertain to the desire to build certain sets with my kids. Before my children were of Lego age, I watched as a series of sets I wanted to build with them went out of production and slipped forever beyond my reach. The Ultimate Collector's Edition Millennium Falcon (#10179-1), for example, went from $499.99—which seemed criminally expensive for a cache of plastic bricks—to $3,759. At which point even my superhuman powers of rationalization failed me.

The lesson I took from #10179-1 is that I couldn't afford not to buy the Legos I wanted someday to build with my children. The London Tower Bridge (#10214-1) might be my favorite Lego set ever. With 4,287 pieces, it's too hard for my kids to tackle just yet. But it was released in 2010, and the Lego Group could retire it at any minute.

Which is why my attic is slowly filling with Lego sets, just waiting to be built.

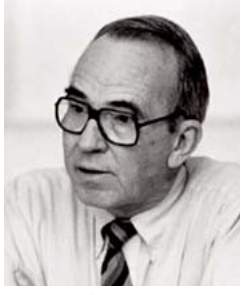
Jonathan V. Last

the weekly Standard

Men With Chests

On September 4, 2014, as the NATO summit convened in Wales, President Barack Obama and Prime Minister David Cameron coauthored an op-ed in the *Times* of London. Its headline: "We will not be cowed by barbaric killers." On January 15, a mere four and a half months later, the same coauthors had the good fortune to have another submission accepted by that august paper. Its headline? "We won't let the voice of freedom be muzzled."

One can't blame politicians for message discipline. One also can't help but note that their message is conveyed in the hortatory tone and declamatory voice used by politicians when asserting a condition contrary to fact. It's not that Obama and Cameron are dissembling, exactly. Their determination may well be sincere. But they surely protest too much. People who aren't cowed don't spend a lot of time proclaiming they won't be cowed. Leaders who really have strengthened the voice of freedom don't need to reassure their electorates that they're committed to doing so.



Walter Berns

Harry Jaffa

BERNS, COURTESY OF WALTERBERNS.ORG; JAFFA, COURTESY OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

We in the West enjoy our freedoms. We occasionally appreciate them. If it's not too much trouble, we're more or less in favor of defending them. When the enemies of freedom kill innocents, we sympathize with them. But surely we are nagged by the unbidden thought—I suspect even Obama and Cameron are nagged by the thought—that while we like freedom, we may not really be up to defending it. And so we wonder if C. S. Lewis didn't have it right: "We make men without chests and expect from them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst."

It's true that we say "*Je suis Charlie*." That's better than saying nothing. But we do so only after the fact and in the safety of crowds.

"*Je suis Charlie*" is an echo, across half a century and from a neighboring country, of John Kennedy's famous statement: "Two thousand years ago the proudest boast was '*civis Romanus sum*.' Today, in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is '*Ich bin ein Berliner.*'" But "*Je suis Charlie*" is a plaintive and hollow echo of Kennedy's proud and assertive boast of freedom.

Here's how Kennedy continued:

> There are many people in the world who really don't understand, or say they don't, what is the great issue between the free world and the Communist world. Let them come to Berlin. There are some who say that communism is the wave of the future. Let them come to Berlin. And there are some who say in Europe and elsewhere we can work with the Communists. Let them come to Berlin. And there are even a few who say that it is true that communism is an evil system, but it permits us to make economic progress. *Lass' sie nach Berlin kommen*. Let them come to Berlin. . . . All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and, therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words "*Ich bin ein Berliner*!"

Who today takes a proud stand for freedom?

Two who did, men of Kennedy's generation, died last weekend. The achievements of Walter Berns and Harry Jaffa are chronicled elsewhere in this issue. Both understood that freedom was precarious and the American republic was precious. And both were students of Leo Strauss, and therefore understood the weaknesses of the modern accounts of freedom.

The life's work of both was shaped by the problem identified by Strauss in *Natural Right and History*: Modern thought, most decisively in Germany, had abandoned the idea of natural right and of any claim that there might be reasonable grounds for an attachment to freedom. Strauss remarked in 1952 that "It would not be the first time that a nation, defeated on the battlefield and, as it were, annihilated as a political being, has deprived the conquerors of the most sublime fruit of victory by imposing on them the yoke of its own thought."

Berns and Jaffa, each in his own way, sought to preserve that sublime fruit of victory. Whatever differences, important and transient, there were between the two of them, both understood that saving freedom required historical and philosophical rethinking.

Strauss's discoveries in the history of political philosophy had the effect of liberating his students from the yoke of contemporary thought. But Strauss and his students understood—indeed, emphasized—that such a liberation could

not mean simply ignoring the challenges to or wishing away the weaknesses of modern freedom. Berns and Jaffa each tried to work through the arguments and rediscover the history that could deepen our understanding of the conditions of freedom, and thereby inform and strengthen our commitment to freedom. The greatest tribute we could pay to Berns and Jaffa is to rededicate ourselves to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly advanced.

—William Kristol

A Do-Nothing Congress?

Two weeks after taking over Congress in the new year, congressional Republicans adjourned to Hershey, Pennsylvania, for a bicameral retreat to plan the next two years. The meeting came as the GOP enjoys its highest marks in years from an electorate generally skeptical of politics and cynical about Washington.

A *Washington Post*/ABC News poll taken shortly before the new Congress was sworn in found the public evenly divided on Republicans. Forty-seven percent see the GOP favorably; the same percentage see the party unfavorably. These may not seem like numbers to celebrate. But in the same poll taken in October, shortly before the midterm elections, just 33 percent had a favorable view of Republicans and 56 had an unfavorable view.

Republicans, of course, haven't done anything substantive to earn the higher marks. And for some in Congress, there's a lesson in that: Don't do anything substantive. It might jeopardize this new standing.

In an interview with the *Washington Post* shortly before becoming Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell said his objective was to prevent his party from appearing "scary" to voters ahead of the 2016 presidential election. "I think that's the single best thing we can do, is to not mess up the playing field, if you will, for whoever the nominee ultimately is."

It's an understandable impulse. It's also the wrong one.

The single best thing congressional Republicans can do is make clear to voters that their party will take the country in a very different direction from that of President Obama. In its most recent poll on the subject, taken in December, Gallup found that 76 percent of Americans were dissatisfied with the direction of the country; just 23 percent were satisfied. Gallup has asked that question 85 times since Obama was first elected. In 73 of those 85 surveys, more than 70 percent of respondents have told pollsters they were dissatisfied with the direction of the country.

We have little doubt that what McConnell had in mind when he said his goal was "to not mess up" was something like avoiding a repeat of the 2013 government shutdown. Fine. But it would also be nice to see hints of a bolder agenda from Republicans in the first two weeks of their control of Congress. Instead, we've seen every indication that Republicans will use their majorities to do. . . very little.

Consider taxes.

There may never be a better political environment for serious tax reform. Barack Obama has repeatedly raised taxes during his six years in office. The Internal Revenue Service has been plagued by scandal after revelations that top IRS officials were targeting political opponents of the president for additional scrutiny. And the IRS is the chief enforcement agency for Obamacare, the president's deeply unpopular signature domestic policy item. Many of the punitive tax and penalty provisions of Obamacare kick in this year, including the employer mandate, and even defenders of the law are predicting widespread confusion over the next several months.

Given all this, voters might have expected congressional Republicans to prioritize comprehensive tax reform, for businesses and individuals. They might have anticipated that Republicans had legislation teed up and ready for a vote immediately after taking control of both chambers.

Instead, to the extent voters have heard much about Republicans and taxes in the first couple weeks of this new Congress, they've heard this: Republicans want to work with President Obama to reform taxes for corporations; some Republicans favor repealing the medical device tax that helps fund Obamacare; and some Republicans have gone to great lengths to make clear that a gas tax hike remains on the table.

If you're a blue-collar worker in, say, Iowa or Colorado who voted for a Republican last fall hoping for change, there's not a lot there to excite you.

It's not time to panic. A gas tax hike will not get through this Congress. Republicans are emphasizing corporate tax reform and targeted Obamacare tax repeal not because they're top priorities but because they're possible. And with Paul Ryan the new chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, there's every reason to hope congressional Republicans will settle on a tax reform package that is aggressive.

GRAPHIC RIVER

President Obama won't sign such tax reform legislation, of course. But this is a fight Republicans win simply by having it. So we say: Go big, go bold! On tax reform, on an Obamacare alternative, and on everything else, too. Give us substance, sharpen the contrast, highlight the differences.

Playing defense only works when you've got a big lead. And playing not to lose rarely leads to a win.

—Stephen F. Hayes

Caving to Iran

So, we meet again: Kerry and Zarif

Just as John Kerry was meeting with his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif in Geneva last week as part of the ongoing negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, Tehran announced it was building two new nuclear reactors in the Bushehr region. That's perfectly okay, said the State Department, since that's allowed under the Joint Plan of Action: They can build as many reactors as they want. It seems the Iranians can get away with a lot under the JPOA—the agreement reached in November 2013 that eased sanctions on Tehran—because the White House has hardly batted an eye over any of Iran's actions.

Of course, the notion that it's fine to build more reactors somewhat complicates the Obama administration's claims that the agreement froze the Iranian nuclear program. But in the year since the interim agreement with Iran was signed, it's become clear that the White House defines "froze" very flexibly. The agreement also acknowledges Iran's right to enrich uranium. It allows Iran unlimited work on its plutonium reactor at Arak. It ignores Iran's ballistic missile program. All this while the administration has provided sanctions relief that has rescued the Iranian economy and encouraged European businesses to seek opportunities in Iran.

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Like any competent negotiator, Iran is employing a two-track policy—negotiating while it enhances its leverage by establishing facts on the ground. Why, on the other hand, is the Obama administration forfeiting what leverage it has?

An argument commonly made by critics of the White House is that Iranian negotiators have run circles around the Americans. It is easy to think so, but the reality is that Iran, despite its worthy history as a great civilization, to say nothing of its chess masters and master carpet weavers, has not cornered the market on cunning. For every wheeler-dealer at the Iranian bazaar, America produces a dozen corporate lawyers. The Obama administration isn't getting outhustled. If it wanted to negotiate a tougher deal, it surely could. It just doesn't want to.

The Iranians understand that they're pushing against an open door—across a threshold that happens to lead to the rest of the Middle East, where Tehran's men are busy empire-building. Tehran, as the clerical regime likes to boast, now controls four Arab capitals—Baghdad, Beirut, Sanaa, and Damascus. Iran's holdings in Syria may at present be the most threatening. Last week came reports that Iran was building missile sites in Syria.

This news was followed by a report in *Der Spiegel* that Syria may be trying to restart its nuclear weapons program in a site close to the Lebanese border. Some regional experts counsel caution about the report. They argue that Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and his Hezbollah allies do not have the time and opportunity to build a nuclear facility while they're fighting for their lives against antiregime rebels. However, the important fact is that Syria is hiding 50 tons of enriched uranium, which went missing from the Iranian nuclear program. In other words, Iran is dispersing its nuclear infrastructure and materials. What if Iran is able to move parts of its program to Baghdad, Beirut, and Sanaa as well?

The issue isn't just the nuclear deal. Sure, you can't have a meaningful agreement to stop Iran's nuclear weapons program if it's moving material to another country. But you also can't have a meaningful agreement if the administration doesn't push for one. As we've seen repeatedly over the last year, the White House refuses to call the Iranians to account. That means we have a big problem. If Iran is determined to have the bomb, and this administration is very clearly less determined to stop them from acquiring and dispersing the equipment and material it takes to build a bomb, then Iran's growing Middle East empire will be a nuclear one.

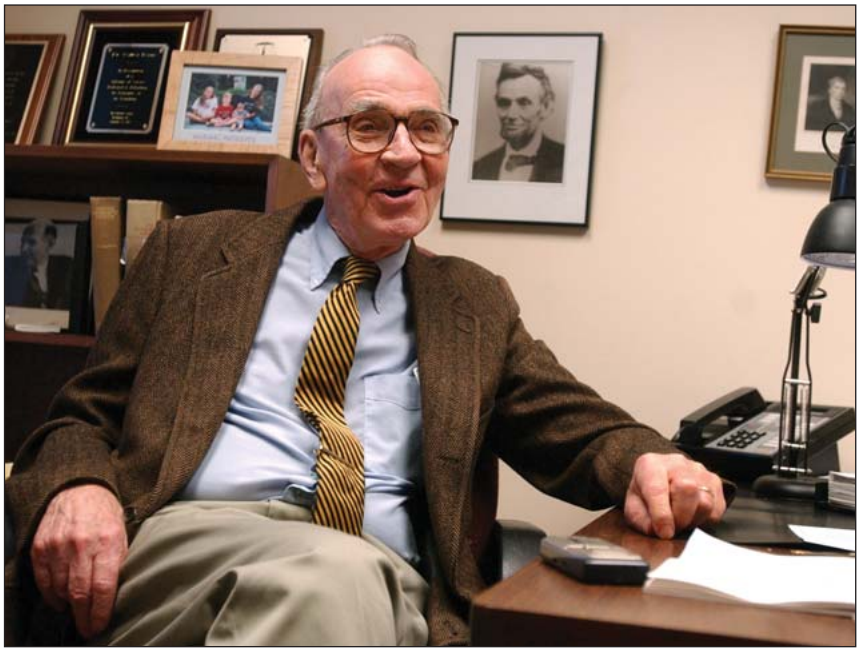
Maybe there are enough votes in the new Republican Senate to pass more meaningful sanctions legislation. They had better act fast, because the fact is we're soon going to reach the point when sanctions will be largely irrelevant. Sanctions will be an empty threat against an Iranian empire under a nuclear umbrella.

—Lee Smith

The Gentleman Patriot

Walter Berns, 1919-2015.

BY JEREMY RABKIN



Walter Berns, who died last week at 95, was a scholar who spoke for a more serious and more confident America. He did his best service in the 1960s and '70s, when America was at its least sober and self-confident.

Aristotle says nature intends the gentleman to be physically imposing but does not always achieve this intention. Nature delivered for Walter Berns. Or anyway (which may have been Aristotle's point), Berns made the most of nature's gifts. He was imposing.

Berns taught constitutional law in political science departments—at Cornell in the 1960s, at the University of Toronto in the 1970s, at Georgetown in the 1980s and '90s. He did not do the sort of Socratic questioning favored by law professors. It would probably have provoked too much whimpering while the questioned students squirmed under his gaze.

Mostly, Berns lectured and students listened. Perhaps they didn't agree with his various judgments, condemning this decision or that justice, lauding others. But most students came away with the sense that this was a serious subject, because Berns took it seriously—and he was self-evidently a serious man.

In the spring of 1969, students at Cornell "occupied" campus buildings to protest the imposition of penalties on the Afro-American Society for vandalizing university property. Leaders of the group brandished rifles in the air to dramatize their determination. After intense debate, the Cornell faculty endorsed administration proposals to waive the penalties and give in to other demands. Berns, of course, argued for upholding the university's rules and against giving in to threats of violence. When the university went the other way, he resigned his full professorship. The whole episode still reverberated in the faculty when I came back to teach at Cornell more than a decade later.

The stern public moralist was not the whole man. With his friends—and especially after a few cocktails and a few (or more than a few) cigarettes—he could be charming, witty, an engaging raconteur. Before he entered graduate school at the University of Chicago in the 1950s, he had aspired to be a novelist. He spent time at a writers' retreat in New Mexico, with the widow of D.H. Lawrence—and wrote of her years later with wistful affection. Among Berns's very closest friends were Allan Bloom and Werner Dannhauser, fellow students of Leo Strauss and colleagues at Cornell. Bloom and Dannhauser were serious students of political philosophy but not paragons of conventional respectability. Walter Berns stood by them through thick and thin.

When he moved to Washington in the early 1980s, Berns joined a weekly poker game with Irving Kristol, Robert Bork, William Rehnquist, and Antonin Scalia. With occasional additions, they kept up this game for many years. It's probably safe to assume Berns didn't lecture the others on constitutional law. Also probably a safe bet—if you like gambling—that Harry Jaffa wouldn't have been invited to join that group, if he'd been in Washington. He couldn't have been relied on not to lecture the others.

Jaffa died within hours of Berns last week, also in his mid-90s. They had been fellow students of Strauss, fellow scholars of American thought, broadly similar in their outlook and approach—and had been feuding for decades. So memorial tributes in the past week have repeatedly suggested the parallel with John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, former collaborators, then political opponents, who

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Jeremy Rabkin is professor of law at George Mason University. He first encountered constitutional law in Walter Berns's course at the University of Toronto in 1972.

died on the same day, each mentioning the other in his last hour. But Jefferson and Adams had reconciled in their later years and engaged in extensive correspondence. I don't think Berns and Jaffa ever did reconcile. Jefferson and Adams wanted, among other things, to protect the political project they had both done so much to launch. Berns was devoted to the political project of Jefferson and Adams—and Lincoln—more than to any contemporary scholarly project.

On Jaffa's side, the feud (if that's the right word) seems to have been motivated by Jaffa's determination to show—in public and in print—that his view of the American Founding was more compelling than the various tributes offered in the bicentennial era (the mid-1970s) by Martin Diamond, Irving Kristol, Robert Bork, and others. Jaffa sought to distinguish himself from those of broadly similar views. On the Berns side, it was simpler, I think: He stood by his friends.

Walter Berns had enlisted in the Navy before Pearl Harbor and served in the Pacific theater until the end of the war. He never wrote about his war experience, and I was never able to coax him to say much about it. I didn't get much more from others in that generation, not even relatives or close friends of my parents. That generation disdained weepy confessions and boastful self-dramatizing.

I have since learned from Harvey Mansfield—I mean, from his book *Manliness*—that the most manly men are inherently self-dramatizing. I think the generation of American men who fought the Second World War were too struck by the scale of the effort—and the stakes of the effort—to see the war as a stage for their own personal heroism. But the war left a mark on that generation: Most seem to have taken the lesson that there's enough honor in doing a hard job when you have to. Through his whole career, Berns was, foremost, a defender of America.

What he learned from Leo Strauss was that the principles of the American Revolution had not seemed at all "self-evident" to earlier thinkers. Before the seventeenth century, the tradition of political philosophy, stretching back to Plato and Aristotle, would scarcely have recognized America's founding doctrines as political principles. What Berns also saw, however—without prompting from any books or teachers—was that America was a boon to its own people and a great force for good in the world. His academic career was in some way an effort to reconcile these two understandings. He appreciated that liberty is—as the preamble to the Constitution says—"a blessing." But he also came to appreciate that, even if God-given, freedom is not simply a spontaneous growth: It can't be expected to continue without reflection, without effort, without commitment to preserve and defend it.

The different phases of his scholarship reflect an underlying purpose, when seen in this light. In the 1950s and '60s, he criticized the Supreme Court for an approach to free speech that disregarded the rightful claims of civility and decency. In the 1970s and '80s, he attacked a judicial activism that seemed to have no anchor in the actual Constitution. So in *Freedom, Virtue and the First Amendment* (1957, 1965) he urged the Court to pay heed to lessons of premodern political thought. In *The First Amendment and the Future of American Democracy* (1976, 1985) he condemned the Court for transforming constitutional dispute into an open-ended symposium and forgetting that the point of the Constitution was to place some conflicts outside the range of political debate so the rest could be settled by open debate and political compromise.

Berns wrote little about federalism, except to defend Lincoln's view of the union. He wrote little about property or the abuses of administrative regulation. He had grown up in the Midwest, the child of Republican parents. Still, he was not very engaged by the fierce debates about the New Deal or the menace of "creeping socialism." His concerns were deeper or wider.

When I saw him at a party last year, where others were bemoaning various failings or transgressions of the Obama presidency, I asked Berns which president he most respected of those in his lifetime. He answered, without hesitation: "Truman." He was not referring to Truman's deplorable or forgettable appointments to the Supreme Court (Fred Vinson, Harold Burton, Tom Clark, Sherman Minton). He admired Truman for mobilizing America and Western Europe to contain Soviet communism.

Berns's most successful books when they appeared were *For Capital Punishment* (1979, 1991) and *Making Patriots* (2001). They were only peripherally concerned with constitutional precedents or specific provisions of the Constitution. They were about more basic things. The first argued the claims of civic indignation against evil (Berns wanted the death penalty reserved for the most unforgivable crimes). The latter urged gratitude to the country that protects us against evil. Participants in the original Platonic dialogues would have recognized the issues. In a lecture published by AEI in 2009, Berns celebrated Lincoln's poetic gift for helping future generations to love America. The ancients would have got the point of that one, too.

Walter Berns revered Lincoln. He cherished the American Constitution. He stood by his friends. He wrote several articles attacking the United Nations and world government. The topic was a bit outside his usual range, but the sentiment was entirely in character. If you claim to embrace everyone, you don't have real loyalty to anyone or anything in particular.

Berns had too much appreciation for the history of political thought to boil down all questions to a few "principles." But he was also impatient with the sorts of fine distinctions that beguile so many legal scholars. Berns defended the idea of an impartial court—and was always unsatisfied with the courts we had. He stood by his friends and did his best, always, to defend his country. He was, in an old-fashioned and honorable way, a gentleman.

Fifty years after the American Founding, a young Abraham Lincoln warned that "the silent artillery of time" had "swept over" the "giant

oaks" of the revolution, so Americans could no longer rely on the personal, monitory witness of revolutionary heroes to maintain "the temple of liberty." Lincoln accordingly advised the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield that the next generation of Americans must now rely on "the solid quarry of sober reason"—and the "revered name" of George Washington. In other words, "sober reason"—and something more.

Walter Berns was among the last of the "giant oaks" who helped steady the country through the challenges of Cold War and domestic upheaval. He made his contributions to "sober reason" and taught generations of students and readers to appreciate the something more that a flourishing nation requires. He would be the last to say American soil has grown too thin to sustain a new generation of great oaks. Still, Berns appreciated that saplings grow best in the shade of older and higher trees. In his own time and his own way, he set a memorable example of what it is to stand tall. ♦

Freedom, Virtue, and Walter Berns

The constitutionalist par excellence.

BY JAMES W. CEASER

Walter Berns, a leading figure in the study of constitutional law for nearly half a century, enjoyed an advantage over most other scholars in this field: He never attended law school. Unburdened by this professional training, Berns brought to his subject the fresh perspective of an outsider who had studied political philosophy at the University of Chicago, earning his doctorate in 1953. This theoretical background helped prepare Berns to see not only differently but further than his more legalistic colleagues.

It was not that Berns did not know his case law backwards and forwards—he could summon Supreme Court holdings from the deep, and, yes, they would come. Nor was it that he did not demand, at least from his graduate students, the painful mastery of all relevant legal doctrines and prong tests. Yet important as he knew such subject matter to be for the teaching of constitutional law, Berns always viewed the field itself in its connection to a larger object of concern: maintaining America's political system and sustaining its experiment in modern liberal democratic government. With this in mind, Berns once ventured the heretical counsel to law schools that they should begin their courses on constitutional law by studying the Constitution rather than the Fourteenth Amendment.

Berns, left, with George W. Bush and fellow National Humanities Medal recipients, 2005

Walter Berns's first book, *Freedom, Virtue and the First Amendment*, was published in 1957. For the undergraduates of the 1960s who encountered this work—I was one—its title was sufficient by itself to provoke and offend. No problem, of course, with "freedom"; it meant throwing off all bourgeois shackles and doing what we wanted. And no problem either with "the First Amendment"; whatever it may have meant originally, we knew it was now being interpreted by the Supreme Court to offer a license for virtually every form of expression. But "virtue"? What was that strange intruder doing in our midst?

In fact, the three concepts in Berns's title fix the matrix of much of his subsequent work. Freedom, though it had many meanings, Berns allowed for purposes of analysis to refer to full and unfettered rights. It was the supreme claim deriving from modern political philosophy. Virtue, which had even more meanings, could be simplified to refer to sound public mores, enough to support a decent republican government. Virtue had been the concern of classical political philosophy. And then there was law, the instrument that was to help find the proper balance for our times between the other two principles. For Berns, the study of these issues involved nothing less than wrestling with the problem of reconciling a key element in the competing views of the ancients and the moderns. It was no wonder that an undergraduate course in constitutional law, insofar as it raised questions of this kind, might become the centerpiece of a liberal arts education, a position it still holds in a few of our colleges and universities.

Today it is a commonplace in social inquiry to acknowledge that, for our society to remain in even a minimum condition of health, freedom must be coupled with responsibility (or what Berns meant in part by virtue). But what role does law in general and constitutional law in particular play in addressing this issue? Berns insisted, contrary to what so many others preached, that the Constitution, correctly understood, allowed for—and

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that the political thought undergirding it even helped to guide—the striking of a workable balance between rights and virtue. Berns accordingly supported certain laws that sought to ban pornography and public profanity and indecency, and that indirectly worked to promote religious beliefs. The law, he wrote, "can lend support to the moral dispositions of a people . . . [and] to those decent habits that are required for self-government." The problem, he often argued, was that the Supreme Court—he was writing in the 1960s and '70s—had come to view key parts of the Constitution, in particular the First Amendment, as being statements only of freedom.

To the students of the 1960s, Walter Berns's willingness to write about virtue could make him seem severe. Sworn as so many of us were to that seminal principle of letting it all hang out, what were we to think of a person who could say, as he did later, that "good manners and forms are barriers to the objects of our desires, and there is much to be said for barriers of that sort"? And so it was that when Walter Berns was selected as the outside examiner for the senior exams at Kenyon College—even though my views had already, as they say today, evolved—I met him in a state of fear and trembling. And he did not disappoint. Here was a teacher who did not coddle and who examined to the limits—and beyond. I attended Cornell a year later, and while slightly more confident, kept a prudent trepidation.

How fortunate it was for me then over the ensuing years to get to know Walter Berns better and begin to glimpse the man in full. I likened him in my mind to a WASP Sabra, a bit intimidating on the outside, but warm, friendly, and generous on the inside. He was a person of great wit, with a zest for good conversation and for the joy of living. He seemed as able as any person I have known to keep in balance the qualities, understood in their higher sense, of virtue and freedom.

And he has left us with a gift that keeps on giving: his prose. It is lean and lapidary, tinctured at times with a playful willingness to provoke. Above all, it is able to boil things down to their essence. For a number of years now, those in the field of constitutional studies have divided themselves into schools of textual interpretation, consisting of originalists, neo-originalists, proponents of the living Constitution, and offshoots of all three tucked into interstices of the debate. I am sure that with much effort and patience students of constitutional law can learn a great deal from following their endless exchanges. Still, it is both pleasant and instructive to read a single sentence of Walter's, written before this debate took center stage: "The Framers . . . provided for a Supreme Court and charged it with the task, not of keeping the Constitution in tune with the times but, to the extent possible, of keeping the times in tune with the Constitution." ♦

Arguing America

Harry Jaffa, 1918-2015.

BY STEVEN F. HAYWARD

To begin to convey a sense of what an extraordinary and compelling figure Harry V. Jaffa was, I offer a confession: The only class notes I have kept from college or graduate school are contained in the dog-eared, green notebook from my courses with Jaffa, and I keep it in my top desk drawer. In idle moments, I read over those notes, reminding myself of key points, puzzling over ideas and observations I still don't fully understand, but above all marveling at the mind of one of the great teachers of our time.

Nothing could prepare a student for the shock of hearing Harry Jaffa in the classroom for the first time. From virtually his first word, you could tell that this was not going to be political science or political philosophy as usually taught. Above all, it was instantly clear that the course would involve engagement with the most serious political matters at the highest level—notably, "the crisis of the West." There was no pawing at the ground with methodological preliminaries, no "on the one hand, on the other hand." We plunged headlong into the assigned texts—Aristotle and Aquinas—whose themes and implications Jaffa illuminated with a peripatetic brilliance that ranged from Plato to Shakespeare to Thackeray; from architecture to drama, music, and poetry; modern culture and sports, all without a single note. And that was just the first 15 minutes.

It was a dazzling vindication of the ancient claim that political philosophy is the queen of the sciences, and that the arguments between the greatest minds were not a matter of antiquarian curiosity or the mere history of ideas, but a live argument relevant to the here and now. My very first three hours in class with Jaffa cleared away years of half-learning, confused ideas, and superficially grounded opinions with a force that others who shared the same experience have compared to a religious conversion—just as Jaffa described his own first encounter with his great teacher, Leo Strauss.

Not that any class ever got very far into the assigned texts. Almost every Jaffa student who took his course on the *Nicomachean Ethics* has the same story: By the end of the semester, Jaffa had failed to get us beyond Book I (though by some miracle, when I took the course, we actually got through several chapters of Aquinas as well as Book II of the *Ethics*). It didn't matter: By the end of that semester, everyone could comprehend the rest of the *Ethics* on his own.

This lack of normal progress through the assigned texts wasn't a result of excess focus on minutiae or, still less, pointless digressions. Indeed, Jaffa's classes consisted half or more of digressions, always deeply interesting, after which he would say, "Where were we? Oh yes—," and he would pick up the main thread of his thought on the text exactly where he had left off. His memory was phenomenal, best seen in his ability to recite verbatim long quotations from memory.

Jaffa's effectiveness in the classroom, and in his writing, was due chiefly to his ability to spot the innermost essence of an idea or problem and render the right way of thinking about the problem in simple and accessible language. This is not to say that his teachings were simple; merely that they were direct and sure. This was not always true of Strauss and his other leading students, who could be obscure or indirect. While Jaffa's teaching often involved difficult and profound subtleties, he was never turgid.

You could see this trait at the core of Jaffa's most famous work about Lincoln, *Crisis of the House Divided*, his detailed interpretation of the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858. At the time Jaffa took up this subject in the early 1950s, historians and political scientists largely ignored the debates; the conventional wisdom among historians was that the Civil War had been an "unnecessary war" and Lincoln's position largely reducible to mere political ambition. Both were outgrowths of the historicism that dominates the modern mind. Jaffa noticed that "the issue between Lincoln and Douglas was in substance, and very nearly in form, identical with the issue between Socrates and Thrasymachus" in Book I of *The Republic*. Because the fundamental questions of the ground of justice transcend time, the wider lessons of the Lincoln-Douglas debates were directly relevant today.

This led to Jaffa's intense focus

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on the Declaration of Independence and the deeper character of the American regime, which in turn led to many of his quarrels with figures who were otherwise allies against the left, such as Walter Berns, Martin Diamond, Allan Bloom, Irving Kristol, Robert Bork, and Justices William Rehnquist and Antonin Scalia, among others. Jaffa thought an insufficient grasp of the connection between the principles of the Declaration and the Constitution was a significant error. His relentless pursuit of these disputes cost him many friendships and became the nub of the split between the so-called West Coast and East Coast Straussians that continues in various ways today.

If Jaffa seemed to delight in his quarrels, it was because he felt it vitally important that the right be right for the right reasons. William F. Buckley Jr. captured a truth with the comment, "If you think Harry Jaffa is hard to argue with, try agreeing with him. It is nearly impossible." Jaffa delighted in this remark, saying, "If Bill had lived to be a hundred, he could not have found better words to express the purpose of my life." The lesson of Lincoln's critique of Douglas, he thought, was that seemingly small theoretical errors could have large practical consequences. On an even higher level, the way in which we understand John Locke and the American Founding bears on the goodness and rightness of America as a regime, and hence the best means of defending it against the nihilism of modern liberalism.

Though his letters and articles were filled with the sharpest barbs for his targets, he was utterly without ill will or rancor in person. This was of a piece with his infinite generosity toward and interest in his students. A long succession of us shared a house over nearly two decades (rented from the famous Peter Drucker), and Jaffa would call us up just to chat. He wanted to hear what we were doing, and especially what we were reading and writing. He exhorted us to get busy and write. (His late wife, Marjorie, I should add, was our unofficial den mother, looking after us to make sure we were decently fed.) But these were not two-way chats for long. He needed to unburden himself of something that was on his mind. Often it was an indignant reaction to something on the current political scene, or a news item or wrongheaded op-ed in the *Los Angeles Times*. Just as often it was a philosophical offering. I vividly recall a profound mini-lecture over the phone on the relationship between Aristotle's *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, lasting no more than 60 seconds and making me wish I'd had my notepad handy, for it was impossible to recapitulate afterward.

"A teacher affects eternity," Henry Adams wrote. "He can never tell where his influence stops." Jaffa's influence was and is enormous. It is no exaggeration to say that he singlehandedly caused conservatives to embrace Lincoln after a long period of indifference or even hostility toward the Great Emancipator. Along the way Jaffa showed how conservatives should understand natural rights and contest the meaning of equality, rather than ceding these ideas to the mischief of the left. Lincoln's statesmanship vindicated the Founding. Equally important to Jaffa was Winston Churchill's statesmanship, which courageously took on nihilism and relativism. As he wrote in *Crisis*, "Henceforward, political science, properly so-called, would have at its heart the study of the speeches and deeds of statesmen."

Just as Jaffa and other leading students of Leo Strauss broadened their outlook beyond classical political philosophy to the American regime, the concentric circles of Jaffa's influence can be seen in the way in which conservatism in recent years has fixed upon Progressivism and the Progressive Era as the undoing of the American Founding. This recognition was remarkably absent from early postwar conservatism, which overlooked Progressivism's direct attack on the Founding as it paved the way for the hated New Deal. This newfound focus, which shows up frequently in the popular work of Charles Kesler, George Will, Jonah Goldberg, and even that of a shock jock like Glenn Beck, among others, is the direct result of Jaffa's inspiration on the next generation of students and writers.

One thing that marked out Jaffa's students is that many of them chose nonacademic careers, as aides to elected officials, administration appointees, think tank analysts, speechwriters, journalists, and popular authors. We took seriously something Jaffa told us in class: "If the dominant reputations of the future—in scholarship as in politics—do not differ from those of the present, it will be an ill time for the fate of freedom." To remain in the ivory tower, many of us concluded, was to fiddle while Rome burned.

I keenly remember the last two times I visited with Jaffa. The first was in 2003, when he had come to Washington for some function related to Lincoln. By then in his 80s, he had not lost a step. Over lunch (appropriately at a restaurant on Thomas Jefferson Street) with a few of his former students, Jaffa enthralled us once again. There was no beating around the bush. The fate of the world, he said, depended on the United States; the fate of the United States depended on the conservative movement; and the fate of the conservative movement depended upon the health and success of the Republican party—unfortunately so, since the GOP could be so confused and faltering. The fundamental causes of the crisis of the house divided that had summoned the Republican party into being were still present—and the Democratic party was just as intellectually corrupt as it was in the 1850s. We had our marching orders.

The second was about six years ago. I was passing briefly—or so I thought—through Claremont and decided to drop by Harry's office at the Claremont Institute (he still went in every day, even though he had stopped teaching at the age of 90) just to say hello. I stayed two hours, as he gave me my own private seminar, a refresher course on the crisis of the West and what we needed to do to reverse it. He was reading, and disliking, Jacob Heilbrunn's new book on neoconservatism; what did I think of

it? Although much of what he said was familiar, coming directly from him it seemed as fresh as the first day of class all over again.

At one point he swiveled his chair around and paused to look up at his framed photo of Churchill walking alone on the forecastle of HMS *Prince of Wales* during the Atlantic conference of 1940. "The fate of the Western world depended on that single man, at that single moment," he said, going on to recount his personal recollections from 1940. "We need him again."

Whether we get a new Churchill or not, Harry Jaffa equipped a generation of students to know the difference, as Strauss put it, between mediocrity, however brilliant, and true greatness. ♦

Saving President Lincoln

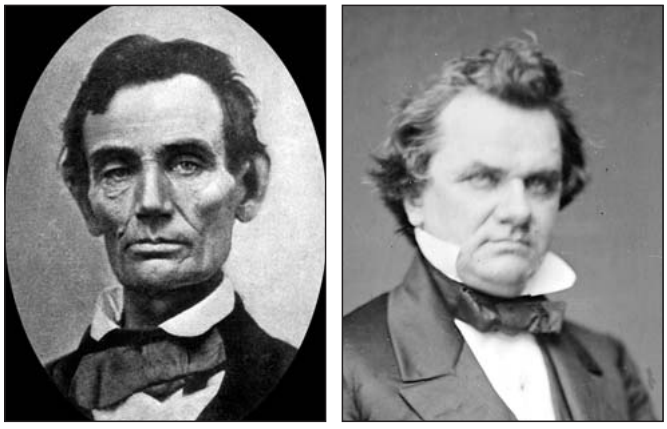
The scholarly achievement of Harry Jaffa.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

When an admirer once asked Harry Jaffa, the political philosopher who died earlier this month at the age of 96, what led to his interest in Abraham Lincoln, he answered without a moment's hesitation, in a ferocious bark: "Plato!"

And he didn't require a lot of encouragement to explain the connection. In 1946, Jaffa was a young graduate student in philosophy at the New School in New York City, reading Plato under the famous philosopher Leo Strauss. Footloose and penniless, as grad students tend to be, Jaffa spent his free hours wandering the used bookstores that long ago lined lower Fourth Avenue.

One fall Saturday, browsing the history shelves, he came across a dusty edition of the debates between Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, held in 1858 as they contended for a U.S. Senate seat in Illinois. Jaffa's curiosity about the debates, about Lincoln and the Civil War, was only cursory, but he took the volume down from the shelf and, as was his wont, settled himself on the floor, leaned against the wall, and began to read. He read until closing, when the owner shooed him away. He returned the next day, and then the evening of the next, until he had read the debates through.



Lincoln in 1858 and Douglas, circa 1860

"I was astonished," he said. "It didn't take long before I could see what was going on. The issue between Lincoln and Douglas was precisely identical to the one between Socrates and Thrasymachus in Plato's *Republic*. I was floored—delighted—*thrilled*!"

Ten years later Jaffa published *Crisis of the House Divided: An Interpretation of the Issues in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates*. It was not only his best book (he wrote several very, very good books, on Aquinas and Shakespeare as well as Lincoln), it was also, in the words of the Civil War historian Allen Guelzo, "incontestably the greatest Lincoln book of the century."

To understand its greatness, and the strange bravery of its author, it helps to consider the intellectual climate in which it appeared. After half a century cast as an unblemished hero by amateur authors, well-meaning folklorists, and researchers of uneven gifts and reliability, Lincoln had by the 1930s fallen into the icy hands of professional historians—*scientific* historians, they called themselves, who applied their clinical, pristinely objective methods to a president that most schoolchildren were still being taught to revere as the Great Emancipator.

Scientific history required its practitioners to dig for the reality beneath the deceiving surface of Lincoln's words and actions. When they did so, they discovered—to everyone's surprise but theirs—that Lincoln wasn't much of an emancipator and he wasn't so great either, at least by common measures.

Tugging their lab coats, the scientific historians announced that the Civil War was "the unnecessary war," touched off by Lincoln's bumbling and kept going by his political ambition. He was a machine pol whose accomplishments, such as they were, had been thrust upon him by events he couldn't control. His prettiest speeches were at best poetic

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expressions of principles he found merely convenient and only half believed. The debates with his rival Stephen A. Douglas, supposedly over the expansion of slavery and—so Lincoln insisted—the future of liberty itself, boiled down to "a talking point . . . a campaign appeal."

It fell to Jaffa to point out that this view of Lincoln as a purely political animal, ultimately uninterested in the future of slavery, was incoherent—incoherent, that is, for anyone who hoped to retain a shred of admiration for him. To assert that Lincoln prosecuted a fratricidal war for no purpose deeper than political ambition, Jaffa wrote, "is to give him a character that, in the profundity of its immorality, is beyond treason." None of the scientific historians was willing to go that far, of course, not explicitly. But there's no escaping it: The Lincoln their method reveals couldn't have been simply opportunistic, indifferent, or incompetent. He would have been a monster. Somewhere Jefferson Davis was smiling, if you can imagine.

Jaffa applied a different method in *Crisis of the House Divided*. He approached Lincoln's debates with Douglas as a classical scholar and a political philosopher. He did the two debaters the great tribute of taking them seriously and assuming that they were honorable and intelligent men whose words meant what they said. Against the wised-up historians of his day, Jaffa's method looks almost innocent. And in a way it is—it has the innocence of intellectual generosity, guided by extreme sophistication and subtlety.

Here's where Plato and Thrasymachus come in. In *The Republic*, Plato quotes Thrasymachus on the nature of justice: "Justice is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger." Today we might call this view relativism—the belief that such truths have no independent existence except as a matter of opinion or as an exertion of power. The power might be pressed, and justice redefined, by an oligarchy, or a monarchy, or even a democratic majority.

This is the essential point on which Lincoln confronted Douglas. On the cusp of the Civil War Douglas asserted that slavery would be legitimate in any territory where a majority had declared it so. No, said Jaffa's Lincoln: Either some things were just in themselves, or justice had no meaning. Slavery violated the self-evident truth on which the country was founded, that all men were created equal. This was a truth for all men in all places at all times; it varied only in how clearly it was acknowledged and acted upon. No majority vote could alter it. It was a truth that was true without regard to the say-so of passing arrangements of power or fashion.

Jaffa put it like this, in a paragraph that distills Lincoln's mind better than any words not written by Lincoln himself.

> If self-government was a *right*, and not a mere *fact* characterizing the American scene (more or less), then it must be derived from some primary source of obligation. There must be something, Lincoln insisted, inhering in each man, *as a man*, which created an obligation in every other man. And if any majority anywhere, however constituted, might rightfully enslave any man or men, it could only be because there was nothing in any man which, simply because he was a man, other men were bound to respect.

"That is the issue," Lincoln said in one of the debates. "It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world." Throughout the world and throughout time: from Plato to Lincoln, from Thrasymachus to Stephen Douglas, and from their day to ours. Jaffa rescued Lincoln from the petty disputes of the academic historians and the other scholar squirrels and placed him in the company he deserved. The greatest American was returned to his exalted position in the American experiment, and the American experiment to its exalted place in human history. And the rest of us, watching Jaffa pull it off, were floored—delighted—*thrilled*. ♦

Obama's Latest Giveaway . . .

But there's no such thing as free tuition.

BY IKE BRANNON

Last week the president feigned striking a blow for lower college costs with his proposal to make junior colleges free for all attendees meeting minimal academic standards. True to form, the president has taken on something not heretofore considered an impediment to college attendance with an initiative that will cost billions of dollars a year. Simply put, it's a crass move that puts politics over policy.

What's another entitlement?

The main flaw in the president's proposal is that it misdiagnoses the problem. Virtually no one is failing to get a degree because their local junior college is too pricey: Tuition at community colleges is somewhere between $3,000 and $5,000 a year. It's not chump change, but neither does it impose the sort of crippling debt that the president likes to bemoan.

What's more, students from middle- and working-class households typically qualify for copious financial aid that can be used for community and four-year colleges alike—most state and federal aid doesn't specify that recipients attend a four-year institution. Many community colleges also give merit-based financial aid to exceptional students.

And while enrolling in a community college as a prelude to a four-year degree makes a lot of sense, most people who attend one don't plan to complete a bachelor's. The Community College Research Center estimates that only 20 percent of all students transfer to a four-year college.

In short, the cost of community college is way down on the list of barriers to low-income students completing degrees. But it's easy to see why the White House would make this proposal: It's a gesture that ostensibly targets the working-class students who are more likely to go to community colleges. To be clear, these students *will* benefit in that they'll spend less to attend community college. But will more of them continue their studies if their first two years are free? There's no reason to think the numbers will change much. The real beneficiaries may be the middle- and upper-class students who save themselves a few thousand bucks by doing a year or two of community college before going off to State Tech University. (As someone who attended his local community college and later taught at a couple of large state universities, I thought it was clear that kids got better instruction at the former.)

And while enrollment will surge if tuition is free, it's not clear that the resources going to community colleges will increase in proportion. Tuition only accounts for about 30 percent of their revenues. If federal and state subsidies—and states participating in the program must also contribute toward tuition—don't keep pace with enrollment, the quality's going to suffer and students wanting to move to a four-year school are going to be fighting to get into the classes they need.

President Obama's proposal would create the educational equivalent of the mortgage interest deduction: a subsidy that goes mainly to middle- and upper-class households and does nothing to achieve its purported goal. And his proposal, if enacted, would be as sacrosanct and politically untouchable as the mortgage interest deduction.

In 2001, shortly before leaving office, the Clinton administration dropped what it proudly referred to (off the record) as a "turd bomb" on the incoming administration of George W. Bush by issuing a rule requiring that all government agencies provide information to their constituents in whatever languages were commonly spoken in their region. It was—and was designed to be—unworkable: To comply with the original strictures, the Los Angeles DMV would have had to issue written exams in over 100 languages, while also having someone available to speak with a constituent in each of those languages. But its manifest unfeasibility meant that the Bush administration would be forced to scale it down to something a DMV or county clerk's office could actually manage, which would then give its critics ammunition for blasting Bush for being indifferent to the plight of poor immigrants.

The junior college proposal is Obama's own parting bomb. No one in higher education wants to see this made law—not junior college presidents, who would see demand outstrip resources, nor four-year college presidents, who would see their enrollment fall precipitously. More important, virtually no one would graduate from college solely thanks to this massive subsidy.

But when it fails to pass Congress, Democrats will be able to pose as defenders of the working classes while crucifying Republicans for being indifferent towards the plight of the poor. Which is the purpose of most proposals from our speech-giver in chief. ◆

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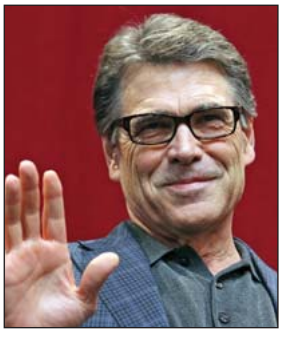
Medicaid and the GOP Governors

Their yea or nay to Washington helps size up some presidential hopefuls. BY ANDREW EVANS

While a pair of former GOP governors are dominating the news in the early stages of the 2016 presidential race, no fewer than six sitting Republican governors appear to be positioning themselves for presidential bids. Each of them—like every governor—has had to decide whether to accept or decline Obamacare's offer of federal funding to expand his state's Medicaid program, which provides health insurance for the poor. The six governors' decisions, then, can serve as a starting point for understanding their different approaches to some of the most important issues the country is facing: our constitutional order, entitlements, and the economy.



Perry: Just give us the funds.

The contrasts could hardly be sharper. On one end of the spectrum stands Rick Perry of Texas, who has strongly denounced Medicaid's current structure and refused to expand it. Bobby Jindal and Scott Walker, of Louisiana and Wisconsin, respectively, have also declined the expansion money, although in different ways. Mike Pence is attempting to negotiate a reform of Medicaid unique to Indiana, while New Jersey's Chris Christie has accepted the expansion money outright. John Kasich has enthusiastically accepted it for Ohio, too, even going so far as to cast moral aspersions on those who object to his decision.

Overall, about half of the states outright rejected the expansion. Perry has described accepting Medicaid money in rather bombastic terms: "It's like putting 1,000 more people on the *Titanic* when you knew what was going to happen," he said at the Republican governors' annual meeting in late 2013. His refusal has more than a hint of Texan independence and brashness in it.

Although he can be light on policy specifics, Perry has suggested an alternative: turning Medicaid into a "block grant" giving the states greater autonomy in running the program. At present, Washington pays between 50 and 74 percent of the costs for each state, and it lays down requirements for how the program must be run. This leaves the states far from the independent centers of power they were originally intended to be under the Constitution.

Jindal has taken just as definite a stance against accepting the money, but he has justified it in much more specific policy language. He wrote in an op-ed in 2013that the federal government has turned down requests to grant waivers (for greater cost-sharing, for example) in exchange for the money, and he noted the subpar outcomes the program produces as well as other problems. He has approached this issue, as he has many others, with considerable technical policy expertise.

The subpar outcomes are a result of a significant design flaw in Medicaid: States can easily expand the program, because the federal government pays for so much of it, but only with great difficulty can they pare it back to save money. The easiest way politically for states to save money is by cutting payments to doctors, which prevents people from being thrown off the rolls—and thus limits the political blowback from taking away poor people's health insurance.

The result is that states pay doctors far less than either private insurers or Medicare, which makes doctors reluctant to accept patients covered by Medicaid. On average, Medicaid pays only 52 cents for every dollar a private insurer pays, according to Manhattan Institute scholar Avik Roy. And the result is predictable: Doctors accept new patients with Medicaid at a far lower rate than they do other patients. This effect is well known and widespread, and it means that some poor people are locked out of our health care system even with Medicaid.

Scott Walker has also turned down the funds, although his situation is different from that of Jindal or Perry. Wisconsin's Medicaid program was already quite generous. Instead of taking the new federal Medicaid money, Walker dropped about 77,000 people who made over 100 percent of the federal poverty level from the state's Medicaid rolls and added about 83,000 more adults who made under the poverty level. Those who were dropped could buy insurance on the new Obamacare exchange. Walker here is leveraging the Obamacare insurance exchange to focus Wisconsin's program on the poor.

Mike Pence of Indiana is one of the Republican governors who have accepted the Medicaid funds—but he has done so provisionally while he tries to negotiate a deal with the Obama administration. Pence's predecessor, Mitch Daniels, implemented an innovative Medicaid program for healthy adults that required participants to make regular contributions to a health savings account and imposed stiff penalties if they failed to do so. Daniels had to get a waiver from the Bush administration to implement this Healthy Indiana Plan because it exceeded the federal cost-sharing requirements for Medicaid.

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Pence's proposal would modify Healthy Indiana by making the benefits more generous and the penalties less severe, all in an effort to secure the Obama administration's blessing. By seeking a waiver for modified expansion, Pence is trying to preserve a state initiative that emphasizes personal responsibility, yet still makes insurance available to healthy adults at very low cost to them. His plan has come under fire from some conservatives as too generous, but it is not clear that the Obama administration will approve even this modified form of Healthy Indiana; Pence said in October that "differences remain" between him and the administration.

A longstanding criticism of Medicaid is that it can act as a disincentive to work for able-bodied adults by providing a benefit at little cost to the beneficiary so long as he remains poor. Prior to Obamacare, states were required to cover only a few groups: children, pregnant mothers, and the disabled (although many states had expanded coverage to others). Obamacare seeks to extend government-provided health insurance to a group that most states did not previously cover—healthy, childless adults who presumably can work. Providing a generous benefit to people who can work encourages dependence on the government and discourages upward mobility, and it is a large reason why many conservatives, such as Jindal, refused to expand the program as Obamacare prescribes.

Chris Christie fully accepted the expansion and justified his decision as a short-term saving to the state and a boon to the uninsured. Taking up the administration's offer of funds to expand Medicaid also boosts his image as a bipartisan, can-do politician in a deep-blue state, though he has not particularly touted the expansion of the program.

John Kasich, in contrast, has loudly accepted Obamacare's offer and defends his decision by appealing to his Christian faith. "When you die and get to the meeting with St. Peter, he's probably not going to ask you much about what you did about keeping government small. But he is going to ask you what you did for the poor," Kasich has said. "You better have a good answer."

Kasich was so insistent on the expansion that he bypassed the Republican-controlled legislature to get it. His position carries a whiff of the big-government conservatism anathema to many Republicans and has pitted him against other conservatives.

The Medicaid expansion in Ohio, as in New Jersey, will help some people, but it is not a fundamentally conservative move. It extends a government-run program to healthy adults, discouraging work and institutionalizing greater dependence while disregarding federalism.

Some will see in the governors' different approaches to Medicaid hints of what kind of president each might be, whether brash and bold, policy-oriented, incrementalist, reform-minded, accommodating, compromising, or pragmatic with a tendency to browbeat. While far from the only issue voters should look at, Medicaid is a useful point of comparison for a large group of the GOP's possible presidential contenders. ♦

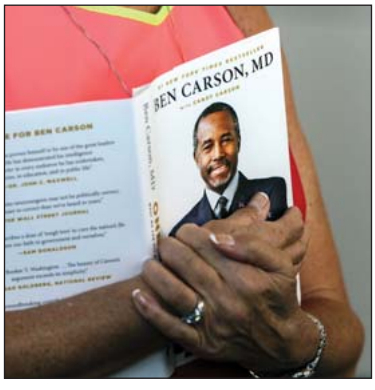
Taking Ben Carson Seriously

The 2016 campaign's most interesting long shot

By Fred Barnes

As Jeb Bush, Mitt Romney, and untold others ramp up their campaigns for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination, they're going to be in for a surprise. A candidate neither they nor the political class regard as a serious contender is ahead of them in organizing a well-financed and unique campaign operation. It includes a "director of campaign culture" to motivate the staff and make sure the campaign reflects the vision and character of the candidate.

That candidate is Ben Carson, the African-American conservative and retired brain surgeon. His White House bid is not a lark. It only seems that way. Carson was more active in 2014 than any other potential Republican candidate. Now he is set to create a presidential exploratory committee and announce his candidacy sometime before May 1.



An admirer waits at a West Palm Beach book-signing, September 8, 2014.

Candidates like Carson from the outskirts of electoral politics, who've never before run for office, are routinely dismissed as dreamers. They're bucking history. They're bound to wash out after the first caucus and primary, if not earlier. And in choosing Terry Giles, a Houston businessman with no political experience, as his campaign chairman, Carson only added to skepticism about his candidacy.

But Carson, 63, is no Herman Cain, the Georgia businessman who ran for the GOP nomination in 2012. Cain flew solo, without a campaign organization. His candidacy went nowhere. Carson is different. He has substantial name identification. He can raise money. His poverty-to-prominence story is compelling. He has a grassroots following. He is fluent on national issues.

Fred Barnes is an executive editor at The Weekly Standard.

Besides bringing in Giles, whom he met in 1994 when they were recipients of the Horatio Alger Award for overcoming "significant personal challenges to achieve success," here's what Carson did last year to advance his candidacy:

■ He delivered four or five speeches a week, some paid, some political, some to aid Republican congressional candidates, some to promote causes he favors, some to tout his book *One Nation*. He was a "contributor" on Fox News for most of the year, then a frequent guest. "He's already won the Fox primary," says Scott Reed, who was Bob Dole's campaign manager in the 1996 presidential race. "He doesn't have to go to Des Moines every week." The Iowa presidential caucuses are currently scheduled for January 18, 2016.

■ He wrote two books, *One Nation* and an ebook titled *One Vote*. *One Nation*, published by Sentinel, spent 20 weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list, 5 weeks as number one. It has outsold Hillary Clinton's *Hard Choices* 343,743 copies to 260,814, according to Bookscan. The ebook sold 35,000 copies and later another 85,000 as a paperback. Still another Carson book (coauthored with his wife Candy) on the Constitution is scheduled for publication later this year.

■ He collected as many as 750,000 names, roughly 600,000 gathered through the "Save Our Healthcare" project of American Legacy PAC. The Carson campaign intends to rent more than 530,000 names from the National Draft Ben Carson for President Committee, better known by its slogan "Run Ben Run." That adds up to more than 1.2 million names, many with email addresses attached, linked to Carson. This is Carson's base.

■ A 42-minute "documentary" on Carson ran in 37 local TV markets in November and on Newsmax and DirecTV from December 7 to 15. "You ask him a question

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and he knows how to answer," country musician Ricky Skaggs says on the show. "From all indications," the narrator says, "the sky's the limit for Dr. Carson."

■ Thousands listened to Carson on hourlong "teleforums," in which he was asked questions by callers. They tuned in after being notified of the opportunity to question Carson live. According to Broadnet, which operates the forums, Carson's listeners stayed on the phone line a record amount of time.

The Carson campaign didn't simply begin. It erupted with his 27-minute speech at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington in February 2013. President Obama was sitting a few feet away at the head table. "I have discovered in recent years," Carson began, "that it's very difficult to speak to a large group of people these days and not offend someone." He criticized the tax system, excessive government spending, called the national debt a "big problem," and offered a health care plan in sharp contrast to Obamacare. Obama was offended. The White House asked for an apology, but Carson refused.

The speech got enormous media coverage. It went viral. Carson was already well-known for his extraordinary surgery that separated German twins joined at their heads. But he wasn't a household name. "All that changed after the prayer breakfast," Carson told me. A Carson-for-president drumbeat began outside Washington and away from elite Republican circles.

In August 2013, the National Draft Ben Carson for President Committee was founded by John Philip Sousa IV, the great-grandson of the composer and conductor. "We only have one objective here—to get him to the White House in January 2017," Sousa says. The group, which had raised $13 million by the end of 2014, asks voters to sign a petition imploring Carson to run. The group sends between 3,000 and 6,000 signed petitions every week directly to Carson's home in West Palm Beach, Florida, along with books Sousa believes Carson "ought to read."

Carson and the committee are barred by campaign law from collaborating. Still, Carson could have stifled Sousa by publicly insisting he cease and desist. That never happened. Carson was asked about the draft outfit on Fox News last year. "We all took a deep breath," said Vernon Robinson, cofounder of the committee. When Carson said he wouldn't discourage the effort, "we thought that was a political wink." Indeed, it was.

The pro-Carson drive has emerged as a fact of life for Republicans in Iowa. It has a full-time staffer—political veteran Tina Goff—and claims to have Carson chairmen in all 99 Iowa counties. Once Carson announces, he should inherit this critical campaign infrastructure. Sousa and Robinson bought a list of past Republican caucusgoers and sent them four mailers. They also got 4,000 of them to declare their favorite in 2016. Undecided came in first (22 percent), followed by Senator Ted Cruz (17 percent) and Carson (14 percent).

Presidential polls so far before the election year are notoriously unreliable. Yet they can legitimize a seemingly fringe candidate. This appears to have happened in Carson's case, at least in Iowa. In the *Bloomberg Politics*/*Des Moines Register*'s Iowa poll in October of likely GOP caucus participants, Carson finished second with 11 percent to Mitt Romney's 17 percent. And in the national CNN/ORC poll in December, Carson got 10 percent, second only to Romney's 20 percent. He was ahead of Jeb Bush (9 percent), Chris Christie (8 percent), and Mike Huckabee (7 percent).

Does all this mean Carson is a serious rival to the bigger Republican names with long résumés and well-developed political skills? Possibly. At least he's a long shot. Carson falls into that category of people who, having been successful in one high-powered field, assume they can succeed in another. Some are delusional. Others are more grounded, Ronald Reagan being the best example. In his stump speech, Carson says listening to Reagan drew him away from his liberal views and led him to conservatism. Carson appears to be grounded.

He faces four critical tests of his presidential ambitions. And to win the GOP nomination, he'll have to pass all four. I think he's already passed the first: He's an appealing candidate. He's likable. He speaks without notes. He has a sense of humor. His favorite story is about the man who gives two expensive birds that sing, dance, and speak to his mother. Later, he asks what she thought of his gift. They were good, she says. You didn't eat them, did you? They could sing, dance, and speak! Well, she says, they should have said something. He told this story in his prayer breakfast speech. Now it's part of his stump speech.

But Carson's most striking feature is his calmness. I've interviewed him three times and he never raised his voice, even slightly. He's pretty much the same in public appearances. Being calm—always—is a necessary trait in a brain surgeon, but unusual in a candidate. Armstrong Williams, Carson's business manager and friend for more than two decades, says he's never seen Carson get angry. Mike Murray, who created the "Save Our Healthcare" project, says Carson "has a great way of getting his point across without yelling or screaming."

One thing not in doubt is Carson's conservatism. He's the real deal, an economic, social, and foreign policy conservative. He's pro-life, opposed to gay marriage, eager to

reduce welfare dependency and reform the tax code. "We need to recognize that there is a responsibility that goes with strength and that goes with position and leadership," he told radio talk show host Hugh Hewitt in September. "And if we don't exercise it, someone else will. And we don't really want another nation at the pinnacle of the world that is not as benign as we are."

In November, Carson changed his party affiliation to Republican from independent. "It's a truly pragmatic move because I have to run in one party or another," he told the *Washington Times*. "If you run as an independent, you only risk splitting the electorate." He's hardly a conventional Republican. He faults them for contributing to the nation's political discord. "Washington, D.C., is dysfunctional today because the primary two political parties have become opponents instead of teammates with different approaches to the same goal," he wrote in *One Nation*.

Carson and his wife, Candy

The second test for Carson is overcoming the implausibility of a brain surgeon's becoming president. This won't be easy. It may even be impossible. But it's an obsession with Carson. He's been insisting for years that nonpoliticians shouldn't be ruled out for high office. "We need doctors, we need scientists, engineers," he told the prayer breakfast. "We need all those people involved in government, not just lawyers." In his book *America the Beautiful*, published in 2012, he said critics would discredit him by saying: "He is a brilliant surgeon, but he knows nothing about politics, law, and economics, and should confine his opinions to medicine."

Carson stoutly defends a role for doctors in politics. Five signed the Declaration of Independence, he reminds audiences. Doctors are the "most highly educated group in the nation, trained to make decisions based on facts rather than emotion," he wrote. "They tend to be excellent with numbers, very concerned about the welfare of others, and accustomed to hard work." In the TV documentary, he carries the argument further. "One's profession doesn't dictate what one knows," Carson said. "It dictates what one has to know to perform the duties of their profession. You don't have to restrict yourself." Also, "you have some people who are trained to be rational, and that helps when you throw them into the mix."

For Carson, the campaign is the mix. The televised campaign debates with Republican candidates will be crucial. If he's as credible and persuasive as Republican heavyweights like Bush and Romney, Carson's reputation will soar. If he's not, his campaign will be over. Campaign chief Terry Giles says the Carson operation will produce a series of policy papers. "He is looking to change the country. . . . We'll actually have a plan . . . to move the country back to where it was." For Carson's sake, the plan better make sense.

Google "Ben Carson gaffes" and you will understand Carson's third test. The gaffe file is lengthy. When I accessed it last week, it began with the headline: "History of Gaffes Proves Ben Carson Isn't a Serious Candidate." And a whole series of exaggerated or unseemly statements followed. By uttering them, Carson played into the hands of the press, for whom gaffes are the bread of journalistic life. And when Carson declined to retract statements such as his equating of America under Obama with Nazi Germany, it triggered further stories.

It got so bad that Carson's advisers were criticizing him in public. Then, as Williams tells it, he sat down with Carson last fall and "we had a frank conversation. It went very well because we're brothers." For 20 years, they had talked by phone every morning as Carson drove to work at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Williams, whose firm produced the documentary, told Carson his troublesome comments were not "accidents." They were unworthy of a presidential candidate and must stop. And they have. Carson, Williams says, "has a lot of discipline." On this test, the verdict is: So far, so good.

The fourth test is his campaign operation. Giles will have a lot to do with its success. He was once a criminal defense lawyer. One of his clients was Richard Pryor, the black comedian. After he and Carson met two decades ago, "Ben and I always had reasons to get together and talk," Giles says. Like Carson, "I've been concerned about the direction of the country for a long time." He wouldn't have taken the campaign job, Giles told me, if he didn't "believe in Ben," think "Ben can win," and feel Ben can "make a difference."

The campaign will certainly be unconventional. Giles has been "vetting people and lining people up" for months. He's avoided Republican consultants who move from "campaign to campaign" like mercenaries. Instead, he wants people "completely committed to Ben Carson and our principles. They've got to believe what we believe." Since as much as 75 percent of the campaign staff will come from the private sector, it's not surprising that Giles

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refers to the Carson agenda as "the new business plan for America." The other officials—the 25 percent—will be "seasoned election pros." He has yet to find a campaign manager. Giles describes himself as CEO.

According to Giles, "Ben feels the road [to the White House] has been laid out for him by divine guidance." Exactly what that means strategy-wise is unclear. But it may affect campaign staffers. When they arrive at work each morning, "there will be a message waiting" on their computer from the director of campaign culture. It will be three or four minutes long. The idea here, Giles says, is to make sure the campaign stays "on message" and "reflects the character of our candidate." Giles has already chosen the person for the job.

Will a campaign operation like this work? Anyone with doubts about Carson as a presidential candidate is bound to have them about the organization too. "Maybe what we've been using is the wrong model for leadership," Giles says. "Maybe it's all that experience that's gotten us into the hole we're in." And maybe a new style of campaign organization is required. "While Ben is a rookie and so am I," Giles says, "we're going to have a pretty impressive national campaign." We'll see.

Who will be in charge? For now, the inner circle consists of Carson, his wife Candy, Giles, Armstrong, Murray, and Logan Delaney, treasurer of Carson's PAC. But it's the Carsons who are strategists in chief. They have the last word. They'll have to work smoothly with the campaign staff for Carson to advance. This is not a given.

Can Carson win the nomination? It's unlikely, yet possible. Let's call him an underdog. Stranger things may have happened in politics, though I can't recall one. An outsider has a higher hill to climb than a regular Republican. Bush and Romney will have a cadre of key Republicans in every state committed to them from the moment they announce. Not so for Carson. For him, simply getting on every state ballot will be a burden.

If nominated, can Carson beat Hillary Clinton or another Democrat? Yes he can. Giles thinks Carson can win 25 percent to 40 percent of the black vote. Williams is doubtful. But Robinson, the draft-Ben leader, says he has "run the numbers" and found that Carson would easily win with 17 percent of the black vote in swing states. "At 17 percent, Hillary loses every swing state in the union, and the Roosevelt coalition is effectively destroyed." That's an outcome worth thinking about. ♦

The Great Free Speech Experiment

What good have Holocaust-denial bans done?

By Sam Schulman

France's momentary appearance on the world stage as a champion of free expression, after the execution of the beloved *Charlie Hebdo* cartoonists, made for a break in her relentless culture of repression of free speech, which she shares with most of Europe. Aside from a handful of exceptions—*Charlie Hebdo*'s Muhammad cartoons now being the most famous—official France and its media have for years done all that they could to prevent journalists, essayists, and fiction writers from questioning Islam and immigration policy, or drawing attention to the rising antisemitism and anti-Christian feeling that had driven so many French voters into the arms of the once-out-of-bounds National Front. Just the month before, Eric Zemmour, France's most popular political commentator, had been fired by his major TV outlet and threatened with prosecution for inciting hatred. Targets for persecution ranged from the notorious to the recherché: Renaud Camus, an aesthete devoted to art, literature, his sensational diary, 20 volumes of it so far, and his eccentric political party of one, le Parti de l'In-nocence. When he threw the featherweight of his party's support to the National Front's Marine Le Pen in the 2012 presidential contest, his longtime publisher told Camus he would no longer publish his books.

The very issue *Charlie Hebdo* was preparing to print when it came under murderous assault on January 7 was to be an attack for his supposed Islamophobia on the current hate figure of the French left, the highbrow novelist Michel Houellebecq, whose new novel *Submission* was published on that dark day. Just days before, a journalist for France24, a government-owned TV channel, fretted about the novel, which describes a France of 2022 that elects a Muslim president: "The book's publication could not come at a more sensitive time as France is currently undergoing a fierce debate on Islam and national identity." A former friend, Sylvain Bourmeau, whose interview with Houellebecq in the *Paris Review* was widely published across Europe, announced to the readers of his blog that *Submission* "is dangerous: contributing like so many things, large and small, and always ugly, to make life in France a little more unpleasant for anyone with an Arab name or black skin." (Critics, by the way, have noted that *Submission* is by no means dystopic, and that its imagined Islamic French state is presented as an attractive, humane place.) The *Paris Review* interview is a reeducation course for the novelist in racism, Islamophobia, and the correct way to view France. Bourmeau suggests to Houellebecq that perhaps it were best that his novel had never been written: "Have you asked yourself what the effect might be of a novel based on such a hypothesis? . . . You don't think it will help reinforce the image of France . . . in which Islam hangs overhead like the sword of Damocles, like the most frightening thing of all?"

When something goes terribly wrong in France, its media elite tend to blame it on someone who has said the wrong thing. After an at-first-unknown shooter attacked a Jewish day school in Toulouse in 2012, killing three children and a teacher-parent, Bernard-Henri Lévy knew whom to blame: the extreme right, as if the killer would inevitably turn out to be a neo-Nazi, instead of the jihadist he in fact was:

> A word of advice to the pyromaniacs of the defense of "national identity," perceived as a closed entity, nervous and jittery, feeding on resentment and hatred: it is the social contract that is the victim of assassination in a bloodbath of this kind; it is the very foundation of our common existence that vacillates and gives way when such madness explodes. There can be no worse blow to French culture, to the soul of our country, its history and, when all is said and done, its grandeur than racism and, today, antisemitism.

A skinhead National Front member may not have killed the Jewish children, but for the glory of France you must hold your tongue.

Sam Schulman is a frequent contributor to The Weekly Standard.

Yet despite all this fond protectiveness toward Islam and energy spent muzzling and denouncing anyone who dissents, the jihadists were not impressed. In a fervent letter sent round the Internet the day after the *Charlie Hebdo* murders, a French left activist pleaded with his comrades around the world not to condemn *Charlie Hebdo* for Islamophobia—after all, they support Hamas! But the policy of denunciation and prosecution to silence critics of immigration has failed. France's Muslims are unconvinced that the state is on their side. Dutifully, major imams condemned the attacks of January 7, but schoolteachers told of Muslim students refusing to respect a "minute of silence" for the *Charlie Hebdo* victims, giggling and saying "awful things." Meanwhile the French working classes are alienated, their traditions of religion and the family sneered at, and their complaints about crime and the desecration of their churches ignored. Worst of all, focusing on hate speech has blown up in the face of France's Jewish community, who see the state act on their behalf only to the extent of rounding up the usual suspect—antisemitic comedian Dieudonné—but refusing to confront Muslim immigrant youth who express their antisemitism with fists, clubs, and guns.

Hate-speech bans—they're all the rage.

The French establishment's ultimate target is the National Front's Marine Le Pen (of whom Robert Ménard said in an interview with the website *Boulevard Voltaire* that the French intellectual left would "rather die under [President François] Hollande than live under Le Pen"). If the best efforts of the establishment have failed to persuade the French to fear Le Pen as a racist, antisemite, and hate criminal, they will also fail to persuade them that they have nothing to fear from the immigrant population that the political class made their neighbors, without the courtesy of having consulted them. At the same time, France's Muslim citizens seem unimpressed by the authorities' diligent efforts to smother dissenting voices. The terrorists of January 7 lived among the 16 percent of French citizens who admire the Islamic State; and the Muslim population by and large, like our president, did not join the mammoth national march against terrorism last weekend, despite the French government's calculated decision to make the event Marine Le Pen-free.

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The terrible martyrdom of January 7 comes after a years-long campaign against speaking out and speaking honestly that persuaded only the mouthpieces and censors. An energetic and beautifully expressed campaign of vilification and isolation of unsocial elements has failed. France's momentary embrace of free expression as a pure good last weekend was unconvincing, but the idea has much to recommend it.

Let me propose an unprincipled defense of free speech. Let's not consider whether placing limits on free speech is just or unjust, an act of mercy to minorities and the unprivileged or a betrayal of liberty that will destroy the French Republic and our own. Instead, let's ask if it has worked.

Advocates of censorship in the United States argue that this country should be ashamed to be the only free nation that has not defined hate speech as a crime. We are also outside the honorable group of nations that have declared Holocaust denial a criminal act—in this shame we are joined by the United Kingdom. Europe's unfree-speech regime has been in place for a generation or more. So it is actually possible to consider the question of how much good hate speech and Holocaust-denial bans have done for the societies that enjoy them, and how much harm the First Amendment's power, so far, to prevent our having these laws has done to our nation and our citizens.

Nobody on the free speech side can comprehend how deeply and sincerely the hate-speech censors believe that banning hate speech will reduce the amount of hate in society, that controlling speech is the path to better, happier thoughts. This conviction is so deep-seated in its advocates that the question of its accuracy is rarely even considered.

Rather than measure the good that such laws may do, advocates of speech criminalization focus on the harm that hate speech and Holocaust denial do. That they have an interest in showing this is obvious, but much of the work on the harm of hate speech is thoughtful and persuasive. Yet so confident are they that silencing and punishing people for speaking in a hurtful way is necessary that they feel no need to present data to answer whether it is effective.

America, by standing apart from the Western world's

rush to impose criminal penalties on hate speech, has thus ended up serving as a voluntary control group in this great experiment. As Dr. Walter Reed did with yellow-fever-transmitting mosquitoes, we have exposed ourselves to hate speech and Holocaust denial without the protection of cops, judges, and jailers. Never mind that the question has not been asked: We can answer it simply by comparing the amount of hate speech and Holocaust denial in European countries with that in our own—and in the case of Holocaust denial, with that in the United Kingdom as well. Holocaust denial has the advantage of being a clearly defined thing, not subject to the rococo elaboration of varieties of hate on the part of the hate-speech condemnation profession.

Consider these data points on Holocaust denial, assembled from two widely examined surveys that compared U.S. and global attitudes toward Jews, one conducted for the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in 1992 in the United States and in France, Germany, and the U.K. in 1993 and 1994. The whole project was reexamined and presented in a useful pamphlet in 1995 by Tom W. Smith, the director of the General Social Survey at the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago.

We can compare these data with the results of last year's massive survey of antisemitic attitudes worldwide conducted by the Anti-Defamation League. The ADL asked citizens of 101 countries their opinion about the Holocaust (along with other questions about Jews and Judaism) to establish an overall antisemitism score for each country. We are concerned here only with certain categories of Holocaust denial that can be measured from both the 1992-94 survey and the 2013-14 survey.

Table 1: Holocaust Denial, 1992-94

(American Jewish Committee survey)

YEAR DENIAL CRIMINALIZED	COUNTRY	HAVEN'T HEARD OF HOLOCAUST	OF THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD OF THE HOLOCAUST			
			Complete Deniers	Greatly Exaggerated	Deniers + Exaggerated	Think It Historically True and Accurately Told
None	U.S.	19%	1%	4%	5%	72%
None	U.K.	9%				78%
1990	France	1%				89%
1985	Germany	13%				73%

Here are the results for the United States, the U.K., France, and Germany, measured soon after Holocaust denial was criminalized in Germany and France. (I have regularized the numbers to ADL's 2014 practice of measuring Holocaust denial and acceptance as a percentage of those who are aware of the Holocaust. See Table 1.)

So at the outset of our test, it's clear that the level of Holocaust denial is fairly similar, except in Germany, which also has what one might call a level of Holocaust denial reflected in the unusually high percentage of people who say they've never heard of it. The other countries reflect their respective distance from the event. France, an occupied country and a site on which Holocaust events took place, knows it best, Britain, across the channel, not nearly as well, and we bring up the rear.

The next chart shows the state of play two decades later. Of course, in 1992, many of the generation who lived through World War II were still in the prime of life, while in 2014, almost all were elderly or dead. Each country's population of adults included a generation none of whose parents were alive or old enough to have a reasonable experience of the war. Still, a surprising gap has opened between the countries that banned Holocaust denial and those that did not. (See Table 2, opposite.)

Twenty years of policing speech about the Holocaust has produced a perverse result. In the two countries in which Holocaust denial is freely available to anyone, the level of Holocaust denial and what might be termed Holocaust skepticism has changed very little. But despite the vigilance and police powers of the regulated-speech countries, the percentage of Holocaust deniers plus skeptics increased substantially, from 5 percent to 26 percent in France and from 8 percent to 11 percent in Germany. Yet in laissez-faire America, the percentage of those who remain ignorant of the Holocaust was cut nearly in half, from 19 to 11 percent, while in France ignorance of the Holocaust rose from 1 to 13 percent. Those who accept the historical truth in the United States and the U.K. grew from the '70s to the '80s in percentage terms; in Germany it remained the same; in France, it fell precipitously from 89 to 67 percent. (I should add, at the risk of being reported as an Islamophobe, that the ADL sample of French respondents in 2013 was only 2 percent Muslim.)

Tom W. Smith expressed surprise at the low level of actual Holocaust denial in 1992-94, and I feel the same way about Holocaust denial among Americans and Britons today. However contemptible Holocaust denial may be, it is, when people are permitted to discuss it, at a very low level. Smith points out that the vast majority of those who question the Holocaust's

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scale and other details are unaware that there is an organized historical revision movement. They are not deniers-in-training, but merely ornery. The very rough data here, despite some problems with comparability, suggest that indignation, disgust, and contempt for Holocaust denial may be more effective than policemen.

What's more, the sclerotic nature of legislation can't keep up with human ingenuity when it comes to insulting and harming unpopular groups. Holocaust denial has certainly grown alongside literacy in the Arab world—where the idea that the Jews faked the Holocaust can scarcely be said to lower the popularity of the Jewish people. On the other hand, the West's almost ritual focus on Holocaust denial as a uniquely horrific type of hate speech ignores the latest development in historical revisionism, one not only more insulting but more dangerous to the security of the Jewish people worldwide. The most up-to-date historical revisionists are happy to agree that Hitler systematically killed six million; but they assert that none of the six million victims were Jews. The "Jewish People" with an ancestral link to the holy land is an invented concept. Denying Jewish history, an ethnic and familial link to the ancient Hebrews, and a national identity is now fashionable among the European left, Jewish and gentile, as well as among the publicists of Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. The prestige of this lie among the left of center political class in Europe has a far more damaging practical effect upon the Jews of the European diaspora and on Israel than Holocaust denial has ever had.

When Muslims and those who proclaim themselves their protectors say that they cannot be expected to put up with free speech, it is time for Jews to answer with action: Every Jewish community worldwide ought to petition its government that it wishes to forgo the utterly useless legal privileges that banning Holocaust denial gives us. As the supposed beneficiaries of the ban, we have the right to surrender it—and now it is our duty to do so. Tariq Ramadan, the Muslim Brotherhood scholar, is only one among dozens to suggest since January 7 that if Jews are spared Holocaust denial, it is hypocrisy to demand that Muslims accept cartoons mocking Muhammad. The sly insinuation of the argument is that the *Charlie Hebdo* murderers are no more than Holocaust-denial constables in a hurry.

The data on the effectiveness of hate-speech bans are even thinner, understandably so. Hate-speech experts show no interest in defining "hate" in a way that could be measured even in a single country. In theory, such a measure must analyze within each society the mutual hatreds not only of different races and religions but of denominations within religions, shades of skin color within races, and hatred of many other groupings: the young, the old, Yankees fans—the list is endless and would be impossible to analyze except, perhaps, in an elaborate annual survey of attitudes toward certain races, religions, and other groups.

Table 2: Holocaust Denial, 2013-14
(Anti-Defamation League survey)

COUNTRY	HAVEN'T HEARD OF HOLOCAUST	OF THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD OF THE HOLOCAUST				
		Complete Deniers	Greatly Exaggerated	Deniers + Exaggerated	Still Don't Know	Think It Historically True and Accurately Told
U.S.	11%	1%	6%	7%	4%	89%
U.K.	1%	0%	6%	6%	10%	83%
France	13%	2%	24%	26%	7%	67%
Germany	7%	0%	11%	11%	4%	85%

Nevertheless, it is interesting to take a look at the United States, in 2013-14, unprotected by hate-speech laws, and compare it with its rival nations where hate speech is a crime. I include, this time, Canada, which is demographically like us, but enjoys the protection of hate-speech legislation. I begin with the ADL's "Antisemitism Index" for each country, and then that for each country's two largest belief groups—Christians and atheist/nonreligious. In the United States, U.K., and Germany, the level of antisemitism expressed by the whole country is compared with that of its dominant religious groups. When there is a delta, as the statisticians would say, it is interesting because it represents a situation where the dominant groups are meaner or nicer than the country as a whole. Christian/secular Canadians, for example, are less antisemitic than the country as a whole, which in turn is a third more antisemitic than the United States and the U.K. The presence of non-Christian, nonatheist groups in France, on the other hand, lowers not raises its antisemitism index. More important, I think, are the total haters-of-other-religions figures in the last two columns (my own contribution to hate-speech science). The United States is tied for second-most hate-free country with Canada. France and Germany have a substantially higher level of dislike for Jews/Buddhists/Hindus that is about equal. Germany's high level of distaste for Muslims makes it

Table 3: Effectiveness of Hate Speech Bans

Country	ADL's anti-semitism index for country as a whole	Antisemitism index for Christians and secular citizens	Delta between level of hate by Christians/atheists and level of hate by Muslims	Percentage who dislike Hindus	Percentage who dislike Jews	Percentage who dislike Buddhists	Percentage who dislike Muslims	Hater average	Hater of non-Muslims
France	37%	42%	-5	8	9	7	15	13%	12%
Germany	27%	27%	0	9	18	9	49	19%	13%
U.K.	8%	8%	0	6	5	4	11	6%	5%
Canada	14%	12%	2	10	8	10	22	11%	8%
U.S.	9%	9%	0	12	6	12	24	11%	8%

the most hate-filled country in our sample—19 percent total hating, compared with only 11 percent for the North Americans and half that for the U.K. When comparing attitudes to other religious groups, America is no more hate-filled than Canada, which is beset with speech codes, and is substantially less hate-filled than speech-patrolled France and Germany. (See Table 3.)

Again, this comparison is highly artificial. It is America's comparative ranking that is important to my argument, which clearly shows that a country without hate-speech laws—even a country with a reputation for being unkind and racist like ours—is in fact to be classed with the most tolerant, but well-thought-policed countries.

Let us grant to Jeremy Waldron (*The Harm in Hate Speech*) and his colleagues all their arguments about the specific injuries that hate speech can cause. How would they respond to the evidence that restrictions on speech don't reduce hate? They may think that hate-speech police methods are still in their infancy, and that some Bill Bratton/Rudy Giuliani-style speech-monitoring and surveillance experts can produce a dramatic drop in hate crime, perhaps after a mental hygiene stop-and-frisk program has been instituted.

But to them, we can respond with an absolute: Few crimes consisting purely of hateful speech directed at someone as a member of a disadvantaged group can be nearly as injurious as the harm caused by hurtful remarks directed at us as individuals by people who know us well. Compared with the injury done me by remarks made by my mother, father, grandparents, teachers, friends, enemies, spouses, children—verbal injuries, humiliations, rebukes that are unfair and, even worse, accurate, to say nothing of ineradicable remorse for the injuries my own words have done to others—instances of antisemitism, anti-Americanism, and beratings for being white are faint indeed. I hope I'm not alone in being rather proud of having been made to suffer for my race. But only the onset of Alzheimer's can free me from the verbal darts lodged in me: You're clumsy; you're selfish; you take without giving; I can't trust you; you're too inarticulate to be a good teacher; you're wasting your life. If there were a law that could protect us from pain caused by parents, teachers, Little League teammates, 1960s greasers, drivers in the next car—I think anyone would take that over a law that guaranteed protection from bigots and ill-regarders of one's religion's points of theology.

In 2013, the *Nation* published an article by hate crime researchers which makes, I think uniquely, the admission that criminalizing hate crime does not reduce hate crime—in this case against the LGBT community on which they are experts.

> Do hate crime laws deter crime? There is a great deal of research on the question of whether the death penalty is a deterrent to murder. Hundreds of studies have tried to demonstrate that it is, and all have been debunked for statistical and methodological reasons. There is no conclusive evidence that the death penalty works as a deterrent. There have been far fewer studies done on hate crime laws as a deterrent, and *none has demonstrated that they deter crimes*. Hate crime law proponents will often argue that we don't need scientific proof, only common sense. Many Americans simply accept the unproven assumption that these laws act as a deterrent. Wade Henderson, president of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, states, "We recognize we cannot outlaw hate. However, laws shape attitudes. And attitudes influence behavior." He is correct. Laws do shape attitudes. But our legal system does not write laws to shape attitudes; it writes them to justly and fairly punish explicit behaviors. . . . But the place to change social attitudes, hearts, and minds is not in prisons. It is in schools, in activist organizations, around the dinner table, at houses of worship and other places where people can talk, disagree and learn that disagreement may be a useful and even productive means of growth. [emphasis added]

Europeans may think that we Americans walk around armed with guns but unarmed against hate speech. In fact, limits on free speech have in effect been privatized in this country. Voluntary organizations have risen up to enforce what speech is acceptable, not because they have legal

powers, and not because they are wise or just, but because they project the moral authority and rhetorical power to draw the line between what is permissible and impermissible, polite and impolite. The precise location of such lines is merely convention. That is a good thing. Unlike laws, voluntary organizations can change or be superseded. The Legion of Decency had the moral authority to draw the line between what is obscene and what isn't as long as the public was with it and entrusted its judgment to it. When the public mood changed and serious artists became interested in what happens to the human body after the wedding ceremony and after the meal, the legion became a figure of fun. Marx was wrong: Only private organizations can wither away—never the state, which may be replaced with something worse.

The danger of carefully drafted anti-hate-speech laws is their legalism. When good lawyers draw a clear and reasonable line beyond which one cannot go, everything short of that line is not only legal, but protected speech. For example, Germany's laws against Nazi symbols, Holocaust denial, and antisemitism are notoriously tough. But what has happened in at least two occasions I know of in the last few years is this: The gold standard for antisemitism is to deny the Holocaust. In the instance of Ken Jebsen, a disc jockey at Radio Fritz (Potsdam/Berlin) fired in 2011, and in a courtroom in Munich, drawing such a clear line has worked to protect some pretty ordinary antisemites. The disc jockey claimed, correctly, that never once had he denied or praised the Holocaust—so he couldn't possibly be an antisemite. And in Munich, a man sued a journalist for libel for calling him an antisemite, and the judge's initial decision was that antisemitism could only be proven by denying or advocating the Holocaust of 1940-45. So the victim's shield becomes the tool of hate.

And for *Charlie Hebdo*? The executioners were sending a message to two audiences, neither of them the cartoonists whom so many Muslim and liberal Western commentators accused of committing blasphemy and hurting the feelings of Muslims. One was to the government of France, which had, as Christopher Caldwell remarked in these pages last week, a great deal of prestige invested in the protection of *Charlie Hebdo*, whose premises had been destroyed by firebombing in 2011. That the West believes to some degree in free speech was probably of no interest to the jihadists, whose demands for the West involve much more than forcing us to compromise a principle we pretend to cherish. They were demonstrating the powerlessness of France to protect people in whom they had a special interest, and their own greater power.

The other important message was to the Muslim population in non-Muslim countries, where so many had come originally to live a Muslim but relatively liberal life, free of the imam and the religious police. It was they who were being warned not to tolerate Enlightenment values, not to acknowledge the interventions of French Jewish or leftwing organizations on matters touching Muslim honor, and not to hope for a future in which they will be free of Islamist rule, wherever they live.

Tariq Ramadan made the reference plain by omission in his *Guardian* column immediately after the attack. "We condemn what happened in France. We condemn the violent extremism that is targeting westerners. But it is not only westerners. We are reacting emotionally because 12 people were killed in Paris, but there are hundreds being killed day in, day out in Syria and Iraq, and still we send more bombs. We have to look at the big picture. Lives matter, but it is important to be clear that the lives of Muslims in Muslim majority countries have as much value as our own lives in the west."

Ramadan wants the war against ISIS to stop because attacking Muslims who are slaughtering Muslims in Muslim majority countries is not the business of the West. He is silent on the fact that al Qaeda men attacked *Charlie Hebdo*, because that is understood—indeed, he justifies it by saying that the 12 murders are equivalent to the magazine's choice, a few years ago, to fire an antisemitic employee. He carefully says nothing about the value of Muslim lives in Christendom, such as the policeman, Ahmed Merabet, and copy editor, Mustapha Ourrad, who died in the attack—for they are contingent. By omission, he informs them that they may not appeal to protection as French citizens to the French state: They, at least, will be, by mutual and silent agreement, submitted to Islamism. In their very different way, the Islamists who tried to extinguish *Charlie Hebdo* and murder Jews this month took care to kill a Muslim in the service of the liberal French state—as did the Islamist who killed the Jewish children in Toulouse in 2012 (his other victims included three French paratroopers, Muslims of North African origin).

Limiting free speech, for noble or ignoble reasons, is an experiment that has been tried and failed. Jailing antisemites and dissenting journalists has failed to protect even the lives of European Jews, much less reduce antisemitism. The one Western leader who refused to join the march in Paris for free expression is the one most concerned with protecting Muslims from insult, and also the one who has most assiduously pursued a foreign policy that surrenders Muslim populations to the most sectarian and violent rulers available. What will happen to liberal Muslims under a legal regime that reserves special privileges for Islam's tyrants is not difficult to imagine. ♦

The Warthog Lives!

Happily, the Air Force has failed again in its crusade to kill off a great plane

By Jonathan Foreman

This December saw the climax of one of the more peculiar conflicts in Washington. It was a battle over an Air Force plane. But it was not one of those standard-issue Washington procurement battles in which congressional bean counters seek to kill off a hugely expensive project that the relevant military branch insists is vital for American security. It was almost the opposite: The politicians were trying to save a weapon system, and the service brass, together with one of America's aerospace giants, were trying to get rid of it.

The weapon in question is the A-10 ground attack plane, officially the "Thunderbolt II" but widely known as the "Warthog." It has been around for more than three decades. It's one of the outstanding successes of modern American military aircraft, and its effectiveness in recent wars has made it beloved by American and allied troops.

The ungainly but effective A-10 Warthog

The effort of the Air Force to retire prematurely this storied plane has few parallels, not just because it has faced dogged, and ultimately successful, resistance from well-informed members of Congress, but because it has lasted 25 years and has its origin in what looks like a troubling moral and intellectual crisis among Air Force leadership.

Every service has its cultural eccentricities, its strategic fashions, its technological fetishes that cause it to see defense priorities in terms of its parochial interests. But the obsessional Air Force campaign to get rid of the A-10 suggests an especially perverse set of priorities. After all, the A-10 has been one of the great airborne success stories of the last two wars, and even now is enabling the United States to battle ISIS in Iraq in a way that is not just far more economical than flying fast jets from distant aircraft carriers or bases at the other end of the Gulf, but highly effective.

Ask anyone who has served on the ground—or worked near ground troops in Iraq and Afghanistan—what aircraft they would prefer to come and give them close air support and they will say the A-10. They don't just love the Warthog because it is deadly, though the distinctive "Brrrap" sound of its 30 mm cannon is dreaded by the likes of the Taliban. Ground troops prefer it because planes like the F-16, the French Mirage, and the British Typhoon are just too fast to carry out genuine close air support efficiently and safely and are much more likely to kill them—or civilians—by mistake.

Even early in the Iraq war when U.S. forces called for air support, some 80 to 90 percent of the requests specifically asked for the A-10. In 2006 a leaked email from a British Army officer involved in fierce fighting in Afghanistan's Helmand Province prompted a political storm in the U.K. by talking about near misses of his own troops by RAF fast jets and praising the Warthog. "I'd take an A-10 over a Eurofighter [Typhoon] any day," said Maj. James Loden of the Parachute Regiment. U.S. soldiers have similar stories. One experienced NCO in Afghanistan told *National Defense* magazine, "The A-10s never missed, and with the F/A-18s we had to do two or three bomb runs to get them on the target."

The pilots of fast jets, no matter how good they are, simply have less time to see what is happening on the ground. They are more reliant on technology that can go wrong, and there is little question that they are more likely to inflict friendly fire and collateral damage casualties.

USAF brass don't like to admit this. That's partly because they tend to look down on both the A-10 and the mission for which it is so suitable, but also because it implicitly undermines their massive, desperate public relations

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An A-10 deploys flares over Afghanistan, 2008.

campaign on behalf of the troubled, hugely over-budget F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, a high-tech multirole plane that they claim, unconvincingly, will be able to replace the A-10 as a close air support aircraft.

Quite apart from the unlikelihood that the Air Force would ever want to risk a fragile $200 million stealth jet "down in the weeds" on low-level missions against ISIS, the Taliban, or their equivalents, it makes little sense to replace a plane designed specifically for a task with one that may be fundamentally unsuited for it. As Pierre Sprey, who played a key role in designing the F-16 and the A-10, has written, "As a 'close air support' attack aircraft to help U.S. troops engaged in combat, the F-35 is a nonstarter. It is too fast to see the tactical targets it is shooting at; too delicate and flammable to withstand ground fire; and it lacks the payload and especially the endurance to loiter usefully over U.S. forces for sustained periods as they manoeuvre on the ground."

This is not to say that there are no valid arguments for replacing the A-10 at some point—especially if America's armed forces start facing different enemies using more effective antiaircraft technology than the Taliban or even Syria have at hand. But it's surely bizarre to go to the mattresses to get rid of an aircraft without having anything in the pipeline that can truly replace it.

The A-10's original purpose was to give U.S. forces a chance of stopping vast Soviet tank armies if the Warsaw Pact invaded Western Europe. Accordingly, the engineers at Republic-Fairchild built a uniquely rugged aircraft around a powerful automatic cannon. The plane is ugly and ungraceful, but it can take off and land on rough airstrips close to the combat zone and requires relatively little maintenance. It has a long "loiter time," making it ideal for search and destroy missions. It can take an astonishing amount of punishment from ground fire, its cockpit offers unparalleled visibility, and its pilot is well protected by a titanium armored "bathtub."

The USAF, however, never embraced the A-10. It hadn't really wanted the plane in the first place, but it had to field something like it or face the probability that the Army would demand the right to field its own fixed-wing aircraft. (Theoretically the Army has been forbidden to fly fixed-wing planes since the so-called Key West Agreement of 1947, which divided permission to field aviation assets between the older armed services and the new U.S. Air Force.)

As the Cold War came to an end, the Air Force saw an opportunity to mothball its 300 A-10s. But then Iraq invaded Kuwait, and the A-10 was deployed against Saddam's armored divisions. Its success was so dramatic—even

as other, faster, more expensive jets like the British Tornado failed—that its retirement had to be postponed.

The A-10 then turned out to be equally useful in the Balkan bombing campaigns, during which primitive Serbian air defenses were able to shoot down one of the latest, stealthiest, most expensive U.S. aircraft.

By 2003 the USAF had managed to hand off its A-10 fleet to the Air National Guard. Once the second invasion of Iraq had begun, however, there could be no question of not using the Warthog to provide close air support to coalition ground forces.

In the next few years, A-10s, mostly flown by Air National Guard pilots, became the mainstay of these missions both in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Air Force and Navy used plenty of other aircraft types, and the Army and Marine Corps used their Apache and Cobra attack helicopters in support of ground troops, but the A-10 turned out to be the ideal counterinsurgency tool.

Even more frustrating for those who wanted to get rid of it, efforts to dismiss the A-10 as merely a "single-mission airframe" have been undermined by its surprising utility for other missions besides tactical ground attack.

In the Balkans it proved to be useful for combat search and rescue. During the first Gulf war, besides shooting up thousands of Iraqi tanks, the A-10 also shot down enemy helicopters, making it a star of what the military calls "Battlefield Air Interdiction." In Iraq and Afghanistan the A-10 turned out to be excellent for Forward Air Control (guiding other aircraft and artillery fire) in the tradition of Vietnam-era planes like the Mohawk and Bronco.

Right now in Iraq, A-10s are carrying out not just close air support but also the search and destroy sorties that the Air Force calls strike coordinated armed reconnaissance (SCAR) missions, for which it is ideally suited, unlike fragile, fuel-guzzling F-35s or even F-16s.

In 2013 the Air Force brass thought they could exploit the sequester to finally retire the A-10. Sure there was still fighting in Afghanistan, and mothballing the A-10 would mean using fast jets in its place, with all of the attendant downside, but the political opportunity was too good to miss. Indeed, it looked for a while like the A-10 was doomed. It didn't help that the plane has no big aerospace lobby behind it, the last A-10 having been built in 1984 by a company that no longer exists. But Senator John McCain, supported by the Army and veterans' groups, began a congressional insurrection on its behalf.

It was an uneven struggle. The Air Force and the Pentagon as a whole, including Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, pushed for the plane's mothballing. Again and again they assured Congress that the A-10's retirement would be no great loss as the soon-to-be-ready F-35 is more than capable of doing everything the A-10 does. Of course, the Air Force knows perfectly well that supersonic jet fighters are not well-suited to the down and dirty jobs that the A-10 does so well. But admitting that might mean admitting the shortcomings of the troubled F-35.

Certainly the ruthlessness of the USAF's efforts to retire the A-10 during the last two years seems to be a byproduct of the service's ardent commitment to the F-35 and its terror that the latter might be canceled or cut. You can see this in the way that the Air Force has dishonestly redefined "close air support" so that the term includes dropping bombs from high above the clouds, and also in its shiftiness about when the F-35 will be deployable.

The Warthog has been around for more than three decades. It's one of the outstanding successes of modern American military aircraft, and its effectiveness in recent wars has made it beloved by American and allied troops.

The Air Force, like the Navy and Marine Corps, has plenty to be nervous about when it comes to the F-35. It is not only already the most expensive weapons project in history and late by almost a decade, there are many people within the defense establishment and even the Air Force who think it a misconceived and wasteful procurement catastrophe.

Part of the problem is that the F-35 was marketed on "commonality"—one airframe for all three services—but built around the Marine Corps's demand for a jet that can take off and land vertically like the Harrier jump jet. The resulting design compromises meant what should have been the best fighter in the world is slower than and aerodynamically inferior to the modern Russian and Chinese designs it might come up against. As a 2008 RAND Corporation study put it, the F-35 "can't turn, can't climb, can't run."

Perhaps the Air Force should have realized this earlier, and fought for a top-of-the-line plane without a fat waist that makes it slow to cross the sound barrier and all but incapable of agile maneuver. Instead it has put all its trust in the F-35's "stealth" characteristics—i.e., its low observability by certain kinds of radar, and the way its sensors enable it to engage enemy aircraft beyond visual range. If everything works well, the F-35 can spot an enemy far away and then destroy it with a long-range missile and not have to worry about being slow and ungainly.

However, the F-35 is only stealthy from the front, and

even then its cross section is readily observable by old-fashioned low-frequency radars, still used by the Russians and many other countries. Moreover, while stealth technology was exciting and seemed as unbeatable as a Harry Potter invisibility cloak back in the 1980s when the F-35 was conceived, in the 30 years since, adversaries have been working on clever countermeasures and/or developing their own stealth planes.

But even before the F-35 program, with all its implications for the reputations, promotions, and future employment of USAF brass became publicly problematic, the Air Force disliked the A-10, for reasons that had little to do with mission effectiveness and much to do with considerations like aesthetics, self-image, and interservice rivalry.

The A-10 is an ugly, unglamorous aircraft and therefore unappealing to those whose world is steeped in the "knights of the air" mythology of air-to-air combat. It is relatively simple and inexpensive—and therefore has little added value for officers who might want to curry favors with the aerospace industry.

Moreover, despite its age, the A-10 is relatively inexpensive to fuel and operate. That sets a bad precedent for an organization that has struggled to justify the purchase of fragile high-tech aircraft like the F-22 and F-35 that often need days of repair after each mission.

Finally (and perhaps most damning of all), the point of the A-10's existence is to support personnel from rival services: The Warthog does the grubby job of assisting soldiers and Marines in their work. But the USAF is traditionally and primarily interested in two missions far removed from such tasks—strategic bombing and air-to-air combat.

It may sound extraordinary that senior Air Force officers could be almost unconcerned with the safety and success of American ground troops, or that they would make such a fetish of the purchase of expensive, glamorous, high-tech pointy-nosed toys as to undermine the overall military capacity of the United States, but that seems to be the case.

Last fall, the Air Force tried a final gambit. Its spokesmen claimed that the F-35 program would be even more over budget and delayed if the A-10 weren't "divested." The latter's defenders responded that getting rid of all 280-odd A-10s would save enough money to buy just 12 F-35s.

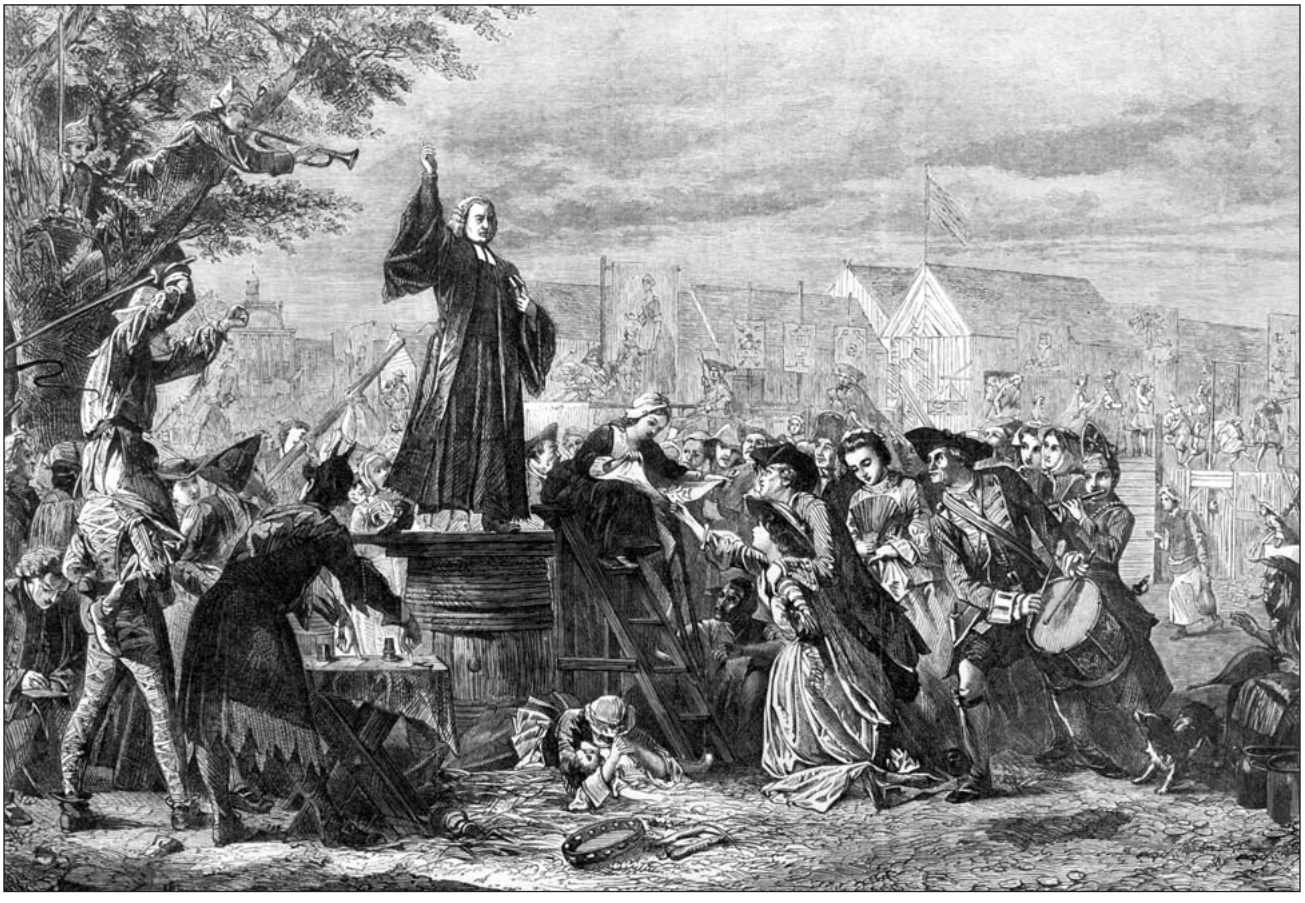
But the USAF wasn't done yet. It claimed in November that the F-35's crisis was a matter of maintenance personnel shortages and that the program could not flourish without the 800-odd maintenance people who currently work on the A-10. This was not true. As the well-informed War is Boring website quickly pointed out, there are thousands of maintenance personnel working on other aircraft types (including rarely used B-1B bombers and F-15 interceptors) who could easily be diverted to support the F-35.

Fortunately, Congress wasn't gulled, and the latest National Defense Authorization Act forbade the USAF from retiring the A-10. It helped that the politicians fighting for the A-10 included not just McCain but also Sen. Kelly Ayotte from New Hampshire, whose husband flew A-10s in Iraq, and Representative Martha McSally, a retired Air Force colonel who herself flew A-10s in combat.

ISIS also played a role in saving the A-10. A single squadron of Warthogs would have been enough to stop the ISIS blitzkrieg into northern Iraq—especially given that during the summer the Islamist force moved in long, vulnerable convoys of pickup trucks. Though it will be harder to dislodge ISIS forces now that they are hiding in Iraq's towns, the Pentagon has deployed an Indiana National Guard A-10 air wing to Iraq, where it has been in action supporting Kurdish forces.

While the A-10's supporters have won for now, the underlying problems with the Air Force remain. There's an argument to be made that if it is institutionally unwilling to take seriously the mission of delivering close air support to American troops, as seems to be the case, then it would make sense to abolish its near-monopoly on fixed-wing aircraft and hand the A-10 over to a resuscitated U.S. Army Air Corps that would be pleased to have it.

And perhaps the USAF should also give up other unglamorous tasks that are about supporting soldiers, sailors, and Marines. It could become a smaller force that operates interceptors, strategic bombers, tankers, and America's strategic missiles. It's a solution that could keep the fighter jockeys happy (at least until they are all replaced by unmanned aircraft) without undermining the effectiveness of America's military as a whole. Of course, it would be far better if the service simply came to its senses and made the national interest, rather than the promotion of the F-35, its first priority. ♦



George Whitefield preaching in London, 1742

The Great Dissenter

The transatlantic origins of evangelical America. BY MARK TOOLEY

This new biography recalls George Whitefield, the 18th-century English evangelist, as probably the most recognizable celebrity of his age. He was certainly the most traveled, crisscrossing the Atlantic countless times and preaching to audiences, sometimes in the tens of thousands, up and down the Atlantic seaboard and throughout the British Isles at a time when the total population of Great Britain and its colonies was only in the several millions.

Mark Tooley is president of the Institute on Religion and Democracy.

George Whitefield
America's Spiritual Founding Father
by Thomas S. Kidd
Yale, 344 pp., $38

Powerfully converted when he was a very young man as part of the early Methodist revivals, Whitefield was a founder of the evangelical movement that persists today. He popularized outdoor evangelistic preaching, skillfully employed the media (including Philadelphia printer Benjamin Franklin) to publicize his works, and exploited his celebrity to make his theme of "new birth" in Christ socially acceptable among all classes.

Whitefield was also a model for the merger of evangelical faith and patriotism. He sanctified Great Britain's Protestant constitutional system as a bulwark for liberty against "popish tyranny," a liberty that protected his evangelistic appeals even as he defied the preferences of the established church. He championed all of Britain's wars against France and other continental Catholic powers, and he rejoiced over the Hanover monarchy's defeat of the Stuart Pretender.

American patriots for independence would appropriate Whitefield's legacy

ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS / STRINGER / GETTY IMAGES

after his death. Benedict Arnold, en route to seize Quebec during the revolution, visited Whitefield's Massachusetts tomb to pay homage and clip relics from the corpse. Although loyal to the king, Whitefield had quietly sympathized with the colonists' early struggles against taxation, having attended the parliamentary testimony of his friend Franklin against the Stamp Act. His ecumenical preaching and mass rallies from Maine to Georgia had helped fuel a new common spiritual purpose among Americans.

Although ordained in the Church of England, Whitefield was a staunch Calvinist who treated denominational affiliations as irrelevant. He appealed, in particular, to Protestant dissenters, who were especially prevalent in New England. And he seems to have warned against the imposition of a Church of England bishop on the colonies, which had long feared such a perceived attack on their religious freedom.

Whitefield was an unapologetic controversialist, perhaps another key emblem of his persona as an early international celebrity. He knew that controversy magnified attention for his sermons and, therefore, the Gospel. As a young man in his 20s, at the height of his fame, he denounced clergy twice his age whom he deemed unconverted. Bishops, in turn, denounced him for claiming direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit and for implicitly operating outside the authority of the established church. Harvard College, already prone to theological laxity, naturally rejected Whitefield's critique. Some churches closed their doors to him, but his fame and oratory rarely failed to attract an attentive crowd wherever he preached.

As an orator, Whitefield was a sensation, projecting his voice so that audiences of perhaps 20,000, even 30,000, could hear him. Whitefield shouted, emoted, and wept, unashamedly deploying his early training as a dramatist. Sometimes audiences wept with him. Others fainted or cried out for God's mercy as he detailed the torments of divine judgment. As a young man, Whitefield was handsome, tall with dark hair and noticeably white teeth, although slightly cross-eyed. From his tortuous preaching and travel schedule, though, he aged quickly, becoming fat and white-haired. Yet he pressed on, even when vomiting blood after preaching.

His fellow evangelist John Wesley, who was 12 years older and an early mentor, thought Whitefield aged tremendously even as the fastidious and disciplined Wesley felt and looked youthful. Their friendship, theological disputes, and rivalry endured for over 30 years, animating and dividing Methodism and evangelical revivalism. Both were expert preachers and could attract massive crowds. Whitefield was the more powerful orator, while Wesley was the better organizer. Their partnership frayed when Wesley denounced Whitefield's Calvinism: Whitefield never retreated from his commitment to predestination and publicly assailed Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection.

Despite their frequent pamphleteering against each other, John Wesley and George Whitefield sustained an association that was often affectionate, with Whitefield sometimes even mediating disputes between Wesley and his hymn-writing brother Charles. Wesley probably had a greater intellect than did Whitefield, and he may have felt superior and resentful of the younger man's greater transatlantic fame. But Wesley had too much in common with Whitefield to tolerate a full rupture.

They both endured rhetorical attacks from the established church and physical attacks from angry mobs unappreciative of the robust Methodist challenge to favorite pastimes such as bawdy theater, cockfighting, horse racing, and the frequenting of gin houses. Whitefield nearly lost his life when he was stoned by a Dublin mob, an experience with which Wesley and other Methodist preachers were familiar.

Upon Whitefield's death in 1770 at 55, Wesley eulogized his colleague above all for his gift of friendship, a gift Whitefield also shared with Benjamin Franklin, despite Franklin's declining to embrace evangelical faith.

Although Wesley had only visited America once when young, Whitefield eagerly moved back and forth from England to America. When most people shunned ocean travel as dangerous and wearying, Whitefield saw months at sea, however uncomfortable, as a respite from crowds and ceaseless attention. His American base was primarily Georgia, outside Savannah, where he founded an orphanage for which he endlessly fundraised and which still survives as America's oldest charitable institution.

Georgia also showcased Whitefield's lamentable support for slavery. The colony had banned slavery, which the evangelist urged overturning as a path to prosperity and for exposing Africans to the Gospel. Whitefield even imported slaves to support his orphanage before Georgia outlawed slavery. He preached to and was often well received by blacks, some of whom he inspired into full-time preaching ministries. At his death, he was rhapsodized as a friend of Africans in a widely disseminated poem by Phillis Wheatley, the Massachusetts slave who was America's first black female published poet.

Like Wesley, Whitefield preached obsessively, and his spiritual ardor made his romantic relations with women awkward. Eventually, however, he married an older widow for whom he had no strong initial attachment but whom he deemed appropriate. Their 30-year marriage was probably not a happy one: Mrs. Whitefield suffered during her husband's absences, helped to run his ministry, and was sincerely mourned by him at her death.

Whitefield, of course, was long outlived by the health-obsessed Wesley, and Wesley's legacy soon outshone Whitefield's thanks to the organizing power of Wesley's Methodism in Britain—and even more in America, where it became the largest denomination. Whitefield's Calvinist Methodist Association had a much shorter shelf life.

American patriots, especially New Englanders and Franklin, recalled George Whitefield as both a personal friend and a friend to America. Wesley, by contrast, gained notoriety here

for loudly opposing the revolution. But Wesley's version of Methodism and evangelical revival eventually prevailed. Moreover, Wesley's opposition to slavery, although developed later in life, was emphatic and bolstered his long-term reputation as a religious and social reformer.

Two centuries later, the British prime minister David Lloyd George, himself from a nonconformist evangelical background, celebrated Whitefield and Wesley as the spiritual sealants of Anglo-American culture while touting the alliance against Germany in World War I. Not many politicians, on either side of the Atlantic, would likely cite either man today, especially Whitefield. But George Whitefield indelibly shaped America, the Anglosphere, the surging global evangelical movement—and modern notions of celebrity. ♦

B&A

Loss and Gain

David Yezzi, poet of 'urbane detachment.'

BY JAMES MATTHEW WILSON

Every time I return to the poetry of Wallace Stevens, I am struck by how the world of his work appears bleak, emptied, almost entirely unpopulated. Even the perceiver who voices his philosophical lyrics is concealed for the sake of foregrounding perception itself, that the intermingling play of imagination and reality may alone hold our attention.

A similar impression kept creeping up on me when I first read the early work of David Yezzi. In *The Hidden Model* (2003), the poems mostly fit into two broad categories: austere urban landscapes, especially New York City (e.g., "Aporia"), and desolate seascapes. In the latter, Yezzi's writing grows most stark, as when he depicts a solitary sailor crossing the Pacific. The emptiness of the sea brings into focus the irreducible necessities of human life, when we throw ourselves into a condition that threatens us on every side.

In *Azores* (2008), this vacillation between sea- and cityscape develops. Here, Yezzi studies the solitude, the loneliness, of people who seem alien, out of place, as they wander through the crowded streets of their lives.

Birds of the Air
by David Yezzi
Carnegie Mellon, 88 pp., $15.95

David Yezzi

When he speaks in the first person, his narrator is urbanely interested yet detached from those he sees, confessing to himself about one late acquaintance, for instance, *you never liked him much*. He sees a young man in the Whitney Museum gazing sidelong at a girl, and concludes, *Poor fool . . . you poor romantic fool*. Cities may be full of people, but those people are all alone, and the author's vision alternately reduces them to objects whose gestures expose their pathetic psyches and perpetuates their solitude by dwelling on the narrator's own suave and aloof perspicuity—one which seems to delight, as in one poem, in the play of erasing names from his address book.

No wonder, then, that *Azores* begins, *There are days I don't think about the sea*, as if this fact surprises its author. For, in contrast to our life among other human beings, life at sea—which Yezzi, an accomplished sailor, knows well—really puts us out of our element. The petrel may be *instinct in it, the scope of its flight / fitted to its will*, but *we are not suited to live long at sea*. To set sail is to gain insight into human nature by setting it in relief against its limits; its wide, empty sweep clarifies things for us as life among other persons evidently does not. In the city, Yezzi picks everyone else apart; at sea, he confronts himself in a hostile world, and the drama is absorbing.

Even in these first two books, however, we see another current developing. A poem about his infant daughter concludes that it was *not until I held a thing / that, losing, would unsettle me* that the author realized another way of being in the world with others. Life in the city had revealed how (often conveniently) alienated we are from each other, and life at sea helps overcome alienation from the self as we face abysses without and within. But fatherhood is altogether different, unveiling not the thrill of emptiness but of promise and plentitude: the natural interpenetration of one's life in that of others across generations. In *Azores*, "Vigil" reflects on the imminent birth of twin boys, acknowledging that their lives will *fuse / someway into generations, / a future they already bequeath / to us*. Such moments at once interrogate and justify Yezzi's usual pose of urbane detachment.

Since the 1950s, we have heard tales of the modern nightmare of "lonely crowds," of "bowling alone in America," and of, as Charles Taylor would have it, secular "buffered selves," all of

PRESTON MERCHANT

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which seem to be the dark side of material prosperity, suburban sprawl, and "rugged individualism." For many of us, only fatherhood or motherhood can jar us out of ourselves; only the experience of loving one's own daughter before one even knows her can prompt us to see truth, as Yezzi does, in the Sunday school injunction that

> *the beggar in the park was Jesus Christ,*
> *as was Aunt Faith who hid her cigarettes*
> *and whose butt-ends were ringed with blood-red Os.*

As is the case with city life, a conception of most other human beings as mere strangers can live side-by-side with one in which some few emerge as loved, as possessing the *imago dei*—at least for a time.

Yezzi's latest collection, *Birds of the Air*, retains his astringent view of mankind, but it is balanced against poems in which the sublime heights of mountains unveil the visionary powers of the human spirit, just as the earlier seascapes had exposed its pained fragility. Further, as in the title poem, we catch glimpses of plentitude, in which the life of cities and of the sea meet, revealing an order both well-formed and generous. A woman feeds seagulls from a grocery bag full of crusts:

> *She casts the crumbs in lamplight, over water,*
> *to gulls who catch her manna on the wing—*
> *snatching their staple needs straight from the air,*
> *the sky replete with every wanted thing.*

Even Yezzi's sketches of urban dwellers gain from this vision. In a series of brilliant dramatic monologues, he shows us characters pathetic in their needs, but complex enough that no penetrating stare can simply get them "down to size." Human beings look less alien now; no longer opaque like bottles in a still life, they take on the dimensions of Shakespeare's most eccentric creatures.

"Tomorrow & Tomorrow," the long narrative at the heart of *Birds of the Air*, exemplifies this with brilliance. A cursed waiter and aspiring actor traverses Cold War Germany as part of a traveling company playing the "Scottish tragedy" (to the laughter of their uncomprehending audiences). By the end, the reader learns what the protagonist cannot: how much he has lost, the mortal cost to himself and others, through what seems a complacent freedom from love. Yezzi's poems move between the densely wrought lyric and loose demotic voices suitable for acting on stage. His thematic concerns have been consistent—only deepening—across his three books, as has his mastery of meter and stanza.

I should close, however, by noting how delightfully various are the poems of each volume, especially this latest. We have here a collection that complements lyrics of meditation and social satire with narrative poems that bring back to poetry in our time an interest in character and plot that we have seldom seen since the age of Browning. ♦

B&A

Sound Familiar?

A report from the battlefield in the war on clichés.

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

"Mother," asks 10-year-old Johnny upon returning from school, "do I have a cliché on my face?"

"A cliché on your face? Whatever do you mean, Johnny?"

"A cliché," he answers, "you know, a tired expression."

Johnny nailed it: Clichés are tired expressions. Their fatigue comes from their having been overused, and often badly used. They are words and phrases that no longer carry much meaning and have even less force. They reveal mental laziness on the part of those who use them. They are despoilers of style. Using clichés is like dressing out of the dirty-laundry bag—someone else's dirty-laundry bag.

Who is to say what is a cliché? Some clichés are obvious, of course, like throwing that baby out with the bathwater or watching someone like a hawk. But others are in doubt. Has "boots on the ground" now achieved cliché status? Has "go-to guy" arrived there? And what about "take," as in "what's your take on the subject?" Until recently, a cliché was what arbiters of language claimed it was, and, being arbiters, they could sometimes be arbitrary.

This has now changed, owing to modern computational lexicography, which allows linguists to gather statistical evidence on how frequently words and phrases are used, and in what combinations, and by whom, and in what settings. Overuse alone does not always mark a cliché. According to Orin Hargraves, a lecturer in linguistics who works on computational analysis of language at the University of Colorado, "It is often misapplication, rather than frequency of application, that leads to the perception of a phrase as a cliché." In *It's Been Said Before*, Hargraves sets out as his criteria for clichés that

> they are frequent, often used without regard to their appropriateness, and they may give a general or inaccurate impression of an idea that could often benefit by being stated more succinctly, clearly, or specifically—or in some cases, by not being stated at all.

It's Been Said Before
A Guide to the Use and Abuse of Clichés
by Orin Hargraves
Oxford, 248 pp., $24.95

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Clichés can, of course, be clever, and some contain a fairly high truth quotient. Many clichés began life as dazzling metaphors or scintillating similes. The Bible and Shakespeare, an old joke has it, are magnificent, but contain way too many clichés. Clichés can also be useful for spinning off, reversing, and doubling back on, for comic results. Maurice Bowra once remarked that an overly friendly Oxford don had given him "the warm shoulder." Philip Larkin, after leaving his first librarian job in the provincial town of Wellington, which he described as "a hole of toads' turds," wrote, "I'd have missed it for anything." I have been known sometimes to introduce my wife as my "better three quarters."

As Hargraves acknowledges, clichés are long-lived. They offer ready refuge to the unoriginal. Speakers find them useful in connecting with audiences. He notes: "Many, perhaps most, writers must resort to cliché from time to time in order to connect with their readers in a way that formal language, often barren of cliché, does not allow them to do." Is it a cliché to say that clichés are always ready to hand? Whether it is or not, they are.

Orin Hargraves is, by self-designation, a "cliché-killer," out to divest the English language of as many clichés as possible by highlighting their illogic and ridiculing their stupidity. Excellent cliché hitman though he is, he realizes that the job cannot be done with anything like thoroughness and that most clichés will live on; he even believes that some clichés deserve to do so, if only because they can put people at ease by their informality and familiarity. "None of these judicious uses of cliché," he writes, "if kept in check, is objectionable." He distinguishes between clichés and proverbs, and he does not regard as clichés those idioms that do the job of precise expression more economically than lengthier phrasing, among them "shed light," "leaps and bounds," and "part and parcel." His larger intention here is to bring about a greater awareness of the inanity of most clichés and to point out "the detriment that they typically represent to effective communication."

The great swamp in which clichés nest, it will surprise no one to learn, is journalism, which, Hargraves writes, "has been historically and continues to be the true home of the cliché." As such, journalists are also the great vectors, or spreaders, of cliché. If anything, more clichés show up in contemporary journalism than ever before because of the increased absence at budget-restricted newspapers of that necessary drudge, the copy editor. Hargraves also finds the blogosphere to be "particularly rich in cliché today," and for the same reason: want of editing. He doesn't mention the Twitterverse, but given its need for quick and clipped communication, clichés to the tweeter are, as one might have said before reading Hargraves's book, as meat and drink.

After its introductory chapters, *It's Been Said Before* is organized into seven chapters, four by grammatical function (nominal, adverbial, adjectival, and predicate clichés) and three by semantic function (as framing devices, modifiers, and collocations). Within each of these chapters, clichés are listed in alphabetical order, followed by a core meaning of the cliché, usually three examples of it in use, and a brief paragraph about the cost of using the cliché. A chapter of afterthoughts closes out the book, beginning with its author's acknowledgment that it would be a peculiar kind of reader who had read all that precedes it. I, as a reviewer, am, by duty, that peculiar reader; but Hargraves's point here is to underscore that he has produced a volume best used as a work of reference. If a writer thinks he is striding into cliché country in his own work, he can consult this book's index to see if a particular phrase is listed there, then turn to the appropriate page to determine why it has gained its shabby status as a cliché.

The first thing a reading of *It's Been Said Before* conveys is how pervasive are clichés. In the mine-filled field of language—where grammatical error, semantic imprecision, and misusage abound—clichés are buried everywhere. In the work of some fearless writers, cliché explosions go off in every paragraph, though these scribblers seem neither to notice nor to mind.

Although Hargraves has looked into thousands of clichés over the two years he spent studying them, he has assembled and dispatched (by my rough count) 517 notable clichés for this book. A few were new to me: "jump the shark," for one; "shift the dynamic," for another. A small handful of my own favorites are missing: "a teachable moment," "a paradigm shift," "totally awesome," "a window of opportunity," and the single word "fraught," which, whenever I come upon it, makes me think of Fraughty the Snowman.

Hargraves is neither a belletrist nor a language curmudgeon. Not the least wisp of snobbery clings to his pages. He does not set out to reform the English language and its use. What he intends, he tells us in his final chapter, is to call to the attention of interested readers and writers the need to excise from prose those deposits of stale language that come in the form of clichés and that block, if they do not sometimes befuddle, clear communication. He wants his readers to "write mindfully"—mindful, that is, of when their own language is precise and lively and when wobbly and deadening.

> The best way to ensure that your writing is as good as you can make it … is simply to consult your imagination and judgment as you write and take note of whether you are using an expression that has found its way into the stream simply because it's always there, swirling lifelessly in an eddy, where it was recently deposited by some other writer you have read.

Orin Hargraves also happens to be an amusing man, never more so than when he is in sarcastic mode, slashing away at clichés. Some clichés, for Hargraves, are "swayback workhorses"; others come from "the fetid stew of clichédom." In response to the cliché "the elephant in the room," he writes: "Elephants in rooms outnumber elephants in Africa by nearly twenty to one." Let us forget that "800-pound gorilla," which, if found in the same room with one of those elephants, can make for a densely packed room and

provide serious housekeeping problems. Of "meteoric rise," he notes, with astronomy on his side, that meteors usually fall. "Slippery slope" he allows has the appeal of alliteration but not much else. He excoriates "bright eyed and bushy tailed" by remarking that it contains "a lot of syllables for a small idea." Using the phrase "a whole host" is "a sure sign that you are running to the nearest exit from the theater of engaged thought."

The cliché "for all intents and purposes" suffers from the people who use it not being able "to separate *intents* from *purposes*." He notes that "totally overcome" is the "absolutely fantastic" of a younger generation. Of "sound the death knell," he notes that the "poor little knell" is much overworked and that the cliché, if used at all, ought perhaps only to be used in the past tense. On "time to think outside the box" he writes that it is "time to think outside the box about 'think outside the box.'"

Because Hargraves organizes his catalogues of clichés by function and not subject, there is no separate listing of the preponderance of clichés in certain fields. Sports clichés are one such field, though "sports clichés" might itself be a redundancy, for, deprived of their clichés, broadcasters and sportswriters would be out of work. Five prominent clichés that have their origins in sports that Hargraves notes are "game changer," "on steroids," "the whole nine yards," "take it to the next level," and "touch base." A sixth is "ballpark figure," which Hargraves doesn't include. "Going forward" is not a cliché exclusive to sports—Hargraves cites it as "now irresistible to politicians, business spokespersons, and even sports journalists, all of whom use it in preference to a number of plainer expressions such as *now*, *in the future*, and *from now on*"—but athletes who have been caught doping, beating up wives or girlfriends, or toting guns all do seem to have one thing in common: the wish to put it all behind them and "just go forward."

The only directly political cliché that occurs in *It's Been Said Before* is "staunch conservative/Republican." If Orin Hargraves has a politics, he has kept his book free of them. Regarding this cliché, he notes that "instances of *staunch conservative/Republican* outnumber *staunch liberals/Democrats* by nearly four to one, suggesting that the users of these phrases are speaking or writing formulaically—or alternatively and not very persuasively, that liberals and Democrats are less steadfast in their principles and so do not merit the *staunch* label." Another possibility—one I favor—is that the word "staunch" here really stands for unbending, if not fanatic. In this reading, conservatives and Republicans are staunch, while liberals and Democrats, more reasonably, are merely steady but flexible.

Orin Hargraves

Which brings to mind a pair of linked clichés from the years of the Ronald Reagan presidency, during which so many of Reagan's budget items were "savage cuts" that had "chilling effects." In those days, one couldn't pick up the *New York Times* without finding those "savage cuts" causing yet more and more "chilling effects." So many chilling effects were in the air that it seemed a mistake to read the *Times* without wearing gloves and a muffler lest one catch cold.

The attraction to clichés is akin to what H.W. Fowler called "vogue words," which he defined as words that emerge "from obscurity, or even from nothingness or a merely potential and not actual existence, into sudden popularity." Vogue words soon enough morph—is "morph" itself such a word?—into clichés. "Tipping point" is an example. Hargraves writes that "tipping points first came to light in considerable numbers in the 1960s and today people and situations reach them all the time," adding that before the phrase came into vogue, "there were more straws breaking camels' backs." The word "outliers" is another vogue word headed on its way to the unhappy hunting ground of cliché country. Many such vogue words—which are really little more than new clichés—have been loosed upon the world through the books of the journalist-sociologist Malcolm Gladwell.

Outside the ken of *It's Been Said Before* is the role that clichés play beyond the written or spoken word. Clichés directly affecting life also exist, exerting genuine pressure on people and often determining crucial decisions for them. For years, the term "middle class" had this kind of cliché standing, and what it stood for was dullness, safe-playing, a comfortable but empty existence, selling out. The reigning impulse for many people under the sway of the tyranny of this cliché was to avoid being, or even seeming, middle class, no matter how truly middle class they were. As we now know, without a solid middle class, and without large sections of the populace regularly ascending into it, the country is in jeopardy.

"Midlife crisis" is another such cliché, fading perhaps a bit by now, but once explaining, and thereby half justifying, all sorts of stupid behavior, chiefly on the part of men, from buying red convertibles to taking up with women 30 years younger than themselves. "Reinventing oneself" is yet another, more contemporary, cliché, suggesting that one's life can fairly easily be changed, quickly rendering one a new and happier person, as if human character were so plastic, so malleable.

The only way to ward off clichés in speech and writing, as Hargraves suggests, is to use your imagination and judgment. The same applies to clichés in life, with the added and sometimes painful necessity of consulting reality before being taken in by any of them. ♦

B&A

Withdrawal Symptoms

The cost of our slow, but steady, disengagement.

BY GARY SCHMITT

When it comes to understanding America's place in the world, prospective presidential candidates could do much worse than read just three pieces of writing: Charles Krauthammer's WEEKLY STANDARD essay "Decline Is a Choice" (Oct. 19, 2009); Robert Kagan's *New Republic* article "Superpowers Don't Get to Retire" (May 26, 2014); and, now, Bret Stephens's *America in Retreat*. This book is the *Wall Street Journal* columnist at his best: substantive, historically informed, and with the kind of cutting style that helped him earn his Pulitzer Prize two years ago.

Examples abound:

> Obama spent more money in a single day—February 18, 2009—with the signing of the $787 billion stimulus package than the Defense Department spent in Iraq in an entire decade: $770 billion. . . .
>
> The tragedies of the 1930s are well known. What's forgotten is how they flowed from the illusions of the 1920s, the same illusions that conservative advocates of the Retreat Doctrine harbor today.

Regarding Thomas L. Friedman's unfavorable comparison of China's high-speed train with the Washington, D.C., subway system, he writes, "It's vintage Friedman: mistaking anecdote for data, making an apples-to-oranges comparison, and reaching a morally dubious conclusion." As the book's title and subtitle make clear, Stephens's chief target is the rise, on both the left and right, of a desire to turn away from America's post-World War II role in leading and protecting the liberal international order—and the consequences of doing so.

America in Retreat
The New Isolationism and the Coming Global Disorder
by Bret Stephens
Sentinel, 288 pp., $27.95

Like Krauthammer, Stephens is at pains to note that the present policy of retreat is a choice, not a necessity based on objective conditions. As he details, America's longer-term prospects, when compared with those of possible rivals such as China and Russia, actually look quite good. Nevertheless, for different reasons, a considerable portion of Democrats and Republicans have coalesced around a posture of retrenchment.

In the case of President Obama and his partisan allies, the "higher purpose" is "to build America anew" by way of a social democratic domestic agenda paid for by global disengagement and deep, deep cuts in military spending. For conservatives, the logic for retreat is more complex, ranging from confusion about what a "small government" agenda should mean to a strain of old-style realpolitik that is in fact not realistic about the nature of power or about modern democratic politics. Add a dollop of "tea party leftism" that sees most foreign engagements as part of a conspiracy to drain away American strength, and you have a mix in which left and right meet not at the center but at their extremes.

According to Stephens, this tendency is a product of recent events: difficult wars, a poor economy, and a president who thinks "leading from behind" is actually leading. But Stephens believes there is a more deeply ingrained ambivalence in the American psyche about how the country should interact with the larger world—an idea first expressed in John Winthrop's address to his Puritan brethren in 1630, when he said that the Massachusetts Bay colonists should be "as a Citty upon a Hill." They were to be an example of right rule to the rest of the world—no more, no less.

As evidence that this ambivalence has lived on, Stephens points to the examples of "Mr. Republican" Sen. Robert A. Taft of Ohio (in office 1939-53) and Henry Wallace, Franklin Roosevelt's vice president during 1941-45. Both Taft and Wallace were willing to disengage from Europe and Asia despite the evident threat posed by Soviet communism and the incredible cost in blood and treasure resulting from the isolationist policies of only a few years past. Neither, of course, commanded a majority, but they were, nevertheless, major policy figures.

To Stephens's credit, he doesn't summarily dismiss the arguments for retrenchment. What he does show, however, is that the proposed alternatives to American leadership—be it collective "security" under the United Nations, the fantasies of a self-sustaining liberal peace, or a balance of power model that fails to understand that "the nature of *power* is that it seeks preeminence, not balance"—all fall short in providing the kind of general stability that has proved to be in America's interest, let alone the world's.

None of this leads Stephens to trumpet a higher call to arms. If anything, the logic for American global leadership is, as Tocqueville might have put it, an example of self-interest rightly understood. "We live," Stephens writes, under Pax Americana "not because it is easy or costless, but because the alternatives have all proved wanting or illusory. The alternative to Pax Americana—the *only* alternative—is global disorder."

What that disorder might look like is detailed in the book's later chap-

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ters. Adversaries (such as China, Russia, Iran, and jihadists everywhere) see "a strategic opening to revise regional and global order," while allies (such as Japan, South Korea, and Israel) begin to "consider their security options in ways they haven't for many years." Altogether, "this creates a geopolitical environment that is less predictable, less manageable, and potentially more violent."

To reverse course, the United States must accept that it needs to be the world's policeman, although Stephens cautions that this doesn't mean it should become the world's priest, trying, as George W. Bush advocated in his second inaugural address, to save it by ending tyranny everywhere. Instead, Stephens endorses, among other proposals, upping defense spending, adopting a policy of punishing violations of geopolitical norms quickly and decisively, abandoning notions of regional "pivots," and using local proxies where possible. No less important, he wants the American policy debate to move beyond describing every possible new military intervention as "another Iraq," noting correctly that "the cliché of the slippery slope incapacitates rational debate."

But speaking of Iraq, Stephens ascribes too easily our problems there to a decision by the Bush administration to move from a more limited goal of getting rid of a security problem (Saddam Hussein) to building a liberal democratic state. The change of mission, he argues, was a problem both there and in Afghanistan and is something to be avoided.

Yet, if anything, it was the Pentagon's and State Department's policies handling post-Saddam Iraq and post-Taliban Afghanistan with as light a footprint as possible that allowed, in the first instance, chaos to grow and, in the second instance, the insurgency to return. Arguably, neither Iraq nor Afghanistan had anything close to the institutions that could have been called upon to establish stability or take up the mantle of governance. Indeed, as Stephens admits, it was only after the Bush team deepened its efforts in Iraq that it could hand over to the Obama administration an Iraq that was capable of conducting peaceful elections and was up and running as a country. State-building may not be anyone's first choice, but, as with America's need to be the global order-setter, it may be a necessary one in certain instances.

Although the book's title captures Stephens's concern about the rise of isolationist sentiment among both policymakers and the general public, Stephens does note toward the conclusion that the consequences of the policies of retreat are beginning to make themselves evident and that "perhaps . . . thinking is beginning to change." Certainly, exit polling from November's congressional elections affirms that worries about national security are much more on the public's mind than they were in the immediate past. This, plus the fact that American isolationism has been more the exception than the rule, suggests that Winthrop's paradigm for dealing with an imperfect world has rarely been a deeply held sentiment among most Americans. And the truth is that it held little writ among other colonists or, for that matter, among succeeding Massachusetts generations.

That said, as Bret Stephens also notes, "Americans have lived in a relatively orderly world for so long that we have become broadly oblivious to how good that world has been for us"—and, one might add, what it takes to sustain that world. In short, it's not so much that most Americans are inherently isolationist but, rather, that they need to be reminded of the facts of international life to avoid reacting with too little too late. ♦

B&A

Looking Backward

The art of the Victorian vision of history.

BY HENRIK BERING

In the Olden Time
Victorians and the British Past
by Andrew Sanders
Yale, 344 pp., $75

As Charles Dickens's *Child's History of England* makes plain, Charles II was not an upstanding individual: "Whenever you see his portrait, with his swarthy, ill-looking face and great nose, you may fancy him at his court in Whitehall surrounded by the worst vagabonds in the kingdom (though they were lords and ladies), drinking, gambling, indulging in vicious conversation and committing every kind of profligate excess."

Precisely what the "debauched men" and "shameless women" of Charles's entourage were up to may not have been immediately apparent to Dickens's young audience, but a certain curiosity as to the nature of these shameless women cannot be ruled out. And not only did Charles surround himself with the aforesaid shameless women, he was vengeful, too: Mercilessly repeating Charles's sobriquet as "The Merry Monarch" throughout, Dickens details how, on the anniversary of his father's execution, the Merry Monarch had the bodies of Oliver Cromwell and two other regicides disinterred, hanged from the gallows at Tyburn, beheaded, and their heads stuck on poles. Further evidence of Charles's character defects was provided by Victorian painters such as Edward Matthew Ward, whose *Interview between Charles II and Nell Gwynne* (1848) shows a suitably swarthy king leering at the delectable Miss

Henrik Bering is a journalist and critic.

'And When Did You Last See Your Father?' (1878) by William Frederick Yeames

Gwynne—onetime orange girl turned actress turned royal mistress—while the diarist John Evelyn looks on in mighty disapproval.

Inspired by Roy Strong's classic *And When Did You Last See Your Father?* (1977), which rescued Victorian history painting from oblivion, Andrew Sanders's lavishly illustrated *In the Olden Time* explores how the Victorians responded to key figures in their political and cultural tradition, and how they cheerfully molded the past to conform to the needs of the present. As laid out by the leading historian of the day, Thomas Babington Macaulay, the Victorian interpretation of history was Whiggish, with clearly defined heroes and villains and yielding useful lessons. Embracing the notion of progress, it presented history as a steady movement towards a balanced constitution and the representative government of the Victorian era, an object of envy for the less fortunate folk living on the Continent.

The challenge of making the past come alive was eagerly accepted by novelists and artists, says Sanders. Sir Walter Scott's *Waverly* (1824), set during the Jacobite rising in 1745, pioneered the genre by plunging fictional characters into the middle of momentous events. Said Thomas Carlyle of Scott and his imitators: "The historical novel taught us that the bygone ages of the land were actually filled with living men, not by protocols, state papers, controversies and abstractions of men."

In their efforts, novelists and painters took pains to get the physical details right, relying on antiquarian handbooks on dress and armor. Scott thus provided meticulous descriptions of clothing and interiors while painters fussed endlessly over costumes. Occasionally, the result looked a little too stiff: Thackeray once complained that Sir Edwin Landseer's "gentlemen and ladies do not look as if they were accustomed to their dresses, for all their correctness, but had put them on for the first time."

Who, then, were the heroes, and who were the villains? Having united the Anglo-Saxons against the Vikings, King Alfred was assured his place as the founder of the monarchy, while Queen Elizabeth was much too headstrong and Machiavellian to fit into the Victorian ideal of womanhood. Vain, too: The book shows Augustus Egg's *Queen Elizabeth Discovers She Is No Longer Young* (1848), in which a haggard-looking Elizabeth consults her mirror and hates what she sees. Much more in tune with Victorian ideals of demure womanhood were figures such as Lady Jane Grey, who, after having first turned down the offer of the crown, was queen for nine days before Mary Tudor's accession and was painted by Paul Delaroche helpless and blindfolded on the scaffold. Not to mention Mary Queen of Scots, the very queen of suffering, subjected to all manner of degradation before losing her head. That the Victorian Mary had little to do with the real Mary is neither here nor there: Regard for the past only extended to its outward forms.

The English Civil War provided endless inspiration, the Commonwealth and Protectorate (in Macaulay's view) having paved the way for the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which forced the Roman Catholic James II into exile and won "the solemn recognition of popular rights, liberty, security, toleration." Regarded as an evil regicide in the 18th century, Oliver Cromwell became the embodiment of "the self-reliant hero" in Carlyle's biography and lectures such as those published in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841). In Scott's *Woodstock* (1826), notes Sanders, Cromwell is presented as principled and just, and Ford Madox Brown's *Cromwell on his Farm* (1874) shows him on horseback after King Charles had dismissed Parliament, peering into some burning bushes, oblivious to his surroundings—clearly a man of Destiny.

This did not prevent the Victorians from sentimental attachment to lost causes, or from shivering at the brutality of Cromwell's soldiers, vividly depicted in paintings such as William Frederick Yeames's *And When Did You Last See Your Father?* (1878), in which a nobleman's young son is questioned by cold-hearted Roundheads, or in William Shakespeare Burton's *The Wounded Cavalier* (1855), in which a young woman aids a wounded Cavalier, much to the chagrin of her black-clad Puritan brother. ♦

B&A

Hero as Victim

Is the Alan Turing seen here the Alan Turing who was?

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

The Imitation Game is the fanciest *ABC Afterschool Special* ever made: It takes the inspiring, mystifying, and upsetting life story of a great genius and turns it into a didactic and banal lesson about how people who are "different" are also very, very special.

Benedict Cumberbatch plays Alan Turing, the visionary British mathematician who helped conceptualize the computer and was a key figure in the triumphant effort at Bletchley Park to break the Nazi code during World War II. Turing came to a terrible end after a minor robbery led to his conviction on grounds of "gross indecency"—for engaging in homosexual acts—and a judge gave him a Hobson's choice between jail and a program of chemical castration. He chose the latter; two years later he committed suicide. He was 41 years old.

Screenwriter Graham Moore and director Morten Tyldum work hard, with some success, to integrate abstruse practices like code-breaking and computer design into the plot, though they do not approach the cleverness with which the similar (and, these days, unfairly maligned) *A Beautiful Mind* succeeded in portraying game theory. They are less successful, and even somewhat injurious, in their depiction of the agonizing moral dilemmas posed by the fact that the British broke the code and then had to stand by as Allied ships were sunk and planes shot down in order to keep the Germans from figuring it out.

The movie makes it seem as though Turing and his team were decision-makers when it came to these matters, and that they kept their discovery not only from the Germans but also from Winston Churchill and the Allied leadership at the behest of an ominous MI6 man. This is utter nonsense on stilts, and seems designed only to make an anachronistic Snowdenish point about the evils of intelligence gathering and the corrupting effects of secrecy. Aside from being indefensible when it comes to the proper treatment of historical fact within historical fiction, this weird plot gloss adds an unnecessary element of melodrama to a story that has no need of it.

The Imitation Game
Directed by Morten Tyldum

Cumberbatch is an old hand by now at playing impossibly brilliant impossible men; he achieved stardom with his glorious turn on the BBC as a present-day Sherlock Holmes. It is a mark of what a terrific actor he is that there is absolutely nothing of Sherlock in his Turing, who is both imposingly formidable in his intellectual self-assurance and set sadly apart from others by the obsessive literalism that we instantly recognize as Asperger's syndrome but his contemporaries viewed only as appalling arrogance and intolerable rudeness.

The Imitation Game is set during three different periods in Turing's life. It begins after his arrest in 1952, and thereafter cuts between that time, the war years, and his lonely teenage existence at a boarding school. In each of these periods, Turing is glum, driven, difficult. The movie makes a great deal out of Turing's social ineptitude and how it alienated everyone he ever knew but a schoolmate named Christopher. *The Imitation Game* is so committed to its portrait of Turing's isolated loneliness and discomfort with human contact that it only mentions in passing, but does not show, how he had engaged in affairs with men.

What is more, the remarkable 1983 biography the film cites as its inspiration, Andrew Hodges's *Alan Turing: The Enigma*, makes it clear that while the "nimble, insouciant" Turing may have been deeply eccentric, he was nonetheless possessed of a mordant sense of humor. Hodges even compares the tone of Turing's correspondence to that of P.G. Wodehouse. Cumberbatch's Turing would not be able to understand a sentence of Wodehouse.

Nor would he have been capable of bestirring himself, as the real Turing did, to sponsor a German-Jewish refugee's education in England on the eve of the war. In truth, Turing seems to have been a "character" in the classic British sense, a man who thought nothing of bicycling in the summer wearing a gas mask to stem the effects of pollen.

The Imitation Game reduces Alan Turing to a man living in social torment because of a condition his contemporaries did not understand—Asperger's—and a sexual preference that made him a criminal in the eyes of the very country he had helped save from the Nazis. He greets the chemical castration to which he is forced to subject himself with a depressed and crippled resignation.

This, too, diverges from the portrait of Turing offered by his biographer, whose work does not suggest Turing suffered from Asperger's and who specifically says Turing's defiant and angry reaction to the injustice done to him was "different from the wilting, disgraced, fearful, hopeless figure expected by fiction or drama." It is astounding, then, that the movie arising from Hodges's biography should have chosen to turn Alan Turing into exactly the wilting, disgraced, fearful, hopeless figure he was not. Turing was not only the possessor of a great mind; he was a far more interesting *person* than the pathetic figure to which he has been reduced by a film that supposedly seeks to do him justice. ♦

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

PARODY

"Secretary of State John Kerry said Monday he will travel to Paris this week to show solidarity with the French people, following sharp criticism of the Obama administration for not sending a senior official to Sunday's rally for unity in Paris that was attended by some 40 world leaders and more than a million people."
—Associated Press, January 12, 2015

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SECOND RALLY IN PARIS HELD JUST 'POUR LES AMERICAINS'

March by Obama, Kerry, Others Goes Largely Unnoticed

By ANDY SACHS

PARIS — Supporters of free speech returned to the streets of Paris on Monday to remember the victims of the recent attacks carried out by Islamic extremists. But unlike at the previous rally, these defenders of freedom were all from the United States: President Barack Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry, Vice President Joseph Biden, and former presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. And while more than a million demonstrators attended the first march, the second march included just the five Americans.

Locked arm in arm at first, the five U.S. dignitaries alternated between chants of "Je suis Charlie!" and "Vive la France!" Occasionally President Carter would yell, "Free Mumia!" Vice President Biden, meanwhile, began chanting, "We're here! We're queer! Get used to it!" This, however, failed to catch on.

Unable to secure a permit, the protesters did not have the benefit of roadblocks and were forced to observe local traffic laws, stopping at intersections and red lights. The march covered a distance of six blocks, with numerous stops along the way (mostly bathroom breaks for the older demonstrators). And the march took a three-hour lunch break when Secretary Kerry spotted his favorite restaurant, Taillevent. "They offer a very reasonable Menu Déjeuner for $125—drinks included. It would be simply *une catastrophe* to pass that up."

Mike Matus

John Kerry—in blue, with presidents Barack Obama, Jimmy Carter, and Bill Clinton—expressed dismay that no one else opted for the audio tour of the Louvre.

Before resuming their rally, the Americans agreed to an hour of free time. President Obama and Vice President Biden were seen shopping for Hermès scarves along the Champs-Élysées, whereas President Clinton decided to pay a visit to the U.S. ambassador. "I've always been a fan of Nina Hartley—I love her work—and would love to meet her in person," said the former president, who appeared to be mistaking Ambassador Jane Hartley for the well-known adult film

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