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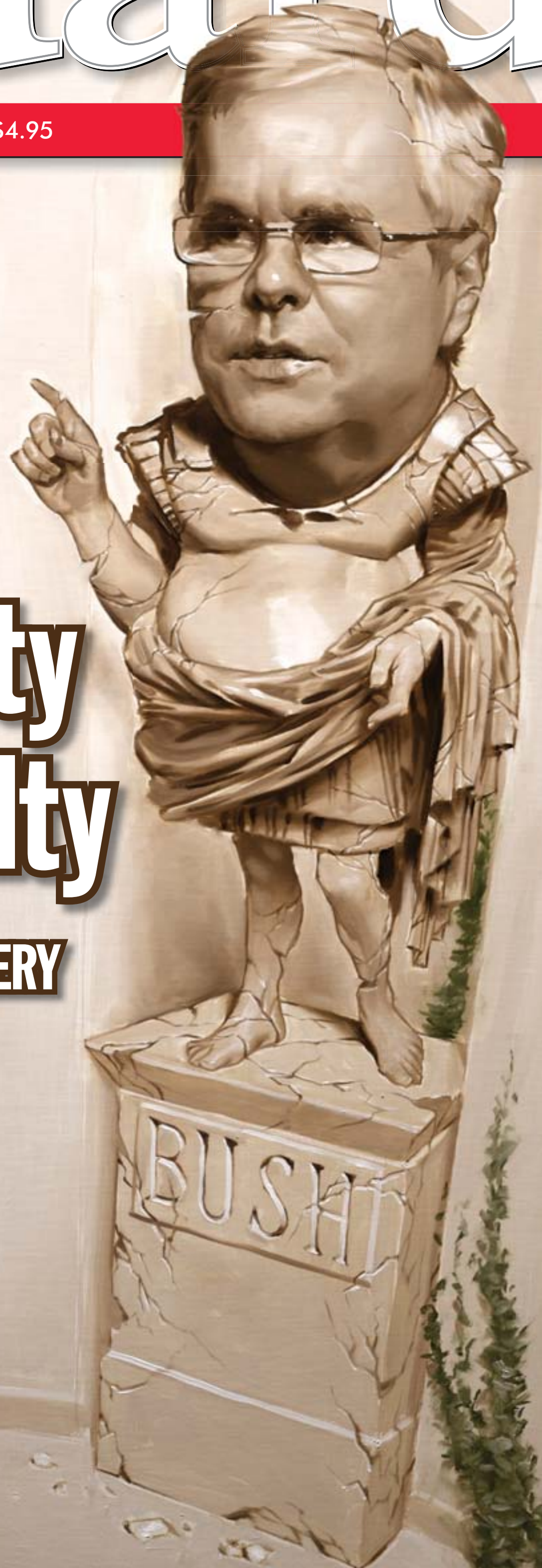
CIVIL WHITES
CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

The Dynasty Difficulty

BY NOEMIE EMERY



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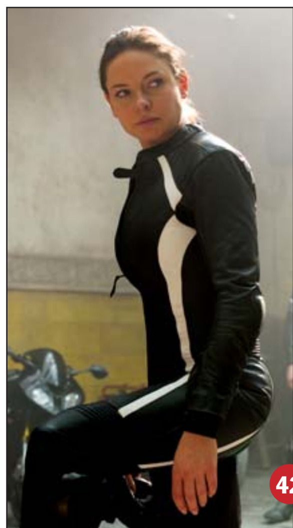
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Peddler in the Dock

One of the more puzzling manifestations of the conflict between radical Islam and the West is the presence of Islamist communities in places like Great Britain, the Netherlands, and France: They are unwelcome in their Muslim homelands—indeed, they are in exile from them—and yet they harbor an abiding hatred for the societies that offer them refuge.

It's a curious, and at times dangerous, contradiction. That is because, on occasion, such hatred manifests itself in direct action: Here in America, we saw this most recently in the attack on military installations in Chattanooga, which left five people dead. But such outbreaks of violence are commonplace in Europe, where Islamists have targeted and murdered French Jews, British soldiers, Dutch journalists—the list goes on. And every country, including our own, has grappled with the problem in its own way.

Which brings The Scrapbook to Great Britain and Anjem Choudary, the 48-year-old, London-based Islamist "preacher," born in England of Pakistani parents, whose jihadist organization, al-Muhajiroun, has been especially conspicuous in recent years: organizing marches and public demonstrations around London, praising the 9/11 hijackers as "the Magnificent 19," demanding the adoption of *sharia* law in Britain, exhorting his followers to join the Islamic State.

Like many purveyors of radical Islam, Choudary has a delinquent past; he is also wise in the ways of social media. This combination has proved especially effective: While no one expects the greater British public to embrace Choudary or jihad, much less *sharia* law, Choudary has been adept at treading the line between his protected status as a public provocateur—abusing Britain's heritage of tolerance and free speech—and encouraging violence at home and abroad.

Anjam Choudary

Until now. For some months, Prime Minister David Cameron has been pledging to tackle the "peddlers of hatred" in Britain, largely with jihadist preachers like Choudary in mind. This is no trivial matter. Islamist-inspired attacks within Britain have increased in recent years, and a disturbing number of prominent figures in ISIS are British nationals—most notably, Mohammed Emwazi, known as "Jihadi John," who specializes in videotaped killings. Late last year, Choudary, along with eight other men, was arrested on suspicion of encouraging terrorism; and last week, it was announced that he will face criminal charges for facilitating recruitment and support for the Islamic State.

This is especially welcome news. One of the many virtues of liberal democracy is its capacious definition of freedom of thought—including, in Justice Holmes's famous formulation, "freedom for the thought that we hate."

By any measure, the Anjem Choudarys of the Western world are entitled to their opinions. But there is a distinction between talk and action, and recruiting and promoting terrorism—publicly, relentlessly, in defiance of civil order and national security—is incompatible, by anyone's standards, with freedom. ♦

Carrying Water for Planned Parenthood

The *New York Times* may still be known as the "paper of record," but the paper's unresponsiveness in correcting the record is not something that is going to burnish its reputation. On July 20, the *Times* published a story about the first of a recent spate of undercover videos showing affiliates of abortion provider Planned Parenthood unethically and possibly illegally negotiating the sale of fetal parts to medical researchers. The videos are produced by a pro-life activist group, the Center for Medical Progress. In order to avoid accusations that the videos are deceptively edited, the group has fastidiously released the full footage of its video stings along with more digestible short videos highlighting the most newsworthy revelations.

Mistakenly, the *Times* story, headlined "Planned Parenthood Tells Congress More Videos of Clinics Might Surface," reported that the Center for Medical Progress only released the "full recording last week after Planned Parenthood complained of selective, misleading editing." This is not true. Both the edited and unedited versions were released at the same time, a fact that was easily verifiable to anyone looking at the Center for Medical Progress's YouTube channel. The error was almost immediately pointed out by bloggers, and numerous individuals on social media notified *Times* reporter Jackie Calmes and various *New York Times* editors.

The story was not corrected promptly. In fact, two days later a *New York Times* editorial cited this erroneous detail as proof that the Center for Medical Progress was

being deceptive. "The full video of the lunch meeting, over two hours long and released by the Center for Medical Progress after complaints by Planned Parenthood, shows something very different from what these critics claim," read the editorial.

A drumbeat continued sounding across the Internet urging the *Times* to correct its blunder. This publication (among others) ran a blog item headlined "After Two Weeks, *New York Times* Still Hasn't Corrected Major Error in Planned Parenthood Story" on August 4. The *Times* finally corrected the piece the following day.

Not content simply to note the facts, the correction offered a bizarre excuse for the error. "While the full-length video of more than two hours took longer to download than the nearly nine-minute edited footage, the full video was in fact posted at the same time as the edited version," read the correction. Of course the download time has no bearing at all on whether the two videos were released at the same time—indeed, YouTube is a streaming service, not one that requires you (or even easily allows you) to download a video before watching it. Apparently some editors at the *Times* also thought this an odd issue to raise, because the initial correction was itself subsequently corrected to delete this superfluous rationalization. The editorial was also finally corrected, on August 6.

Suffice to say, that it would take 16 days to get a straightforward factual correction at the *New York Times* on such a high-profile story tells us nothing flattering about the paper's journalistic standards. ♦

Go Get a Refund

Harper Lee, author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, has long lived as a literary recluse, famously dodging publicity associated with her classic work. After *Mockingbird*'s publication, she never wrote another novel. The author's decades of silence (she famously turned her back if anyone mentioned her work in her presence) were broken this year, when HarperCollins announced the discovery of the manuscript for another novel, *Go Set a Watchman*, in Harper Lee's safe-deposit box.

Almost from the moment its existence was announced, the book has been the subject of controversy. Critics have questioned the timing of the book's discovery and wondered if Lee, 89 years old and in poor health, was pressured into allowing its publication.

The manuscript and its history resemble the old Churchill quote: a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma—much to the consternation of the book-reading world.

Watchman tells the story of a grown-up Scout returning to Monroeville to visit her aging father after living in New York City for several years working as a writer. The trial of Tom Robinson, the central focus of *Mockingbird*, is mentioned only in passing. Shocking for fans of Lee's first novel is the depiction of an aged Atticus who quietly supports segregation.

It's possible some reviewer somewhere has been enraptured by the "new" novel, but from what The Scrapbook has seen, the reviews have run the gamut from awful to horrible. But at least the reviewers got paid. Ordinary fans have simply been distressed and appalled, with nothing to compensate them for their emotional pain. Till now.

Brilliant Books of Traverse City, Michigan, is offering dissatisfied customers a refund for *Watchman*. (The

bookstore did not elaborate on how this differs from a return and whether it requires a receipt.) In a letter posted on its website, the bookstore called the novel "pure exploitation both of literary fans and a beloved American classic." Instead of a sequel, they advise treating the book as an "academic insight" to be viewed with "intellectual curiosity and careful consideration."

The Scrapbook seconds Brilliant Books' advice, but would go a step further. Shouldn't all books be approached with such curiosity and consideration? ♦

Sentences We Didn't Finish

'As the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act's signing approaches Thursday, Marione Ingram says we're backtracking as a country. 'They're disenfranchising the poor, the elderly, blacks, Latinos, students,' she says of voter identification laws and the Supreme Court's continued refusal to hear challenges to such restrictions. 'This is, of course, how Hitler came to power . . . '" (*Washington Post*, August 5). ♦

Conquest the Poet

One can't do justice in a short space to the late Robert Conquest's gifts as a poet. But The Scrapbook can offer Nobel laureate Czeslaw Milosz's assessment, which was no exaggeration:

"In the history of modern poetry, Conquest occupies a permanent place." Readers unfamiliar with his verse will have to haunt the few remaining used bookstores, as far too many of his seven published volumes of poetry are out of print. Elsewhere in this issue, Joseph Bottum refers as well to his astonishing gift for comic verse. Of that, we can offer a sample, The Scrapbook's favorite stanza from Conquest's "Grouchy Good Night to the Academic Year."

'Those teach who can't do' runs the dictum,
But for some even that's out of reach:
They can't even teach—so they've picked 'em
To teach other people to teach.
Then alas for the next generation,
For the pots fairly crackle with thorn.
Where psychology meets education
A terrible bull—t is born. ♦

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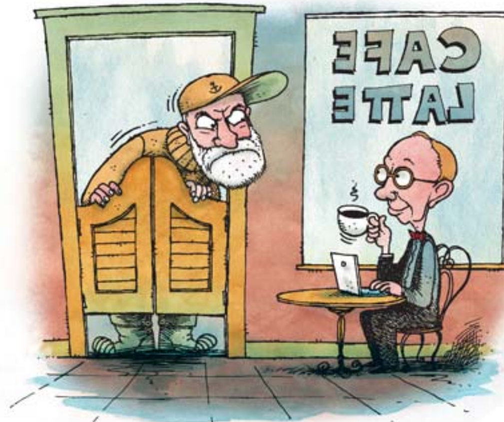
Cuppa Joe

From my living-room windows, I can see two of the three coffee shops within a block of our apartment. Within less than a mile, there are five other coffee shops. In America the coffee shop has for the most part replaced the neighborhood bar, the country club, it used to be said, of the working man. Bars have never been my idea of a good time. Hemingway was, I think, correct when he said that there were only two reasons to go into a bar: the search for complaisant women and the yearning for a fight. Looking for neither, I tend to steer clear of bars.

I do, though, tend to steer into coffee shops. For a good while I met friends and acquaintances and a few strangers down the block at Peet's, the coffee shop begun at Berkeley in 1966 and now franchised round the country. But Peet's is frequently crowded, and, as a neighborhood character, I am too often recognized by people who come up to greet me and have to be introduced to whomever I'm with. I still take out coffee from Peet's, but otherwise avoid the place.

I've noticed that a number of people spend a good part of their day in Peet's. Some, who don't need to go into offices to earn their livings, bring their laptops, legal pads, and whatever else they require and set up shop there. Others I assume come to Peet's to escape the loneliness of isolation in their apartments. They use Peet's the way people once used neighborhood bars. Ten or 11 such people, more men than women, are regulars in my local Peet's, members, as I think of them, of the Occupy Peet's Movement.

Over the years I have become friendly with some of the baristas working at Peet's. Many are young men and women just passing through. A nice feeling of toleration reigns among them and their customers; they are often tattoo-bearing, pierced, with day-glo-colored hair. Nobody seems to mind, nor does anyone suggest this might slow them in their efforts toward getting better jobs. Before long, as the country continues to alter both its etiquette and its expectations, this may well not be true. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that many large corporations, the Ford Motor Company and Boeing among them, allow their executives to bear tattoos and piercings; about day-glo hair the word hasn't come down.



DAVID CLARK

My current coffee shop of choice is called Coralie. A *Nous Sommes Charlie* sign is in the front window. French songs often play lightly in the background. I enjoy at Coralie the presence of an attractive woman, young enough to be my granddaughter, who works there and with whom I have a running joke. The premise of the joke is that she is my long-divorced first wife. After introducing her as such to whomever I'm with, I sometimes add, "The sex was terrific but we found nothing to talk about." Other times I say, "The sex wasn't much, but the conversation was dazzling." Playing along nicely, she inquires, in a complaining tone, about yet another of my late alimony checks. How I have come to acquire the reputation of a neighborhood character I shall never know.

I claim no connoisseurship in the realm of coffee, and cannot tell you on which side of the hill outside Lagos the beans for my coffee were grown. I take a pass on all designer coffees, lattes, cappuccinos, half-cafs, mocha-boca ratons, skim milk, four Splendas lightly marinated in cinnamon, and order only plain coffee, regular in the mornings, decaf in the afternoons.

I've still not got used to the steep price currently charged for coffee. I come from the time when Henny Youngman used to tell a joke about a bum asking him for 50 cents for a cup of coffee. "But coffee's only a quarter," Youngman says. "Won't you join me?" the bum replies. Today that joke, with the bum banished for political correctness, would go: A homeless man asks for $6 for a cup of coffee. "But coffee costs only $2.50," he is told. "I was thinking of adding a chocolate croissant," the homeless man replies.

My friend Edward Shils once asked the Christian socialist R.H. Tawney, author of *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, if he had noted any progress in his lifetime. "Yes," said Tawney, "in the deportment of dogs. In my youth dogs seemed so much more unruly than they do now." I wonder if Professor Tawney, were he alive today, might wish to add the replacement of the neighborhood bar by the coffee shop as another bit of small but genuine progress. The neighborhood bar was dark and xenophobic, the coffee shop light and welcoming. For those still looking for complaisant women or a fight, I recommend Google or the Yellow Pages.

Joseph Epstein

the weekly Standard

Hastening War

War, President Obama says, is the only alternative to his deal with Iran. But if the president's overriding goal is to avoid bloody conflict, why is he arming the Middle East for a shootout that may lead to Armageddon?

The Iran nuclear deal lifts the U.N. arms embargo and ensures a huge cash windfall to Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, which will fund its imperial wars across the Middle East. As a result, the other side is girding its loins for combat, too. Saudi Arabia is almost certain to go shopping for a nuclear weapon, now that the path is clear for Iran to get a nuke. But, of more immediate concern, the White House has been selling conventional weapons systems to the Sunni Arab states at record levels.

It's worth remembering that Obama believes these same Gulf Cooperation Council states—Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, etc.—that have spent billions on U.S. weapons are also the most threatened from within. The Gulf Arabs' real strategic threat, Obama says, is not Iran but their own disenfranchised populations. In other words, the president is arming states he believes are fundamentally unstable, regimes that might not be long for this world. He wouldn't give MANPADs to the Syrian rebels because shoulder-held missile systems might wind up in the wrong hands. But apparently it's okay to bestow F-15s on countries whose masses feed the ranks of ISIS.

The Middle East never fails to disappoint. Many believed that the silver lining in the Iran nuclear deal would be improved relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors, thanks to a shared concern over a nuclearized Islamic Republic. Israel and Saudi Arabia would perhaps coordinate on regional defense and fighting the deal in Washington. Nope. As Obama noted in his speech at American University last week, the government of Israel is the one country that says the deal is rotten (as does the American public, by a 2-1 ratio, in recent polls). Whatever they may think privately, the Gulf states will not stand alongside Israel to oppose the deal.

According to a senior Israeli official, the Saudis think they can't afford a fight with the White House, even though Obama has less than a year and a half left in office. The way the Saudis see it, the Israelis can have a public argument with the president because it's family, and after Obama everything will go back to normal. The Saudis have a point—they have never enjoyed the popular American support that Israel counts on. Riyadh's ability to influence American policymakers is based on the oil it sells, the money it spreads around, and the weapons it buys. The arrangement has been good for the stability of global markets and American industry. It was also good for regional security insofar as it was the United States that, regardless of how many arms the Saudis bought, was ultimately responsible for keeping the Persian Gulf safe.

The other key component to managing regional security, of course, is that the United States also protected the Saudis from themselves. Riyadh never wanted a nuclear weapon until now not just because it knew Israel wasn't going to level Mecca and Medina. The Saudis understood that the Americans were 100 percent with them, so they didn't have to do things, like acquire a bomb, that might well complicate Saudi Arabia's interminable succession crises. Once you remove the United States from regional security, the Saudis are more apt to shoot themselves in the foot—and they have plenty of guns to do it with.

But that's not how Obama sees it. He wants the Arabs to grow up and learn how to take care of themselves. That is a fine instinct for a parent, but it is hardly a foreign policy principle. You can't change the nature of your allies without risking the interests that they embody.

Obama's view of Persian Gulf security is based on the twin-pillars policy that Great Britain formulated shortly before it vacated the Middle East. In order to cover its retreat, London wanted to establish a balance of power in the Persian Gulf between Iran and Saudi Arabia. That's what Obama wants—a geopolitical "equilibrium," as he's put it, that will stabilize the region while the United States retreats.

The twin-pillars policy may have been attractive as an academic theory, but there was no balance of power after the Brits left—the United States simply filled the vacuum. It was only because of the American presence that there was any stability in the Gulf. For instance, when the order of the region was threatened after Saddam invaded Kuwait and contemplated a run at Saudi Arabia, Washington had to land troops to restore order.

Not any more, says Obama. It's better for America, and the Middle East, if the U.S. footprint is minimized. The Saudis and others in the Gulf are terrified, because they never believed in the twin-pillars fantasy. Their assessment is that Iran will fill the vacuum left by Obama. Don't be worried, says the president. The Iranians are far from getting the nuclear bomb—and besides,

we're going to sell you tons of weapons to protect yourself.

If it weren't so dangerous, it would be funny—liberal president arms Middle Eastern regimes dominated by religious obscurantists. But it is dangerous, not just for American allies, like Israel and Jordan, likely to get caught in the crossfire, but for global security. The conflict Obama thinks he is balancing with the Iran nuclear deal looks more likely to widen throughout the region, spreading from Iraq and Syria to include the Gulf, the eastern Mediterranean, and North Africa. It may soon reach the capitals of Europe, where Sunni and Shiite fighters will seek to avenge their grievances with the West and with each other. It is not difficult to imagine it touching down on our shores as well. War is not the alternative to Obama's Iran deal but its likeliest consequence.

—Lee Smith

Dole, Gehry, and Ike

Like Lazarus, or maybe Frankenstein's monster, the appalling plan for the Eisenhower Memorial in Washington, D.C., appears to be sputtering to life once more. Only two months ago it seemed safely kaput.

The design by "starchitect" Frank Gehry aims for a deconstructionist fantasy that scatters its elements (massive stone blocks, a few statues, a vast metallic screen hoisted between 80-foot posts) across a chaotic city block just off the National Mall. It's a sly insult to Dwight Eisenhower and the homespun virtues he typifies in the American imagination. And coming from the famously antibourgeois Gehry, it is very likely a pitiless joke—completely missed by its targets—on the aesthetic judgment of the bureaucrats and bumpkins responsible for preserving the integrity of the city's memorials.

Not the way to remember him

NEWSCOM

Having gazed upon the design—and having duly registered the opposition of Eisenhower's family—the relevant committees in the House and Senate were properly horrified. The commission overseeing the memorial has already spent more than $60 million, without a spadeful of earth being turned. (Bureaucratic inertia can be a blessing.) It had asked for another $60 million this year in hopes of beginning construction. Instead, the House budget eliminates all funding for the project and calls for a new design competition to find a more fitting memorial. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved only $1 million to keep the Eisenhower Memorial Commission in existence for another year, with no funds for construction.

So when the final two review boards approved the design earlier this summer, it seemed a meaningless gesture. "Whether or not the current design is approved by the commissions has little relevance to the prospects of congressional funding," Representative Rob Bishop, chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, told the *New York Times*.

Then Bob Dole showed up.

"I proudly served in the United States Congress for 36 years," Dole said in a statement last month, "and it is hard for me to understand why a body I hold with such high respect is hesitant to fund this memorial . . . "

A Kansan like Ike, a genuine hero of the war effort that Eisenhower led, Dole has joined the commission's new chairman, Kansas senator Pat Roberts, to lobby on behalf of the memorial. The force of his reputation has had some effect. In July the government of Taiwan agreed unexpectedly to donate $1 million to the commission's work. (The commission's slack fundraising has been a source of embarrassment: It has spent more than $1 million on hiring professional fundraisers and, before the Taiwanese donation, raised less than $1 million in actual funds.)

At their annual convention last month, the Veterans of Foreign Wars passed a resolution in support of funding the memorial, though it was silent about the design itself. Less impressively, Dole recruited the retired newsreader Tom Brokaw, who coined the term "the greatest generation" in a bestseller of that name, to join the commission's advisory board. Editorials this summer in both the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* urged Congress to fund the memorial. Dole makes weekly visits to the World War II memorial on the mall to enlist his fellow veterans to his new cause.

Publicly Dole has expressed no opinion of Gehry's design. He seems indifferent to it; what gets built is less important to him than when it gets built, and the sooner the better. His argument for the memorial sounds closer in spirit to the self-seeking of the Me Generation than the selflessness of the greatest generation. "This is not being built for the grandchildren," he told the *Times* last month. "The voice that hasn't been listened to is us guys for whom Ike is our hero, and we'd like to be around for the dedication."

Dole has it exactly backward. Who are memorials built for if not the generations to come? All parties agree that Eisenhower deserves a memorial. But its purpose should be to impart to the grandchildren of the greatest generation, and to the grandchildren's grandchildren, a sense of the greatness of the man and his achievements. Gehry's design has nothing of the timeless quality required for such a living inheritance. Indeed, in its ostentatious rejection of grandeur and greatness, the design is more about the architect than the man the architect claims to honor.

Dole and the commission now ask Congress simply to defer to Gehry and the besotted aesthetes who have approved his work, on the grounds that they are, after all, the experts. "The Eisenhower commission is frustrated that lawmakers may end up usurping the role of experts specifically charged with assessing the memorial's design," the *Times* reported. It went on to quote the commission's spokesman: "Congress should take a lesson from the federal approval agencies. . . . If [the agencies] believe that the design is appropriate for commemorating Eisenhower, [Congress] should take their word for it."

This argument will sound familiar to anyone who knows the story of our civic life over the last 70 years. Though the point is seldom explicitly made, the legacy of the greatest generation is decidedly mixed. It certainly got the big things right—saving the world from unspeakable tyranny, for example. In matters of architecture, design, and public planning, however, the greatest generation was a disaster, and for this reason: It lacked the confidence to question the say-so of frauds and cynics and ideologues who called themselves experts—whether in scholarship, social sciences, architecture, or art.

Think of the public abominations wrought by this careless deference to self-appointed authority. Think of the disaster of "urban renewal," and the high-rise housing projects—vertical slums—that blighted inner cities. Think of such forbidding public spaces as City Hall Square in Boston and Pershing Square in Los Angeles, Empire State Plaza in Albany and L'Enfant Plaza in Washington; an endless parade of brutalist insults to the tastes of ordinary people. Only in the last 30 years, as the architects and planners of the greatest generation retired at last, have their successors begun to undo the damage done by their submission to modernist affectation.

If we're lucky, the Eisenhower design by the 86-year-old Gehry might come to be seen as a last gasp in his generation's devastating experiment in ceding popular judgment to the pretensions of elites. The greatest generation could make it so. Imagine the weight it would carry if the veterans themselves took the measure of Gehry's plainly unsuitable design, and instead of bowing to the reputation of a starchitect and his followers, insisted that their hero—and ours—be properly honored, no matter how long it takes to get it right.

—Andrew Ferguson

Lessons of Conquest

It's more than a quarter-century since the Berlin Wall came down. We now take it for granted that it happened, assume it was inevitable that it would happen, and forget that some people helped bring about victory in the Cold War while others sought to impede their efforts.

As Joseph Bottum explains elsewhere in this issue, the late Robert Conquest was decidedly in the first category. He told the truth about the Soviet Union when doing so wasn't fashionable. He helped educate and guide two politicians who weren't afraid of the derision of their supposed intellectual and cultural betters, Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. When a second edition of his 1968 classic, *The Great Terror*, was to be issued in 1990, his publisher asked him to come up with a new title. His friend Kingsley Amis is reputed to have suggested *I Told You So, You F—ing Fools*.

There were lots of Cold War fools. Some were senators, like Joe Biden and John Kerry. Some were students and community organizers, like Barack Obama. They did not come to power in time to lose the Cold War. They did come to power in time to lose the Iraq war and preside over an extraordinary diminution of U.S. power and stature in the post-9/11 world.

In 1992, Conquest wrote that the lessons of the 20th century "have not yet been learned, or not adequately so." Nor have they been learned since. Conquest lamented the "massive reality denial" that prevented many from having a clear-eyed view of Soviet communism. But the denial of reality embodied in the Iran deal is the latter-day cousin of the denial of reality with respect to the Soviet Union.

It's all there, after all—the wishful thinking, the belief that accommodation on the part of the West is all that is needed to make the world safer and that appeasement on the part of the West will produce peace. The resort to the same dishonest rhetoric is also there—the claim that to be tough-minded is to be a warmonger and that to insist on moral clarity and military strength is to beat the drums of war. Having chosen to remember nothing of the Cold War, especially nothing that would dent their amour propre, John Kerry and Barack Obama have learned nothing from the Cold War years. Conquest wouldn't have expected them to.

But we are not simply putty in the hands of Barack Obama and John Kerry. We have a Congress that can act. In 1979, congressional opposition, led by men educated and inspired by Robert Conquest, doomed a bad arms-control deal with the Soviet Union and laid the groundwork for the election of Ronald Reagan, who reversed America's course. Congress has an opportunity to follow in their footsteps today. It would be a fitting posthumous tribute to Robert Conquest.

—William Kristol

The Veep and the Columnist

Will Biden run?

BY DANIEL HALPER

Joe Biden was a liberal hero, fighting for birth control, when Maureen Dowd came for him. It was September 1987, and Robert Bork was before the Delaware senator's Judiciary Committee. Biden was arguing that married couples have a right to privacy; Bork, in Biden's retelling of the Supreme Court confirmation hearing, defended restrictions based on the "rationality standard in the law."

Biden writes in his memoir *Promises to Keep: On Life and Politics* that this exchange was an inflection point. The *New York Times*—the liberal gold standard—had highlighted the interaction, Biden proudly writes, suggesting it was the first salvo in the destruction of Bork's Supreme Court nomination.

But Biden, who was at the time running for president, was learning that what the *Times* gives, it can also take away. Just days before, Dowd, then a star reporter for the paper, had written that the Delaware senator "lifted [Neil] Kinnock's closing speech with phrases, gestures and lyrical Welsh syntax intact for his own closing speech at a debate at the Iowa State Fair on Aug. 23—without crediting Mr. Kinnock."

Kinnock, as Dowd described him in her campaign-killing article, was the eloquent British Labor leader whose "passionate speeches, against a cool soundtrack of Brahms, raised his approval rating by 19 points and became an instant classic."

Biden appropriated this deeply personal speech for his own usage. He even borrowed Kinnock's coal mining relatives, their love of "football," and the "platform upon which" Kinnock stood.

The story led others to look into his past, which included accusations of plagiarism from his law school days at Syracuse. Biden intimates in his memoir that both stories may have originated from hardnosed Republicans. And he recounts the near-tearful reaction of his wife Jill: "Of all the things to attack you on. . . . Your integrity?"

Joe Biden, left, greets Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork prior to a confirmation hearing, Septermber 17, 1987.

AP / JOHN DURICKA

Too late—the Washington sharks had noticed "a hint of blood in the water." And Biden's ambition to be the next president of the United States would soon be halted.

But of course that was not the last we would hear from him. Biden has remained gainfully employed in Washington, D.C., ever since those heady days nearly 30 years ago. His star rose in the Senate, and he became a leading voice on foreign policy in his party before being selected Barack Obama's vice president.

In his 2007 book he recounts those events and is even able to praise Dowd, looking back, as a "talented young reporter." It's the kind of praise on which relationships are built in Washington, and it's the kind of relationship that would seem to have served both of them well in their respective careers.

Because here we are, three decades on: The Democratic party is still the party of birth control. Joe Biden is still an ambitious officeholder. Maureen Dowd is still at the *New York Times*, no longer a talented young reporter but a top columnist, and she's still playing a major role in Biden's life.

In an emotional column last week, Dowd did the opposite of her 1987 article: She effectively put Joe Biden into a presidential race.

The column was raw and emotional. It was filled with details of the dying wish of Biden's son, Beau, who succumbed in May to brain cancer.

"'Dad, I know you don't give a damn about money,' Beau told him, dismissing the idea that his father would take some sort of cushy job after the vice presidency to cash in," Dowd writes. "Beau was losing his nouns and the right side of his face was partially paralyzed. But he had a mission: He tried to make his father promise to run, arguing that the White House should not revert to the Clintons and that the country would be better off with Biden values."

The column presented a very different Joe Biden, a likable, selfless father who may run for president to carry out the dying wish of his son.

Selflessness may not be needed, though, since Biden would have a decent chance of winning, should he decide to run. A sitting vice president has never in modern times failed to

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win his party's nomination. In addition, Biden, as vice president, has earned a tremendous amount of goodwill from some of the president's most loyal supporters.

And perhaps most important: Hillary Clinton is damaged goods. The Democratic frontrunner is facing a Federal Bureau of Investigation probe into the use of a private homebrew email server while she was secretary of state. Clinton has come under fire, too, for being out of touch and using her family's public service to earn close to a quarter of a billion dollars since leaving the White House "dead broke" a decade and a half ago. And she's no longer "likable enough," poll after poll shows, with an underwater favorability/unfavorability ratio that will be hard to reverse.

Of course the Clinton campaign has certain structural advantages: namely, that she has successfully positioned herself as the "inevitable" Democratic nominee, persuading almost all other candidates not even to enter the contest. But with the first Democratic presidential debate not planned until October, there's plenty of time for Biden to mull his options and decide whether he can sit back and allow the country to "revert to the Clintons," as his son put it.

Biden could present a substantial impediment to Clinton's coronation. He'd be in the unique position of a vice president coming into the fight as an underdog and able to challenge Clinton in ways open to no other candidate (his critique, as a White House official, of Clinton's State Department, for instance, could be devastating).

Even on the issue where Hillary Clinton would seem to have the strongest claim on Democratic voters, women's rights, Biden will rightly be able to say he's been fighting for these issues since before Hillary even reached the national stage. After all, birth control and Biden go way back.

But unlike in 1987, it's the other candidate who now has the "integrity" problem. And this time around, it looks like Maureen Dowd has Biden's back. ◆

In Tenth and Rising

John Kasich's New Hampshire charm offensive.

BY MICHAEL WARREN

He shoots, he scores: Kasich in New Hampshire.

THE WEEKLY STANDARD / MICHAEL WARREN

Manchester, N.H.

John Kasich is touring the headquarters of Dyn, a Manchester-based cloud computing support firm with big-name clients like Netflix, Amazon, and Pinterest. It's a run-of-the-mill campaign stop—Rand Paul visited the company earlier in the year—except with Kasich, nothing's ever run-of-the-mill. Before his entourage knows what's happened, the Ohio governor is making a beeline for the foosball table.

An old warehouse along the banks of the Merrimack River houses Dyn's offices, which have a Silicon-Valley-meets-New-England vibe. Employees walk around in shorts and untucked shirts. The company provides free sandwiches every Tuesday. There's a putting green downstairs, and a foosball table is occupied by four workers. Kasich nudges one aside to get in on the game and almost immediately knocks a goal in. The employees are impressed, and Kasich, sensing he should quit while he's ahead, walks away just as quickly as he came.

"You guys need to practice more!" he shouts back as he returns to the tour.

Pundits often refer to Kasich's "unique" personal style, which is a polite way of saying the Ohio Republican is a little weird. For one thing, he constantly makes fun of voters. During the tour, he keeps referring to one of Dyn's vice presidents as "Ted Cruz," because he looks a little like the Texas senator. He also makes sure to stick it to a bunch of Boston sports fans in the company's sales department. "I heard the Red Sox are going to finally start playing baseball again," he says to groans. Kasich is prone to tangents, as when he stops at the putting green to sink a ball and then instructs the gathered executives and journalists about the proper way to swing a golf club. He almost

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hits a TV camera with a driver. Twice.

Kasich's boyish grin can't always hide his 63 years. During a discussion with a large group of Dyn's twenty- and thirtysomething employees, he notes the recent uptick in heroin and other drug abuse in New Hampshire. "We've just gotta fight this. We've gotta get into our friends' faces and force them to rehab. Because the next thing you know, they could be dead," he says. "Talk to your friends about drugs." Thanks, Dad.

Despite his awkwardness, Kasich is charming, and it's an important part of why he could disrupt the New Hampshire primary and the race for the Republican presidential nomination. When he formally declared his candidacy on July 21, Kasich had yet to poll above 3 percent in national surveys and was barely registering in polls of New Hampshire Republicans. The announcement gave him enough of a boost in national polls to catapult Kasich into the first primary debate on August 6. According to the *Real Clear Politics* average of New Hampshire primary polls, Kasich is in fourth place, behind Donald Trump, Jeb Bush, and Scott Walker and ahead of Chris Christie and Rand Paul.

Kasich is positioning himself as a hybrid of Bush and Christie: a conservative who cares about those in need and a tough-talking, hardnosed problem solver. He often touts his work crafting balanced budgets in the 1990s as the chairman of the House Budget Committee, and he says he supports a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. "We don't have the right to live high on the hog and leave the bills to our children," said Kasich at the August 3 *New Hampshire Union Leader* candidate forum at St. Anselm College. So far, he's treated his biggest liability in the GOP primary—his enthusiastic expansion of Medicaid in Ohio, offered by Obamacare—as an asset.

"I'm really glad I did this, because there are people's lives who've been saved as a result of it," Kasich told a group of voters in Greenland, New Hampshire, last month.

Kasich has Bush in his sights, though he won't admit it. The former Florida governor has frequently promised on the trail to deliver 4 percent economic growth as president. At the August 3 forum, Kasich took what sounded like a swipe at Bush, saying "I think that economic growth is not just an end unto itself," before calling for Republicans to reach out to Americans living "in the shadows." The next day, speaking with reporters, he shook his head at the suggestion he was targeting Bush. "I was trying to figure out how anybody thought I was doing that," said Kasich. "It wasn't a slap at anybody."

Will the nice guy routine last? Kasich's path to the nomination requires him to cut into Bush's support, and to do so in New Hampshire. He's visited the state nine times this year, including twice since he declared his candidacy. Kasich may be on his way to endearing himself to New Hampshire voters, but he'll have to challenge Bush directly before the February primary.

Kasich's position is reminiscent of Jon Huntsman's in 2012. The former Utah governor's chief strategist John Weaver, a veteran of the John McCain political operation, is now a Kasich adviser. Like Kasich, Huntsman positioned himself as an alternative to the Republican establishment favorite, then Mitt Romney. The Huntsman campaign eventually moved its entire operation to New Hampshire in recognition that the state was a must-win. But Romney was practically a resident of New Hampshire, and in the end, Huntsman didn't even come close.

The good news for the Ohio governor is that Bush is not as strong in New Hampshire as Romney was, and Kasich's a much better campaigner than Huntsman. That won't be enough, but it's a start. ♦

The Historian as Moral Hero

Robert Conquest, 1917-2015.

BY JOSEPH BOTTUM

Robert Conquest could easily have missed being . . . well, *Robert Conquest*, the most morally significant historian of the second half of the twentieth century. Now that he's slipped away—dying in California on August 3 at age 98—it's possible to see that he might well have failed to find his way.

In other words, Robert Conquest wasn't destined to become a key chronicler of Soviet atrocity, a Cold War adviser to prime ministers and presidents, a central analyst of the corruption of modern intelligence in service of political ideology. He didn't have to be the man he was, and his times pushed against him in any number of ways. The son of a trust-funded American father and an English mother, Conquest probably ought to have broken in some other fashion—say, a minor poet, earning a paycheck as a literary editor or a university librarian, a footnote in other, more famous people's biographies.

He was intelligent, of course, but then the England of his time was full of intelligent young men, adrift after their service in the Second World War. He was brilliantly educated, at Winchester and Oxford, but that too wasn't terribly rare, and the world

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seemed to be slipping away from all the bright young lights of the time. For years after the war, the vast majority of the intellectual class was convinced that, for good or for ill, Soviet communism was the destiny of civilization.

Besides, to read the literature of the era is to find a sense of Great Britain as a terribly dreary place: as barren in mind and spirit as it was in weather and economics. England seemed—at least, to the intellectualized English—like a narrow bed in a small, meanly proportioned Kensington walk-up on a rainy Thursday afternoon.

George W. Bush presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Conquest, November 9, 2005.

AP / EVAN VUCCI

Sheer talent helped Conquest's close friends, the novelist Kingsley Amis and the poet Philip Larkin, transcend that bleakness. And yet, even in the brio of the comedy in Amis's 1954 *Lucky Jim* or the perfect diction of the poems in Larkin's 1955 *The Less Deceived*, you can feel the cheerlessness that was their sense of their own place and time.

In Conquest's case, what allowed him to escape was his unexpected seriousness—the moral cast of his mind that both kept him a precise historian and directed him to oppose communism. Recent commentators, reminiscing after his death, have delighted in speaking of his personal impishness, his literary range in everything from biography to science fiction, and his fine (if often prurient) touch at comic verse. And fair enough. In his letters, even Larkin can't resist mocking his friend Conquest precisely for his meticulously documented work on Stalin: "What an old bore Bob is."

His work for the Foreign Office from the end of the war until 1956—first as a press officer in Bulgaria and then at the Information Research Department—established him as a significant Sovietologist, producing such Cold War documentation as his 1961 *Power and Policy in the USSR* and 1965 *Russia After Khrushchev*. But all that could have been understood as merely his hobby, with his literary friendships his real vocation. His role in putting together the "New Lines" anthologies, for example, helped define the new "Movement" poetry of the 1950s—identifying a rebellion among young English poets against the high modernism of Eliot and Pound, and making stars of such figures as Thom Gunn, Amis, and Larkin along the way.

What made Robert Conquest different, however, was that, unlike so many of his clever contemporaries, he could bring himself to cry murder while studying something like the day in 1937 when Stalin and Molotov signed 3,167 death sentences and then went to watch a movie. Conquest had, in the structure of his mind, a moral seriousness that compelled his move from a youthful and unthinking communism to a mature understanding, in his 1986 book *The Harvest of Sorrow*, of what Stalin's industrialization-induced famine did in Ukraine in the 1930s: "About 20 human lives were lost," he wrote in his preface, "not for every word, but for every letter, in this book."

Living now more than 20 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, we can forget how much Conquest and *The Great Terror* mattered in the years after its publication in 1968. Conquest's historical documentation was as meticulous as the thin sources of the time allowed, and his historical intuition about what those sources meant was matchless. He saw that the Soviet system had murdered millions, and unlike so many of his time he refused to blink or turn away.

After leaving the Foreign Office, Conquest became something of an intellectual nomad. He taught for two years at the London School of Economics (where he was, in an irony he loved, a Sidney and Beatrice Webb Fellow) and visited America as a professor in poetry at the University of Buffalo and Soviet specialist at Columbia. He served as literary editor of the London *Spectator* for a year, and wrote regularly for the *Daily Telegraph*, before finally settling at the Hoover Institution at Stanford in 1981.

It was only there in California in the late 1990s that I came to know Bob Conquest, and our occasional interactions were mostly about poetry, science fiction, and literary gossip. I never really got to express my admiration for his studies of communism, and it's a regret, for the moral cast of his historical work is what made him a towering figure. Robert Conquest was above all a man of serious purpose, one of the props of the world when it mattered, and we stand on weaker, flimsier foundations, now he is gone. ♦

Do They Really Feel Remorse?

South Korea, Japan, and a fraught anniversary.

BY ETHAN EPSTEIN

Seoul

A visit to the Dokdo Museum in downtown Seoul must be a strange experience for those unfamiliar with the delicate intricacies of Korea-Japan relations. Dokdo is a pair of islands—rocks, really—boasting no natural resources, save a few fish and, presumably, a surfeit of guano. Yet the museum, with beautiful to-scale dioramas and "4D" movie theater that simulates a visit to the islands, is designed to make the case emphatically that Dokdo—which is also claimed by the Japanese, who call it "Takeshima"—is Korean territory.

The museum, replete with historical maps and legal documents, convincingly demonstrates that Dokdo has been part of Korea for its entire recorded history. (The islands, known in English as the Liancourt Rocks, are 46 miles from the Korean mainland and about 100 from Japan.) But what it doesn't explain to outsiders is *why* the status of the uninhabited volcanic outcrops is so important to so many Koreans.

Korean angst over Dokdo is a genuinely widespread, grassroots phenomenon. In 2005, a Japanese prefecture passed a resolution proclaiming Dokdo Japanese territory and establishing an annual "Takeshima Day." The provocation came on the heels of the Japanese ambassador to Korea making a public statement that "Takeshima" was part of Japan. In response, businesses across Korea put up signs proclaiming Dokdo "our land." Mass protests followed. A friend of mine in Seoul had theretofore been a dedicated smoker of Japan's Mild Seven cigarettes; in the wake of the incident, he switched to a domestic brand.

So why the hullabaloo? While Japan's claims to the islands are plainly illegitimate, Dokdo serves as a synecdoche for far deeper concerns. To many Koreans, the Japanese stance on Dokdo indicates that, though it largely became a "normal" country after World War II, Japan still refuses to accept the territorial sovereignty of its neighbors. (Korea, of course, was a brutally administered Japanese colony from 1910 to 1945.) Tokyo's intransigence over Dokdo also raises uncomfortable questions about how sincere the country's professed "remorse" over its behavior in the first half of the twentieth century really is. Those questions will come to the fore this month, when Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe, a strident nationalist, marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Asia with a highly anticipated address. Koreans are keenly interested to see how Prime Minister Abe will handle the occasion.

A protest against Japan's claim to Dokdo at the Japanese embassy in Seoul, February 23, 2015

NEWSCOM

Since at least the 1950s, Japanese prime ministers have periodically issued ritualistic expressions of "remorse" for their country's brutal pre-1945 behavior. Yet, as one Korean academic put it to me, there's an established pattern of the Japanese professing regret and then turning around and reneging. Consider the Yasukuni Shrine. Junichiro Koizumi—prime minister from 2001 to 2006 noted for his resemblance to Richard Gere and affinity for the music of Elvis Presley—was one of the many premiers who expressed his country's "deep remorse" for the suffering it caused during World War II. Yet Koizumi also made annual pilgrimages to Yasukuni, which honors 14 class-A war criminals (along with 2.5 million Japanese war dead) and features a "historical" museum that makes Japan out to be the *victim* in World War II. (It blames the Pearl Harbor attack on the U.S. oil embargo against Japan, for example.) Prime Minister Abe and his wife have also made widely condemned visits to Yasukuni, raising hackles across Asia. (It should be noted that a not insignificant number of Japanese protest these visits as well.)

Faulkner's adage about the past not being past has become a cliché. But that doesn't mean it's wrong, especially in Asia. More than the Yasukuni provocations, the issue of "comfort women"—young women and girls from occupied territories who were forced into sex slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army—is still an acutely painful one for many Koreans. In 1993, after decades of denials, the Japanese government finally admitted that it had forced tens of thousands of women into military-run brothels. In 1995, the Japanese government set up a private fund to pay compensation to some of the women, though the state itself did not contribute. Prime Minister Abe, meanwhile, is an on-the-record denier; in 2007, he claimed that "there is no evidence to prove there

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Ethan Epstein is an associate editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD. *He traveled with a group as guests of the South Korean foreign ministry.*

was coercion," parroting a slander that the comfort women had elected to work as prostitutes. Abe later apologized, and he has said he has no intention of altering the 1993 apology.

But even when apologizing, the Japanese still find a way to offend the Koreans. Late last month, Mitsubishi became the first private Japanese company to express remorse for its conduct during World War II; it issued an apology to the American POWs who were forced into slave labor for the company. But you know who Mitsubishi didn't apologize to? The thousands of Koreans who were forced into slave labor over the same period. (This oversight, shall we say, was not lost on most Koreans.)

Japan's significance to Korea's export-dependent economy is declining. Today, South Korea's trade with China outstrips its trade with Japan and the United States combined. Korea's conservative president Park Geun-hye seems to have made the strategic decision that managing relations with China successfully is far more important, at this juncture, than remaining on cordial terms with Japan. Tokyo, by repeatedly kicking dust in the eyes of the Koreans, has been happy to oblige.

In a masterpiece of subtle diplomacy, German chancellor Angela Merkel implicitly contrasted her country's post-World War II behavior with that of Japan on a visit to Tokyo earlier this year. At a speech that was widely covered by everyone except the docile Japanese media, Merkel lauded Germany's decision to "face our past," a process that largely began under Willy Brandt's chancellorship from 1969 to 1974. Abe has an opportunity to spark similar soul-searching with his anniversary statement. As seasoned Asia-watcher Sean King of Park Strategies put it to me, "Abe can be Willy Brandt here, but I doubt he'll take that chance." Abe's political base, after all, is highly nationalistic and would be antagonized by any statement that could be viewed as too "masochistic." It remains unlikely that, come August 15, we'll be asking how to say "Sister Souljah" in Japanese. ♦

The EPA Doubles Down

Its latest regulations show an agency captured by environmental activists.

BY STEVEN F. HAYWARD

Over the years, "agency capture" has been a staple of the economic analysis of regulation—the phenomenon whereby regulatory agencies would come to be largely controlled by the industries they purported to regulate, or at the very least would protect those industries as a cartel in a tradeoff for regulatory control. Railroads dominated the Interstate Commerce Commission during much of its early life, and for decades airlines used the Civil Aeronautics Board to stifle competition and innovation.

Agency capture is still a probable outcome of many regulatory schemes. The Federal Communications Commission is likely to implement its new "net neutrality" rules in such a way as to cement an Internet cartel to the detriment of consumers and innovation. And the Dodd-Frank Act appears headed toward the cartelization of the big banks, to the detriment of medium-sized and small banks. But increasingly the regulatory state has solved the problem of agency capture by industry. It has instead become captive to ideological interest groups.

This is nowhere more evident than at the Environmental Protection Agency, which has for practical purposes become a wholly owned subsidiary of the environmental movement.

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Defending the Plan, March 8

NEWSCOM

Beyond a revolving door between environmental advocacy and senior EPA staff positions, there is ample evidence of close collaboration between environmental organizations and EPA staff in regulatory rule-making and even in permitting decisions.

A cache of emails and other communication records that the Energy and Environment Legal Institute and Competitive Enterprise Institute pried from the EPA through Freedom of Information Act litigation reveals close connections between EPA and the Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Environmental Defense Fund. While these collaborations may not cross a legal boundary, they certainly violate any sense of transparency and the duty of a regulatory agency to be impartial. And as with Hillary Clinton's private email server, senior EPA officials went out of their way to communicate through pseudonymous email addresses (like former EPA administrator Lisa Jackson's "Richard Windsor" emails) and private accounts, in what appears to be a deliberate attempt to avoid public scrutiny. In addition, EPA staff sometimes arranged to meet environmentalists offsite to avoid having to log visits to EPA offices.

For example, documents discovered in the FOIA action demonstrate that the EPA had decided to veto the application for the proposed Pebble copper mine in Alaska even before it had

conducted an environmental assessment, and that it relied on an "Options Paper" produced by a lawyer working for the mine's opponents to justify its veto. Other documents show the EPA is determined to prevent new coal export terminals from being built in the Pacific Northwest, though permitting decisions for such facilities are outside the EPA's jurisdiction.

The most significant collaboration, though, concerns Obama's "Clean Power Plan," the final rule for which was released on August 3. The record is clear that environmental organizations—especially the NRDC—had major input into the design of the Clean Power Plan that was first announced a year ago, and are likely responsible for the major changes in the final, tougher Clean Power Plan rule just released.

The final rule calls for larger greenhouse gas emissions reductions by the year 2030, and will compel the use of wind and solar power over natural gas much more aggressively than the initial proposed rule of last year. The Sierra Club has openly said that after it succeeds in killing coal, natural gas is next on the menu. Having failed to stop the fracking revolution that has brought us cheap and abundant natural gas (the EPA recently gave fracking a clean bill of health after a four-year study), environmentalists now plan to constrict natural gas through the climate plan. The tougher conditions of the final rule came as a surprise especially to the natural gas and nuclear industries, reflecting the likelihood that environmentalists pressed the EPA, saying that its initial proposal wasn't strong enough. Despite questions about the legal vulnerability of the rule, the EPA decided to double down.

On the surface the final rule appears to be slightly more "flexible," as the EPA describes it, as it has pushed back compliance timetables by two years. But the EPA's "flexibility" is a euphemism for ambiguities that will enable arbitrary state-by-state diktats by the EPA, which must approve compliance plans that states are required to develop and submit (Alaska, Hawaii, and Vermont are exempted). The original deadline for the state plans was to be next summer, right in the middle of the presidential campaign, so pushing back the due date was likely done to avoid an election year controversy that would be unhelpful to Democrats.

There is one other small but highly revealing change in the final rule. In the proposed rule last year, the EPA identified four "building blocks" for reducing emissions. They were: a higher "heat rate" for coal-fired power plants; switching to lower-carbon generation like natural gas; building more wind and solar power; and employing energy conservation measures such as building and home insulation and weatherization. (Think of rolling out Pink Panther insulation in your attic.) The final rule, however, includes only the first three building blocks; energy conservation has been dropped.

This change involves environmentalists having to undergo an embarrassing about-face and recognize that one of their favorite slogans isn't true. For years environmentalists have promoted energy conservation measures for buildings and homes with the claim that such improvements "paid for themselves" and were more cost-effective than building new power plants. The EPA and the Department of Energy happily touted claims that conservation resulted in lower energy bills, and were therefore competitive, cost-effective investments.

But there's a growing body of economic research going back more than 15 years that finds the conservation claims to be exaggerated, when they are not completely wrong. Last month the National Bureau of Economic Research published a devastating study that concluded energy efficiency investments on average had a negative 9.5 percent rate of return, and that the actual reduction in energy use was less than half as much as the government models assert.

Some sharp-eyed environmentalist probably noticed this problem and tipped off the EPA to drop the conservation building block. The conservation talking point also threatened to undermine environmentalists' goal of killing hydrocarbon energy, because it opened the door to states promoting energy conservation as a cost-effective way of achieving the Clean Power Plan's mandated reductions, on paper at least. With this telling change, the movement should file for intellectual bankruptcy.

But the ultimate intellectual bankruptcy of the Clean Power Plan is this: According to the EPA's own models, full implementation of the plan will lower global warming in the year 2100 by 0.018 degrees Celsius. That's *two one-hundredths* of a degree. If you believe that the world faces a climate catastrophe several decades hence, the Clean Power Plan is deeply unserious. In fact, the EPA claims no actual climate benefits from the plan. All of its claimed benefits come from ancillary reductions in conventional forms of air pollution (such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides). And the EPA is double-counting benefits, since other Clean Air Act measures are already reducing conventional air pollution. Any private company that used accounting methods like this for its profit and loss statement would be hauled before the Securities and Exchange Commission for fraud.

The whole scheme is driven by larger politics, namely, the U.N. climate summit scheduled for Paris at the end of the year. The U.N. climate circus has been deadlocked for more than a decade, and Obama was humiliated at the 2009 Copenhagen summit that was supposed to come up with a successor to the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, which has expired. Obama has decided to embark on a new strategy. With the Clean Power Plan now in motion, he will show up with a firm U.S. emissions reduction commitment in hand. Along with some bilateral tentative commitments to future action from China, Obama hopes to stitch together a pot-luck-style treaty in which each nation will determine its own contribution to solving climate change.

The U.N. climate caucus will tie all this up in a fancy bow and call it a "breakthrough," hoping that no one will notice what a retreat it represents from the pretensions of climate change activism of the 1990s. The important thing is to be seen taking "action," and keeping the diplomatic circus going. ♦

How to End Putinism

Get Europe right.

BY JEFFREY GEDMIN & GARY SCHMITT

'Russia is a friendly, European country," said President Vladimir Putin in a 2001 address to the Bundestag in Berlin. Putin told German lawmakers he applauded European integration, believed in the unity of European culture, and was convinced that no one had benefited from Europe's divisions in the past. Then last November, speaking again to Germans in an interview for ARD, German national television—in sports coat and open collar—the Russian president lauded dialogue and diplomacy when it came to the crisis in Ukraine. His only concern, Putin said, was that Kiev was allowing the country to become "immersed" in "neo-Nazism."

No matter where he was a decade and a half ago, we know what the ex-KGB officer is about today. Putin dissembles. He lies. Indeed, he may even sanction, if only in mode of "who will rid me of this troublesome priest," the assassination of opponents at home and abroad.

He also advances a vision, Ukraine being but one piece of a larger puzzle. The Kremlin leader wants to divide Europe into spheres of influence and, in the process, show NATO and the EU to be toothless and obsolete. He seems to be pushing on an open door.

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Parts of "New Europe"—as we once called those young, promising democracies of Central and Eastern Europe—are drifting. Hungary's prime minister appeases Putin by saying Hungary "needs Russia"; the Czech president refers to the Russian invasion of Ukraine as a "civil war"; and the Slovak prime minister argues against sanctions and says there is "no tension" between Moscow and Bratislava. Meanwhile, in "Old Europe," turmoil over Greece, questions about the future of the euro, and tensions between north and south portend a European Union looking inward. In Washington, the Obama administration in its final 15 months is seeking deals, not discord, with longstanding European allies discombobulated by an American partner dysfunctional in the counsels of NATO.

All this, while it becomes increasingly obvious that only a robust, forward-leaning U.S. policy designed to revitalize the transatlantic relationship—and create a community resolute about standing up for our common interests and principles—will stave off the machinations of the Kremlin.

What is needed is a strategy.

First, we should be clear about what we want. After the end of the Cold War, we called for a "Europe Whole and Free." We saw NATO and EU enlargement, working in tandem, as a means to extend Western zones of security and prosperity to the de-communizing zones of the east. We were committed in those days to the notion that states should be free to choose their political and economic systems. And, in turn, those states understood that such freedom, along with their long-term prosperity and stability, was only possible if there were no strategic "gray zone" in which nearby great powers could undermine or challenge their sovereignty.

What happened? We underestimated the time it would take for democratic institutions to sink roots and for civil society to take shape in countries that had suffered from decades of Communist rule. NATO and EU enlargement were important steps, but hardly sufficient in most cases to transform Communist countries into strong rule-of-law states with open, well-functioning market economies. It didn't help that Washington, along with Brussels, stopped paying sufficient attention to Central and Eastern Europe. Until recently, it was easy for Washington and key capitals, such as Berlin, Paris, and London, to assume that Europe was a "settled" strategic matter. Nor did it help, justified as it might have been, that the U.S. government has "pivoted" away from Europe twice in the last 15 years, once under George W. Bush to prosecute the war on terror, and then again under the Obama administration to deal with the rise of a more truculent China.

The temptation created by the vacuum proved too great for Putin to resist. Russia fell off the wagon and returned to its old ways, invading Georgia and Ukraine, seeking to destabilize smaller allies by cyberattacks, stirring up ethnic tensions among Russian-speakers, engaging in military threats, funding illiberal parties and NGOs, and corrupting decision-makers with backroom deals. We need to return to our vision of a Europe whole and free, and stop reacting tactically and late on all this.

Second, let's push forward with all the soft power we can muster. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), an agreement being negotiated between the United States and the EU, would be a boon to growth on both sides of the Atlantic but also a help strategically. One can certainly oversell TTIP's importance on both fronts. But, that said, at a time when Russia is promoting its Eurasian Economic Union of authoritarian countries and is not shy about

engaging in dubious deal-making within Europe, Washington and Brussels need to make it easier for the countries of the Atlantic community to deal commercially with each other and tighten business practices.

Soft power also includes information and media policy. We've now entered a seemingly endless debate over how to counter Kremlin-directed disinformation. Russian propaganda is proving successful in large part because we've left an open field. It's time we turn the tables and see to it that Kremlin officials are spending more time fretting how Moscow ought to block our own public diplomacy and media campaign. There's no need to answer Russian propaganda tit for tat. But we need to work closely with our European allies to tell the truth and, in turn, remind our own media that "balanced" reporting is not to be confused with "objective" reporting, especially when Moscow and its media surrogates are filling the Internet and airwaves with misleading stories and blatant lies.

Even more important, we need to use all the tools at our disposal to inform Russians about the roots and realities of Putin's corrupt and kleptocratic rule. Putin has pumped up Russian nationalism to distract from a declining economy and the fact that he and his cronies are looting Russia, culturally, spiritually, and financially. If Putin is allowed to continue on his current path, Russians should know that their country will be left an empty shell, sullen, dysfunctional, and hungover for years to come. In short, we need to play the Russian nationalist card against Putin himself.

Third, we must have a strategy that includes hard power as a central element. It's hard power that makes soft power useful and effective. Putin understands this. It's why he's winning in Ukraine and one reason his propaganda campaign appears to be effective so far. Putin needs to be seen at home and abroad as losing. It's as simple as that, and it starts with Ukraine. Sanctions are an instrument of hard power that have shown they can bite. Sanctions alone, however, will not drive Russia out of eastern Ukraine. Only arms and training for Ukrainians can do that.

Others in the region want to defend themselves, too. Eastern European members of NATO—the Poles and the Balts foremost—welcome the administration's recent decision to bolster their defenses with the rotation of troops and aircraft in the region and the stationing of modest amounts of equipment on their territory. But they fret privately that these measures are not nearly enough. We need urgent and careful preparation against sub-Article V threats coming from the cyber realm and the use of "little green men." And the Article V commitment under NATO for collective defense needs more than rhetorical reassurance from alliance leaders; it also requires plans for putting in place substantial, well-armed, and well-trained forces for deterrence. All of which will require a decision by the allies to reverse the downward trend in defense spending and to do so faster than they have collectively pledged at recent NATO summits. Given the history of this issue, no one should expect a significant surge in allied military expenditures, but small steps ought to be possible.

NEWSCOM

Putin enters a meeting at the Kremlin in Moscow, March 17, 2015.

Finally, we need a serious diplomatic effort to forge a common strategic vision with our partners in the EU. And the news on that front is not all bad: France has been relatively solid on Iran, trying to sober the Obama administration about Tehran's capabilities and intentions. German chancellor Angela Merkel has led on sanctions against Russia over Ukraine in the face of German business interests. And the EU Commission has continued to push forward with policies designed to increase energy diversification to lessen the continent's energy dependence on Russian supplies.

Still, American leadership matters. While the Iraq war did damage to our credibility, and our recent clumsiness over spying on allies hasn't helped, the lack of leadership from President Obama has shocked even those European capitals that found his multilateral, postnational, dovish, and social democratic approach initially so appealing. Once again, Europe has been reminded of just how "indispensable," to use the word of former secretary of state Madeleine Albright, the United States is in helping keep the world from changing in ways inimical to their interests.

None of this means the EU is waiting for the American sheriff to arrive and round up a posse. This is no longer the Europe of junior partnership we worked with during the Cold War. It will require a new way of talking, a new touch, and more listening on our part. Yet the crisis in Ukraine and the threat posed by ISIS to Europeans at home provide the occasion to begin to put transatlantic ties on a better footing. It's doubtful our president will rise to the occasion. But those running to succeed him can make "getting Europe right" a policy priority for 2017. ♦

Save the *Enterprise*!

She deserves a better fate.

BY DANIEL GELERNTER

USS *Enterprise* steams toward the Arabian Gulf, October 21, 2003.

The beautiful planes that flew over the National Mall on the seventieth anniversary of V-E Day are rare not because few survived the war but because few survived the war's aftermath.

When the war ended, the American government suddenly had a huge surplus of aircraft. It could have stored the planes, or auctioned them off, or just given them away to the men who had flown them. Indeed, some were sold—which is why a few are still around. The vast majority, however, were destroyed by a bureaucracy that thought all unwanted equipment was the same—a bureaucracy that couldn't tell the difference between a file cabinet or a coffee machine and a bomber that had carried American airmen to Ploesti and back.

Great aircraft were destroyed by the thousand—chopped up or blown apart and then melted down. In some cases, brand-new planes, already paid for, were flown direct from the factories to the scrapyards, where they were stripped of engines, wheels, and instruments—the remarkable Norden bombsights smashed with hammers—and then the fuselages were torn apart. The famous *Memphis Belle* was rediscovered in 1945 at an airfield in Oklahoma, where it had been shipped to be scrapped. But that was in a world with 4,000 flying B-17s. Today there are 13.

On June 4, 1942, the American Navy changed the course of the Pacific War at Midway by sinking four Japanese fleet aircraft carriers. The American carrier USS *Yorktown*, a hero both at Midway and a month earlier at the Coral Sea, was crippled in the fight and had to be abandoned. The historian Samuel Eliot Morison records that, on the morning of June 7, when it became clear *Yorktown* was doomed, the surrounding ships half-masted their colors, and all hands came to attention as the gallant carrier disappeared beneath the waves. The men who had fought on her and with her respected the ship as a fallen comrade; she had been elevated from an ordinary object into something noble—something with spiritual value. That remarkable incident is a violent contrast to the postwar scrapyards where P-38s were piled on top of each other like firewood, P-40s were stacked with their noses in the ground to save space, and B-17s were neatly lined up by the hundred to be dynamited.

Of the American carriers that fought at Midway, the only one to survive the war was the USS *Enterprise*. "Big E" earned 20 battle stars and a Presidential Unit Citation. She became the only non-British ship in history to be honored with a British Admiralty Pennant. And when *Enterprise* was decommissioned in 1947, she was—and remains—the most decorated Navy ship in U.S. history. *Enterprise* was also the last surviving pre-World War II carrier. (The USS *Saratoga* survived the war, but, in another act comprehensible only to a bureaucrat, she was deliberately destroyed in a 1946 atomic bomb test.)

In 1956, the Navy announced it could no longer afford to keep *Enterprise* in mothballs. An act of Congress, acknowledging the historic greatness of the carrier, established her as a national memorial in Washington, D.C.—provided that $2 million to pay for the project could be raised in six months. The ship's former crewmembers formed the Enterprise Association and fought to raise the money, setting aside any understandable annoyance at having had to buy the ship first with tax dollars when she was built, then with their own blood during the war, and now with the money they'd earned saving the world. Despite their efforts, six months was not enough, and the money was not raised.

So the government sold *Enterprise* for $561,000 as scrap to the Lipsett Corporation, promising at least to preserve the ship's famous tripod mast. Even this token promise was not kept, and by 1960 the *Enterprise* was gone. Today,

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all that remains is a bell, an anchor, and the one-ton nameplate bearing the proudest and greatest name that ever adorned an American fighting ship.

There was one bright spot: In 1958, the Navy commissioned its first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, designated CVN-65: USS *Enterprise*. The new *Enterprise* would go on to become the longest-serving ship in the Navy (and, at 1,123 feet, the longest, period). Naval aviators made more than 400,000 flights from her decks. She was deployed during the Cuban Missile Crisis and made six deployments to Vietnam. She was returning from a completed tour in the Persian Gulf when she received news of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. *Enterprise* immediately reversed course and steamed back to the Gulf at flank speed, outrunning her escorts. The new *Enterprise*, in other words, was worthy of her name. And now that this great representative of American devotion, sacrifice, and ideals (not to mention American science and engineering), having finished more than half a century of service, is retired, our government plans for her to be—scrapped.

In a familiar rerun, the funds for a museum couldn't be raised. Even now the decks of the *Enterprise*, in dry dock in Newport News, have been cut open as a preliminary to defueling—and the government claims that repairing her after the reactors have been removed would not be worth it. Simply too expensive. To that, the Navy will now add another favorite governmental excuse: that it's too late, the wheels are already in motion.

But as long as the ship still floats, it is not too late to save the *Enterprise*. And, in saving her, we have an opportunity to honor her World War II forebear—*and* the *Yorktown* and the *Saratoga* and all the great planes and ships that Americans designed and built and used to defend the United States and the freedom of the world. Considering what this extraordinary ship represents, we ought to say: Damn the cost. Save the *Enterprise*. And, to the *Enterprise* herself, we can add: Thank you. ♦

Even Economists Can't Invest

Another lousy regulatory idea from the Obama administration.

BY IKE BRANNON

Sendhil Mullainathan is a brave economist. I say that because the Harvard professor and recipient of a MacArthur "genius" grant admitted in a recent *New York Times* piece that until recently he had no recollection how he had invested his retirement funds, and that when he finally got around to checking he discovered to his chagrin that a substantial proportion was in cash—a big no-no for anyone saving money for the long run.

He's not alone: I know numerous economists who have made similarly boneheaded investment errors. One friend quit his job precisely one week before his employer's matching contributions vested. Another worked at his job for five years without realizing there was a generous employer match—and had never bothered to put a dime into his retirement account. Still another put his retirement investments into low-interest government bonds his first decade on the job.

Sendhil Mullainathan

The "economists as investment naïfs" club includes me in its rolls as well. I didn't enroll in a retirement account the first year at my first job: It wasn't until I chatted with a financial adviser that I was forced to confront my own stupidity. He also gave me some sage advice, gently suggesting I diversify my retirement portfolio in foreign stock funds, a strategy that has served me well.

Such nudges may soon become rarer, as the Department of Labor has proposed new regulations that would overhaul the relationship between the investor and financial advisers. The regulations would make it all but impossible for investment advisers to put clients into funds from which they receive a commission. It would thereby drastically change how investors could compensate financial advisers and would likely increase the cost of most financial advice for middle-class investors, which ought to result in fewer middle-class savers receiving advice.

The implicit assumption in this regulation—one that an accompanying study by the Council of Economic Advisers made all but explicit—is that most people should put their assets in a passively managed index fund, which would not require the services of a financial adviser.

While simply investing in an index fund may make sense for the bulk of households under age 50, many people don't manage to do that even in a world where automatic enrollment is the norm. Wanting to automate investment decisions may help households merely constrained by inertia, but many other people need more than a nudge: They want someone who thinks about these issues for a living to help them make decisions that can be stressful and complicated.

The White House and various supporters of the regulation have extolled the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan, implicitly suggesting that this might serve as a model for investors. The program offers a handful of different funds—besides its index

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fund it has a bond fund, a small stock fund, and an international stock fund, along with some lifecycle funds. Each of these is passively managed with very low fees: The fee for the stock index fund is less than three basis points per fund, or three cents per $100—that's less than 20 percent of Vanguard's famously low expense ratio.

Having access to funds with minuscule expense ratios, federal workers must be quite happy with the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), right? You might think so, but there has been a growing dissatisfaction with the—wait for it—lack of investment advice in the system. John Turner, an economist at the Pension Policy Center, reports that nearly half of all federal employees withdraw their money from TSP within a year after leaving their government job.

While the administration suggests that these people are being lured into making a grievous mistake by smooth-talking advisers, most people seem to want a modicum of advice and are willing to pay for it, if necessary, by putting their money into funds with higher management fees. In a recent survey of TSP participants, 48 percent of respondents said their biggest complaint with the retirement plan was the lack of advice. In response, TSP administrators are endeavoring to shift gears in order to allow TSP to provide more advice for its participants—something that would eventually boost management fees.

Federal government employees are generally well-educated, middle-class, well-informed folk: If *they* are forgoing the low, low investment costs associated with TSP for products that come with advisers, putting up barriers for other people wanting the same sort of advice is nonsensical.

Perhaps no one typifies the complicated nature of retirement investment better than a former high-level federal employee recently profiled by *Bloomberg Business*. She entered government service in the 1990s. Upon leaving her previous job to enter government service she cashed out her defined-benefit pension, and did the same thing with her TSP upon leaving her government job. While working for the government she tapped another 401(k) account even though she wasn't close to retirement age. Her saving grace, she confesses, was the advice she received from her son—a banker at Goldman Sachs—who helped persuade her to stop putting her remaining retirement funds in cash and to be less cavalier in her decision-making. "Investing is too hard," she says simply.

This confused investor happens to be Alicia Munnell, who was no ordinary government employee: She has a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard and was a member of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers, later serving as assistant secretary for policy in the Treasury. For the last 17 years she has run the Retirement Research Center at Boston College. If there's *anyone* who ought to be capable of making investment decisions on her own, it is she. And those of us without investment banker offspring—what are we supposed to do?

It looks like we're about to find out, unless the Obama administration changes its mind.

Life isn't getting any simpler. Automating investment decisions to a greater degree is a good way to help inertia-ridden investors, but making it more difficult and costly for others to purchase investment advice threatens to make millions of Americans feel less secure about their retirement and potentially result in lower savings. ♦

The Greatest Liberation

Humanitarians in uniform.

BY WARREN KOZAK

Many years ago, I struck up a conversation with a Dutch businessman in a hotel in China. In the course of our discussion, I learned that he had been born in Asia, in the Dutch East Indies, today known as Indonesia. I quickly calculated that he was old enough to have been alive during World War II, so I asked what happened to him?

He told me that he and his parents spent the entire war in a Japanese prison camp.

"What was that like?" I asked.

He explained that because his family entered the camp when he was 3 years old and were liberated when he was 8, he really had no basis of comparison to anything else.

"That's all I knew," he said. "That was really my whole life up until then."

They got by. They survived. As a child, he even found ways to play with some simple toys his mother made for him. He didn't appear scarred in any way, and I thought our conversation had ended. But after a long pause, for some reason he opened up and began to tell me a story that I have never forgotten. It is a story that actually said more about my own country, its singularity and its values.

"When we were liberated," he said, "these soldiers came into the camp. They were different. They looked like giants and they were all smiling."

One of these giants quietly sat down next to him and gently lifted him on his knee. The soldier reached into his pack and took out a tin can, which contained a piece of bread, something the boy had never seen. Then he reached back and opened another

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can with a strange, colorful paste.

"I watched the soldier as he slowly spread jam over the bread and then he gave it to me."

The man stopped there for a moment as his voice choked up, and then he turned and looked straight at me. "I travel all over the world." He said. "I eat in very expensive restaurants . . . and I will never, ever, eat anything again that tasted so good."

I didn't realize that I was nodding in agreement and I said, "I know," to which he quickly corrected me: "No, you will never know . . . and that's a very lucky thing."

Seventy years ago this summer, as World War II came to its climactic end, the world became a vast arena of liberated humanity. People came out of prison camps and attics, forests and cellars. Whole countries and populations were freed as the Nazi army crumbled and Japan surrendered. Millions of human beings, many of whom had been slaves for years, most of them starving, were suddenly released.

Their liberators included, along with our allies, a vast army of millions of young Americans—for some reason everyone referred to them as boys or "our boys." Paul Fussell, the late writer, who was a young lieutenant in the 103rd Infantry, accurately titled his war memoir *The Boys' Crusade*.

These young Americans played a major role in this colossal emancipation. Up until the war, many of them had never left their home states and had never seen anyone who looked different from themselves. Now they were in places they never expected to see, exotic lands like the Philippines, North Africa, and China.

For many foreigners, this was their first glimpse of Americans as well. Before that, their only views came from Hollywood movies. These big, handsome soldiers with easy smiles proved their preconceptions to be pretty accurate—they all seemed to look like matinee idols. And they were extraordinarily generous. Yes, Americans were better supplied than all the other armies, but they shared their largess with all the people they encountered, including their former enemies.

Above, Filipinos run to greet American troops as they liberate the Philippines, 1944. Below, American soldiers assist Filipino women freed from Japanese captivity.

TOP, HAYNES ARCHIVE / POPPERFOTO / GETTY; BELOW, THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION / GETTY

Because this large portion of humanity owed its freedom, in large part, to the United States, millions of Asians and Europeans of that generation have always held a positive feeling towards this country. The United States helped rebuild and feed these people, which, of course, added to the warm feelings. The quiet American military cemeteries across the globe, with their immaculate rows of white crosses intermixed with Jewish stars, serve as further reminders that this mass freedom came at a more significant cost than just U.S. tax dollars.

It is ironic that this positive attitude runs completely counter to a much more negative narrative that is mostly homegrown. It comes originally out of leftist circles in the 1950s and began to take a solid hold in academic institutions as baby boomers came into teaching positions in the late 1960s and '70s. Howard Zinn's extremely influential *A People's History of the United States* (1980) has only reinforced this view. Thanks to the many

Paris teens welcome a GI, August 25, 1944.

teachers who felt obliged to assign Zinn's book in their high school and college history courses over the past 35 years, hundreds of thousands, maybe even millions, of students were introduced to their country as America the empire, America the rapacious, America the evil.

William Ayers, the 1960s Weatherman terrorist turned education professor, is a high-value speaker at universities across the country today. Ayers often lectures on the issue of social justice. The man who admits only that the bombs set off by his group 40 years ago were "not enough" is often treated as a hero on campus. At the University of Oregon, Professor Ayers told his young audience that they are a lucky generation. They could very possibly live in a world without a powerful United States. This new world, according to Ayers, will offer more freedom and opportunity because the United States will no longer determine everyone's future and a small percentage of the world's population (Americans) will no longer consume a disproportionate amount of the earth's resources and wealth.

The aging population around the world that was actually liberated from totalitarian rule in 1945 and again in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed might not see Ayers's vision as a good thing. Their real-life experience refutes the revisionist theory that a weaker America is better for the world. They understand what real evil looks like. They lived it. And they witnessed with their own eyes something unique in world history—a victorious army that wanted only to leave the lands they conquered and go home as soon as they arrived. They didn't colonize; they fought to end colonization. They freed a large swath of humanity, fed them, and gave them billions of dollars to rebuild.

In his latest book, *World Order*, Henry Kissinger tells the story of visiting President Harry Truman in Kansas City in 1961 when the former secretary of state was a young professor. During their conversation, Kissinger asked Truman what in his presidency had made him most proud.

"That we totally defeated our enemies and then brought them back to the community of nations," Truman replied. "I would like to think that only America would have done this." Kissinger writes that Truman "wanted to be remembered not so much for America's victories as for its conciliations."

Did America get something in return? Of course it did. Free countries, more stable democracies, new markets, trade partners, and strong allies for sure. But add something else to the obvious list of benefits: wiping the tears from the eyes of a young girl with a number tattooed on her arm and seeing the amazement on an 8-year-old Dutch boy's face tasting bread and jam for the first time. In the ledger of what these young Americans, these *boys*, accomplished 70 years ago, we cannot fail to include these simple acts of kindness multiplied by the tens-of-thousands. ♦

A Rotten Ride

Crass transit in Washington.

BY GEOFFREY NORMAN

It had been a long time since I'd been to a big league ballgame and I was looking forward to this one. My brother had bought the tickets, and going by the stadium schematic, it looked like we had good seats. Grandstand on the third base line, not too far up. We had lucked out on the schedule, too. The Nats were in first place in their division and playing the Mets, who were chasing and two games out. We'd even stumbled into a good pitching matchup. Gio Gonzalez for the Nats, and if he could get out of the first couple of innings, my brother said, then he could be tough, since the Mets were not an especially hard-hitting team. They were starting the best pitcher in their rotation, Matt Harvey.

It was mid-July and hot, almost 100 degrees, but the game didn't start until early evening, when things would be cooling off a little. Fine night for a baseball game, and I had that old eager feeling. Cold beer, salty peanuts, the sound of a hard pitch hitting the leather of the catcher's mitt . . . what could be better?

But first, I had to get to the park. I'd spent the day at the offices of this magazine, which are located right in the tenderloin of D.C., where the lawyers and lobbyists keep their offices. I had to get out to the stadium, not far from the Navy Yard. Much too far to walk, so it was either a conventional cab, Uber, or the Metro.

I've never much liked going underground—nothing that rises to the level of claustrophobia, but when I lived in New York, if it was a nice day, I'd walk 40 blocks to keep from taking the subway, where it was dark and noisy and the space around you seemed to shrink, little by little, the longer you were down there. And, of course, there were your fellow

RDA / GETTY

Geoffrey Norman, a writer in Vermont, is a frequent contributor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

passengers, some of whom looked dangerous or deranged or both.

That was some time ago and people tell me the subways in New York are now much cleaner and safer and . . . I'll take their word for it. Especially since there is Uber.

But I had a different feeling about Washington's Metro. A long time back, I'd ridden it every day for a week, when I was working on a story about one of those "high government officials" whose name I seem to have forgotten. I remember he was important. He had a car and driver and a very big office.

Anyway, I would take the Metro into the District every morning from Virginia, where I was staying with my brother and his family. And I would ride back out every night and bore everyone with accounts of how fantastic the Metro was. It was clean. The trains ran on time and never seemed to come to a halt between stops and then sit there for long, troubling interludes, leaving you to wonder if you would ever get out.

Washington, it seemed to me, had come up with a world-class system for moving people around.

So an hour or so before the first pitch, I went down into the Farragut North station feeling no fear and lined up at one of the machines to buy myself a fare card. But the couple in front of me was having trouble with the machine. It had taken their money but had not delivered a card. They punched buttons more and more forcefully in their frustration, but that didn't work, so one of them went looking for someone to help and came back with the news that there was nobody in the area with the expertise to fix the machine.

I went to another machine, which took my credit card and, then, its own sweet time about giving up a fare card. Eventually, I was cleared to ride.

I walked down the platform, and things seemed less bright and clean than I remembered them. And then the public address system crackled, and an announcement came over the air. "Blllegghа, cooooph lll, thrrrre . . . "

Whatever the voice was saying, it

D.B. KING

Baseball fans navigate a jammed platform after a Nationals game, May 17, 2009.

was incomprehensible. And I remembered this was a feature of the New York subway—to the point that you wondered if it wasn't done intentionally, to keep the riders in their place, reminding them of the contempt in which the system held them. Hard to build new tracks and dig new tunnels and pay for new cars. But a speaker system?

I made the ride to the park with one change and several new announcements coming through the speakers along the way, all of them garbled beyond recognition.

The Metro delivered me to the park, which is handsome and up-to-date enough that I had forgotten the discontents of the ride before the first pitch. The Nats took the game. I might have wished to see a big league double play and a Bryce Harper dinger, but those were mild regrets. Then, it was back to the Metro.

There was another line change on the way to my destination, and along with a few hundred other riders who had been to the game, I waited there for a full half-hour. No announcements came through the speakers. Not even the garbled kind, which would have assured us, at least, that somebody was paying attention and knew we were down there.

The Metro's brass had not, plainly, laid on any extra cars for the inevitable crush that would follow a ballgame. Maybe, someone behind me whispered, they had shut down for the night. It didn't sound to me like whoever was saying it considered this beyond the realm of possibility.

The train showed, eventually, and I made it to my destination. Later, when I said something about this to someone who lived in Washington, he gave me the old "What rock have you been hiding under?" look and recited the litany of recent Metro woes, to include a murder and a train stalled in a tunnel with passengers breathing toxic fumes that killed one of them.

The system, it seems, is a mess, and though there have been studies, reports, and hearings in abundance, nobody seems to know how to fix even the little things, like the speaker system that delivers only garbled, incomprehensible announcements that fit right in with the overall gestalt. And when the great marbled city that is the capital of the world's most powerful nation cannot maintain a system for moving citizens around efficiently and safely . . . well, we all know the rest.

Up above ground, in the clear air of the private sector, Uber is getting it done. Down in the tunnels of the public sector, you can't understand a word that comes through the loudspeakers.

Sic transit … ♦

Family Business

The difficulty with dynasties

By Noemie Emery

The dynasty project is not faring well. Two relatives of three of our most recent presidents have faced early woes in their succession plans, despite layers of aides, networks of backers going back generations, and extravagant levels of cash. On June 11, a front-page story in the *Washington Post* described the first six months of Jeb Bush's campaign as a "political operation going off-course, disjointed in message and approach, torn between factions and more haphazard than it appeared on the surface . . . defined by a series of miscalculations." The campaign's backers said "strategic errors were exacerbated by unexpected stumbles by the would-be candidate, and internal strife within his team."

Ted Kennedy greets Democratic presidential nominee Jimmy Carter at the Boston airport, August 28, 1980.

If this sounds familiar, it should. It is not only the story of Bush, trying to follow his father and brother as president, but also of Hillary Clinton, who is trying to walk in the tracks of her president husband, and also, too, of Edward M. Kennedy, who in 1979 became the last of three brothers to run for that office. Each began with the highest of great expectations, tripped coming out of the gate, and endured a tough slog while attempting a reboot. Each struggled also with legacy issues, which proved in the end a more than mixed blessing and some part of which each would be forced to disown.

As is true of the rich, dynastic families are not quite like the rest of us, in a number of obvious ways: They live in a world where the White House was a family residence, access is assured to most things and most people, and nice things—invitations and offers to make money in business—somehow keep coming their way. Bushes and Kennedys have been millionaires (Prescott Bush and Joseph P. Kennedy), ambassadors to serious countries (George H. W. Bush and Joseph P. Kennedy), elected officials (Senators Prescott Bush, John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Governor George W. Bush of Texas), and, when their fathers or brothers hadn't themselves been president, they were people whose calls he would take.

But while it took the Bushes and Kennedys a number of generations to get to the big time, the Clintons managed to do it in one generation, with Bill and Hillary together racking up a fortune of hundreds of millions of dollars and holding no less than five major offices—governor of Arkansas, president, first lady, senator from New York, and secretary of state—between them and all by themselves. But however it came or how long it took, dynastic family members share the idea that the White House is reachable, and, if they have or are told they have talent, they may think it is what they deserve. Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton were told from a young age how brilliant they were, and they seemed to believe it: Jeb was the Phi Beta Kappa who finished school in two and a half years, and Hillary Rodham was told—even before she set eyes on Bill Clinton—that she could and should seek the big time herself. No one ever told Ted Kennedy how brilliant he was (and certainly never his brother the president), but by the time his two older brothers had both been murdered he had been turned into a sacred vessel of sorts by the people around the family, the very last prince of the blood left standing, and their last chance to hold power again. If this leads to swelled heads it is hardly surprising. And there is one other element to be reckoned with: When a family has held power for a long enough time, it accumulates an army of aides, friends, and donors—a court party—whose purpose in life is to care for the family interests. The upside of this may be self-evident, but the downside is that these loyal retainers are unlikely to question the queen or young master, or to tell them they've made a mistake.

The effect of this mindset on practical matters doesn't take long to play out. "The assumption was that merely being available would be sufficient," wrote Peter Collier and David

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Horowitz of Ted Kennedy's doomed 1979-80 effort. "It was almost as if he felt that the decision finally to do it . . . would in and of itself take care of all the loose ends." This being the case, actual preparations had been kept to a minimum, which was most likely the reason his notoriously stumbling interview with CBS's Roger Mudd, three days before he made his announcement, all but sandbagged Kennedy's race at its start. His "handlers didn't treat him like an ordinary political candidate who needed to be prepped for his media close-up," biographer Edward Klein tells us: Words such as "Chappaquiddick" and "drinking" and "Joan" were seldom mentioned, and when they were, they were bundled as one into the "character issue," which also was seldom brought up. "I don't think that I was ever asked or given the opportunity to really explore" Chappaquiddick, pollster Peter Hart told Klein. "My view," said Mudd, "is that he wasn't prepared because he had never really sat down and asked himself . . . Why do I . . . want to run this country? . . . I suspect [he thought he] could sort of ascend to the nomination and he didn't have to go through that rigorous self-examination that [other politicians] . . . are supposed to go through."

Bill Clinton introduces Hillary at a New York City fundraiser for her Senate campaign, October 25, 1999.

AP / J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE

Before he ran, Ted Kennedy led his putative rivals—President Jimmy Carter and the GOP's Ronald Reagan—by two-to-one margins, and, as biographer Burton Hersh noted, "The euphoria around Kennedy persisted almost until the day he announced." It started to fade with the Mudd interview, then when Iran seized the American embassy, it collapsed even further, as he came out with a slam at the shah. "In December, the anxiety at the Kennedy headquarters was apparent—not just over what Iran was doing to the campaign, but also over what Kennedy himself was doing to it," wrote Elizabeth Drew in the *New Yorker*. "People who had joined up thinking they were about to ride the crest of a wave were adrift."

"Roll up your sleeves and your mothers and fathers," Kennedy exhorted one audience. His campaign, dubbed the "Bozo Zone" by reporters, was ridiculed. "Frequently his manner seemed desultory and uncertain between bursts of rhetoric, as if he found himself shoved out onto the stage and suddenly seemed puzzled about what people expected," Hersh noted. "Whenever crowds responded listlessly, he attempted to harangue them to life."

Similar problems beset the dynastic hopefuls trying to rise to the top in this cycle, such as Jeb Bush's troubles as he tried to explain, over four days of interviews, what he thought of his brother's decision to declare war on Iraq. As Jonah Goldberg wrote, he seemed "out of sync and off-tempo." The issues he cared for seemed not quite of the moment. He had needlessly antagonized the base of his party and did not try enough to make up.

"Fair or not, the impression is that Bush has been merely biding his time and now believes that this is his moment," writes Jonathan Tobin of *Commentary*. Like Ted Kennedy in 1980 and Hillary Clinton this year, a sense of connection with crowds of voters is missing. "At times, attempts to create the illusion of genuine enthusiasm have bordered on comical," wrote *National Review*'s Eliana Johnson, as lobbyists were bused into events to make them seem lively. "There's even a lack of excitement among his own staff."

Much the same has been true of Hillary Clinton, who has been biding her time since her husband's election, if not for some years before that. Described as unbeatable in 2008, she was blindsided in Iowa by Barack Obama (and by John Edwards) and never recovered. In 2013, when she left the State Department after four years as first diplomat, her approval ratings were in the mid-60s. She tried to leave nothing to chance. But in 2014 her book launch went badly—she said she and Bill had been "dead broke" when he left office—and her numbers began to drift down. In 2015 various scandals emerged, and the numbers came down even further. Her response was to limit the chances of failure by avoiding occasions when things could go wrong. Announcing on video, she took off on a no-contact tour of the heartland in a black van with blackened windows. She held closed-door meetings with "everyday Americans," who turned out to be well-vetted liberal activists. In 29 days she took all of eight questions from journalists. "Democrats wonder if they can find a 3-D printer that could produce a new Candidate Hillary," wrote the *Hill*'s A.B. Stoddard. "What we do know is she is consulting with 200 experts to find a message and a platform. . . . She appears with friendly audiences, avoids the press, and attacks Republicans in tweets."

At a Fourth of July parade in New Hampshire, she had the press cordoned off inside rope lines, but the real *joie de vivre* that infused her campaign seemed best expressed when she and aide Huma Abedin stopped for lunch at an Ohio Chipotle where the two—grim-faced and wearing dark glasses—entered, ordered, and ate in absolute silence. "What are she and Huma doing?" asked Bill Clinton as he looked at the footage. "Are they robbing

that place?" Dynasty candidates tend to stagger at first when their names, organizations, and oceans of money fail to produce the success they took for granted. They may reboot and improve their performance. But by then, it is often too late.

Beyond these missteps, dynasts seem plagued by other dysfunctions that have little to do with themselves. By the time that he or she faces the voters, a dynast may inherit as many as three generations of aides and retainers, 30 years or more removed from each other, and with different, sometimes clashing views. Ted Kennedy in 1980 had Jack people from 1952-60, Bobby people from 1964-68, and his personal aides from the Senate; Jeb Bush has Bush 41 and Bush 43 people, as well as his own people from Florida; Hillary has her staff from the State Department, her staff from the Senate, the people she worked with when she was first lady, as well as what remains of Bill's original Arkansas mafia. Light-years apart, they often have different issue agendas and fail to merge smoothly. Time may be lost in dealing with their arguments. And then, there are problems with famous relations, both dead and living. If they look too big, they can make you look smaller; if all too human-sized, then there are things to explain.

Florida's then-governor Jeb Bush, right, watches presidential election returns with his father and brother in Austin, November 7, 2000.

AP / ERIC DRAPER

Kennedy's hope in 1979 was that voters would see his brothers in him, and look at all three as a contrast to the squalor, bungling, and general haplessness that had beset the country since 1968. But as he blundered his way through his campaign's first phases, people saw him less as the cure than as part of the problem, and unimpressed voters moved away. Stylistically, he had none of his brothers' quickness and wit, much less of their eloquence, and on policy matters he was not quite their heir. A defense hawk and tax-cutter, John Kennedy would have been called center-right by post-'60s standards, while Ted had morphed into a lunch-bucket liberal, more like Hubert Humphrey, his brothers' old rival, than like his brothers themselves.

While Jack urged people not to ask what their country could give them, Ted urged them to ask more and more from it. While Bobby had moved in his last days away from Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and its big government, big spending models, Ted had embraced them. And where Jack had become a household name in World War II when he swam three miles from his sunken boat pulling an injured shipmate to safety, Ted had driven off a bridge and into the water, and left a young woman to die in his car.

The difference between these two watery episodes tells the whole story. While the sole Kennedy loss before 1980 had been Bobby's loss to Eugene McCarthy in 1968 in the Oregon primary, Ted would go on to lose and lose massively, in Iowa, New Hampshire, and Illinois, losing 44 of 59 primaries and caucuses, winning, as Michael Barone tells us, "only when his backers argued that he would not be nominated anyway, and when Carter made an error, as in the March 25 contest in New York." Ted Kennedy would go on to be one of the longest-serving senators in American history, deeply beloved by the liberals who distrusted his brothers. But his hopes to establish himself as a genuine national leader were gone.

Unlike Ted Kennedy's brothers, the relations of Jeb Bush and Hillary Clinton aren't dead and revered but alive and contentious, which puts a different species of strain on their kin.

It may be the case that Bill Clinton and George W. Bush would not have been reelected had they not passed the crime bill, welfare reform, and Medicare Part D, but the parties that produced them are now convinced they want no more of these heresies and are making it clear to their heirs. If Jeb Bush has been promising not to invade Arab countries, Bill Clinton has been disowning his signal achievements on behalf of his candidate wife. NAFTA, Don't Ask, Don't Tell, not to mention the Defense of Marriage Act, have gone under the bus, as Hillary feels the need to placate serial blocs of Obama supporters. "Expressing a centrist philosophy, Mr. Clinton sought to recalibrate his party by enacting tough-on-crime legislation," said the *New York Times*'s Peter Baker. Now he has disowned it: "The expression of regret was the latest effort by Mr. Clinton to reframe his record nearly 15 years after he left office and clear the way for his wife's own White House bid." Ah, relatives! If they're dead and adored, they make you look smaller; and if they're still alive and around, they only cause problems. What's a poor dynast to do?

Have there been times when dynasts succeeded? Perhaps. But only when conditions were special, and when they broke out of the box. Robert F. Kennedy's short, compressed run in the 1968 cycle (which ended in June, when he met the fate of his older brother) broke all the rules of dynasty politics: He ran for emotional, not really political, reasons; he did not enter big; he was never the favorite; his polls did not start out high and then crater; and he was

not at a loss to explain why he was running, or what he intended to do. He did not live to win, and no one knows if he could have done so, but he had established himself as a very strong voice, with a strong base of power, who would have been a huge presence for years to come.

The second exception to the pattern of dynastic dysfunction was the second George Bush. He was put forth not by himself or his family's backers but by his fellow Republican governors, the most popular politicians of the late 1990s, who worried the Republican Congress had all but destroyed the brand of their party and decided it was time to get the functioning grown-ups back in command. They saw in George W. Bush the Republican version of President Clinton, an affable southerner with good people skills who had a record as a creative and capable governor, and was able to soften his party's harder edges. Neither fit the profile of the heir who is raised as a prince. Bobby had been fairly low down on his family's food chain—seventh child, third son—and had been the behind-the-scenes fixer for his brother the president, so much so that the sudden change to becoming pack leader as well as head of the family enterprise had been a disturbing and wrenching emotional moment. Bush, though the first-born and namesake, was not the "anointed one" of his generation: That had been Jeb, seven years his junior, the early self-starter, while George had belonged to another tradition of prominent families, the one that had made alcoholics over two generations of four out of six Adams sons. But for George, life had restarted at 40, when he stopped drinking and then launched a long-shot run for governor against a popular female incumbent.

Instead he won, on the same day that Jeb lost his own race in Florida, a day that upended the two brothers' lives. Thus it was George who was tapped for the nation's highest office, while Jeb was just starting his own term in Florida, a reversal of fortune that no one expected. In spite of their privilege, the runt of the Kennedy litter and the one-time black sheep of the Bush family did not have the sense they were ordained and special. They had more of a sense of the complications and problems of life, and a more proportionate sense of their own places in it. George W. Bush did not think he was doing his country a favor by running for president; he thought he was lucky to serve, and luckier still to have conquered his demons.

Can dynasts run well? Yes, but only if they are able to control the assets they have while escaping the traps of entitlement, arrogance, and insularity that do in so many. It does not happen often. Good luck with that. ♦

Free Enterprise Is Key to Prosperity

By Thomas J. Donohue
President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

It's ironic that a government that has been so hostile to free enterprise recently opened a new exhibit in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History celebrating how business ingenuity and innovation helped create the most successful and wealthy economy on earth. The exhibit—*American Enterprise*—seeks to inspire the next generation of innovators. It's a welcome reminder of the power of free enterprise to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and raise our standard of living.

Support for free enterprise in America used to be a given. The painful recession made many Americans feel insecure and question if free enterprise was the best approach for our country. In fact, today we are in the midst of a battle between two distinct economic models. The first believes in the power of the individual and the free market—with a strong social safety net—to spur economic growth and spark innovation. The second trusts in the power of government, where politicians and unaccountable bureaucrats divvy up the economic spoils as they see fit, exercise control over key industry sectors, and dictate to individuals.

The tilt toward big government in recent years—and away from free enterprise—has taken a toll on the economy. An onslaught of government regulations, a "you didn't build that" attitude, and sweeping legislation that's remade key industries like health care, finance, and energy have sapped economic growth and job creation. The result? We've had the weakest recovery since World War II, and the labor force participation rate is the lowest since 1978.

A return to free enterprise principles would help rev up our economic engine, create jobs, and encourage innovation. Free enterprise, not government, empowers individuals; enables legitimate risk taking that is at the heart of innovation and growth; and reflects the values our nation was founded on. After all, the spirit of enterprise is in our DNA. From Benjamin Franklin to Steve Jobs, Americans have always pushed the boundaries of what was thought possible.

Free enterprise shouldn't be relegated to a museum. It is something we need here and now to revitalize our economy and provide opportunities for all Americans. Free enterprise is what made the United States the land of opportunity and created the American Dream. While visiting the new exhibit is a great way to celebrate the role that free enterprise played in America's past, we need to renew our commitment to it today. By doing so, we can get back to business, jobs, and economic growth.

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Civil Whites

Why are critics so deferential to the radicalism of Ta-Nehisi Coates?

By Christopher Caldwell

Maybe "Culture Belongs to Everyone," as they say at New York City's Shakespeare in the Park shows, but the works of *Atlantic* essayist and blogger Ta-Nehisi Coates appear to exist in another realm altogether. In the weeks since the publication of *Between the World and Me*, Coates's letter to his teenage son about the perils and promise of being black and male in America, critics have struggled to find adjectives to match his achievements. Carlos Lozada of the *Washington Post* summed up recent discussions of who counted as America's foremost "public intellectual" by concluding: "Coates has won that title for himself, and it isn't even close." *New York Times* film reviewer A.O. Scott tweeted: "'Must read' doesn't even come close. This from @tanehisicoates is essential, like water or air."

Coates at the University of Virginia, January 22, 2015

The book's devotees ask not just whether we can "come close" to fathoming its genius but whether we, and especially the whites among us, have the moral standing even to aspire to. The novelist Michael Chabon begs pardon:

> I know that this book is addressed to the author's son, and by obvious analogy to all boys and young men of color as they pass, inexorably, into harm's way. I hope that I will be forgiven, then, for feeling that Ta-Nehisi Coates was speaking to me, too, one father to another, teaching me that real courage is the courage to be vulnerable.

The *Times* columnist David Brooks was clearly troubled by a passage in which Coates recalls watching the World Trade Center towers burn on September 11, 2001, and remembers having seen "no difference" between a policeman who had shot one of his college classmates and those police and firemen then being incinerated in the buildings. ("They were not human to me.") But Brooks managed to catch himself before he committed an act of lèse-majesté: "I suppose the first obligation is to sit with it," he wrote, "to make sure the testimony is respected and sinks in. But I have to ask, Am I displaying my privilege if I disagree? Is my job just to respect your experience and accept your conclusions? Does a white person have standing to respond?"

Other white public intellectuals were ready to offer guidance. Wrote Toronto *National Post* columnist Emily Keeler: "It's despicable for Brooks to position the destruction of people's lives as some kind of learning opportunity for white people. . . . Coates isn't writing to or for us, fellow white people." But Keeler could not help taking a little peek at the book herself, and now, she writes, she "wouldn't give up the chance to bear witness to that bracing act of love, and perhaps, to feel changed by it, for the world."

PLUNDER AND REPARATION

For decades, several books every publishing season have promised an "authentic" account of the experience of being black in America. But the 39-year-old Coates, a Baltimore native, has struck it very big. We learn from *New York* magazine that he even shows up late for meetings with the president. Coates claims as his model a classic of the black autobiographical genre, James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* (1963). It is not immediately clear, though, what distinguishes Coates's effort from the heap of less distinguished books written in Baldwin's wake. To figure this out one must look at "The Case for Reparations," a 16,000-word essay Coates wrote for the *Atlantic* last year, which won him a wide Internet following. The article makes no explicit "case" that someone should pay

EDUARDO MONTES-BRADLEY

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today's blacks for the mistreatment of yesterday's. The case gets made by implication, through a thumbnail history of American slavery, the racial prejudice that underlay it, and the inequality and injustice that survived it.

Coates asks us to accept that reparations, far from being unthinkable, have always made intuitive sense to reasonable Americans. This requires a slippery kind of redefinition, in which a Chicago homeowners' association suing slumlords, or an eighteenth-century slave claiming part of her fled Loyalist owner's estates, is "seeking reparations." It also requires racializing certain race-neutral phenomena. Until the introduction of federal housing guarantees in the 1930s, whites, it goes without saying, were the biggest victims of housing financed "on contract"—i.e., through a system in which the buyer acquires no equity until the house is fully paid for. In the 1950s Chicago that Coates describes, it was black newcomers who suffered most. Coates notes, rightly, that federal housing aid made suburbanization possible. He adds that federal housing authorities actively reinforced segregation by accepting restrictive covenants and other instruments of exclusion and by "redlining" (classifying certain neighborhoods as bad credit risks). A hallmark of Coates's style is the lurid metaphor that blurs the past and the present, the imaginary and the real, and incites ideological combat. "In America," he writes, "there is a strange and powerful belief that if you stab a black person 10 times, the bleeding stops and the healing begins the moment the assailant drops the knife."

From this point, Coates orates, rather than reasons, his way to a reinterpretation of American history. The key concept is "plunder." White Americans did not, as the heroic narrative of civil rights would have it, move from enslaving blacks to excluding them, and then, starting in the 1950s, steadily break down the exclusion until we reached the more equal world of today. No—Coates's argument is one of "structural racism." To this day, society is structured so that whites can continue to rip off blacks. Indeed, they cannot do without blacks, whose exploitation is their main source of prosperity. America's entire democratic Constitution was built on goods robbed under color of law and still rests on that robbery. "By erecting a slave society," Coates writes, "America created the economic foundation for its great experiment in democracy." Reparations are owed because today's system is the same system in essence, and all whites participate in it. "White supremacy," he writes, "is not merely the work of hotheaded demagogues, or a matter of false consciousness, but a force so fundamental to America that it is difficult to imagine the country without it."

Coates does not address such questions as whether the Constitution, unsubsidized by plunder, is something the country can still afford, or whether democratic verdicts passed under conditions of plunder—including the decision to wage war against the slaveholding South in 1861 and the passage of civil rights laws in the 1960s—are to be thought legitimate or illegitimate. But he does come up with a basis for a "bottom line": the difference between black and white per capita income, multiplied by the population of blacks, to be paid each year for "a decade or two." It is a figure that would today come to between $4 and $9 trillion (between a quarter and half the U.S. GDP), to be supplemented perhaps by "a program of job training and public works that takes racial justice as its mission but includes the poor of all races."

One more element in this view of reparations should detain us, and it is the key element: The reparations under discussion will not discharge the debt whites owe to blacks. "We may find," Coates writes, "that the country can never fully repay African Americans." What he is proposing is ultimately less a regime of reparations for blacks (since nothing can be fully "repaired") than a program of infinite penance for whites. To judge from the reaction to Coates's book, white intellectuals are ready to endorse this idea almost unanimously.

X MARKS THE SPOT

Between the World and Me uses this plunder-based model of the American race problem as a way to understand the recent wave of highly publicized incidents involving police violence against young black men. It repeats many themes from the reparations article. But it is written in a very different idiom—as a rambling, reminiscent, repetitive, hortatory, easily distracted letter of advice to Coates's teenage son. The evidence mustered in the reparations article was tendentious, but there was a good deal of it. Coates cites historians Thomas Sugrue and Kenneth Jackson and the late Tony Judt's discussion of Israeli controversies over German reparations. This new book doesn't use evidence at all. It is a performance, an oration, an affirmation: a cri de coeur for those who are well-disposed to it, a harangue for those who are not.

Violent confrontations between youth and law enforcement are invoked, not explained. When Coates alludes, for instance, to his son's shock at finding out on television one night last autumn that "the killers of Michael Brown would go free," he presents the episode as a self-evident miscarriage of justice. That night, which ended in riots in St. Louis, was certainly a tense one, and a politically engaged person can be forgiven for getting angry or downcast in front of a TV set. But months have passed, and the best evidence we now have is that the policeman who shot Brown should indeed have walked free. Not even

former attorney general Eric Holder thought there was enough evidence for an indictment. And Holder is a man whose attentiveness to the very questions of police prejudice that preoccupy Coates led the historian and activist Michael Eric Dyson to call him a "straight-up-and-down race man."

Someone who has not read *Between the World and Me* may have the sense that reviewers are dodging the nitty-gritty of Coates's argument about police violence. They are not. There is no argument. It is no part of Coates's project to weigh the evidence in the varied cases of, say, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Walter Scott, and Freddie Gray; to consider whether high crime rates in black neighborhoods may provoke, and even justify, more aggressive policing there; or to ask whether the vividness and efficiency of our new information technology might not be causing us to overreact to a handful of incidents among the millions of encounters between police and suspects each year. (That is, we might assume we're seeing the tip of the iceberg when what we're seeing is the iceberg.) Coates assumes police guilt in each instance. It is part of the "structure."

The white plunder of blacks, Coates writes, 'has matured into habit and addiction; the people who could author the mechanized death of our ghettos, the mass rape of private prisons, then engineer their own forgetting must inevitably plunder much more.'

The book, in fact, develops no arguments of any kind. In this sense it is true to the literary device Coates uses to frame it. Father-to-son letters tend to be written in a somewhat private language, and are rarely given over to logical demonstrations of truth or falsity. In place of arguments, Coates has a field of favorite subjects, or themes, which he crisscrosses haphazardly, as if running a lawnmower, for the duration of the book, sometimes going back over territory he has covered before, and leaving certain important patches unmowed. One can lay out the half-dozen most important of these themes:

■ *Plunder*. The white plunder of blacks, he writes, "has matured into habit and addiction; the people who could author the mechanized death of our ghettos, the mass rape of private prisons, then engineer their own forgetting must inevitably plunder much more." The plunder model is more suited to alleging bankers' exploitation than policemen's violence. In fact it creates a logical problem—one cannot exploit something and destroy it at the same time—that Coates seeks to resolve by introducing a mystical-sounding concept of bodies.

■ *Bodies*. The "black body" is invoked in a variety of ways, sometimes Strangelovean ("This need to be always on guard was an unmeasured expenditure of energy, the slow siphoning of the essence. It contributed to the fast breakdown of our bodies"), sometimes minatory ("The police departments of your country have been endowed with the authority to destroy your body"), sometimes erotic ("We are all our beautiful bodies and so must never be prostrate before barbarians, must never submit our original self, our one of one, to defiling and plunder").

■ *Nostalgia*. Coates loves the literature of the days when the struggle between blacks and whites was more obviously Manichean than in our own era of mass immigration, the EEOC, and shopping malls. A curious element of this book is its vocabulary. The word "African-American," imposed on American usage with partial success since the 1980s, appears only twice; "black," which appears 208 times, is Coates's preferred term. "Affirmative action" does not appear in the book in any form. Nor does "Obama," although Coates tells his son at one point, "I don't know what it means to grow up with a black president, social networks, omnipresent media, and black women everywhere in their natural hair."

■ *Howard University*. A main repository of this nostalgia is historically black Howard University, in Washington, D.C., which Coates attended, and which he describes variously as "the vastness of black people across space-time" and "my only Mecca." He is grateful to the faculty for having encouraged him to take with a grain of salt the "weaponized" history he confesses a taste for, and alludes to a contemporary at school named Prince Jones who was killed in a confrontation with police in Virginia in 2000.

■ *Atheism*. Coates insists vehemently on his atheism. Since he does not bother to demonstrate, Christopher Hitchens-style, any grounds for nonbelief, his primary purpose seems not theological but political. Coates wishes to disaffiliate himself from the mostly Christian-derived theories of nonviolence, associated with Martin Luther King Jr. and drummed into the heads of schoolchildren each Black History Month, through which all Americans under 50 have come to understand the civil rights movement. (Coates is quite right that this is an oversimplification of what was a highly varied uprising, but he does not dwell on the subject.) Such theories, as Coates sees them, mean "exulting non-violence for the weak and the biggest guns for the strong."

■ *Malcolm X and black nationalism*. Coates claims descent instead from the alternative tradition of

Malcolm X, who professed indifference to whether black emancipation came through the ballot or the bullet. Coates's father, the subject of his first memoir, had been a "local captain" in the Black Panther party in the 1960s. Coates reveres him, and the Black Panther movement generally. "I was attracted to their guns," he writes of his youth, "because the guns seemed honest. The guns seemed to address this country, which invented the streets that secured them with despotic police, in its primary language—violence."

REAL BLACKS, FAKE WHITES

If that were the whole of the book, there would be little to excite any reader—and, in terms of subject matter, that *is* the whole of the book. But underpinning these discussions is a mythologized, even metaphysical idea of race, and this is what has imparted to certain readers an exhilarating promise of liberation. Coates's world is, in the literal sense, unprincipled. It is arbitrary. Sauce for the goose is never sauce for the gander. When whites are at issue, he urges us to "forget about intentions"—protestations that one is not a racist don't keep blacks from being left to suffer in the streets. When it comes to blacks, intentions matter profoundly—we must understand that the menacing boys of Coates's childhood Baltimore were more afraid than threatening; most likely they were "girding themselves against the ghosts of the bad old days when the Mississippi mob gathered round their grandfathers so that the branches of the black body might be torched, then cut away."

Blackness is real in this world, but whiteness is fake. Coates uses theories of "racecraft" that have lately come out of academic cultural studies departments, which hold race to be a pure social construction, but he is unwilling to apply them with the same rigor to his own blackness. "We will always be black, you and I," he tells his son, "even if it means different things in different places." When Coates talks in ghetto slang with a stranger at an airport, they are communicating as "two particular strangers of this tribe that we call black. . . . In that single exchange with that young man, I was speaking the personal language of my people. It was the briefest intimacy, but it captured much of the beauty of my black world."

Whiteness, by contrast, is presented as a figment of the imagination, a kind of delirium. Strictly speaking, there are no whites, there are only "these new people who have been brought up hopelessly, tragically, deceitfully, to believe that they are white." Sometimes Coates calls this belief "the Dream," a concept he conflates with the American Dream. The Dream is not just a "deceitful" but an utterly malevolent force. It is what justifies the plunder of blacks:

> "White America" is a syndicate arrayed to protect its exclusive power to dominate and control our bodies. Sometimes this power is direct (lynching), and sometimes it is insidious (redlining). But however it appears, the power of domination and exclusion is central to the belief in being white, and without it, "white people" would cease to exist for want of reasons.

This theme—that whiteness, in all its falsity, is parasitical on blackness, in all its authenticity—is one he returns to again and again:

> There is no them without you, and without the right to break you they must necessarily fall from the mountain, lose their divinity, and tumble out of the Dream. And then they would have to determine how to build their suburbs on something other than human bones, how to angle their jails toward something other than a human stockyard, how to erect a democracy independent of cannibalism. But because they believe themselves to be white, they would rather countenance a man choked to death on film under their laws.

Whiteness, defined this way, becomes a kind of bloodsucking subhumanity. "Part of me thinks that your very vulnerability brings you closer to the meaning of life," Coates tells his son, "just as for others, the quest to believe oneself white divides them from it." Black Is Beautiful is a beautiful message, but there are two senses in which one can say it. You can say "Black [Too] Is Beautiful" or you can say "[Only] Black Is Beautiful." This book leans towards the latter view.

Focusing his rage on "people who believe themselves to be white," as opposed to whites, is a punctilio that lets Coates write to two contradictory ends. First, it shields him, on a technicality, from imputations of hatred and scapegoating. But second, by blurring lines of racial identity, it allows him to scapegoat whites more broadly, even for misdeeds they did not commit. The street gangs of Baltimore who terrified Coates when he was young were black—but to speak of "black-on-black crime" is, in his view, to indulge in "jargon, violence to language, which vanishes the men who engineered the covenants, who fixed the loans, who planned the projects, who built the streets and sold red ink by the barrel." The Maryland police officer who shot Coates's classmate Prince Jones in September 2000 was black, as were many of the politicians responsible for hiring him—but they do not bear the ultimate blame for Jones's death. Who does? "The Dream of acting white, of talking white, of being white, murdered Prince Jones as sure as it murders black people in Chicago with frightening regularity."

There is one passage in the book that has been taken up with such zeal by street protesters and the Black Lives Matter movement that it can stand as the book's condensation and synopsis:

> It is not necessary that you believe that the officer who choked Eric Garner set out that day to destroy a body. All you need to understand is that the officer carries with him the power of the American state and the weight of an American legacy, and they necessitate that of the bodies destroyed every year, some wild and disproportionate number of them will be black.
>
> Here is what I would like for you to know: In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body—*it is heritage*.

If the country really is as Coates describes it here, with such traditions, such a heritage, what is the proper response to it? In the passage where he describes to his son his indifference to the attacks of September 11, 2001—the passage that made David Brooks so mad that he nearly interrupted his thank-you letter to Coates—Coates notes that there was once a slave market in lower Manhattan. He implies to his son that forgiveness is his to confer, and urges him to withhold that forgiveness:

> I did know that Bin Laden was not the first man to bring terror to that section of the city. I never forgot that. Neither should you. In the days after, I watched the ridiculous pageantry of flags, the machismo of firemen, the overwrought slogans. Damn it all. Prince Jones was dead. And hell upon those who tell us to be twice as good and shoot us no matter. Hell for ancestral fear that put black parents under terror. And hell upon those who shatter the holy vessel.

The charge that Coates is leveling at the present-day United States is genocide. The project, the "struggle" that Coates is recommending to his son, is retribution for genocide. You would need to be a "public intellectual" not to see where this is tending.

DAZED AND CONFUSED

If certain readers have not been able to see it, that is partly because nowhere in this book is Coates's meaning as clear as it ought to be. One is constantly running across sentences that appear to have been mistypeset: "Remember the rumbling we all felt under the beauty of Paris, as though the city had been built in abeyance of Pompeii." Even critics who extol Coates's prose admit that there are moments when they haven't the foggiest idea what he is talking about. Michiko Kakutani of the *New York Times* praised his "lyric and gritty prose" but grants she found his leitmotif of "the Dream" "somewhat confusing." David Brooks calls Coates's definition of whiteness "confusing," too, and says of his 9/11 thoughts: "You obviously do not mean that literally today (sometimes in your phrasing you seem determined to be misunderstood)." The book, apparently, is eloquent in the sense of "hard to understand."

Opacity serves Coates. His narrative often does exactly what he excoriates the white American narrative of race for doing: It obscures agency. It leaves unclear who is doing what. Deeds and misdeeds for which someone ought to be assigned responsibility happen like weather. Coates's descriptions of his childhood neighborhood are hazy—in his account of a gang member showing a gun in the local 7-Eleven parking lot, it is never clear whether the boy is threatening Coates or someone else. Coates's late classmate Prince Jones, killed by a policeman in Virginia, is waved at the reader as a totem of Coates's own proximity to real violence and injustice. It is only after recurring professions of his anguish at Jones's death that Coates notes, 10 pages before the book's close: "The fact is that I had not known Prince all that well."

Where Coates is most precise is when he is recasting, to tendentious and incendiary effect, what others have said. This is a trope that will be familiar to readers of his reparations article ("In 1949, a group of Englewood Catholics formed block associations intended to 'keep up the neighborhood.' Translation: keep black people out."). Here, he describes a strange encounter on the West Side of Manhattan, in which, he says, a white woman, coming off an escalator, pushed his 4-year-old son and said, "Come on!" and Coates threatened her:

> I turned and spoke to this woman, and my words were hot with all of the moment and all of my history. She shrunk back, shocked. A white man standing nearby spoke up in her defense. . . . "I could have you arrested," he said. Which is to say, "One of your son's earliest memories will be watching the men who sodomized Abner Louima and choked Anthony Baez cuff, club, tase, and break you."

This book is short, simple, monomaniacal, and punchy. That can be a plus. "Visceral" and "direct" are two perfectly appropriate adjectives that have been much conferred. And yet, critics have felt the need to praise the book for the very virtues in which it is most obviously deficient. Jack Hamilton, an assistant professor at the University of Virginia, writes in *Slate*: "Coates is more teacher than preacher, a polymath whose breadth of knowledge on matters ranging from literature to pop culture to French philosophy to the Civil War bleeds through every page of his book, distilled into profound moments of discovery, immensely erudite but never showy." Not a word of this is true. Coates may well possess this knowledge privately, and there are signs of it in his reparations article, but it is wholly absent from his book. What Civil War? The two pages describing battlefields he toured with his son after page 99? What French philosophy? Coates mentions Sartre and Camus once, on page 122, but only to say he's never read them. Coates himself, while he professes a love of books and learning, makes no claim to erudition, "immense" or otherwise.

In general, black writers have been more

balanced in their assessment of the book. The linguist John McWhorter, for instance, who is one of the rare American commentators of any race who actually can lay claim to a broad erudition, was taken aback by the "almost tearfully ardent praise" for Coates's reparations piece. McWhorter dismissed one of Coates's more exuberant fans as having written "the kind of thing one formerly said of the *Greatest Story Ever Told*," and described Coates as fulfilling the role of a priest in some new religion of antiracism.

MAJORITARIAN PIGS

Coates has written a provocative book about one of the pivotal issues of our time: the confrontation between black youth and forces of order. With an Internet and grassroots campaign having arisen to delegitimize the latter, it would be surprising if the issue did not gather intensity in coming months. Coates's contribution to the discussion is not well written or well reasoned or trustworthy. But it is politically engaged, and exhilarating in the way that political engagement is exhilarating. If the book itself tells us little about the issue, the reaction to the book among intellectuals tells us a lot. It is evidence that something is changing at the core of our literary culture. Either critics have lost sight that there is such a thing as an unworthy book on a worthy subject; or they are too terrified of being tarred as racists even to give an accurate description of a book about race.

Coates's book sets a mood rather than conducts an argument. Feeling demonized himself, he offers a counter-demonization that will convey forcefully to whites (or at least those who read it) that blacks (or at least one black author confident he speaks in their name) think white culture worthless and predatory. It will convey, too, that he considers the measures put in place to secure racial equality since the civil rights legislation in the 1960s laughably inadequate.

Both races believe race relations have deteriorated in recent years, a *New York Times* poll has found, with two-thirds describing them as "generally bad." There was a moment of solidarity over the murder of nine black Christians in South Carolina, culminating in a successful biracial movement to remove the Confederate battle flag from the state's capitol. In fact, a poll taken in mid-July by the Pew Research Center found a slim majority of whites (53 percent) saying, for the first time ever, that "the country needs to continue making changes to achieve racial equality." But each side is perpetually in danger of missing, or minimizing, the sacrifices the other has had to make over the last half-century. Heightening the tension are the almost constant admonitions to whites that the country's demography is changing and they will someday be outnumbered. The implicit message is that concessions will be imposed on them, whether they like it or not.

So the lavish praise—and even gratitude—that *Between the World and Me* has elicited from white elites is surprising. Truculent, aggrieved, allergic to compromise, Coates has nonetheless seen his book blown to the top of the bestseller lists on a powerful tailwind of antiracism. The cynical way of explaining its success is to note that the interests of privileged minorities (royal families, oligarchies, coteries of literary critics) are often the same as those of underprivileged minorities. Both of them distrust and seek protection against electoral majorities. In this light some of the most impassioned passages in the book are revealing. "The problem with the police is not that they are fascist pigs," Coates writes at one point, "but that our country is ruled by majoritarian pigs." Coates returns to this rare word in his closing pages. "We are captured, brother, surrounded by the majoritarian bandits of America." A median voter might find such statements appalling. A New York literary critic, with his own misgivings about majoritarian views on gay rights and guns and school prayer, might find them consoling.

A less cynical explanation is to say that McWhorter is right about antiracism's having become a substitute religion. In demanding from whites a program of infinite penance, Coates is offering them a metaphysical purpose. Many seem to welcome it, as did the Germans who flocked to the lectures of Daniel Jonah Goldhagen when he published *Hitler's Willing Executioners* in 1996. Coates's book runs whites down—but at least it gives them a role. In our day, the peer pressure to join the procession of penitents gains momentum online, from what students of Internet memes call "virtue signaling."

"My experience in this world," Coates writes, "has been that the people who believe themselves to be white are obsessed with the politics of personal exoneration." He needn't have made that explicit. It is plain from the style of his prose. As Bertrand Russell once wrote: "A skillful orator, when he wishes to stimulate warlike feeling, produces in his audience two layers of belief: a superficial layer, in which the power of the enemy is magnified so as to make great courage seem necessary, and a deeper layer, in which there is a firm conviction of victory." But to rely on whites' desire for exoneration may be to miscalculate, in just the way various villains in Coates's narrative once did, from the builders of the Southern cotton economy to the planners of the all-white towns who succeeded them. They, too, looked at black-white relations as they existed in one era, in one place, in one social class, and mistook them for laws of nature, forgetting that race relations can always get a lot better, and just as easily get a lot worse. ♦

Orson Welles meets the press, October 31, 1938.

When Earthlings Panic

It makes for great mythology. BY ROBERT NASON

Before the fake news of the *Onion*, before fake TV newscasters such as Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert, there was Orson Welles and his 1938 dramatization of H.G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds*. No radio program has ever been examined as thoroughly, in books, film, and television. Coverage leans toward the lurid, describing how Americans were so terrified by "news bulletins" about a Martian invasion that they fled their homes, attempted suicide, or prayed for salvation from extraterrestrial heat rays. But this carefully researched new book reveals that the press, pundits, and academics got the story colossally wrong.

Broadcast Hysteria
Orson Welles's War of the Worlds *and the Art of Fake News*
by A. Brad Schwartz
Hill and Wang, 352 pp., $35

A. Brad Schwartz has evaluated more than a thousand letters written by Martian broadcast listeners to CBS, to the Federal Communications Commission, and to Welles himself. Schwartz is the first scholar to have read some of these letters since they were deposited in the University of Michigan's Welles archive in 2005. Also drawing on recent work by other researchers, he comes to a startling conclusion: The hysteria was produced not by the audience, but by the press, which scared the public with misleading reports of mass terror, followed by dire warnings that Americans were dangerously susceptible to fascism by demagogues controlling the medium of radio.

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ASSOCIATED PRESS

If there was any invasion, it was by radio itself, which made its first American broadcast in 1920 and created print enmity toward the new, faster medium, a dislike that intensified as advertising revenues were captured by broadcasters. The number of homes with radios leapt from 60,000 in 1921 to 16.7 million in 1930.

Radio became a fixture of American life in the decade that followed, from coverage of the kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh's baby son to the fiery crash of the German zeppelin *Hindenburg* ("Oh, the humanity!"). This shared national experience was new, and, as Schwartz writes:

> Never before in human history had such a great mass of people, spread over such a wide area, been able to follow events instantaneously. Radio allowed people to be both disparate and together, isolated yet involved; it helped foster a sense of national community at a time when economic and social turmoil threatened to tear the country apart.

Enter a man made for the moment: Orson Welles. Proclaimed a genius virtually the moment he was born in Wisconsin in 1915, he was a star of both theater and radio by the time he was barely out of his teens. CBS radio would be the vehicle for his *Mercury Theatre on the Air*'s Halloween eve adaptation of H.G. Wells's 1898 science-fiction novel.

Worried that listeners would find the story too silly, Welles instructed writer Howard Koch (of future *Casablanca* fame) to change its setting from 19th-century England to 20th-century America. The script used names of real places and presented the drama as a series of news bulletins interrupted by seemingly normal programming. Koch dropped his pencil over a map; the point hit a tiny town named Grover's Mill, New Jersey. That's where the Martians would land.

On a Sunday night at 8 P.M., six million listeners heard an announcer present "Orson Welles and *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* in *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells." Orson Welles's resonant baritone then spoke the novel's opening lines, followed by an announcer who cut to supposed orchestra music out of a Manhattan hotel. This was interrupted by reports of explosions on Mars and an interview with "Professor Pierson of the Princeton Observatory," played by Welles himself. The station then returned to music.

The pace was measured and convincing. When reporter "Carl Phillips" arrives at Grover's Mill to report on a presumed meteor that fell there, he encounters a cylinder whose top unscrews as monstrous-looking armed aliens emerge to attack the Earthlings. His commentary is redolent of the *Hindenburg* crash: "There's a jet of flame. . . . It leaps right at the advancing men! . . . Lord, they're turning into flame!" The station then goes silent. Welles held that silence for an unnervingly long time.

DAILY NEWS
NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER
FINAL
Daily---1,800,000
Sunday--3,150,000

FAKE RADIO 'WAR' STIRS TERROR THROUGH U.S.

"War" Victim

"I Didn't Know".

NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES

As the aliens (now officially Martians) rampage through the tristate area, causing fake death and desolation, various pseudo-officials are brought on to calm the public. One sounds too much like Franklin Roosevelt, violating a radio dictum that the president should not be imitated on the air. Network executives were furious. Midway through the broadcast, Welles noticed policemen entering the control room: He'd ignored the customary "station identification" at the half-hour mark and had waited 40 minutes before reminding people that the program was a dramatization. By then, it was too late: Switchboards at CBS were lighting up brighter than a Martian heat ray.

At a press conference the next morning, Welles was unshaven, contrite, and deeply apologetic for any injury, physical or mental, he might have caused. In fact, he was terrified that he would go to jail—and that his meteoric career had crashed to Earth.

What had happened? Conjecture was that many radio listeners who tuned in to a more popular program with Edgar Bergen and his wooden sidekick Charlie McCarthy didn't care for guest Dorothy Lamour's singing and switched to Welles's program only *after* it had been identified as a drama. Schwartz's research finds otherwise, indicating that relatively few made the switch. Nevertheless, Welles's friend, the writer and radio personality Alexander Woollcott, sent him a telegram for the ages: "The intelligent people were all listening to a dummy, and all the dummies were listening to you."

The newspapers had a field day. The *New York Times* wrote that "a wave of mass hysteria" had overtaken America and reported that a Pittsburgh man stopped his wife from taking poison as she screamed, "I'd rather die this way than like that." But Schwartz's research indicates that such sensational stories were either invented, exaggerated, or anomalous. Meanwhile, an Iowa senator with the improbable name of Clyde LaVerne Herring (D) told the press that the Federal Communications Commission should prohibit radio scripts containing violent material that could warp children's minds. Columnist Dorothy Thompson wrote that Welles should receive a congressional medal for demonstrating radio's potential for demagoguery. Others called Welles a fascist for using the airwaves to terrify the public.

In Germany, the real fascists used

Welles's broadcast for their own propaganda purposes. Adolf Hitler jibed that he would never "start a war scare in the world, a panic, perhaps, about an impending invasion of Martians," and the Nazi press sneered that Americans were so stupid they would believe anything. Academics piled on, too. Princeton social psychologist Hadley Cantril's volume *The Invasion from Mars: A Study in the Psychology of Panic* (1940) was methodologically flawed and tainted by the author's prejudices. Schwartz notes that its interviewees were drawn largely from the Princeton area, near the program's fictive epicenter—and, consequently, included a high concentration of frightened listeners. Cantril, says Schwartz, betrayed his own disdain for ordinary Americans by claiming that those more likely to believe the broadcast were less educated, lower-class, and more religious than those less likely to believe, who were educated, not very religious, and possessed "critical ability"—people not unlike Cantril himself.

By contrast, Schwartz argues that those who believed the broadcast were none of the above. Rather, they were part of small communities where misinformation spread quickly—"virally," as we would say today—regardless of the inhabitants' background. Additionally, many who missed Welles's opening thought the bulletins referred either to a natural disaster or a German invasion—a not-implausible notion in the same month that Hitler seized the Sudetenland.

Ultimately, however, most people were either aware that the program was a drama or briefly worried but then reassured after some simple checking. Yet the mass-panic legend persists.

Schwartz is a graceful writer and a diligent historian, but he falters when turning his eye to the present. In his conclusion, he expresses dismay that modern media blur the line between news and entertainment, allowing consumers to find niche programming that caters to their beliefs. He perversely commends the aforementioned Stewart and Colbert for alerting the public to this state of affairs while ignoring the fact that these faux-newscasters offer biased views of their own for their niche audience.

Near the end of his life, Orson Welles noted of his Martian broadcast that people in other countries had tried the same stunt and been arrested: "I didn't go to jail," he said, "I went to Hollywood." That trip resulted in the 1941 masterpiece *Citizen Kane*, a film famous for, among other things, an early sequence with a pitch-perfect fake newsreel. But Welles never shook off the notoriety caused by *The War of the Worlds*. Though adamant, in 1938, that he never intended to make anyone think the broadcast was real, he later enjoyed saying that he had planned it all—to make people understand that "they shouldn't swallow everything that came through the tap, whether it was radio or not." Such skepticism, of course, should also be applied to statements by that highly gifted storyteller, Orson Welles. ♦

Vision Quest

We've been coming to terms with modernity for some time. BY LAWRENCE KLEPP

European Intellectual History from Rousseau to Nietzsche
by Frank M. Turner
edited by Richard A. Lofthouse
Yale, 320 pp., $40

The extremely fertile period of European intellectual history that runs from about 1749 (Rousseau becomes famous) to 1889 (Nietzsche goes mad just as he's becoming famous) spawned nearly every idea that has bewitched and bedeviled us since. It also spawned a new social class entirely devoted to coming up with ideas—the thinking class, the theory class, the class consisting of the imperious, all-explaining persons who became known, sometime around the middle of the 19th century, as intellectuals.

In Frank M. Turner's view, Rousseau, who shed conventional clothing along with conventional manners and morals, was the original of all the estranged, visionary, badly dressed intellectuals who came after him:

> He made intellectuals different from simply being influential writers. He made the social role or social function of the intellectual to be that of a critic who found himself alienated from his or her society while at the same time actually living a life deeply embedded in that society. . . . It was Rousseau who made the hatred of one's own culture the stance of the cultivated person.

Lawrence Klepp is a writer in New York.

Of course, alienation from conventional or sophisticated society wasn't new—think of Diogenes the Cynic or the desert saints or the Chinese Taoists—and some measure of it can be found in thoughtful people of any era. But if Rousseau was something new, it's because he was reacting to something new. He broke with his fellow *philosophes* because he thought that their newly minted ideal of rational progress was deforming and diminishing modern humanity instead of improving it.

Most of the writers Turner surveys here either turned against progress or declared it wasn't nearly enough and had to be accelerated into a mad dash to utopia. It's really a study of a new kind of sour grapes: For these writers, the grapes were sour precisely because they were within reach, and they all went off feverishly pursuing something out of reach.

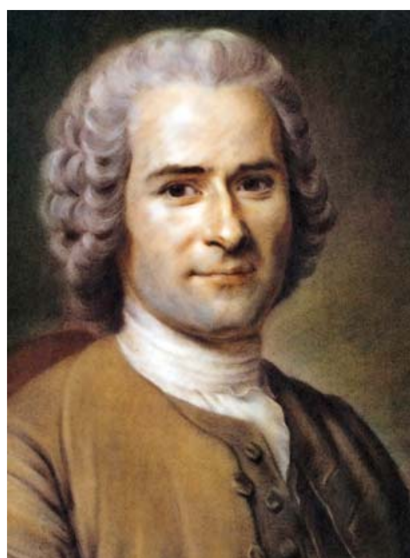
Frank Turner, who died in 2010, was an Ohio-born historian and specialist

in eminent Victorians who had a long career at Yale and first presented this material in lecture form for a popular course there. In 15 chapters, corresponding to the original lectures, he negotiates his way through the Ozymandias-caliber ruins of every once-mighty theory and moonstruck utopia of the period with infinite tact, avoiding summary judgments and any theoretical posturing of his own. Each chapter contains acute, often against-the-grain insights into individual thinkers or movements.

In his chapter on nationalism, for instance, he notes that despite its later populist manifestations, it was originally a top-down movement. He traces the respective roles of university professors and students, schoolteachers, newspapers, and the emerging scholarly field of philology in forging (in both senses of the word) distinct national identities out of the blurred European reality of multiethnic states, regional loyalties, wary peasants, and the Babel of local dialects. And in "Race and Anti-Semitism," he deals not only with the usual suspects (Arthur de Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, whose dueling Aryan theories form a study in delusional contrasts) but with the way scientific achievements like the theory of evolution, advances in public hygiene, and the germ theory inadvertently contributed to new obsessions with ethnic purity and eugenic measures.

Turner's sympathies are clear. He likes the less presumptuous intellectuals, writers of a moderate reformist bent or an empirical, scientific temper: Alexis de Tocqueville, John Stuart Mill, Charles Darwin, Adam Smith, and the pioneering feminist Mary Wollstonecraft. He offers interesting angles on all of them, such as Darwin's eventually repudiated debt to William Paley's *Natural Theology* (1802) and the way Mill's entanglement with the married Harriet Taylor affected his conceptions of liberty, genius, and progress. Like Isaiah Berlin, Turner takes a complex and cautionary view of 19th-century liberalism, and he sees its inherent disadvantages in competition with other philosophies and movements of the time that resembled heavenly visions and fighting faiths.

In fact, most of the figures Turner contemplates were not interested in gradual reform or patient scientific inquiry. They were engaged in a far-flung quest for lost authenticity—or wholeness, or purity, or organic unity, or something equally inspiring and vague and lost. Much of this looks, in retrospect, like a search for new bottles into which the old wine of religious feelings could be poured. So Turner's intellectual history becomes, in large part, a history of intellectuals trying to make a religion out of something that can't actually be one—nature, art, the inner self, primitivism, progress, the distant past, the radiant future, nation, culture, even science—and in the process turning each of them into a myth.


Jean-Jacques Rousseau

This, of course, doesn't always invalidate their criticisms of contemporary society, which could be devastatingly accurate—e.g., Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin on the degrading monotony of modern work. Even while chasing their mirages, they could discover real things, like the beauty of Gothic cathedrals, which Ruskin's evangelism turned into the 19th-century architectural juggernaut known as the Gothic Revival.

Turner devotes one of his best chapters to medievalism. The fascination with medieval legends and lore, with knights errant and damsels in distress and sacred quests, emerged from Romanticism and quickly became a vital part of Western popular culture. For its admirers, it was an age of pure, naïve passions, heroism, and wholehearted faith, or else an age of inspired craftsmanship and organic social forms—one that, in any case, served as the polar opposite of the new utilitarian age. The Middle Ages, much more than the ancient world, formed the childhood of Western civilization, offering the wonder, enchantments, and archetypal figures that childhood retains but that rational, businesslike, bureaucratic modernity seemed to have lost.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Yet Turner overlooks this enduring aspect of Romanticism in Rousseau, William Blake, and William Wordsworth—a longing for an idealized childhood and a sense of childhood as a separate, significant realm. He also overlooks the momentous change in 18th-century sensibility demonstrated by the new penchant for the sublime—soaring mountains, storms, wilderness, and melancholy ruins—that was reflected in the works of Rousseau and Edmund Burke and consummated in Romantic art. Burke, in fact, hardly appears in the book.

But in "The Turn to Subjectivity" and "The Cult of the Artist," Turner seizes on the lasting importance of another aesthetic development.

German idealist philosophy took a plunge into the inner self and emerged cradling a new conception of art and the artist. Art, sometimes along with nature, was seen as an expression of profound inner realities: the unique, autonomous, creative genius of the artist or of some pantheistic or transcendent inner spiritual essence. Art was given a metaphysical status and sacred aura: It was now understood as inherently expressive, with an emphasis on the artist's personality and on radical originality instead of the faithful, self-effacing imitation of nature—or an edifying version of it—found in classical aesthetics. But once sacred mysteries were expected of the artist, mystification often followed, and Turner considers just one form of it in a separate, mordant chapter on Richard Wagner.

Friedrich Nietzsche picked up the cult of the artist and ran with it. His cloudy, lofty, suspiciously godlike Superman may be a super-artist who turns life itself into a work of art. At the very least, the artist gives form and meaning to human life in a formless, meaningless, godless universe: "We have art lest we perish of the truth." Human beings need illusions, and the artist provides them at their best.

Rousseau, despite his own literary and musical gifts, was almost as hostile to the arts as Plato. His ideal was the artless austerity of ancient Sparta. But Turner, bringing his survey full-circle, focuses instead on the contrasting ethical and historical visions of Rousseau and Nietzsche. They make ideal bookends for this shelf of modern writers, being twinned opposites. They had in common not only their nomadic, ailing lives, their Swiss affiliations, and their devotion to music and long, solitary Alpine walks, but also a tendency to see history in terms of a decisive wrong turn, a fall from grace.

For Rousseau, it occurred with the advent of organized society itself, when private property and inequalities of wealth and power eclipsed a primordial state of nature, where equality had prevailed and natural human sympathy prevented violent rivalries. For Nietzsche, the fall came when a robust pagan aristocratic-warrior ethic succumbed, first, to the ethical and metaphysical rationalism of Socrates and Plato, and then to the life-denying ascetic morality of Christianity ("Platonism for the masses"). His saga of leveling "resentment" disguised as morality continued with the French Revolution and its offspring, democracy and socialism, both aiming, in his view, at a herdlike mediocrity and conformity: life with all the risk, adventure, and high aspiration ironed out of it.

Both Nietzsche and Rousseau thus saw in modernity a dismal sequel to the original fall. Rousseau thought modern "progress" was just leading to more inequality and conflict; Nietzsche thought it was leading to not enough of either. Both recommended if not a return to nature a closer approach to it. But Rousseau's nature is pastoral and peaceful, like the imaginary Arcadia of the ancient pagan world. Nietzsche's nature is a sublimely heroic, strenuously life-affirming version of the ancient pagan world itself, and is equally imaginary.

Both writers had great critical gifts, Rousseau's tending toward earnest complaint and Nietzsche's toward astringent irony. But both went trolling in the distant past for myths of authenticity and offered them up as a basis for wiping the slate of modern civilization clean so that something more resilient and redemptive could take its place. And with some honorable exceptions, that is the story of the intellectuals in this book. Some of their myths were harmless; others, like Marxism and militant nationalism, were essentially bombs with long fuses that finally exploded during the 20th century. Nietzsche may or may not have been right about human beings needing illusions, but it's clear that most intellectuals can't live without them. ♦

B&A

The Good Fight

Reflections of a Chinese human rights hero in exile.

BY DAVID AIKMAN

The Barefoot Lawyer
A Blind Man's Fight for Justice and Freedom in China
by Chen Guangcheng
Henry Holt, 330 pp., $30

When Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in Beijing in May 2012 for a top-level conference with Chinese officials on strategic and economic issues, she got much more than she bargained for. A handicapped Chinese human rights activist, Chen Guangcheng, had managed to obtain provisional asylum in the American embassy. Chen, who has been blind since infancy, was well-known to diplomats, journalists, and observers of human rights in China. In a society not sympathetic to people with disabilities, Chen had to fight for the right to obtain a primary school education and then acquire qualifications as a lawyer using the Chinese version of Braille. He came to prominence in the early part of the last decade for trying to draw attention to—and correct—the brutal and egregious persecution of Chinese families who had transgressed the one-child policy.

David Aikman is the author, most recently, of The Mirage of Peace: Understanding the Never-Ending Conflict in the Middle East.

Only 41 years old at the time of his arrival at the embassy, Chen had already conducted many interviews with foreign journalists based in China, and *Newsweek* had run a cover story on him. Secretary Clinton found herself drawn into a multifaceted squabble between the Chinese government and the U.S. State Department on an issue of profound principle to both sides: The United States didn't approve of China's persecution of Chen, and China didn't want any private political activist questioning its policies.

Here, Chen tells his story of having, as a blind person, to overcome challenges from his earliest days growing up in rural Shandong Province. The arc of his life has been a persistent and courageous struggle, not only to overcome the challenges of being disabled in China but to stand up for the rights of ordinary Chinese citizens by employing his legal skills. As a young man, he demanded that officials honor China's law permitting blind citizens to travel free on public transportation. One of his first public battles was to stop a factory spewing its waste into water supplies close to his village. Chen prevailed in this confrontation, with the help of a sympathetic diplomat at the British embassy who helped finance the digging of a new well.

Chen's first head-on confrontation with the Chinese Communist party, however, was when he began to investigate flagrant instances of brutality in the implementation of China's coercive one-child policy. His prominence in human rights struggles had already secured him a brief invitation to the United States, in 2002, and the friendship of New York University law professor Jerome Cohen. Cohen was actively communicating with both Chen and the State Department when Chen first reached the American embassy in Beijing in 2012.

Friendship with American human rights activists was a major count against Chen in his ongoing battle with Chinese authorities, and he paid a high price for it. In 2005, he was kidnapped, held in a "black" (extralegal) prison, and then given a four-year sentence for mobilizing a mob to obstruct traffic. The prison was part of China's infamous forced labor (*laogai*) system, and he was treated brutally during the entire sentence. On his release, he was subjected to a form of house arrest in which his wife and two children were under constant scrutiny by scores of guards, and the Chen family had to endure frequent home invasions by government-sponsored thugs rifling through their scant possessions.

Chen, blind and initially without any assistance, managed to escape from his residence, link up with sympathizers, and make his way to Beijing in a friend's car. His mother and extended family were subject to surveillance, detention, and beatings in the days after Chen made his escape.

At first, from within the American embassy, Chen merely asked for the privilege of seeing his wife and two children and of studying freely at a Chinese university. But the Obama administration found itself in a delicate position, as it was trying to improve strategic relations with the People's Republic of China. According to Chen, President Obama's National Security Council initially considered his human rights to be of less importance than the U.S.-China relationship.

American diplomats, while personally kind and hospitable, made it clear to Chen that he would have to leave the embassy one way or another. But when it became apparent that he would be charged with treason and his family would continue to be harassed—indeed, possibly be beaten or killed—if he stayed in the embassy, Chen changed his request from being allowed to remain in the embassy to obtaining political asylum in the United States. In the end, he was allowed to go to the United States with his family, initially to study at NYU, and more recently to be a fellow of the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton.

Chen Guangcheng and his wife Yuan Weijing at the National Press Club (2013)

YURI GRIPAS / REUTERS / NEWSCOM

This is a genuinely inspiring book, both in its account of how Chen has dealt with his disability throughout his life and in its story of his unrelenting resistance to the oppression and mendacity of the Chinese Communist authorities. He was inspired, in childhood, by the stories his father would read to him about China's historical heroes in the fight against injustice. Without question, Chen Guangcheng's story may now be added to those annals. ♦

B&A

Austen in Haste

The latest iteration of the fungible Emma.

BY JULIANNE DUDLEY

Perhaps no other Jane Austen novel lends itself so well to modern interpretation as *Emma*. Considered by many to be Austen's magnum opus, *Emma* features a heroine who, though "handsome, clever, and rich," is judgmental, arrogant, presumptuous, and, at times, callous. She is deeply flawed, and her faults are less forgivable than, say, Elizabeth Bennet's. It is these very flaws, though, that make Emma a relatable heroine for modern audiences: She is multilayered, and her self-assured attitude is less of an anomaly today than it would have been in the early 19th century.

A prime example of this is Amy Heckerling's film *Clueless* (1995), which transposes *Emma* into the world of privileged Beverly Hills high school students. Cher Horowitz (Alicia Silverstone), with her long blond hair and impeccable wardrobe, is easily cast as the updated version of a character who, even Jane Austen admitted, "no one but myself will much like." Heckerling devised ingenious ways of modernizing key plot points, and the microcosm of high school allows Emma to reign supreme in a way that otherwise would not have made sense in today's (largely) classless society.

More recently, a web series entitled *Emma Approved* turned Emma into a twentysomething life coach/matchmaker/event planner who runs her own company and records her day-to-day activities for the benefit of the admiring multitudes. The character fits perfectly into the 21st-century landscape of vainglorious self-representation: Of course Emma would have a vlog.

Julianne Dudley is an assistant editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Emma
A Modern Retelling
by Alexander McCall Smith
Pantheon, 368 pp., $25.95

Alicia Silverstone in 'Clueless' (1995)

Now we have Alexander McCall Smith's attempt at modernizing *Emma*. Smith, a prolific author best known for his No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, might have been worthy of the challenge. However, as is so often the case with Austen adaptations and sequels, the result is disappointing.

The book begins charmingly enough. Mr. Woodhouse's pantophobia is reimagined as being the result of Cold War fear-mongering and an overly protective mother. Other details are less well thought out. How is it, for example, that so many orphans exist in a 21st-century English village? In the early 19th century, myriad maladies and poor medical care meant that it was not uncommon for children to lose one or both parents at a young age. When the same number of characters are parentless in the 21st century, it seems more like laziness on the part of the author. As Lady Bracknell says to Mr. Worthing in *The Importance of Being Earnest*: "To lose one parent . . . may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness."

Where Smith fails is in his attempt to simply rewrite Austen's *Emma*. He follows the same basic plot and even keeps the same location—a large estate in the English countryside—changing details only when necessary for the time shift (Emma drives a Mini Cooper rather than a horse and carriage). The focus is on the modernization gimmick, and as a stand-alone novel, it makes almost no sense. The characters are underdeveloped, the situations are forced, the prose lacks passion, and Smith spends so long on exposition that almost no action occurs until the very end.

Mr. Knightley, one of Austen's finest characters (and who, unlike Emma, everyone must like), is inexplicably absent for most of the novel. In fact, he does not even speak until halfway through. The ultimate coming-together of Emma and Knightley—which should, at least in retrospect, seem a perfect resolution—is here no more than an afterthought. Smith offers more hints of Emma's possible homosexual longing for her pretty young friend Harriet than of her growing tenderness for Knightley. And as problematic as a lesbian Emma would be, I was strangely intrigued by the idea, because then at least this novel would have something original to offer. As it is, why introduce the issue at all?

Conversely, Smith spends pages setting up the relationship between Emma's sister Izzy and Knightley's brother John—only to have those characters disappear completely from the plot. A reader not familiar with the source material would doubtless be at a loss as to why they exist at all. (In Jane Austen's version, the marriage of those two characters creates an excuse for the

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unusually close friendship that exists between Knightley and Emma. Today, women and men need no such excuse.)

It is worth noting that Smith wrote this novel on commission, as part of The Austen Project, which aims to produce updated versions of each of Austen's six masterpieces. "[I]f you are an author and a publisher sidles up to you and asks you to rewrite a Jane Austen novel ... what do you say?" he wrote recently in the *Wall Street Journal*. "It took me no more than 45 seconds to say yes." Unfortunately, he seems to have taken a similarly hasty approach to the actual writing of the novel.

Of course, as we approach the 200th anniversary of *Emma* next year, the truest way to show appreciation for Jane Austen's genius would be to give the original another read. Or better yet, introduce someone to it. ♦

B&A

Proust in English

How much is the author and how much is the translator? BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.

Chasing Lost Time
The Life of C.K. Scott Moncrieff: Soldier, Spy, and Translator
by Jean Findlay
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 368 pp., $30

Those who venture upon the heights of Mount Proust are well aware that his fame in the English-speaking world owes much to a Scots translator, C.K. Scott Moncrieff. Proust's masterpiece, *À la recherche du temps perdu*, certainly among the half-dozen literary classics of the 20th century, with its syntactic challenges, ruminations, and comic storytelling, would be far less familiar without Moncrieff's prodigious labors. But who, exactly, was C.K. Scott Moncrieff?

Until now, the author of the classic English translation of Proust's seven volumes in French has been a shadowy mystery man. And no wonder, given that Charles K. Scott Moncrieff maintained at least half-a-dozen identities, one of which—his sexual orientation—was known only to close friends. Now, this mysterious figure steps from the shadows in a diligently researched biography by his great-great-niece, Jean Findlay. She has discovered a more adventurous ancestor than could well have been invented—even, perhaps, by Marcel Proust himself: Scots nationalist, Winchester scholar and failed Oxford applicant, Edinburgh-trained lawyer, Great War officer and decorated hero, Roman Catholic convert, cruising homosexual, literary scholar and critic, man of the world with a circle of loyal and admiring friends—and, toward the end of his brief life, British spy in Mussolini's Italy.

Edwin M. Yoder Jr. is a former editor and columnist in Washington.

C.K. Scott Moncrieff

All these identities notwithstanding, Scott Moncrieff primarily justifies biographical attention as the eloquent author of what is widely regarded as the greatest of 20th-century translations and one of the best in the history of translation: a work fit to stand with the King James Bible and Sir Thomas North's Plutarch, which nourished Shakespeare.

An enduring issue lies at the heart of *Chasing Lost Time*: How free or literal should the ideal translator be, how idiomatic in the language into which he renders a masterwork? One classic discussion of this perennial question is not to be found in Findlay's diligent study: It is a debate about the translation of Alexander Pushkin. A half-century ago, Edmund Wilson and Vladimir Nabokov conducted an acrid debate on the English versions of Pushkin's seminal work, *Eugene Onegin*. Nabokov, whose native language was Russian and whose adoptive mastery of English rivals Joseph Conrad's, wrote a lumpy and literal translation. Wilson, self-taught in Russian, translated freely, in smooth, idiomatic English. The argument became more than a bit vitriolic when Nabokov pronounced that any less-than-literal translation is inherently false—borderline trash, in his view.

Their argument is well worth reviewing, for Scott Moncrieff's version of Proust raises identical issues concerning the art of translation. And, but for his English rendition of Proust's seven fat volumes, his name would remain obscure. Not merely did Scott Moncrieff write (or create?) an eloquent book in English—"a masterpiece," in the judgment of F. Scott Fitzgerald, with which Conrad himself agreed, finding it better reading than the French original. He also translated freely, taking huge liberties with the phrasing and, more than occasionally, substituting English equivalents not to be found in Larousse.

To Proust's displeasure, Scott Moncrieff decorated his work with romantic titular lines from English poetry. From Shakespeare's Sonnet 30, he drew the

overall title, *Remembrance of Things Past*, which is distant in English idiom from Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*, whose sense is "The Search (or Quest) for Lost Time." As Proust pointed out in a mild rejoinder—he was on his deathbed in 1922 when the translation of the first volume, *Swann's Way*, appeared—the quest for a vanished or forgotten past evokes his principal theme and the hero's moments of pleasurable recall, the most familiar of which is stimulated by scallop-shaped cake suffused in lime tea that evokes memories of his cherished Aunt Leonie.

Proust was slow to react: "a reticent devil," the translator scoffed, after several attempts to get his attention. *Swann's Way*, as Scott Moncrieff called the first volume (after *swansweg* from *Beowulf*) was again distant from the French *Du côté de chez Swann*—a direction in which the young Proust and his family walked, not a manner. Another problem was what to call the volume that Proust had entitled *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, with explicit allusion to the activity sometimes rudely named for the first of those biblical place names. Scott Moncrieff and his publishers, both English and American, wished to avoid the attentions of censors, and so the inexplicit title *Cities of the Plain* was adopted.

Most students of translation would sympathize with Proust's mild complaint, for in the process of writing a masterpiece, Scott Moncrieff leaped over the boundaries of literal fidelity. A learned friend of mine, fluent in Proust's French, who has read the translation through, writes:

> Scott Moncrieff makes [Proust] sound eloquent in a Ruskinian voice, missing the naughtiness, the mockery and detachment, and giving excessive solemnity and nobility to the flatter narrative—when it is that. *Prends l'éloquence et torts-lui son cou*. Proust didn't do exactly that, but he was aware of the necessity to avoid consistent monumentality.

(The French phrase, meaning, in effect, "Wring the neck of eloquence," is cousin to the familiar admonition that writers should "murder their darlings"—that is, avoid grandiloquence.)

Jean Findlay is not a partisan of either view, and she assumes, in her pivotal chapter on "Translating Proust," that her ancestor's work needs no defense. She seems to have read a shelf of books on translation but contents herself, finally, with citing a familiar encapsulation of the Wilson-Naboklov debate: A translation, like a mistress, may be either faithful or beautiful, but it cannot be both. Even that, however, is a debatable proposition.

Along with this crucial chapter, the topic of which is the crux of any book about a famous translator, Findlay tells a vivid story of her kinsman. Though he died of cancer at 40, Scott Moncrieff was a loving colleague and son who, from a slender purse, generously subsidized the education of nieces, nephews, and siblings. He also seems to have led a very active sexual life and was seemingly at ease with his unconventionality. Findlay suggests that he found spiritual ease in the confessional system favored by his acquired Catholic faith and in the company of several women who adored him, including his very literary mother. It is a piquant circumstance that the only male friend in whom he freely confided was Oscar Wilde's son, Vyvyan Holland, whose lusty pursuit of women matched his father's ill-fated pursuit of the rent boys of Edwardian London.

Scott Moncrieff, whose left leg was crippled by a battlefield explosion on the Western Front (in a war he relished), lived a brief but intense life. And while he translated, in memorable fashion, other writers—Stendhal in French, Pirandello in Italian—*Remembrance of Things Past* stands as his monument, one any literary gent in any age would covet. ♦

B&A

Mission Improbable

The increasingly unwilling suspension of disbelief.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Mission: Impossible–Rogue Nation
Directed by Christopher McQuarrie

Mission: Impossible–Rogue Nation makes no sense. Even more striking, this fifth installment in the Tom Cruise movie series based on the 1960s television show doesn't even try to make sense.

For example, Cruise's character Ethan Hunt doesn't know the name or identity or nationality or anything whatever about the movie's villain, Solomon Lane. He's also cut off from all sources of intelligence, because he has been branded a rogue agent by the CIA. But then Hunt gets back in touch with one of his ex-colleagues on the now-disbanded Impossible Missions Force and reveals that he has "reason to believe" Lane will be at the Vienna Opera House during a performance of *Turandot*.

Wouldn't you know it—he's right!

Later, Hunt has to hold his breath underwater for three minutes. He ends up underwater for more than three minutes. He drowns. Then someone comes by and gets his body, which takes another minute. The person pulls him onto a rock, gets a defibrillator from out of nowhere, charges it up, and Hunt springs back to life. He's dizzy and woozy and can barely walk, but in about 30 seconds he's driving in a high-speed chase through the streets of Casablanca.

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

Rebecca Ferguson as Ilsa Faust

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

One of Hunt's ex-colleagues is under suspicion of being in touch with him. The CIA polygraphs the guy weekly. He passes every polygraph test, even though he's lying. How?

And on and on it goes. Hunt's people can do everything brilliantly, but when the plot demands it, Luther Stickell (played by the awesome Ving Rhames) loses track of someone who's five feet away from him in an airport.

Look, nobody expects an international spy thriller to be credible. You don't go to one of these movies, or to a James Bond film, because you actually believe genius madmen live in underground volcanoes or have assassins working for them who can shoot people and ski-jump at the same time. But it's annoying when characters are granted magical powers over space and time and life, which has always been the profound weakness of the *Mission: Impossible* series.

As the title promises, this movie places its characters in impossible situations. But it allows them to extract themselves from these impossible situations using essentially supernatural means, and that's a cheat.

The writer-director Christopher McQuarrie knows this in some way, which is why he begins the movie with an amazing stunt in which we can see Tom Cruise himself is attached to the outside of a plane as it takes off from an airfield and goes straight up into the sky. The purpose of this shot is precisely to locate Cruise and his character in some kind of extreme version of reality and make your jaw drop. But once that bit is over, it's all transparent and embarrassing fakery.

I guess moviegoers mostly don't mind this; I've written before about how ever since the *Lethal Weapon* movies back in the 1980s cars have been granted magical powers to not get flat tires or stop running when other cars crash into them. But here's the important thing: While others might not mind, *I do*.

There's one reason and one reason only to see *Rogue Nation*, and that's an actress new to the big screen named Rebecca Ferguson. She plays a spy with the exceedingly unlikely name of Ilsa Faust who saves Hunt's life but whose allegiances appear to shift with every scene. Rebecca Ferguson is beautiful but not in the least fragile, and she radiates command. She all but chews up Tom Cruise and spits him out with languid hauteur. Despite her conventional Anglo name, she's actually a Swede with an English mother, so she speaks with a British accent that is nearly flawless but a trifle odd around the edges. It lends her character exactly the kind of mystery she needs, and she is altogether, from first moment to last, sensational. This makes her the second major Nordic discovery of 2015, after Alicia Vikander, who played the gorgeous robot in *Ex Machina* and will appear in no fewer than five other movies before the year's end.

Tom Cruise has been a star for more than 30 years; Rebecca Ferguson may still be around in 2045—by which time maybe cars really will be able, at long last, to fly. ♦

"[Hillary Clinton] entered her second presidential race this spring with nearly universal name recognition. But her campaign staff viewed the situation differently, calling her the least-known famous person in the world; the public view is of the former first lady, senator and secretary of State, but not the woman herself. So as Clinton tours early primary states and holds intimate gatherings with voters, she seems to go out of her way to share the kinds of details voters may not have known."

—Los Angeles Times, *July 27, 2015*

, AUGUST 11, 2015 *washingtonpost.com* • *$1.50*

At long last, Clinton reveals her true self

ONCE HAD CRUSH ON PAULY SHORE

Suffered for years from bunion

BY DANIEL BALZAC

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Customers inside the Red Arrow Diner leaned in closely as Hillary Clinton whispered, "There's something else you don't know about me. Sometimes ... I have ketchup with my eggs." She then added, "But that's just between us!" and let out a ferocious laugh.

The revelation is part of the candidate's reintroduction to voters. As Jennifer Palmieri, Clinton's director of communications, explained, "America has only known her in her limited capacity as first lady, senator, and secretary of state, but they don't really know anything substantive about her." As an example, Palmieri said Clinton was enamored of actor Pauly Shore. "After seeing 'Encino Man,' she was hooked. They exchanged emails, too, but these have since been deleted."

BARBARA KINNEY FOR HILLARY FOR AMERICA

Hillary Clinton discusses shampoo and conditioner brands with diners at Kiki's Chicken and Waffles in Columbia, S.C., on Monday.

Palmieri also noted the candidate's habit of flipping on light switches with her elbows to avoid germs. When asked to confirm this, Clinton admitted, "It's true, I'm a bit of a germophobe. But then again, I haven't had to flip on my own light switches since 1992."

Back at the Red Arrow Diner, Clinton chatted up the customers at the counter. "Did I mention that when I clip my nails, I just leave them scattered on the rug? My toenails, I mean. My point is to remind you all that I am just like you. So on the rare occasion I miss my pedi appointment, I'll clip my own nails and let the shrapnel fly. So when you think of toenails, think of me. Are you going to eat that?"

Clinton greeted more voters in the parking lot. "Thanks for coming! On my feet every day, it's not easy. Even with these comfortable shoes, I'm talking blisters, corns, and calluses. And now I've got this enormous

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RNC revamps debate rules

Eligibility to depend on candidate hairstyle