

**HILLARY CLINTON'S
MALFEASANCE**
JAY COST

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WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HIGH CULTURE?

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

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Don't Be Stampeded Away from Meat

The World Health Organization's announcement last week that bacon and processed meats cause cancer may well cause an untold number of premature deaths, and THE SCRAPBOOK has a sneaking suspicion that the political overseers at the WHO would be fine with that outcome.

Trying to avoid cancer is tricky: While stopping smoking clearly reduces cancer risks, changing a diet to reduce risk is more problematic. People have to eat, and if they eat less of one type of food, they invariably substitute some other food in its place. Usually, that other food isn't salad—it's often something else that's not terribly salutary.

For years, the U.S. government has been trying to get people to eat less fatty meat, and it's been an unmitigated disaster. In the early 1990s, the first Bush administration introduced regulations mandating food labels indicate the amount of saturated fat contained in each serving of food, expressed as a proportion of the daily recommended allowance.

The labeling amounted to a big nudge to get people to eat less saturated fat, and Americans duly complied: Consumption of beef, pork,

and eggs diminished while chicken skyrocketed. But Americans did more than just substitute white meat for red: A lot of us ate more carbs to make up for the red meat we were virtuously eschewing.

Science now tells us that this was a



Don't blame me.

grievous mistake: The unprecedented weight gain in the populace the last 25 years—along with the alarming increase in the incidence of diabetes—may in fact stem largely from this change in our diets.

In the last couple of years science has concluded what the practitioners of the Atkins and South Beach diets have told us for some time: We need to eat less bread and other carbohydrates if we want to stay in fighting shape. While science may have done a 180

on diet and weight gain, politicians haven't caught up. Until recently the Obama administration pressed to extend the same broken labeling system to delis and cafeterias, belatedly backing off only when it became difficult to find anyone in their echo chamber of experts willing to say it was a good idea.

The World Health Organization does not have those political constraints. While it has no ability to issue regulations—at least not any that could jam lettuce down our throats—its edicts still matter, as there will undoubtedly be at least a few countries that will take the cue and impose the same sort of fatally flawed labeling system that persuaded us to eat less meat.

Given the disastrous consequences of our own labeling system, why would the WHO sound this alarm? A cynic might suggest an ulterior motive for this announcement was—wait for it—climate change: More people eating meat means more cows and pigs, leading to more methane and more crops grown and the vicious cycle that brings us all one day closer to armageddon. When the very survival of the planet is at stake, a higher incidence of obesity and diabetes is a small price to pay. ♦

Climate Shenanigans

In a recent interview with *Politico*, Al Gore made a pretty remarkable claim about climate change: “All the predictions of the scientists have come true in spades, except it's now abundantly obvious that they erred on the conservative side.” Whatever side you come down on in the climate change debate, this statement

is patently absurd. In fact, more than a few climate change activists have noted that a generation of alarmism hasn't helped their cause. And it's downright galling to hear such tripe coming from Gore, who claimed that the polar ice cap would be gone in as little as five years—a prediction he made in 2007, 2008, and 2009.

The fact is that alarmist climate scientists continue to do little to help

themselves. For a while now, they have been vexed by why warming appears to have paused for 15 years. Well, this summer scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a paper saying the data actually show no pause in global warming and concluding that it was, in fact, accelerating. They reached this conclusion by “correcting” the previous data to

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show that temperatures before the pause were lower than previously recorded, and more recent temperatures were warmer than reported.

If that sounds arbitrary and suspicious to you—well, you're not alone. Rep. Lamar Smith asked NOAA to produce the data used in their study so Congress could look at them. Naturally, the climate change community was outraged by such impertinence from a climate change denier such as the Texas Republican, e.g., *Slate* characterized this move as “More Global Warming Nonsense from Congress.”

Their outrage is going to be pretty hard to sustain, however. That's because NOAA is declining to respond to the House's subpoena and produce the documentation the House science committee is requesting. “It is a long-standing practice in the scientific community to protect the confidentiality of deliberative scientific discussions,” NOAA said in a statement to *Nature*.

The idea that scientific process should not be fully transparent, especially when it's publicly funded, is a bold assertion. Especially since the climate change community is still reeling from events in 2009, when hacked emails from the University of East Anglia showed climate scientists apparently colluding to deal with inconvenient data. And never mind that peer review is essential to the scientific process. Saying complete transparency runs counter to “a long-standing practice in the scientific community” is, well, unscientific.

This stonewalling is even more appalling when you consider that in September, 20 notable climate scientists signed a letter asking the White House to use antiracketeering laws to go after fossil fuel companies. This idea had been floated by Democratic senator Sheldon Whitehouse in the *Washington Post* in May.

Who's being unreasonable here? Rep. Smith wants climate scientists to show taxpayers the work they're paying for. Climate scientists and Democratic senators want to use racketeering laws to throw their critics in jail.



THE SCRAPBOOK is more than willing to consider scientific evidence that climate change is real and man-made. But threatening to criminalize the debate does not suggest that climate change alarmists are confident the truth is on their side. ♦

Two, Three, Many Children

Last week, while Americans were watching the World Series and John Harwood's presidential debate buffoonery, the Chinese government did something interesting: It killed the one-child policy.

First formulated in 1979, one-child

was a brutal but effective regime. Through a combination of propaganda, intimidation, fines, forced sterilizations, and forced abortions, the Chinese government was remarkably successful in lowering the country's fertility rate. In 1980, the average Chinese woman had 2.7 children over the course of her lifetime. In its first iteration, one-child forced all couples to apply for state permission before having a baby. Urban residents and government employees were then capped at one; in rural provinces, couples were often allowed to have a second child if they so desired (the state approved of more agricultural laborers). By 2000, the average Chinese woman was having somewhere

between 1.3 and 1.9 children. (Health statistics in China aren't as reliable as you might imagine.)

But China found that the economics of subreplacement fertility eventually become challenging. When a country has been below the replacement fertility rate of 2.1 births per woman for long enough, the age structure of the population inverts, giving you many more old people than young. Which leads to all sorts of problems.

In 2002, they eliminated the need for couples to ask permission before having a first child. That didn't raise the fertility rate enough, so in 2013, the Communist government declared that in any family where one of the parents was an only child, permission would be granted by the state to have a second child.

The early returns suggest that this move is also not having enough of an effect—only about 12 percent of eligible couples applied for permission. So now one-child has been replaced by a policy under

which anyone in China who desires two kids can have them.

Why does China want more babies? Because today 10 percent of its population is over the age of 65. In 20 years that percentage will double. By 2050, one out of every four Chinese will be over 65. With the attendant weakness in the labor pool and financial drain of supporting so many elderly, the Chinese economy will be hardpressed to cope.

For the few remaining ideologues who deny the social and economic costs of low fertility, China's reversal is a striking piece of contradictory evidence. In the West, environmentalist dogma long championed China's one-child as a brave move to spare Mother Gaia the horrors of overpopulation. But whatever else you want to say about them, the ChiComs are ruthless in maximizing their strategic advantages and remarkably impervious to Western cant.

Whatever its effect on fertility rates, the loosening should be cheered by everyone who cares for freedom. ♦

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Speaker Ryan

Overcoming deep personal ambivalence and a battery of attacks from conservative complainers outside Congress, Paul Ryan became the 62nd speaker of the House on October 29, 2015. To call this improbable understates the case. Not primarily because Ryan is young (he's 45) or because Ryan is first a policy maven (his colleagues used to worry that he was too wonky to be an effective communicator) or because Ryan is an inveterate optimist in an age of pessimism (though his sanguinity is irrepressible).

The fact that Ryan is today the most important Republican in Washington—the de facto leader of the new GOP establishment—is surprising for another reason. Ryan rose after years as a leading antiestablishment agitator on one of the most important domestic policy issues of our time.

In January 2007, the national debt was roughly \$9 trillion. Long-term projections had it growing exponentially and inexorably, driven by entitlements. Ryan, frustrated by the inability to get things done in Congress, considered leaving when Democrats took the House in November 2006. He did not. But liberated by his willingness to walk away, Ryan cast aside the long-held, nearly unanimous view that entitlements were the “third rail” of American politics and crafted a plan to reform them. When he presented an early version to Republicans on the House Ways and Means Committee, his proposal was met with skepticism and disbelief. One member who attended the briefing said many of his colleagues were “running for cover.”

Ryan moved forward anyway. On May 21, 2008, without warning the leaders of his own party, Ryan introduced the legislative version of his plan: A Roadmap for America's Future. “When I wrote this, I didn't ask the leadership for permission,” Ryan told us in 2012. “I figured, ask forgiveness later and not permission first.”

The bill had eight original cosponsors and was largely ignored, at least initially. But in private, Washington Republicans lined up to urge Ryan to shelve his program. He declined. In January 2010, on the same day Barack Obama gave his first State of the Union address, Ryan published a long op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal*, touting his reforms as an alternative to the president's statist policies. “It is based on a fundamentally different vision from the one now prevailing in Washington. It focuses the government on its proper

role. It restrains government spending, and hence limits the size of government itself.”

Democrats howled in opposition. So did the Republican establishment. GOP donors lit up phone lines on Capitol Hill urging Minority Leader John Boehner to put Ryan back in his box. “Parts of it are well done,” said Boehner, before undercutting Ryan's effort. “Other parts I have some doubts about, in terms of how good the policy is.” The Republican party infrastructure warned its members about even mentioning Ryan's reforms. In August 2010, a press secretary for the NRCC sent out an “Alert” to GOP campaigns across the country:



MSNBC is trying to convince a Republican candidate to go on the Dylan Ratigan Show tonight and support the Paul Ryan Roadmap, therefore supporting Social Security privatization. Please do NOT accept this invitation; it will not end well.

In addition, if you receive any questions about the Roadmap, please contact me before answering any questions.

The National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) offered the same advice, telling candidates to avoid discussing entitlements at all costs. Republican consultants who met regularly to discuss how to defeat Democrats were instead spending much of their time plotting against Ryan and his Roadmap. Republicans on K Street protested.

But across the country, grassroots conservatives embraced the reforms, and many candidates chose to run on them. (Ryan's office received more than 100 requests for briefings during the 2010 cycle.)

“I think the validation of the 2010 elections gave leadership the courage to proceed—2010 woke people up,” Ryan said. “The 87 new freshman were a welcome burst of energy, and I think leadership understood that they had two choices: They could lead the parade, or they could get out of the way.”

In January 2011, Ryan gave the GOP response to Obama's State of the Union, highlighting his vision of conservative governance. By spring, Republicans in both chambers of Congress had voted for Ryan's budget, and his reforms had become official Republican policy. And in 2012, of course, he was chosen as Mitt Romney's running mate.

In short order, then, the antiestablishment agitator became a leading party spokesman, and his reforms were the official party line. Ryan didn't do the bidding of the

Republican establishment. He fought the establishment and won. And eventually the establishment was doing his bidding—on the critical domestic policy concern of our time.

Now conservatives—in Congress and outside—have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build a strong governing majority based on the limited government principles that stirred the Founders and have animated Republicans for more than a century. There will be policy and strategic and tactical differences, big and small. But with bold, thoughtful leadership, such differences can be a source of strength for an ideological movement or a political party.

We trust Speaker Paul Ryan will provide that leadership.

—Stephen F. Hayes

A Good Start

On October 27, the House of Representatives moved to impeach the commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, John Koskinen. It may seem odd that Koskinen is being punished since he wasn't commissioner when the IRS scandal broke two years ago. But make no mistake, Koskinen is a worthy candidate for impeachment.

To get to the bottom of the scandal—the deliberate slow-walking or outright denial of applications for tax-exempt status from conservative groups—Congress subpoenaed all the emails of the IRS's Exempt Organizations Unit head, Lois Lerner. Koskinen, who was sworn in as commissioner on December 23, 2013, failed to act on this subpoena, and on March 4, 2014, the agency erased 422 backup tapes, destroying as many as 24,000 of Lerner's emails, despite a congressional order mandating relevant IRS records be preserved.

Koskinen knowingly sat on the information that the emails had been destroyed for four months. When he finally offered an explanation of what had happened to the emails, it was buried on page seven of the third attachment to a letter sent to the Senate Finance Committee in a Friday news dump. Koskinen testified before Congress that he had personally confirmed that none of the IRS's other email backup tapes was recoverable.

This was a lie. Employees from the inspector general's office later drove to the IRS office in West Virginia, where the backup tapes were kept, and asked for whatever was there. They recovered 700 backup tapes, and with them 1,000 new emails from Lois Lerner. Finally, a Government Accountability Office report in July indicated that the agency had introduced no new safeguards to prevent the targeting of "organizations' religious, educational, political, or other views" despite a clear mandate to do so.

Koskinen is just the most prominent federal employee recently implicated in malfeasance. To recap:

■ Lois Lerner had a history of targeting conservatives at

the Federal Election Commission before going to the IRS. In emails, she called conservatives "crazies" and "a—holes." She admitted in a press conference that the targeting of conservative groups that she had engaged in was wrong. Yet just the other day, on October 23, the Justice Department announced it was bringing no charges against her. She received \$129,300 in bonuses in the three years leading up to the scandal and retired with a full pension.

■ Coincidentally, on October 22, the Justice Department's inspector general revealed that half the drug enforcement agents investigated for attending parties with prostitutes in Colombia received bonuses either during the investigation into their conduct or later.

■ After poor management at the Veterans Administration was implicated in numerous deaths, the *New York Times* reported in April that "at most three" VA employees lost their jobs. A September inspector general's report revealed that VA employees were getting around having their bonuses frozen as a result of the scandal by creating new positions at the agency, then volunteering to relocate for these jobs—and collecting exorbitant expenses related to the move. One VA executive relocating to Philadelphia collected \$274,019. The inspector general's report declared this "inappropriate," but conceded that the payoffs were "generally allowable under Federal and VA policy."

The federal bureaucracy has always been bad at policing employees, but President Obama bears direct responsibility for the problem getting immeasurably worse. Last year, 47 of the 73 federal inspectors general signed a letter decrying the Obama administration for stonewalling their investigations and in some cases actively intimidating investigators. Recall that Obama actually fired the inspector general at the Corporation for National and Community Service, Gerald Walpin, in 2009 for reporting that Sacramento mayor and Obama pal Kevin Johnson was abusing funds from AmeriCorps. Since then, Johnson's term as mayor has been marked by a series of scandals that echo Walpin's charges.

But the GOP can't be content merely to have the House impeach Koskinen. (Democrats in the Senate, whose campaigns are underwritten by federal employee unions, will likely impede any effort to unseat the IRS head.) The House already held Eric Holder, then attorney general, in contempt for lying and withholding records in the Fast and Furious gunrunning investigation, and that had no salutary effect on conduct. It shouldn't take impeachment proceedings to fire a federal employee, and yet that's almost the only recourse.

In 2013, Cory Gardner—in the House at the time, now a senator—proposed legislation (HR 2679) that would exclude the Internal Revenue Service from the relevant and onerous federal labor-management-relations statutes that make accountability impossible. The GOP should pass and expand that bill to include the VA and the Drug Enforcement Administration and otherwise assure all two million federal employees that if they abuse their power or don't do their job they will be fired.

But even this is only a starting point. Democrats have long understood personnel is policy. For decades, the administrative state has continued to extend its reach. So long as the people enforcing our laws and regulations are union liberals with broad immunity, the rule of law will depend on those individuals' views and choices.

To address the systemic problem, the GOP has to reclaim Congress's oversight power and push for sweeping civil service reforms. Without them, no significant conservative policy overhaul will ever be implemented, and Americans will be increasingly subject to a complex web of unaccountable and unconstitutional administrative fiefdoms.

—Mark Hemingway

Iran Unleashed

Last week, the Obama White House moved to ensure Hezbollah's ability to point 100,000 missiles at Israel. That's not how they would describe it, of course. But it was the Obama administration—as U.S. officials are quietly letting on—and not Russia that invited Iran to participate in talks in Vienna to resolve the Syrian civil war. By doing so, the White House legitimized the Islamic Republic as a “stakeholder” whose interests in Syria must be respected. But of course, Iran has only one interest in Syria, which is to protect its ally, Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, whose regime facilitates the transfer of missiles to Hezbollah.

The administration admits as much. As the head of the State Department's Bureau of Near East Affairs, Anne Patterson told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week, “What [Iran is] looking for is a Syria that protects their interests and particularly their access to Hezbollah.”

Why doesn't this seem to bother the White House? Hezbollah is a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization. Its primary campaign is against Israel, while it threatens other regional actors traditionally regarded as American allies, like Saudi Arabia. It has plenty of American blood on its hands, as well. From the 1983 bombings of the U.S. embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut to the Iraq war, Hezbollah has targeted U.S. military and diplomatic personnel for more than three decades.

You might think that the government of the United States has an interest in severing the weapons supply line between Iran and a terrorist organization waging war against an American ally. But that's old thinking. Obama is building a new Middle East on the foundation of the Iranian nuclear deal, which foresees a balance of powers among all the regional actors that will bring stability to a wildly volatile neighborhood. Everyone needs to be deterred, including American allies. So as the White House sees it, Iran's supplying Hezbollah with weapons that it points

at Israel is a necessary condition of Middle East peace.

The administration sought previously, in January 2014, to include Iran in talks over the Syrian war. Iran refused to accept the condition that Assad would have to leave. Saudi Arabia objected, and the administration walked the plan back, hanging the fiasco on U.N. general secretary Ban Ki-moon. Iran has not changed its position—Assad will stay, says Tehran. The Russians aren't budging either—they, too, insist that the Syrian president isn't going anywhere. The White House has long regretted Obama's August 2011 demand that Assad step aside and has stated its willingness to let the Syrian dictator stay on for at least a “transitional” period.

What's different now is that the administration has backed traditional allies into a corner with the Iranian nuclear deal. When Saudi Arabia reluctantly gave its support to the deal with Tehran, it conceded any political or diplomatic clout it had in resolving the Syrian conflict in its favor. The White House strong-armed Turkey as well, enlisting Kurdish parties at war with Ankara into its anti-ISIS campaign.

The other big change is Vladimir Putin's military escalation in Syria. The administration had long argued that there was no military solution to the four-and-a-half-year-old conflict, only a political one. The reality is that Putin's military solution has paved the way for a political solution, which the White House at least tacitly supports. It has no choice, really, since Putin calls the shots now. Kerry says he wants everyone who has a stake in Syria at the table, but the deck is stacked against those who want Assad gone, like Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Kerry's goal in Vienna is to end the war, but to get Russia and Iran to agree, he'll have to concede their key demand—Assad stays. Therefore, the administration's role is to line up everyone behind Russia and Iran, to pressure Assad and thus Iran's supply line to Hezbollah.

It's worth noting that while Tehran has three seats at the table in Vienna (the governments it controls in Lebanon and Iraq as well as its own), Israel wasn't invited, even though the Syrian war touches directly on Jerusalem's national security. A soon-to-be-nuclear state putting missiles on Israel's borders is a serious matter, but that's not how the White House sees it—or Russia for that matter.

Israel's absence from Vienna underscores a key fact that should give pause to those who believe Russia's presence in Syria isn't that big a problem, that Israel can do business with Putin, that Russia's interests are not the same as Iran's and therefore it's only a matter of time before the two powers fall out. That's delusional. Vienna is evidence that Russia and Iran's interests are in alignment—Assad stays. But it's not hard to see why American allies are fooling themselves, for the reality is much harder to believe. The Obama administration has legitimized Iran's supply line to Hezbollah. By bringing Iran to Vienna, the White House has legitimized the Islamic Republic's war against Israel.

—Lee Smith

Rome's Obama

What happened at Pope Francis's synod on the family. BY JONATHAN V. LAST

Pope Francis's synod on the family adjourned on Sunday, October 25, after an acrimonious three weeks. This assembly of bishops, like a similar one last year, was convened because the pope is interested in changing Catholic teaching on divorce, remarriage, and, to a lesser extent, homosexuality.

How so? The pope's favorite theologian seems to be the German cardinal Walter Kasper, who has long argued that, *pace* the explicit words of Jesus Christ, marriage is a dissoluble institution. Kasper believes that the Catholic church should recognize divorce and subsequent remarriages—readmitting such Catholics to holy communion—and that it ought to be more “open” to homosexual couples, too. (The exact details of what this openness entails are never concretely defined.)

Because Francis is a Jesuit, he presented the two synods as beautiful opportunities to dialogue—Jesuits love this verb—on Cardinal Kasper's propositions. But make no mistake: The synods were not a dialogue. They were a fight between a small group of clerics that wants to revolutionize the doctrines of the church and a larger group that wants to preserve them.

At the conclusion of the fight, both the traditionalists and progressives claimed victory. Both were wrong.

To give a sense of the quality of the “dialogue” at the synod, consider a few highlights:

Jonathan V. Last is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

■ The day before the synod convened, Monsignor Krzysztof Charamsa, a Vatican priest assigned to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was ousted because it was revealed that he was (1) gay; (2) with a



long-term boyfriend; and (3) planning a public protest outside the synod against the church's “homophobia” (his word).

■ Going into the synod, the pope established new bureaucratic procedures that did away with the traditional democratic processes and granted power to small groups of appointed bishops. To wit: The priests charged with drafting the synod working documents were appointed by

Francis rather than elected by their peers. At the close of a synod, this drafting committee presents a final document. Traditionally, the assembly then votes on each paragraph, in order to exercise strict control over what is being said. The pope's new rules would allow only a single up-or-down vote on the final document.

■ These “reforms” looked so much like rigging that on the first day of the synod a group of 13 senior clergymen sent a letter of protest to Francis.

■ In response, Francis chastised critics for giving in to “the hermeneutic of conspiracy,” which, he claimed, “is sociologically weak and spiritually unhelpful.”

■ Speaking of conspiracies, shortly thereafter supporters of Francis began alleging that Monsignor Charamsa's ousting had been part of a conservative plot “to create problems for the Synod and for Francis.”

■ After that, a Vatican reporter obtained the text of the protest letter that had been sent to Francis. Four of the signers issued statements designed to suggest they had not been party to the communiqué. Subsequent reporting revealed that these demurrals were themselves misleading—all 13 men had indeed signed the rebuke.

■ In a speech a few days later Francis said that going forward the Catholic church would become a “synodal church.”

It wasn't clear what that term meant—the Holy Father talked a lot about “listening.” But he closed these remarks emphasizing obedience, reminding the assembled participants that “the synodal process culminates in listening to the Bishop of Rome, who is called upon to pronounce as ‘pastor and teacher of all Christians.’” Translation: *This will proceed as a dialogue unless you don't give me what I want. In which case remember: I'm in charge.*

It was reminiscent of a moment in 2009 when a newly elected President Obama met with congressional

DAVE MALAN

Republicans to build consensus on his stimulus proposal. Rep. Eric Cantor began to criticize certain aspects of the plan, but Obama cut him off, explaining, “Eric, I won.”

It’s normally a mistake to view the workings of the Catholic church through the lens we use to evaluate domestic American politics. But in this case, the lens fits: Throughout the synod, Francis behaved like an ideologically ambitious president at war with an oppositional Congress. He was the Roman church’s Obama.

Obama claimed to run “the most transparent administration in history.” Francis insisted that his procedural changes would make the synod more transparent and responsive. Obama campaigned as a pragmatic centrist, but turned out to have robust and radical ideological ambitions. Francis began his pontificate talking blandly about “service,” only to push the most theologically radical agenda in (at least) half a century. Obama, who promised to unite a purple America, became the most divisive president in modern history. Francis, who began his papacy promising “humility,” has become the most divisive pope in living memory. When it became clear at the synod that the majority of the bishops and cardinals would not approve the pope’s favored outcomes, the Vatican floated the idea of simply devolving authority over these questions to local councils of bishops.

Even Francis’s defenders noted the commonality: “Francis has the same problem that Obama had,” the Rev. Thomas J. Reese told the *Washington Post*. “He promised the world, but Congress wouldn’t let him deliver. If nothing much comes of this synod, I think people will give the pope a pass and blame the bishops for stopping change.” At this point, all we’re missing to make the analogy complete is a Jesuit priest from Georgetown explaining that, for the first time in his life, he’s proud of his church.

Which brings us to the competing claims of victory. Traditionalist Catholics view the outcome of the synod as a win. The letter from the 13 bishops and cardinals did indeed change

the trajectory of the meeting, causing Francis to reinstate voting: When the synod compiled its final document, it was approved paragraph-by-paragraph, rather than by a single up-or-down vote. And when all the votes were counted, the Kasper gambit had been avoided. The final document did not recommend defacing Catholic doctrine on marriage.

But avoidance of calamity is not the same thing as a great victory. That it feels that way to the traditionalists tells you a bit about why the progressives think they won. Because on closer inspection, the relevant paragraphs in the final document that deal with divorce and remarriage—and which passed with very narrow majorities—weren’t quite as firm as they seemed. As *National Review*’s C.C. Pecknold put it, these paragraphs leave so much room that “Kasper’s battalions can be driven right through them.”

Cardinal Kasper himself agreed, saying, “I’m satisfied; the door has been opened to the possibility of the divorced and remarried being granted communion. There has been somewhat of an opening, but the consequences were not discussed. All of this is now in the pope’s hands, who will decide what has to be done.”

So if progressive Catholics didn’t get exactly what they wanted from the synod, they did get a good, hard look at a possible future. The synod document isn’t binding. It is merely a suggestion to the Holy Father. The pope can affirm it, ignore it, or contradict it as he sees fit. As for the pope’s mindset? Well. At the close of the synod, Francis gave a homily in which he excoriated the bishops who had voted against his preferred changes. The synod process had, he said, “laid bare the closed hearts which frequently hide even behind the church’s teachings and good intentions, in order to sit in the chair of Moses and judge, sometimes with superiority and superficiality, difficult cases and wounded families.”

He continued: “The synod experience also made us better realize that the true defenders of doctrine are not

those who uphold its letter, but its spirit; not ideas but people; not formulas but the free availability of God’s love and forgiveness.” Once you got past the shock of hearing a pope say that “ideas” are less important to Catholic doctrine than “people,” you half expected Francis to declare that while the corrupt, sclerotic synod may resist change, he still has a ring and a pen.

The net effect of the Obama administration has been to open for discussion ideas that were once inconceivable. Eight years ago, who would have thought that a president could unilaterally grant amnesty to five million illegal immigrants—or sign a long-term nuclear treaty with Iran—without congressional approval? Who would have thought a bakery could be sued for refusing to bake a cake for a gay wedding? Or that an avowed socialist would be a serious candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination? Obama changed the scope of the possible in American politics.

And Francis is doing the same. As Maggie Gallagher put it, “issues that have been considered closed for 2,000 years will likely remain open questions in Catholic life for the foreseeable future.” The result for Catholics, she says, “is likely to be a profound dislocation in the authority structures of the Catholic Church.” You could say much the same about post-Obama America.

Radicalism is radicalism, be it political or theological. And its effects are rarely happy.

Non-Catholics might not fully appreciate what’s at stake here, so it’s important to understand that the fight at the synod wasn’t really about whether or not people who divorce and remarry can receive the Eucharist. The church has its teachings about the condition one’s soul must be in to validly participate in communion. But as a practical matter, *anyone* who lines up at the altar will be served. Divorced and remarried? Gay? Shot a man in Reno just to watch him die? The only practical barrier to the Eucharist is your own conscience, because whatever the church *teaches*, priests don’t deny communion to people during the Mass. Even if you do 10 abortions

a day for Planned Parenthood. Even if you're Nancy Pelosi.

So when the pope and Cardinal Kasper fight to change doctrine, it isn't because they want to change the practice of Catholicism. It isn't about getting the Eucharist into the mouths of the divorced-and-remarried. That happens thousands—possibly millions—of times per week. No, it's about getting the church to formally approve of divorce and remarriage.

Which is the thin end of the wedge for getting the church to formally approve of all sorts of *other* things. Because once doctrine has been untethered from the actual teachings of Jesus,

you can do pretty much whatever you want. And for Francis, Kasper, and millions of militantly progressive Catholics, that's where the real fun begins.

The problem is that it's where the real conflict will begin, too. Which is why, despite what both sides claimed at the close of the synod, nobody left Rome a winner. As columnist Ross Douthat noted wryly last week, "Most of human history, Catholic and otherwise, suggests if what you want requires a civil war, you'll get a civil war."

Barack Obama wasn't quite that ambitious. As for Pope Francis, we'll see. ♦

country brimming with opportunity and an advocate of his supply-side path to economic growth.

Yet there are important differences. Ryan often sounds like Kemp, especially when he talks about "growth," which was Kemp's favorite word. But he is not a replica of Kemp. Not only do their styles contrast—Kemp was ebullient, Ryan more analytical—Ryan has updated Kempism for the 21st century.

How so? When Morton Kondracke and I interviewed Ryan last year for our book *Jack Kemp: The Bleeding-Heart Conservative Who Changed America*, he said it "never really necessarily sat right" with him that Kemp was indifferent to deficits, debt, and bigger government. What's different from the 1970s and 1980s—the Kemp era—is "the debt has gotten so big it's growth-retarding," Ryan said. But growth remains the overriding goal, "better than just cut, cut, cut [and] balance the budget."

Ryan's Roadmap for America's Future, unveiled in 2008, reflected a divergence from Kemp. Among other ideas, Ryan proposed to reform Medicare and Social Security, a daring political step that Kemp would probably not have taken. Indeed, Kemp thought Ryan should not have agreed to be chairman of the House Budget Committee because it is associated with spending cuts.

The Roadmap and the way Ryan went about promoting it did for him what the 30 percent cut in tax rates on individual income had done for Kemp. Ryan didn't criticize Republican leaders for not adopting it. He simply pushed it on his own. And it made him the most influential Republican in Congress on domestic policy.

Kemp never attacked anyone personally, much less the GOP House leadership. He went around them. He recruited Senator Bill Roth of Delaware as cosponsor and got Republican national chairman Bill Brock to endorse the tax cut. The Kemp-Roth bill never won a majority in the House. But Kemp became a major political figure, especially after it was

From Acolyte to Speaker

Paul Ryan's Kemp connection.

BY FRED BARNES

Paul Ryan was a waiter at Tortilla Coast, a Capitol Hill restaurant, when he first encountered Jack Kemp. Ryan had worked for Senator Bob Kasten (R-Wis.), who lost his race for reelection in 1992. Ryan was killing time in Washington before going to graduate school in economics.

Ryan, then 23 and already a believer in free market capitalism, had read Kemp's book *An American Renaissance*. The book "had perfectly and succinctly described my own political views and philosophy," he wrote later. "So, out of respect, when I waited on him I didn't try to sell him on the Sunset Sauce."

A few weeks later, Ryan learned Empower America, a new think tank headed by Kemp and Bill Bennett, would soon be established and was



Kemp speaks and Ryan listens, July 20, 2004.

looking for a young person who understood economics. He applied, was interrogated intensely by Kemp and Bennett, and got the job.

One thing led to another, and by 1998, when Ryan won a House seat in Wisconsin, he had become Kemp's leading acolyte in politics. Kemp died in 2009. Ryan, having been elected House speaker last week, is now the embodiment of Kemp's vision of a

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enacted at President Reagan's behest in 1981 and generated two decades of robust economic growth. Meanwhile, Republicans became the party of tax cuts, not austerity.

Both Ryan and Kemp seized their first chance to be elected to the House. But their careers progressed differently. Ryan is a man of the House. He won the job he most wanted: chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the tax-writing committee. Speaker was not one of his goals.

Kemp was not a man of the House. He didn't much care whether Republicans controlled the House or whether he chaired a committee. (He did become head of the House GOP conference.) Newt Gingrich saw Kemp as a presidential figure, addressing the entire nation as he pursued a vision for lifting everyone to a better place in life. Ryan's audience was members of Congress.

At Empower America in the 1990s, Ryan worked for both Kemp and Bennett, who'd been education secretary in the Reagan administration. Bennett is not alone in seeing Kemp as "pretty close" to being an economic determinist. Ryan is not. Kemp was enthusiastic and impatient. "Paul is more focused and controlled," Bennett says.

Bennett recalls discussing hunting with Kemp and Ryan, and what it's like to sit in a blind waiting for prey. Kemp merely grunted. He wasn't interested. Bennett says he couldn't imagine Kemp sitting still in a blind for three hours. For Ryan, no problem.

It's telling which sports they took to. Kemp played professional football and loved tennis. "With Jack, sports were always a joy," Bennett told me. Ryan subjects himself to the P90X exercise routine. "It's all about self-discipline and punishment," Bennett says.

Kemp taught himself economics. Ryan studied economics at Miami University in Ohio, then taught himself the budget. There's only one way to do that, he told me in 2011. "You read it. You literally just read it. Having a knowledge of economic policy and having an economic doctrine is one thing. But understanding the federal budget and its components is another. Not

many people do that. It's fairly laborious. I'm a self-taught person."

Ryan's admiration for Kemp bubbles over in his 2014 book *The Way Forward: Renewing the American Idea*. Kemp was his inspiration. "Looking back, I can see now that it was his enthusiasm for

his beliefs that truly pulled me into politics. . . . Jack's excitement for ideas and the way they could improve people's lives made me see public policy not as a hobby, but as a vocation."

After working with Jack Kemp, graduate school didn't have a chance. ♦

Reading Carson

The candidate's commentaries on the Constitution.

BY TERRY EASTLAND

Ben Carson remains in the presidential race notwithstanding the conventional wisdom that the retired neurosurgeon and first-time-candidate-for-any-office wouldn't last this long. Indeed, the most recent polls show Carson leading Donald Trump in Iowa, which kicks off the presidential primary season with its caucuses on February 1.

With his wife, Candy, Carson has now published *A More Perfect Union: What We the People Can Do to Reclaim Our Constitutional Liberties*. It has been a bestseller in the weeks since its release in mid-October. I read it and then interviewed Carson, finding five things about the book that voters assessing his candidacy might want to know.

First, *A More Perfect Union* cites by name only one Supreme Court decision on the Constitution. It's *Roe v. Wade*, which declared a right to abortion. But no other rulings are mentioned. Not *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), which confirmed the power of judicial review; or *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which struck down public school segregation; or this year's *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which created a right to same-sex marriage.

I don't mean this in a negative way. My point rather is that the book aims to focus the reader not on what judges have said about the Constitution—as so many tomes on the Constitution

do—but on the text itself, the Constitution of 1787 as amended. The book discusses the history, principles, and structure of the Constitution, and it has one appendix: the Constitution. Carson emphasizes that the text is not long and is within the grasp of ordinary citizens. "You don't have to be a constitutional lawyer to understand it," he told me.

Second, Carson urges readers to memorize the preamble to the Constitution. It says (in case your memory fails), "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

The Framers added the preamble toward the end of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. In itself, it had no substantive legal meaning; it was understood as merely declaratory. Yet as the historian Forrest McDonald has pointed out, the preamble "has considerable potency by virtue of its specification of the purposes for which the Constitution exists." Carson agrees and devotes more than a third of his book to it. "You need to understand what's in the preamble in order to understand the rest of the Constitution," he said.

Third, the book takes its title from the preamble's "a more perfect Union." In writing the Constitution,

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the Framers famously divided power between the federal government and the states. Their goal was to achieve a better and stronger union—one “more perfect”—than the notoriously weak union under the Articles of Confederation.

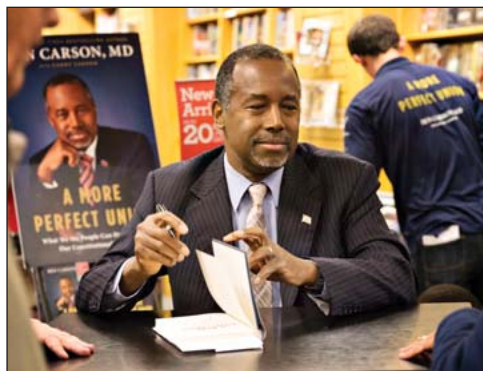
Carson writes that the Framers “set up a good balance of power,” which worked well for many years. That balance, however, has been upset and “our constitutional liberties” compromised. The book points to “overreaching” by the three branches of the national government in explaining how it has become “much too large and much too powerful,” taxing and spending “far more than it should” while also deciding matters (like same-sex marriage) that “could be more efficiently handled” at the state level. “We must return power to the states,” Carson argues. “Only by doing that will we return to being a ‘more perfect Union.’”

In the context of the book’s argument, the “we” in that peroration is, of course, “we the people,” the first words of the preamble. Carson uses the term often to make the point that in America there is only one source of political authority. As Carson puts it, “we the people are in charge.” We the people, however, are not always prudent in the self-governing decisions we make; nor are we sufficiently attentive to what is happening politically. For Carson, returning to “being a more perfect Union” doesn’t require a new constitution but a citizenry that sees the Constitution as a guide to the conduct of our politics and the best security of our liberties. In sum, a citizenry more committed to a constitutionalist politics and the discipline it demands.

Fourth, Carson’s book provides a standard for judging a president—how well he executes the office he was elected to. Section 1 of Article 2 states the oath a president takes: “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.” This oath of office is the only one spelled out in the Constitution.

The president is the only officer obligated to execute a particular office.

There are limits on how a president may use the executive power and thus execute the office—in particular, a president may not legislate, as Carson emphasizes. But those limits do not necessarily prohibit what Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist* called “extensive and arduous enterprises” undertaken for the public benefit. Might such an enterprise be a project to reduce the power of the national government and return power to the states? “Because of the founders’ wis-



Carson signing books in Iowa, October 24, 2015

dom,” writes Carson, “we have all the tools we need to reduce the power of the federal government.”

Not surprisingly, the book finds wanting President Obama’s execution of office. It faults Obama for acting on his own where the Constitution requires that the president work with Congress. It laments the recess appointments Obama made that were found unconstitutional in the *Noel Canning* case (if I may refer to a Supreme Court decision). And it criticizes Obama’s unilateralist approach to governing in which he has effectively legislated through various types of executive action. For Carson, “almost anyone could do a better job of execution” than Obama.

Fifth, the book places verses from the Bible at the start of each chapter. The selections are from the Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, John, Romans, and II Timothy. The Constitution, of course, doesn’t mention any Scripture. I asked Carson why he included it in a book on the Constitution. He said he

did so to show that “our nation has a Judeo-Christian foundation.” And in his book he makes the fair point that “many of the framers subscribed to a political theory that viewed human rights as being derived from God.”

Carson, a Seventh-day Adventist, does not go so far in his use of Scripture as some notable political figures have. Presidents Kennedy and Reagan, for example, recast Christ’s metaphor for the church, “a city on a hill,” into a metaphor for America. Yet Carson’s employment of John 8:32, where Christ says, “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free,” is striking. The verse introduces Carson’s chapter on the history of the Constitution and evidently is meant to convey that you shall know the truth about our Constitution’s history and this truth will set you free to form a more perfect union, or something like that. Of course, the church has always understood “truth” in this passage as the truth of the Gospel and the freedom it secures as freedom from sin and death.

A More Perfect Union has some imperfections, not least such empty constructions as “Today America faces dangers at home and abroad” and “There is still time to turn things around, but we must act immediately.” But the five features of the book reviewed here help confirm key aspects of Carson’s candidacy. Namely, that he is a religious conservative who seeks a more constitutionalist politics; is sharply critical of the non-constitutionalist politics of our current president; and looks poised to seek a mandate for his more perfect union, one in which the balance of power between the federal government and the states would be altered. Carson told me he plans to “block grant some things back to the states.” He says he will announce his proposal before the end of the year.

Perhaps most notable about Carson is how people warm to him, as evidenced by his high favorability ratings. “This whole presidential thing was not really my idea,” he told me. “It was the idea of the people. It was a draft movement, with petitions

for me to run coming in boxes,” as many as 5,000 at a time. Carson distinguishes between “ordinary citizens [who] are out of place in Washington” and “professional politicians [who] rule the day” (the terms are from his book), and he pitches his message to the former while taking digs at the latter. He seems to enjoy his personal interactions on the trail and in bookstores (the tour ends November 6), which are capped off every evening when he goes on Facebook to answer

questions from 4.3 million “friends” on a variety of topics. He told me that the daily sessions have been “tremendous help” to him in terms of understanding what people are thinking about. It’s “something I would continue as president.”

Especially, perhaps, if the alternative is visiting with politicians who in his view “talk a lot and don’t get anything done.” Says the doctor, “The country won’t find that to be the case with the surgeon.” ♦

is *Yankee Lady*, restored and owned by the Yankee Air Museum in Willow Run, Michigan, 35 miles west of Detroit. In late September, I joined a crew of seven museum volunteers for a roundtrip flight to London, Ontario.

Though I’ve done my share of flying, I know nothing at all about how airplanes actually fly: Commercial aviation today hides as many of the realities of flight from passengers as possible. We don’t appreciate this. We look at the sleek drawings of the future of aviation from the 1950s and wonder—as we sit squashed in steerage-class—why the promised glamour never arrived.

But if you climb into a B-17, you will see that we are living in that glamorous future after all. The Flying Fort makes no effort to hide reality. In my mind, the B-17 is a massive plane, and in its day, it was. But by today’s standards, it is small, dark, cramped, and narrow: The catwalk through the bomb bay is barely a foot wide. It took me a minute to crawl and scramble into the bombardier’s seat at the front, and I wasn’t on fire or being shot at. I tried unsuccessfully not to think of what it would be like to be trapped in that cubbyhole if German flak hit and you were ordered to bail out.

I am not a nervous flier, though I don’t usually enjoy it much either. The bombardier’s seat is just 10 feet off the ground, and it’s surrounded by a plexiglass bubble: There is no closing a window shade and ignoring the reality of what is going on. Nor is it possible to escape the noise: The four 1,200-horsepower piston engines, props spinning feet away from you, produce an honest mechanical roar that makes conversation impossible and shouting pointless.

That roar testifies to the dedication of the volunteers who restored *Yankee Lady*. The work took 40,000 man-hours, and every hour of flight now requires 8 to 15 hours of maintenance. The B-17 had an expected service life of only 300 hours, but in a lifetime of coastal patrol, crop spraying, and fighting forest fires that began in July 1945, *Lady* has exceeded that many times over.

The remarkable thing, though, is

The Lady Wants to Fly

From takeoff to landing in *Yankee Lady*, the finest surviving Flying Fortress. BY TED R. BROMUND



In the Second World War, flying in a Boeing B-17—the iconic Flying Fortress—was dangerous beyond belief. Of the 12,731 bombers produced between 1937 and 1945, 4,754 were lost or written off in the course of operations, a loss rate of 37 percent. Ten Americans, the B-17’s standard crew, risked death on every mission.

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To fly in the plane is to remember that, and them.

But what was a horror in 1943 is an honor today, for only 10 flying B-17s remain—1 in Britain, the other 9 in the United States. Of these, the finest, the most nearly fully original,

IMAGES: TED R. BROMUND

that, despite her long, tough life, *Lady* flies like a dream. Takeoff is wonderful, especially if you are seated up front with the runway blurring below your feet. In a jet, there is a definite moment when the plane pitches up. But takeoff speed in a B-17 is a mere 110 miles per hour, which on a broad runway is not perceptibly faster than cruising on the interstate. And because the B-17 climbs slowly, there is no distinct moment of wheels up. Leaving the ground is no cause for nerves. It is effortless and natural. The *Lady* wants to fly.

As an unpressurized plane, the B-17 can't go above 10,000 feet unless you use oxygen, and though *Lady* has a top speed of 285 miles per hour, the museum crew flies low and slow. This limits the strain on the engines and enhances the dreamlike quality of the flight. The tremendous racket of those engines, and the mid-pitched rush of air, should shatter the dream, but all the noise is strangely yet utterly divorced from the sensation of flight. You sail over the land.

Over Germany in 1943, of course, it would have been anything but a sail. The Fortress was named for effect, not accuracy: It was made to shoot down enemy fighters on its way to its target, not to be invulnerable to their fire. But our pilot, John C. Rule—a retired Delta captain—says it remains a pleasure to fly. Its only quirk is its big tail that catches crosswinds easily. But when controlled by skilled hands, that sensation is strangely enjoyable, a gentle drift through the sky.

After we arrived in London—there is nothing like coming in to land when you are suspended in a bubble and can see the airstrip five miles away—and participated in an air show, we flew home to Willow Run. Overhead, I saw jet contrails. I didn't want to trade places. In London, I'd asked one of the crew—Dave Wright, a sprightly 85-year-old—what kind of passengers fly in the *Lady*. Often, Wright chuckled, it was a husband whose wife had paid for 30 minutes in the air as his birthday present. It could be a frustrating gift, because the husband usually scrambled out of the plane with

a smile on his face. It was wonderful, he'd say to his wife—but he couldn't explain why.

I had the same smile. It comes partly from the wonder evoked by any flying machine. Mostly it comes from the ease with which the B-17 rises and goes about its business. And then there's

the sense of history, and thus our gratitude to the plane, to the volunteers who restored it, and to the veterans who flew it. *Yankee Lady* has seen a lot of sacrifice. As I said farewell to Wright, he remarked, "We've got to keep her flying for many more years. She's got a lot left to teach us." ♦

A Family Affair

Marine general John F. Kelly retires.

BY AARON MACLEAN

In March 2003, as the 1st Marine Division raced up Mesopotamia toward Baghdad, two Marines-turned-writers—Bing West and retired Major General Ray "E-Tool" Smith—accepted a helicopter ride from the assistant division commander, John F. Kelly. Though zipping over the battlefield at 150 feet was infinitely preferable to bumping up a highway in nauseating tracked vehicles, there were complications, as West and Smith later wrote in their book *The March Up*.

Over the town of Al Budayr, a regional Baath party stronghold, the helicopter came under heavy machine gun fire. As it dodged and twisted in flight, the door gunners engaging in duels with the Fedayeen below, Kelly and the two former Marines (both hardened veterans of close combat—Smith didn't get the nickname "E-Tool" because he was good at digging holes) shouted instructions at the crew, trying to call out enemy locations and in the process talking over each other a great deal. After the immediate danger had passed, Smith let off some steam, marveling, "He had us cold. . . . It takes skill to miss something this big right in front of you. Thank God for piss poor shooters."

Responding to his slightly unsettled passengers with the compassion

and solicitousness for which Marine generals are famous, the Boston-born Kelly said, "I thought you guys were used to that!"

This seems to have been one of the lighter moments of the campaign for Kelly. Most of his time was spent doing the drudge work of an invasion: investigating why regimental convoys were being held up, monitoring underperforming officers, and insisting that civilians be looked out for despite the constant threat of suicide attacks. Kelly, who retires later this year as commander of U.S. Southern Command, was serving alongside a remarkable group of officers who would go on to lead the Corps and the U.S. military in the decade ahead: Joe Dunford Jr. (another Boston Marine), Jim Mattis, James Conway, and Jim Amos all had Marine commands in the march on Baghdad.

Like these men, Kelly would earn four stars, capping a career that began with his enlisting in the ranks in 1970, followed later by college and a commission. After Baghdad fell, he was appointed to lead an ad hoc force that continued north to seize Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown. When the 1st Marine Division returned to Iraq in 2004, he helped oversee some of the fiercest fighting of the war in Ramadi and Fallujah, before returning to the country for a third time in 2008, now commanding all Marines in Anbar and seeing the "Awakening" there

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through to its successful conclusion.

Despite the remarkable accomplishments of the units he headed, Marines who know Kelly say they cannot remember him ever taking credit. Inspired by his example, Kelly's two sons, John and Robert, followed him into the Marines. The Kelly family was not an anomaly: It is increasingly unusual for someone serving in the military not to have been preceded by a father or other close relative.

Robert—who enlisted immediately after graduating college and became an infantry officer—deployed to Afghanistan as a platoon commander at the peak of the fighting in Helmand Province. Before dawn on November 9, 2010, General Kelly opened the door to his home at the Washington Navy Yard to see Joe Dunford, then serving as the Corps's assistant commandant, standing on the porch in his service uniform. Robert, said by a Marine who served closely with him to be “just like his father,” someone who “was humble, knew his trade, was physically fit, tough as nails, charismatic, funny,” someone who had “a genuine concern for the well-being of Marines,” had been killed in Sangin.

Notifications of families of Marines killed in action are always done in person, and Dunford had decided to tell Kelly himself. What came next was, if possible, worse—as Kelly later put it to a reporter from the *Washington Post*, “I then did the most difficult thing I've done in my life. I walked upstairs, woke Karen to the news, and broke her heart.”

Kelly had earned the terrible distinction of being the most senior American officer to lose a child in Iraq or Afghanistan, and not a soul would have begrudged him taking some time. But November is when the Marine Corps celebrates its birthday, and Kelly had been invited to speak at a celebration in St. Louis four days after. He attended, and there delivered one of the most powerful American speeches of the last decade and a half of war.

Even though most in attendance knew about his loss, as a courtesy it was not mentioned by the officer

introducing him, who opened instead with the jaunty anecdote, “Let me share my favorite line from General Kelly when we were in Iraq. . . . ‘We're the United States Marine Corps. We took Iwo Jima. Baghdad ain't s—.’” Taking the podium to raucous applause, Kelly drew a clear moral line from 9/11 through to the fights in both Afghanistan and Iraq: “Our enemy fights for an ideology based on an irra-



Robert Kelly, left, with brother John and father John

tional hatred of who you are. Make no mistake about that no matter what certain elements of our ‘chattering class’ relentlessly churn out.” Kelly expressed dismay about weak support for the war, and about how small the proportion of Americans who served was, before turning to the character of the current generation of Marines.

And what are they like in combat? They're like Marines have been throughout our history. In my three tours in combat as an infantry officer, I never saw one of them hesitate, or do anything other than lean into the fire and, with no apparent fear of death or injury, take the fight to our enemies. As anyone—and many of you have—who has ever experienced combat knows, when it starts, when the explosions and tracers are everywhere and the calls for the Corpsman are screamed from the throats of men who know they are dying—when seconds seem like hours and it all becomes slow motion and fast forward at the same time, and the only rational act is to stop, get down, save himself. But they don't. When no one would call them a coward for cowering behind a wall or in a hole, none of them do.

Kelly paused a number of times, clearly fighting back emotion, but never succumbed. He then made the only reference in the speech to Robert: “Like my own two sons who have fought in Iraq and, until last, this week in Afghanistan, they are also the same kids that drove their cars too fast for your liking, and played that Godawful music of their generation too loud, but have no doubt they are the finest of their generation.”

Both a video of the speech and a draft of the remarks are available online. In the text, which was presumably written before November 9, the above line reads, “Like my own two sons who are Marines and have fought in Iraq, and today in Sangin, Afghanistan, they are also the same kids . . .” Surely that is the cruelest edit that ever had to be made before the delivery of a speech.

Characteristically, Kelly moved away from his own concerns and those of his family, and devoted the end of his speech to the story of two young Marines who died facing down a suicide bomber in Iraq in 2008. When Kelly sat down, the officer who had introduced him stood to present the customary gift for traveling to St. Louis to speak, but was too overcome with emotion to complete his own brief remarks. Kelly stood, took the gift, and pulled the officer in for a hug.

Since then Kelly has led the combatant command for South and Central America and become a voice for gold star families. Whatever comes next for Kelly in retirement, and despite the toxic elements of our politics that he highlighted during his speech in St. Louis, his career and the service of his family—and of countless families like his—highlight something that remains one of the nation's strengths. The business of defending our democracy, the mastery of a trade as grim as it is exciting, and the willingness to die, if necessary, for the freedom and safety of others: Those guys are used to that. ♦

COURTESY OF THE KELLY FAMILY

The FDA Learned Nothing from Ebola

But it's not too late.

BY MICHAEL J. ASTRUE

Think back to the Ebola chaos of last year. Nobody except the caregivers came away looking good—not the White House, not the Department of Health and Human Services, not the World Health Organization, not Congress, not most of the media.

No organization failed more miserably than the Food and Drug Administration. As I pointed out in *THE WEEKLY STANDARD* last year (“Failing to Rise to the Challenge,” December 1, 2014), the FDA refused to use its discretion under a 2007 law to provide vouchers for an accelerated review to any sponsor who successfully developed a drug for a designated “neglected tropical disease.” The FDA never added Ebola—or any tropical disease—to the list included in the statute. It also never gave the pharmaceutical industry clear guidance on the requirements for Ebola clinical trials—no small matter when huts and rudimentary equipment replace posh teaching hospitals and state-of-the-art devices.

In the midst of the Ebola scare, the FDA did issue a July 2014 tropical disease “guidance,” but that hastily prepared attempt at damage control offered nothing except a generic litany of clinical trial approaches that the FDA may or may not approve in any particular case. This FDA intransigence backfired—it stifled Ebola

drug development and created a backlash that forced the FDA to allow the use of drug candidates *untested in human subjects*. If the agency had embraced the 2007 neglected tropical disease legislation instead of ignoring it, multiple drug candidates tested in humans would almost certainly have been available; lives might have been saved and hysteria might have been avoided.

The FDA culture has always resented outsiders—whether senior executive



Chikungunya patient in Acapulco, Mexico, April 15, 2015; inset, Sylvia Burwell

branch officials or Congress—“interfering” with their increasingly barnacled drug approval process. In the eighties the agency fought Commissioner Frank Young when he first created “fast tracks” for HIV drug approvals. A few years later the FDA unsuccessfully fought extension of those “fast track” principles to drug approvals for other fatal diseases. Despite the fact that the “accelerated approval” regulations of 1992 helped millions of Americans with cancer, fatal protein deficiencies, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, and other conditions, two decades later

the FDA did not support innovative legislation to award “priority review” vouchers to sponsors of approved drugs for neglected rare and devastating diseases of children.

After failed attempts to preserve its unnecessarily sluggish bureaucracy, the FDA resorted to abusing its administrative discretion to undo accelerated approval reforms on a case-by-case basis during the secrecy of the drug approval process. Some reviewers gamed the system by threatening sponsors who did not “voluntarily” request more time for their reviews.

After Congress passed the “neglected tropical diseases” law in 2007, the FDA treated it as dead on arrival. The agency apparently felt that it could finally draw a line against accelerated approvals because the targeted diseases lacked the patient advocacy groups and media attention that drove earlier reforms.

That shameful strategy worked until Ebola. Shortly after my *WEEKLY STANDARD* piece last year, momentum rapidly built for a bill to add Ebola to the list of neglected tropical diseases that merited incentives for approvals. Despite the fact that FDA officials circumvented the White House and “unofficially” went to Congress to try to thwart this legislation, Congress *unanimously* passed the bill in the lame duck session; it became law on December 16, 2014.

In the wake of continuing criticism of its handling of Ebola, on August 20, 2015, the FDA decided to head off additional criticism by adding Chagas disease and neurocysticercosis to the statutory list of neglected tropical diseases. With these two diseases, however, the FDA apparently decided to try once more to draw the line against additional accelerated approvals—a decision that will cost thousands of lives.

One example of a disease for which the FDA should be encouraging drug development is Chikungunya, a disease first identified in Tanzania in 1952 that spread to the Americas in 2013 (Lindsay Lohan suffered from it last year). Now present in more than 60 countries, it is caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitos, and its symptoms are similar to—but far more painful

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than—those of Lyme disease. It is fatal in the short run in about one case in one thousand, but the lingering inflammation it causes eventually kills more patients by damaging their hearts and other organs. The virus also tends to mutate as it adapts to new environments.

Owing to its recent arrival and diffuse symptoms, Chikungunya is often misdiagnosed in the United States, but there are already more than a million people in this hemisphere and hundreds in this country with the disease, and the history of this epidemic strongly suggests that those numbers will explode in the next few years. In other words, now is the exact time the FDA should be responding aggressively instead of merely noting that it “considered” a proposal in 2008 to add Chikungunya to the neglected tropical diseases list.

To be fair, the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, the component within the FDA that regulates the blood supply, has reacted very differently from the FDA’s drug approval component. Officials there grew concerned about this risk to the blood supply years ago and used their scarce research funds to search for ways to identify and neutralize the Chikungunya virus in blood banks. Perhaps these two parts of the FDA should actually talk to each other.

As is traditional with new epidemics, the FDA prefers to protect its institutional prerogatives rather than protect people suffering from this horrid—and spreading—disease; change will have to come from outside. HHS secretary Sylvia Burwell should clear a day to bring in experts from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, the Agency for International Development, academic leaders, and foreign health ministers to develop a plan. Burwell’s first step should be easy: Direct the FDA to add Chikungunya to the neglected tropical diseases list.

Her second step should be to direct the FDA to convene an advisory committee to help the agency craft guidelines for Chikungunya clinical trials

within six months. Such a directive would be timely because there are promising, but underfunded, efforts at Vanderbilt University to develop a treatment for Chikungunya. The work at Vanderbilt is doubly important because the technology being studied for use as a treatment might also help create vaccines.

Burwell’s third step should be to scour the executive branch to find funds to help Vanderbilt and researchers at other institutions who are struggling to develop treatments. If Hillary Clinton can divert \$27 million from the State Department to one of her husband’s pet health care projects in Africa, the Obama administration

should be able to come up with a similar amount to assist in the development of potentially lifesaving treatments.

The Senate should also raise the FDA’s inaction over Chikungunya and the broader issue of its resistance to accelerated approvals with President Obama’s nominee for FDA commissioner, Dr. Robert Califf. Given Dr. Califf’s broad experience working on clinical trials for pharmaceutical companies, he should understand the urgency of action, distance himself from failed policies and cultural norms, and embrace the accelerated approvals that have saved the lives of millions of Americans and desperate people all over the world. ♦

A Market Is Born

Cyberinsurance doesn’t need a government backstop. BY ELI LEHRER

In 1988, Robert Tappan Morris, then a graduate student at Cornell University, decided to write a computer program to measure the size of the still-nascent Internet. Morris’s effort, a cleverly written bit of code that exploited security weaknesses, quickly spread through the computer network, bringing many systems to a halt by copying itself endlessly.

Within hours, a portion of the Internet had simply stopped functioning. Professors lost days of work. Emails went undelivered. Machines took days to disinfect. Morris’s caper made the front page of the *New York Times*, and he became one of the first people convicted of a computer crime under federal law.

Today, a handful of office buildings in any major downtown contain as many connections as the entire Internet had in 1988. An attack that literally brought down much of today’s Internet, as Morris’s did, would be devastating.

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But the attacks we do commonly see, and which frequently make headlines, have taken on a very different character. Major data breaches have rattled the stock prices of firms like Target, which reported more than \$252 million in damages from its 2013 breach. Sony Pictures Entertainment suffered a 2014 breach that U.S. officials say traced to North Korea, possibly in protest of the movie *The Interview* (a satirical depiction of the assassination of Kim Jong-un). More recently, Ashley Madison, a website for affair-seekers, was hacked by a group claiming to be disgusted with its business model.

Sony canceled the theatrical release of its movie, and Ashley Madison’s CEO resigned. But thus far, the sort of catastrophic, system-wide failure that we saw in 1988 has not yet come to pass. The last worm sufficiently widespread to slow the entire Internet was Sobig.F in 2003. Indeed, as software and operating systems have diversified and real-time updates have made it easier to distribute security patches, fast-spreading worm and virus attacks like

Morris's are becoming less common.

Which is not to say that cyber risk isn't an issue to confront. The German insurance firm Allianz estimates the United States has suffered more than 5,000 data breaches over the past decade, at an average cost of \$3.8 million each. Insurance companies have noticed. Changes made in May 2014 by the industry advisory firm ISO (Insurance Service Office, Inc.) to the commercial general liability policy included much broader exclusions of the kinds of cyber risks that standard policies used to cover. Instead, companies are having to buy separate cyber-insurance policies in what's called the "stand-alone" market.

The current market for cyber insurance is estimated to be about \$2 billion, with the largest policies covering about \$500 million of risk. It is a fast-growing market, with predictions it could triple in size over the next seven years. Nearly 80 percent of insurance executives surveyed earlier this year by the Insurance Information Institute, a trade organization, said cyber-insurance is a growth field.

But for some, that growth has not been fast enough. In a report last month, the Federal Insurance Office estimated that current market risks require policies with coverage limits of at least \$1 billion, twice what's currently available. And industry-watchers are beginning to hear calls for a new, much-expanded government role in cyber risk that might include a federal "backstop" to pay large claims. At least two congressional offices are working on bills on that topic.

There are major reasons to be suspicious of efforts to increase the government's role in cyberinsurance. The market, though relatively small, is working fine—it's growing and companies offering the coverage are fully solvent. Moreover, insurance is just one way to manage risk, and it isn't the proper role of the government to prescribe that it be the only way. Finally, the nature of the risks seen in the market thus far are not of the "systemic" variety. Hasty action to insert government into this area would almost certainly do more harm than good.

Some of the current flaws in the market for cyberinsurance come simply from a lack of experience. As with any new risk, it takes time for insurers to develop mathematical models and gain experience that let them price their policies appropriately. As a result, the terms and conditions of policies now offered, and the premiums demanded for those policies, can vary greatly based on the size and nature of the business and the appetite of the individual insurer. While a small firm seeking a general liability policy might find that all firms offer essentially the same coverage and have prices that differ by 15 percent, it's not uncommon to find 50 percent variances in price



A Hollywood poster is removed after 'The Interview' is canceled, December 18, 2014.

and vast coverage differences in the cyberinsurance marketplace.

That market will continue to develop, particularly as the industry and its advisers find ways to share and pool information. But even as it does, the decision about whether and how much cyberinsurance to purchase ultimately will be left up to individual firms. Unlike terrorism risks—for which there is a \$100 billion federal backstop—insurance for cyber risks is almost entirely voluntary. Terrorism coverage is needed for commercial property, and is required by lenders, and for workers' compensation, which is required by law in almost all states. Whether to transfer cyber risks to insurers, retain those risks, or invest in better security is a question for individual firms to decide.

Not only isn't cyberinsurance a requirement for most forms of economic activity, but there's little evidence that cyber risks are "systemic" in a sense that would justify government intervention. Systemic risks are those

that affect all or nearly all segments of the economy at once. Cyberattacks overwhelmingly target individual companies or try to steal individuals' financial information.

One can't entirely discount the possibility of "tail risk," or "black swan" attacks that are so large they bring down significant portions of the Internet all at once. These have drawn the attention of some highly respected insurance industry figures, such as Stephen Catlin of XL Catlin. Since so much vital infrastructure—including the power grid—is tied to the Internet, a true "systemic failure" would be devastating to the economy as a whole.

But the kinds of Internet-wide attacks that are easiest to conceive would require physical destruction of infrastructure. If committed by private actors, these would be terrorism, and would be covered by a combination of public and private insurance programs. If they are instigated by state actors, they would be acts of war, which has never been an insurable risk. To be certain, if China or Russia were to launch a full-scale attack on America's Internet infrastructure (even one carried out entirely by hackers), there would indeed be a federal response, and it's one that doesn't require any government involvement in the cyberinsurance market.

We should watch carefully as this market develops and avoid doing the kinds of things that could create moral hazard or discourage private efforts to improve cybersecurity. Doing so would leave the country even more open to catastrophic attack. There may also be a governmental role in encouraging big companies to audit and secure their information systems, just as they do their financial controls. A still nascent effort to build a system for cyberinsurance similar to bond rating might also benefit from some encouragement and coordination.

But for now, the burden of proof that we need additional government intervention in the cyberinsurance marketplace, much less a partial takeover of the market through a backstop, should remain squarely on those asking for it. ♦

Whatever Happened to High Culture?

An inquest

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

I see no reason why the decay of culture should not proceed much further, and why we may not even anticipate a period, of some duration, of which it will be possible to say that it will have no culture.

Notes Toward the Definition of Culture
—T.S. Eliot

My friend Hilton Kramer, the art critic of the *New York Times* and afterwards the founding editor of the *New Criterion*, was not a man you asked whom he liked in the Super Bowl. An acquaintance once queried me about which was Hilton's favorite rock group. I responded that I wasn't certain but thought him a touch partial to Herman's Hermits. "I say," as Senator Beauregard Claghorn, the windbag Southern politician on the old Fred Allen radio show, used to remark, "I say, that's a joke, son." As a kid, Hilton may have listened to the Fred Allen radio show, but the likelihood of his having heard of Herman's Hermits or any rock group of lesser fame than the Beatles is, more than unlikely, preposterous. The Lubavitcher Rebbe might as easily been discovered eating a pulled-pork sandwich at Wendy's.

I was talking over the phone one day with another friend, Samuel Lipman, who as a child was a piano prodigy and later a powerful music critic and with Hilton Kramer a founder of the *New Criterion*. Sam was dying of leukemia. I told him I had heard that Steve McQueen had gone to Mexico for laetrile treatment for his cancer. Following a pause, Sam, who was then 58 and had spent his entire life in the United States, asked, "Who is Steve McQueen?" On another occasion, I said to Sam that he rarely mentioned the movies or television. "I consider movies and television," he replied without raising his voice, "dog shit." Such for Sam was popular culture; he wasn't willing to confer upon it even the dignity of the droppings of a horse or a bull.

Hilton and Sam were dear friends, and I do not know

to what extent they were aware of my own deviations from high culture. I watch lots of sports on television. The all-too-occasional excellent television sitcom—*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Cheers*, *Seinfeld*—found me at my post on the couch, an avid viewer. Although I don't read detective or spy stories, I enjoy them, in more passive form, through movies and television. Middlebrowest of all middlebrow activities, I also watch most *Masterpiece Theatre* productions on PBS. I never find myself violated by a bad movie, though after having watched one, I wish I had instead done a load of laundry. I sometimes drive around the city with Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons blaring away on my CD player. Hilton and Sam, as I say, may not have known about these hopeless dips on my part into popular culture, and had they done so I do believe they would have forgiven me, with a touch of pity added for my wasting my time on such drivel.

I admired both Hilton and Sam greatly, and one thing I particularly admired was their ability to live on an exclusive diet of high culture. I didn't for a moment think that, in ignoring popular culture, they were missing much, apart, perhaps, from a stronger notion of the general tastes and cultural preoccupations of their countrymen. Between time spent watching six segments of *Seinfeld* and listening to the late Beethoven Quartets there really can't be any argument about which is the right choice. Nor can there be any between reading, say, Tolstoy and Stephen King or Sir Ronald Syme and Doris Kearns Goodwin. As for visual art, about suffering and much else, as W.H. Auden had it, the old masters were never wrong, and any competition between them and contemporary visual art ended, sadly, with the triumph of Andy Warhol, after whom serious people no longer needed to be interested in contemporary visual art. The English philosopher Michael Oakeshott notes that one of the signs of being cultured is that one knows what one doesn't have to know. Contemporary visual art, perhaps for the first time in the history of painting and sculpture, is one of those things a cultured person no longer has to know.

Arguments used to be staged, and whole books written, about which was more authentic, genuine, better: high,

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middle, or popular culture. Subtle distinctions among the three were drawn. Popular culture was aimed at the largest possible audience and hence at the lowest common denominator of education and subtlety. Middlebrow culture was characterized by its pretensions to seriousness, which were shown to be, by people who knew better, pretensions merely. High culture is, as the adjective makes plain, more elevated than middlebrow or popular culture. High culture is, or at least once was, for an intellectual and artistic elite, which could not only appreciate what it was reading, hearing, or seeing, but also had a sophisticated appreciation of how great art is made. Vladimir Nabokov, contemning readers who “identified” with characters in fiction, remarked that the best readers identify with the artist. These would of course be highbrow readers.

Those who took up the cause of high culture worried a good bit about its being contaminated by middlebrow culture. By contaminated they meant less-than-superior cultural works taken for or confused with high culture, with the result of watering it down. In an earlier day, to be dismissed as a middlebrow writer, composer, artist was no mild insult. Middlebrow meant ultimately unserious, failing to comprehend the complexity of the subjects it took up and therefore a bit of a fraud.

In the day when high culture reigned, commercial success for an artist, at any rate in his lifetime, was a near-guarantee that his work didn’t qualify as high culture. How could he be read or heard or viewed and enjoyed by a mass audience and still be serious? Even winning a Nobel Prize in Literature could subtract from one’s prestige. Think of all the great writers who failed to win one—Tolstoy, Henry James, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, Jorge Luis Borges, Vladimir Nabokov, Vassily Grossman, and others—and how superior a club they constitute next to that containing so many of the rather cloddish figures who have won it.

For much of the twentieth century, high culture and modernism were coterminous. Great works of the past—by Sophocles, Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Bach, Goethe—were by their very nature deemed high culture. More recent works, though, had to have the imprimatur of modernism to get through the gate of high culture. Modernism often meant complication, poetry that was difficult, music that was dissonant, architecture stripped of ornament, painting and sculpture no longer pictorial

or representational. Such art was not to everyone’s taste.

As for that gate, highbrow critics functioned as its keepers. For all that might be said against high, or highbrow, culture—that it was rarefied, elitist, failed to yield immediate pleasure, was out of touch with the everyday reality of people’s lives—one thing that has to be said for it is that it did establish a standard. I recall being at a conference where someone was deploring the ill effects of high union wages on the American theater. “What American theater?” Hilton Kramer asked. “I didn’t know we had one.” With this remark I realized that, apart from the

American musicals of the four decades from the 1920s to the ’50s, such American theater as we have had has offered sheer depression and falls wildly short of great art. We have had Arthur Miller’s ill-written, Marxistical plays, the not very well disguised homosexual themes featured in the plays of Tennessee Williams, the dolorosities of Eugene O’Neill’s drunken Irishmen, the hatred of America and the middle-class family that are the chief messages in the plays of Edward Albee. Talk about, as Gertrude Stein complained of Oakland, city of her birth and upbringing, there being “no there, there.”

But it took someone with the high standard of Hilton Kramer, with a single, sarcastic question, to bring this out, at least for me.

Serious advocates of high culture specialized in discrimination. An artist’s putatively lofty intentions did not by themselves get him past the gate. I remember Sam Lipman one day telling me that the night before he had seen Philip Glass’s new opera. When I asked what he thought of it, he replied that the message was clear enough: “Glass is saying die, die, die, fools, but first give me \$175 for a seat to hear me tell it.”

Highbrow critics decided what qualified as high culture and what didn’t make the cut. Furious arguments sometimes raged around whether a given body of painting, novels, plays, poems, music was authentically superior. Sometimes these disputes took years for resolution. The powerful art critic Clement Greenberg won the argument for the acceptance of Abstract Expressionism—the work of Mark Rothko, Arshile Gorky, Franz Kline, Barnett Newman, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, et alia—into the celestial realm of high culture only after a long campaign. Such literary critics as R.P. Blackmur, F.R. Leavis, Irving



Fans throng prima ballerina Alexandra Danilova outside the Metropolitan Opera stage door, May 4, 1957.

Howe, and Edmund Wilson, whose book *Axel's Castle* set the original roster for modernism in literature, had to be got past for a writer to earn a niche in the hall of high literary culture. Virgil Thomson, B.H. Haggin, and Ernest Newman performed a similar function for composers and musical performers. No one passed the gate of high culture without his or her passport being stamped by such men. No one today, in any field of criticism, has their authority.

Thinking about culture in the old terms of high, middle, and low may now have become anachronistic. Over the past 40 or so years the categories themselves have largely been blurred and in the blurring blasted out of existence. How this happened is a complicated story.

University English and foreign-language departments, once a citadel of high culture, began no longer to evaluate literature in the interest of forming a canon of the very best writing; they preferred instead to diddle with theoretical distractions touching on what literature and movies and graphic novels and comic books and television shows tell about race, class, and gender. Earlier, universities instituted courses in science fiction and the movies. Oxford, as late as the 1930s, refused to teach writers later than the Romantics. The assumption there, and in most universities, was that no one needed to teach contemporary writers, for earnest students would eventually read them on their own, if not now then later. The same applied to movies; one didn't need to teach or theorize about the movies—one went to the movies.

The universities' emphasis on diversity, carried out under the banner of multiculturalism, has also helped devalue high culture. Diversity and the expansion of higher education was supposed to make the pleasures and benefits of high culture theoretically available to all. As we know, it didn't work out that way, and, as not infrequently happens, quantity sunk quality. Higher education soon lowered its sights. The immediate effect of diversity has been that, in the current design of university courses, the question is rarely any longer what are the best and most significant works to be studied, but, increasingly, which are the works that fairly represent the interests of the diverse body of students: the concerns that must be catered to of blacks, Hispanics, gays, and that large minority group that isn't truly a minority, women? If this entails a vast reduction in the time spent studying the works of long dead white males, even if these males over the long centuries have produced the preponderance of the

world's important works of art and intellect, so be it. If a dumbing down is implicit in these transactions, then that, too, will have to stand. Equality and what was perceived as justice were deemed to take precedence over high culture. Any other way leads to elitism, and elitism, in an ethnically democratic age, is one of the ugliest words going.

The old reigning assumption was that one had four years for an undergraduate education, and these years were best spent, at least in the classroom, not on the novels of Kurt Vonnegut or the movies of Wes Anderson, but on certifiably great works—certified by that harshest yet fairest of all critics, Time. One couldn't of course become educated—except, vocationally, in a trade: engineering, say, or accounting—in four years, but if one was lucky in one's teachers one could get some rough idea of what education was about and how to go about acquiring more of it once outside of school.

What education is about, the assumption was, is the attainment of culture. By culture was meant an understanding of life and what is most important in it. This understanding is obtained through experience, observation, insight, and the ability to get outside oneself to view the world from a larger than merely personal perspective. Culture at this depth

comprised a compound of a sense of the past, an understanding of what morality was about, and intelligence. The Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa notes that “culture has always signified a combination of factors and disciplines that, according to a broad social consensus, are what define it: a recognition of a shared heritage of ideas, values, works of art, a store of historical, religious, and philosophical knowledge in constant evolution, and the exploration of new artistic and literary forms and of research in all areas of knowledge.”

The study of the past is the main portal through which culture is acquired; and once through that portal, the art of the past—visual, musical, above all literary—is the chief route to culture. Study of the great art of the past, the imbuing of tradition, was also thought the most certain way to ensure that there will be important art in the present and in the future.

Matthew Arnold, the great Victorian promulgator of the gospel of culture, held that poetry “is criticism of life,” and criticism itself is “a disinterested endeavor to learn . . . the best that is known and thought in the world.” Culture was attained through finding and pondering that best.

Unlike in science, in culture there is not a clear line of

Equality and what is perceived as justice are deemed to take precedence over high culture. Any other way leads to elitism, and elitism, in an ethnically democratic age, is one of the ugliest words going.

progress. Progress has little to do with culture. The history of culture is one of highs and lows, mountains and gulley. The greatness of Greek culture was followed by the relative barrenness of culture in the Roman Empire followed by the darkness of the Middle Ages followed by the uphill climb of Renaissance Italy thence to the French and Scottish Enlightenments, and so on, two steps forward, one step back, sometimes one step forward, two steps back. Today, people in a position to know would argue, we are in a deep cultural gulley.

The force of culture is cumulative, its vehicle of transmission is tradition. The great essay on this subject is T. S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in which Eliot remarks, "Some one said: 'The dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did.' Precisely, and they are that which we know." In the same essay, Eliot wrote: "No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists." In this reading, "the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past." Culture comprises connections and interconnections between past and present, and these in turn comprise the future of culture.

Just now, though, the future of culture seems unclear, murky, if not somewhat dubious. One is hard pressed to think of great names in the realm of contemporary culture. A few performing musicians, two or three strong symphonic conductors, an actor or two, but not much else comes to mind. Concerts of symphonic or chamber music are attended mainly by people 70 and older. Once strictly classical music festivals now need to give way to more and more pop and rock performances to pay their way. If there are any powerful novelists now at work, I do not know who they might be. Contemporary painting and sculpture have long seemed more about money than about art. Dance lives chiefly off the great choreographers of the past, from Marius Petipa to George Balanchine. The condition of poetry is perhaps saddest of all, for it has become little more than an intramural sport, read only by the same people who write it. People continue to churn out vast

quantities of art—novels, plays, poems, musical compositions, painting, sculpture—but nothing very much seems at stake in any of their productions.

Santayana said that the reason most older people imagine the world a dark and dreary place is that they will soon no longer be in it. Are mine, in this essay, the dour ruminations of such an older man, one himself soon to depart the planet? I find that John Podhoretz, a man 25 years younger than I and one with a much wider interest in and knowledge of popular culture, has recently sung a threnody briefer but not otherwise dissimilar to my own ("Another Op'nin, Another Show," *THE WEEKLY STANDARD*, August 24, 2015). He begins by noting "that so little of what's made these days, or written these days, or filmed these days, or performed these days, seems to provoke the kind of anticipatory thrill that once went hand-in-hand with being a serious customer, consumer, and enthusiast of culture." He then runs down the lack of excitement caused by recent presentations in the theater, in popular and classical music, in literature, and in visual art. He concludes by writing that "there is something deeply depressing in the fact that, increasingly, the arts seem to be losing their power to capture our attention. And

that is because they no longer hold out the hope that, by providing us an intellectual and emotional guide map, they can help sate our aesthetic hunger—the hunger we all have to understand our own experiences and lives by seeing things anew through the eyes of others."

John Podhoretz's is less an analysis than a brief but potent lament, and as such he doesn't go into the reasons for this new want of enthusiasm. I would go further and call the phenomenon a "want even of interest." He is, I believe, correct in pronouncing contemporary art across the board has lost its power. The question is, though, have the arts generally become less interesting, or has the audience for the arts become less interested because its interest has been deflected elsewhere? Most likely both have combined to land us in the present state of extreme thinness of culture.

For many years I taught an undergraduate course in prose style to would-be writers. At one point in the course I used to present my students with a list of 15 or so items that included such names and events as the Peloponnesian War, Leon Trotsky, Serge Diaghilev, the 1913 Armory Show, the



Arturo Toscanini, 81, conducts the NBC Symphony Orchestra on the air, March 20, 1948.

Spanish Civil War, Nicolas Chamfort, Boris Chaliapin, C. P. Cavafy, the Dreyfus Affair, and a few others. I asked how many knew who or what these items were. A few among them knew one or two of the names and events listed. I said that, at 20 years old, I myself could not have done better than they. I then added that, if one wanted to pass oneself off as a cultured person one had to know such things and a great deal more. My sense is that these students were, as I hoped they would be, as I myself as an undergraduate was, properly cowed by their own ignorance.

I'm not sure that this same exercise would be of much avail today. Now students need merely pick up their smartphones and Google the names on my list. I'm less than sure that culture, and the notion of being a cultured person, has anything like the high standing it once had. Might most people today rather be well informed than cultured? What was once a high human aspiration—the possession of culture—may no longer be so. How did such a change come about?

Truly cultured people were always a minority, at any time and in every place. One used to be able to find a certain number of them in universities. Some schools appeared to have more than others. Columbia in the days of Jacques Barzun, Lionel Trilling, F.W. Dupee, & Co. was notable among them. They were also to be found in the books one read at universities. One could not read, for example, George Eliot without being immensely impressed with her vast learning, deep understanding, and artistic control over complex material, and wondering if, were she alive today, one could engage her in conversation without oneself seeming sadly inadequate.

No George Eliots around today, and no Barzuns or Trillings either, which is a sad subtraction from the richness of not merely culture but life itself. Nor is it easy to imagine such people soon replaced. Universities, operating under the tyranny of political correctness and the requisites of dumbing down, seem just now keener on building up the self-esteem and protecting the tender sensibilities of their students than in creating young men and women eager to possess culture.

The acquisition of culture requires repose, sitting quietly in a room with a book, or alone with one's thoughts even at a crowded concert or art museum. Ours is distinctly not an age of repose. The rhythm of our time is jumpy. The smart phone is its characteristic instrument, with calls and texts coming in more than intermittently, Google there to consult as an *aide-memoire*, to check for

stock prices, ball scores, recent terrorist murders. Information not culture is the great desideratum of our day, distraction our chief theme.

Cable television, with something for everyone but the thoughtful, awaits at home. What with raising children under the full-court press regime of parenting, making a living, working out at the gym, worrying about one's diet, taking a breather to watch a baseball game or a movie, there is scarcely time left to read a serious book or anything else that might be construed as acquiring culture. In 1954 a man named Mac Hyman wrote a comic novel called *No Time for Sergeants*; if he were writing today, he could write another called *No Time for Culture*.

Not all high culture has been obliterated. Serious music schools—Juilliard, Eastman, Peabody—are up and running, turning out performing musicians and singers. Opera companies

continue to do business. Major art museums mount exhibitions of old and modernist masters. But these institutions are living off the culture of the past. Paul Valéry said that everything changes but the avant-garde. Now even the avant-garde has changed; in our day it has gone out of business.

This loss of high culture is not an American phenomenon alone. English intellectual and artistic life has fallen off greatly since the generation of Evelyn Waugh, Isaiah Berlin, and Hugh Trevor-Roper. England now appears to be Mick Jagger's country. The English novel, as written by Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, and Salman Rushdie, attracts more publicity than genuine literary interest. The London *Times Literary Supplement*, an exception, continues to review scholarly books of highbrow quality. English acting, too, much of which is shown in America over PBS, remains on a high level. Yet the Proms, the famous summer English classical music concerts held at Albert Hall and broadcast over the BBC, have been cut back and dumbed down, owing to the need, it was announced, to bring in a younger audience. "Now," Norman Lebrecht, the English music critic, has recently written, "Visigoths rule the roost."

That the loss of high culture is an international phenomenon is revealed in Mario Vargas Llosa's recent collection of essays, *Notes on the Death of Culture*. Along with the Czech novelist Milan Kundera, Vargas Llosa is the last

The acquisition of culture requires repose, sitting quietly in a room with a book, or alone with one's thoughts even at a crowded concert or art museum. Ours is distinctly not an age of repose. The rhythm of our time is jumpy.

of the international literary figures still at work, and a man with an impressive oeuvre as a novelist and a strong enough political activist streak to have run for the presidency of his country in 1990. He is a man with complex political views: an advocate of the free market but concerned about the downtrodden of the earth, an agnostic but with a keen appreciation of the spiritual values necessary to democratic society that only religion brings. Now nearly 80, he has published this book of essays around the theme of what he calls “the culture of the spectacle.”

The culture of spectacle is an entertainment culture in which, as Vargas Llosa has it, “having a good time, escaping boredom, is the universal passion.” The culture of spectacle is dominated by “playful banality . . . in which the supreme value now is to amuse oneself and amuse others, over and above any form of knowledge or ideals.” This is a culture in which “Woody Allen is to David Lean or Orson Welles what Andy Warhol is to Gauguin or Van Gogh in painting or Dario Fo is to Chekhov or Ibsen in the theatre.” In this culture, “frivolity, superficiality, ignorance, gossip, and bad taste” dominate. Vargas Llosa argues that the simplicities of the visual—television, movies, smartphones, the Internet, the partiality, in other words, for pixels over print—preclude the thoughtfulness, gravity, and

seriousness that once were at the center of culture. The result, he holds, is a world “divided between functional illiterates and ignorant and insensitive specialists.”

In *Notes on the Death of Culture* Mario Vargas Llosa has composed a tirade, attacking journalism, French literary theorizing, sexual relations drained of eroticism, the surrender of intellectuals, the lack of complexity in contemporary literature, the absence of authoritative criticism, the deprecations of political correctness and dumbing down. Tirade his book may be, but a most compelling one it is, because backed up by examples and analyses and global in its compass, and with the anger usually associated with tirades here replaced by sadness for a lost world.

On the question of why serious literature is no longer being produced, for example, Vargas Llosa argues that it has been replaced by the kind of light reading that is more congenial to the age. The concentration that reading serious writing requires is no longer there. “For the culture in which we live,” Vargas Llosa writes, “does not favor, but rather discourages, the indefatigable efforts that produce works that require of the readers an intellectual concentration almost as great as that of their writers.” In an extreme statement of this case, James Joyce claimed it took him seven years to write *Ulysses* and saw nothing wrong if it took his readers

Data Privacy: The Next Big Lawsuit Bonanza

By Thomas J. Donohue

President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

You’ve got to give the trial bar credit for being innovative. It has opened up a new frontier in the litigation sweepstakes—data privacy. Cyberattacks are growing in size and frequency, more and more consumers are exposed to them, and state and federal data privacy laws are complex and increasingly antiquated. That means the risk and potential liabilities are staggering.

These breaches impact businesses of all sizes and in every sector—from the corner hardware store running credit card transactions on Main Street to the largest Fortune 500 companies operating worldwide. Attacks against U.S. companies can come from anywhere in the world and hit customers everywhere. So the liability playing field is global. And thanks to mass hacks—compromising millions of customers’ data—there is no shortage of victims.

Plaintiffs’ lawyers can stay up to speed

on the latest cyberattacks thanks to laws in almost every state requiring companies to report breaches to customers, government authorities, or both. They frequently troll news reports and public records, sometimes filing class actions within 24 hours of a data breach.

The U.S. Chamber and its Institute for Legal Reform are working to prevent data privacy from becoming a lawsuit bonanza for the trial bar.

We’re calling for uniformity in data breach liability laws—at home and abroad. Forty-seven states have different and conflicting laws on this topic. This chaos presents all kinds of opportunities for abuse. Congress is belatedly considering legislation to create a federal standard. Its goal should be to achieve real data security with legal clarity, rather than another big payday for the plaintiffs’ lawyers.

We’re using our resources to call out legal abuses of existing and prospective laws, both by regulators and the trial bar. Many states have passed or are contemplating amendments to privacy

laws that allow for private rights of action, attorneys’ fees, and statutory penalties without proof of harm or damage caps.

We’re also strongly supporting the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act, which recently passed the Senate. This bill would enable companies to share specific information about cyber incidents and threats with each other and the government—without the threat of lawsuits. With an updated cybersecurity law, we can help prevent more data breaches from happening in the first place.

In the meantime, the trial bar is using its old tricks of creating lawsuits and fishing for clients in the rapidly evolving area of data privacy, seeking to expand liability and damages. We’re watching all of this very closely, and we’re ready to blow the whistle as soon as the plaintiffs’ lawyers step out of bounds.



U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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seven years to read and understand it. Nor, Vargas Llosa contends, are there serious critics at work to help “guide citizens in the difficult task of judging what they heard, saw, and read.” In *Notes on the Death of Culture* he nicely eviscerates Jean Baudrillard, Michel Foucault, and others of the dazzling school of French ninnyes who argue that not only art but reality itself can scarcely be said to exist.

In the culture of spectacle, the great figures are chefs and fashion designers, athletes and actors, television journalists. Intellectuals, whose chief interest was in ideas, have been replaced by so-called public intellectuals. These are men and women of no notable depth whose domains are the op-ed pages and the television news and talk shows. The culture of spectacle has no interest in ideas. Nor does television, its main medium, which makes all ideas banal.

Mario Vargas Llosa’s culture of spectacle is unanchored and distracted, and not in the least worried about being so. Eroticism, which he defines as “physical love stripped of animality . . . a creative shared activity that prolongs and sublimates physical pleasure, providing a *mise en scène* and refinements that turn it into a work of art,” he claims has departed sex life. “Making love in our time, in the Western world,” he argues, “is much closer to pornography than to eroticism and, paradoxically, it has become a degraded and perverse derivative of freedom.” In Spain, he reports, masturbation is taught in high schools—do these classes have examinations, he wonders?—under the assumption that it will cut down on unwanted sexual desire and reduce teenage pregnancies. Sex in the culture of spectacles is easier, yet more acts of perversion and predation are committed than perhaps at any time in history.

Vargas Llosa finds politics, too, have been degraded in the culture of spectacle. The gutter press, which today is pretty much all the press, television, and the social media have greatly debased it. “The frantic search for scandal and cheap gossip with which to launch attacks on politicians,” Vargas Llosa writes, “has meant that, in many democracies, what the public knows about its politicians are their worst features.” He believes this is a problem without a solution, and hence not so much a problem as an affliction, with no known cure. “Stupidity has become the ruling value of postmodern life,” Vargas Llosa writes, “and politics is one of its main victims.”

Some of the best pages in *Notes on the Death of Culture* are on the subject of that greatest of all mixed blessings, the Internet. The Internet is about information, little more, and, Vargas Llosa holds, “information licentiousness is not the same as freedom of expression; it is the opposite.” The goal of utter transparency in public life, often worked out through exposure on the Internet, is ultimately destructive of the needed privacy of diplomats and politicians to get work done. Most talk of transparency is little more than the

search for entertainment by way of gossip and scandal disguised. “Julian Assange,” Vargas Llosa writes, “rather than being a great freedom fighter, is a successful entertainer, the Oprah Winfrey of the information world.”

As for the connection between the Internet and serious art, Vargas Llosa finds that where it exists it figures to be deleterious to art. “My impression is that literature, philosophy, history, art criticism, to say nothing of poetry, all the manifestations of culture written for the Net, will doubtless be ever more entertaining, that is, more superficial and transient.” Such matter is also likely to put people off serious and demanding works of art and intellect, “because they seem to them as remote and eccentric as the medieval scholastic debates over angels or the alchemists’ tracts on the philosopher’s stone seem to us.”

For reasons no one has yet explained, the Internet is at once riveting and a great killer of concentration. Confronted by a composition on the Internet of more than, say, 25 paragraphs, the mind begins to wander, impatience kicks in, one wants, in the cant phrase, to get to the bottom line. If the Internet teaches anything, it is that information is not knowledge. Nor is it, the Internet, a happy vehicle for aesthetic pleasure. No one goes to the Internet for style, or even notices style when there. One goes for just the facts, ma’am, as Sergeant Friday used to say. Very useful lots of this information is, too, but none of it is culture, or close to it.

Against the current notion of dumbing down, the curtailment of bold intellectual and artistic investigation through political correctness, high culture had been all that remained to smarten us up. Among those of us fortunate enough to have grasped its significance, high culture took us out of our small worlds into a larger universe where human possibilities were immensely enlarged. But now high culture, once thought to be not the shortest but the surest way to the good life, is no longer the main quest in artistic or intellectual life, having been not so much defeated as replaced by noise, nervous energy, sheer distraction.

Today it is not difficult to imagine a world devoid of high culture. In such a world museums will doubtless stay in business, to store what will come to seem the curiosities of earlier centuries; so, too, will a few symphony orchestras remain, while chamber music will seem quaint than Gregorian chant. Libraries, as has already been shown with bookstores, will no longer be required. The diminishing minority still interested in acquiring the benefits of high culture will have to search for it exclusively in the culture of the past. No longer a continuing enterprise, high culture itself will become dead-ended, a curiosity, little more, and thus over time likely to die out. Life will go on. Machines will grow smarter, human beings gradually dumber. Round the world the vast majority might possibly feel that something grand is missing, though they shan’t have a clue to what it might be. ♦

She Botched It

What we've learned about Hillary Clinton's performance at the State Department

BY JAY COST

The mainstream media, liberal pundits, and even some conservative analysts gave Hillary Clinton high marks for her performance at the October 22 hearing of the House Select Committee on Benghazi, and they scored congressional Republicans negatively. The day was widely deemed a huge win for Clinton and a crucial moment in turning her campaign around.

Certainly, Clinton won a solid victory in the news cycle.

And squaring off against House Republicans will boost her among Democratic primary voters, who revile the congressional GOP. Combine that with Joe Biden's decision not to run for president and Clinton's steady performance in the Democratic debate, and it is an easy bet that her poll numbers will rise.

But to leave matters there would be to miss the forest for the trees. A careful look at the transcript of the hearing strongly suggests that as secretary of state Clinton badly botched the Libya conflict. Moreover, at the hearing she significantly undermined her previous statements about her private email server.

Clinton is running for president as a sagacious and trustworthy steward of the national interest. Yet the Benghazi hearing revealed that some of her decisions were irresponsible, and her handling of her email records has been outright dishonest.

Going into the hearing, the media anticipated a debate between Republican members of the committee and Clinton, to be scored as a forensic contest. So did Clinton, and she played to the media's expectations. So did the Democrats on the panel (with

the exception of Tammy Duckworth, who emphasized policy reforms).

Most conservative commentators focused on Clinton's exchanges with congressman Jim Jordan, about the Obama administration's shifting accounts of the cause of the attack on the American facilities in Benghazi on the night of September 11, 2012. Jordan produced an email Clinton sent to her daughter Chelsea around 11 P.M. the night of the attack that identified the attackers as "an Al Qaeda-like group." This was shortly after Clinton had suggested in a first-person statement released by the State Department that a YouTube video had been the cause.



Oh, my aching memory

The point was important. It provided further evidence that the administration's public spin of the Benghazi attack was knowing and deliberate—as it would be, two months before an election, with the president campaigning on the claim that al Qaeda was "on the run." Even so, exclusive focus on the email to Chelsea actually understates the scope of the Republicans' case and overlooks

data they proffered to support their argument.

The GOP's contention is that Clinton cared about Libya mostly for political reasons. She was eager to take credit for the perceived victory when longtime dictator Muammar Qaddafi was toppled by rebels, with NATO air support, in August 2011. She had little interest, however, in managing the tasks assigned to the State Department in connection with the post-Qaddafi transition, though she did keep open a back channel on that country with her old political associate Sidney Blumenthal, a longtime confidant at the time employed by the Clinton Foundation. Not all of the Republicans' assertions rang true, but the questioners did marshal an impressive array of data points to suggest that Clinton should have been more interested in the policy, and less in the U.S. domestic political value, of the intervention in Libya.

Peter Roskam led the questioning for the GOP. He presented evidence that Clinton was the principal Obama

MELINA MARA / THE WASHINGTON POST / GETTY

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official championing U.S. participation in the Libya intervention. Roskam indicated that Clinton overcame objections from domestic officials as well as foreign governments. He also showed how interested Clinton was in receiving public credit. He mentioned a memo from her adviser Jake Sullivan written in August 2011 that applauded her “leadership on Libya,” where she provided “a critical voice” and became “the public face of the U.S. effort.” Two months later, that memo was the basis for a glowing report in the *Washington Post*. Roskam also cited an email from Clinton herself suggesting that she fly to Martha’s Vineyard after the Qaddafi regime fell to appear with President Obama.

Politicians naturally like to take credit for any positive development, so this alone is hardly grounds for criticism. But it sets the stage for the line of questioning pursued mainly by Susan Brooks, Martha Roby, Mike Pompeo, and Lynn Westmoreland: that Clinton lost interest in Libya after Qaddafi fell and did not react appropriately to copious warnings that the security situation in that country was deteriorating badly.

Brooks produced the most striking illustration of Clinton’s lack of interest. She showed a stack of 795 Clinton emails about Libya from February 2011 through December 2011 and compared it with the paltry 67 Clinton emails in 2012. “In this pile in 2011, I see daily updates, sometimes . . . hourly updates from your staff about Benghazi and [U.S. representative in Libya] Chris Stevens. When I look at this pile in 2012, I only see a handful of emails to you from your senior staff about Benghazi.”

Clinton responded:

Well, Congresswoman, I did not conduct most of the business that I did on behalf of our country on email. I conducted it in meetings. I read massive amounts of memos, a great deal of classified information. I made a lot of secure phone calls. I was in and out of the White House all the time. There were a lot of things that happened that I was aware of and that I was reacting to.

This is, of course, true—but it would have been equally true in 2011 and in 2012. Why the drop-off? The emails are not meant to be a definitive, comprehensive account of the secretary’s actions on Libya, only a metric to gauge her overall level of involvement. And a reasonable one at that: If Clinton’s email correspondence on Libya fell so precipitously in 2012, does it not stand to reason that her attention to the matter did, too?

Roby pushed this point, citing an email between State Department staffers on the Libya desk suggesting Clinton’s

lack of interest in February 2012: “The secretary also asked last week if we still have a presence in Benghazi. I think she would be upset to hear, yes, we do. But because we don’t have enough security, they are on lockdown.” Clinton said she could not comment on what any staffer heard or misheard, which is also true. But that’s a second ad hoc assertion to defend her level of involvement: Her email correspondence doesn’t reflect her overall work effort, and this State Department staffer misunderstood.

There was a third ad hoc explanation from Clinton, offered at the end of the hearing. Brooks asked: “Did you ever personally speak to Ambassador Stevens after . . . you swore him in in May [2012]?” Clinton answered yes, she

had, although she could not recall when. Her memory is not the only thing lacking on this matter, for as Brooks noted: “There are no call logs with him. There’s nothing from the ops center with him that we have found. We have no record that you had any conversations with the ambassador after you swore him in and before he died, and you were his boss.”

Maybe Clinton did remain interested in Libya, and the emails are an inaccurate measure of her true involvement, that staffer misheard her, and her conversation with Stevens simply

did not make it into the copious record. But these three independent facts all point in the same direction: After Qaddafi was toppled, she lost interest.

The context for this apparent lack of interest is important. Westmoreland and Pompeo provided it. Westmoreland pointed out that there were 20 security breaches at the Benghazi facility before the fatal attack (though Clinton said she knew of only 2). Pompeo noted the rapid increase in the frequency of requests for additional security for Benghazi through 2012 leading up to September 11. Yet the documentary evidence suggests that Clinton remained unengaged, the security of the facility remained inadequate, and none of the many requests reached her desk.

Clinton’s catchall answer was that the security experts made these decisions, and anyway Stevens never asked for the facility in Benghazi to be closed. As she told Westmoreland:

But, you know, we have a process, and the experts, who I have the greatest confidence in, and who had been through so many difficult positions, because practically all of them had rotated through Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, other places—they were the ones making the assessment.

Clinton’s Republican questioners marshaled an impressive array of data points to suggest that Clinton should have been more interested in the policy, and less in the U.S. domestic political value, of the intervention in Libya.

The Republicans pushed back on this rejoinder in two ways, and Clinton did not have a good answer for either. First, they provided evidence that Clinton should have been more involved. Second, they showed that she was quite prepared to be involved when the messages came from Blumenthal.

Pompeo produced a recommendation from the 1998 Accountability Review Boards after suicide bombers attacked two U.S. embassies in Africa, killing hundreds: “The Secretary of State should personally review the security situation of Embassy Chanceries and other official premises, closing those which are highly vulnerable and threatened.” Roby noted that memos Clinton received from August 2012 showed the security in Libya deteriorating and the country in chaos. One would think the secretary would have initiated the personal review urged by the Accountability Review Boards. Instead, she left the responsibility entirely to lower-level officials.

It is striking to juxtapose her hands-off approach to security with her voluminous correspondence with Blumenthal. According to committee chairman Trey Gowdy, Blumenthal was her “most prolific emailer that we have found on the subjects of Libya and Benghazi.” Whereas none of the requests for additional security got through to her, Blumenthal passed along whatever he liked.

There were, in effect, two different processes at the State Department regarding Libya: the official process, where the security needs of the facility were not met and Clinton never got involved, even as security became precarious; and a back channel for an old pal. Gowdy noted that Stevens was even asked to “read and respond to Sidney Blumenthal’s drivel . . . in some instances on the very same day [Stevens] was asking for security.”

Together, these two points undermined Clinton’s insistence that she did not have a personal role to play in reviewing security arrangements. As Gowdy put it: “How did you decide when to invoke ‘a people and process’ and who just got to come straight to you? Because it looked like certain things got straight to your inbox, and the request for more security did not.” Clinton had no persuasive answer.

All told, the Republicans’ argument that Clinton badly mishandled Libya is strong. They produced compelling evidence that she spearheaded U.S. military involvement, but then lost interest, outsourcing decision-making to State Department staffers, even while attending to a crony who was not an expert on Libya but interested in the situation there.

Even the claim that Clinton won on style requires overlooking the callous note she struck in the middle of the hearing. At one point, Brooks queried Clinton about an email from Stevens to a reporting officer in Benghazi in December 2011 in which he asked “what you guys decided to do regarding future of the compound.” By then Libya’s temporary government, the National Transitional Council, had moved from Benghazi to Tripoli, where the American embassy had been reopened. At the time, other governments were moving their missions out of Benghazi, and there had been talk of winding down the American mission. Yet Stevens—who had served as U.S. representative to the National Transitional Council from March to November 2011 and would be sworn in as ambassador to Libya in May 2012—did not know what was planned for the Benghazi mission. Brooks asked:

[Stevens] was in Washington, D.C., or back in the States during that time, and in December Ambassador Stevens, your soon-to-be ambassador, didn’t know what was going to happen with the compound in Benghazi. How is that possible?

It is a sensible question. And given the evidence presented at the hearing, it is fair to wonder if the real answer is: Nobody at State told Stevens because nobody had made a decision, because senior officials, above all Clinton, were no longer thinking carefully about Libya.

Clinton offered a jarring response:

Well, Congresswoman, one of the great attributes that Chris Stevens had was a really good sense of humor. And I just see him smiling as he’s typing this. Because it is clearly in response to the email down below talking about picking up a few, quote, “fire-sale items” from the Brits.

This comment comes out of nowhere. Why mention Stevens’s sense of humor in response to a serious question about the future of the mission? Clinton was trying to sell us on the idea that she had a certain intimacy with Stevens—even though Brooks would go on to establish there was no record of any conversation between Clinton and Stevens after he became ambassador. Seemingly taken aback, Brooks noted that the fire sale actually referred to barricades the British were selling at cut-rate prices because they and “other countries [were] pulling out” of Benghazi, and American diplomats were looking to buy “because we weren’t providing enough physical security for the compound.”

As Brooks noted, ‘There are no call logs with [Stevens]. There’s nothing from the ops center with him that we have found. We have no record that you had any conversations with the ambassador after you swore him in and before he died, and you were his boss.’

Clinton responded: “Well, I thought it showed their entrepreneurial spirit, Congresswoman. . . . I applaud them for doing so.” Given that over the next year Clinton’s State Department would fail to provide sufficient security for the compound, this was a cold-blooded statement. It also side-stepped Brooks’s question, a tacit admission that the Republicans have figured out that Libya policy was an unmitigated disaster in part because the secretary stopped paying attention to it.

Given the prominent coverage of Clinton’s email server in recent months, it was perhaps surprising that the House Republicans did not focus more intently on it. That line of questioning was left mostly to Gowdy, and it produced two important pieces of information, both of which undercut Clinton’s previous statements.

In March, Clinton said that 90 to 95 percent of her work-related emails were already on the State Department server. When pressed by Gowdy as to where she obtained that figure, she responded, “We learned that from the State Department and their analysis of the emails that were already on the system.” Gowdy noted that the committee had tried and failed to confirm that figure, and asked Clinton for the name of the person who had provided it. Clinton did not offer a name, and on October 23 *Politico* reported the reason why: The figure does not come from the State Department. According to department spokesman Mark Toner, “I’m not aware that we have given that figure.” Moreover, per *Politico*, Jason Baron, former director of litigation at the National Archives and Records Administration, is not sure how the State Department could have derived such a figure. “I do not believe State is in the position to give a precise percentage like that because they honestly wouldn’t know how many of the secretary’s emails did, in fact, make their way into an official record-keeping system,” he said.

Gowdy also asked Clinton how she was sure she had done a thorough job of turning over her work-related emails. After all, Blumenthal had turned over emails from Clinton that she herself did not submit. To this, Clinton gave a surprising answer: Blumenthal’s emails were not related to her work. Instead, “They were from a personal friend, not . . . any government official. And they were, I determined on the basis of looking at them, what I thought was work-related and what wasn’t.”

Yet in March she gave a very different account of what “work-related” meant to her:

[A]fter I left office, the State Department asked former secretaries of state for our assistance in providing copies of work-related emails from our personal accounts. I responded right away and provided all my emails that could possibly be work-related. . . . At the end, I chose not to keep my private personal emails—emails about planning Chelsea’s wedding or my mother’s funeral arrangements, condolence notes to friends as well as yoga routines, family vacations, the other things you typically find in inboxes.

So apparently personal emails actually meant yoga routines, vacation plans . . . and dispatches from a political associate about a major foreign-policy hot spot?

Taken together, these contradictions demolish Clinton’s claims that she has been transparent with her emails. The truth is that she has not been nearly as forthcoming as she would like the voters to believe.



Susan Brooks

There is no doubt that Clinton was poised and cool during most of the Benghazi hearing, while Republicans occasionally lost their tempers and sometimes lost the narrative thread. Given the length of the hearing, the casual viewer could be forgiven for missing some substantive points. The media, however, have no excuse. From laziness, partisanship, or both, journalists chose to track only style. Hillary

Clinton was always bound to get an A+ from them.

Yet on the merits, the hearing should damage the central claims of Clinton’s presidential candidacy. Time and again the Republicans produced evidence showing that after she declared victory in Libya, Clinton lost interest. On top of that, she manifestly contradicted her past accounts of her email disclosure.

All told, Clinton’s behavior represents some of the worst qualities of modern politicians. Her grandiose calls for regime change in Libya were not properly backed up with thorough work on the unglamorous details such as security for diplomats. She allowed cronyism to rear its ugly head, in the State Department of all places. And when called to account for this, she served up lawyerly statements designed to obfuscate rather than clarify. It is little wonder that, when so many Americans look at Clinton, they see what is wrong with our government.

Americans of all political persuasions should ponder a simple question: Does Clinton’s behavior on Libya and her emails comport with our expectations for the next commander in chief? Anyone who paid close attention to the substance of the Benghazi hearing is bound to answer with a resounding no. ♦



Pro-breastfeeding demonstration, Orange County, California (2010)

Mothers Know Best

Breastfeeding enters its Maoist phase. BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

I'm a kind of poster child for bottle-feeding instead of breastfeeding. I'm a first-born, and my mother, bless her heart, decided to nurse me from her own nipples instead of the more "scientific" formula that was the middle-class aspirational standard of the 1940s. (Breastfeeding was strictly for hillbillies back then.) Six weeks later, I was nearly dead. My mother simply didn't have the milk. A pediatrician took one look at my shriveled self and told her to stop. She made far briefer and just as ineffectual stabs at breastfeeding

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Lactivism
How Feminists and Fundamentalists, Hippies and Yuppies, and Physicians and Politicians Made Breastfeeding Big Business and Bad Policy
 by Courtney Jung
 Basic Books, 272 pp., \$26.99

with my two younger sisters; but my two brothers, born somewhat later, were bottle babies from the word go.

It never occurred to most of the moms of the postwar Bottle Baby Boom era to imagine that there could be anything wrong with this picture. The babies, more or less exclusively fed on

formula and jars of decidedly unorganic Gerber's, thrived. The year 1963, representing the cohort of 18-year-olds born in 1945, marked the highest average SAT scores ever recorded in America.

All of that is now turned upside down, as Courtney Jung, a political science professor at the University of Toronto, documents in her highly readable *Lactivism*. Now, it's breastfeeding that's upper-middle-class aspirational, with working-class women, especially African Americans, preferring bottles. And while I don't have children myself, several childbearing friends have complained to me about the dreaded postpartum visit from the "lactation

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consultant”—i.e., breastfeeding Nazi—who lectured them sternly about the supposedly poisonous qualities of infant formula, insisted they must be doing something wrong else the baby would “latch on” properly, and pooh-poohed any complaints about excruciating pain or inadequate milk supply.

“Breast is best,” the lactivist mantra, is a proposition with which I concur wholeheartedly. It’s a loving and also cheap way to provide complete nutrition to a newborn—if you can pull it off easily. But as Jung points out, “Breastfeeding is no longer just a way to feed a baby; it is a moral marker that distinguishes *us* from *them*—good parents from bad.” It’s also a status marker that separates highly educated middle- and upper-middle-class mothers from their less well-off sisters (many of them husbandless) who might not have the job flexibility to nurse, or nurse for very long.

“Breastfeeding is part of a package of lifestyle choices that will often include yoga, farmers’ markets, fair-trade coffee, cloth diapers, and homemade baby food,” Jung writes.

The tide that ultimately made breast milk both chic and quasi-compulsory began to turn during the late 1950s. The La Leche League, the oldest and most obnoxious (from what I’m told) of the lactivist organizations, got started in 1956 as a group of Roman Catholic women who named their movement after a venerated image of the Virgin Mary breastfeeding the infant Jesus. (Nowadays, La Leche is firmly nonsectarian.) A few years later, hippies picked up on the “natural” aspects of nursing, as did radical Second Wave feminists. The earliest, mimeographed version of the rad-fem health manifesto *Women and Their Bodies*, circulated in 1971, aligned formula feeding with capitalism and an over-controlling medical profession.

Commercially manufactured formula was pretty much the norm by then, and there were scandals involving the aggressive marketing of the stuff to desperately poor Third World mothers, who sometimes inadvertently killed their babies by diluting the expensive formula with contaminated water. In any event, militant and lengthy breastfeeding became paradoxically associated (as it is today)

with the most outré of hipsters and also with “crunchy” strains of religiously conservative Christians. Besides nursing their young ones for months on end, both groups go in for home-birthing, “attachment parenting” in which mothers “wear” their infants in ersatz peasant slings, and “co-sleeping,” which means that Mom and Dad share their bed with tiny Junior and, perhaps, his older siblings as well.

Eventually, Jung reports, physicians got involved in the breastfeeding movement. Previously, the touted benefits of nursing had been largely confined to strengthening the mother-child bond. But as soon as such organizations as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control began endorsing breastfeeding, mother’s milk turned into an all-purpose infant-health elixir with magical properties.

Breastfeeding, or breast milk, is credited with reducing the risk of ear infections, gastrointestinal infections, lower respiratory tract infections, necrotizing enterocolitis, high blood pressure, obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, allergies, cancer, celiac disease, Crohn’s disease, eczema, infant mortality, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). . . . Breastfed babies are also said to have higher IQs and to be more emotionally secure.

The scientific studies that supposedly support these enthusiastic conclusions actually show more ambiguous outcomes. For example, there does seem to be a correlation between nursing and higher childhood cognitive development. But that may be because upscale mothers who breastfeed their babies also spend a lot of time playing Mozart for them in the womb—or simply transmit to them their own high-IQ genes.

In 2012, the AAP issued a statement identifying breastfeeding as a “public health issue” akin to avoiding second-hand smoke and wearing seatbelts. A 2011 report from the Obama administration’s surgeon general’s office highlighted a study that claimed breastfeeding would save American taxpayers \$3.6 billion annually in formula outlays, days taken off work by parents caring for their formula-sickened children, and the cost to society

in lost productivity occasioned by premature deaths supposedly attributable to formula-feeding.

In 2009, the federal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which provides vouchers to low-income women for buying nutritious foods, began offering a superior quantity and range of groceries to mothers who breastfeed exclusively. In 2012, New York mayor Michael Bloomberg—he of the 16-ounce drink-cup ban—launched Latch On NYC. This “nudge” (to nursing) program required hospitals to keep formula under lock and key, dole it out in minute quantities, and hector new moms incessantly on the pneumonia, diarrhea, and ear infections that would ensue from feeding a baby out of a bottle. In the Third World, the World Health Organization and other groups have downplayed the high risk of HIV transmission by way of mother’s milk in order to promote the breast.

The irony, as Jung points out, is that, thanks to all the mother’s-milk-is-healthiest rhetoric, the bottle has actually made a covert comeback, because few career-pressed women have the time or inclination for the one or even two solid years of nursing that the lactivists tout. There is now a lively capitalist market in breast pumps (including some very fancy models), storage bags, cleaning equipment, and Internet-facilitated “human milk sharing” that has turned the product of women’s breasts into a valuable commodity.

Courtney Jung, who admits to a crunchy, attachment-parenting side to raising her own children, can occasionally sound like a lactivist herself. She is more tolerant than I of “nurses,” those exhibitionist displays in which militant mothers gather in public places, strip to the waist, and give suck—all to prove some point about the naturalness of what they’re doing. Like many a progressive, she thinks that universal paid maternity leave will solve all the problems she raises. Still, she makes a strong argument: If women are supposed to have a “choice” about their reproductive activities, why can’t they choose how to nourish the offspring that might emerge? ♦

Paths of Glory

*The quest for (literary) immortality in
19th-century England.*

BY SARA LODGE

Why do some authors stay famous, while others fade from history's roll of honor?

When it was published in 1811, Mary Brunton's racy novel *Self-Control* was a runaway bestseller. Although its theme was moral fortitude, it was wildly exciting. An ardent suitor, Hargrave, kidnapped the heroine, Laura Montreville. Despite loving her captor, she resisted his improper advances and passionate mood swings. Her daring escape from Quebec involved piloting a birch bark canoe over a waterfall:

With terrible speed the vessel hurried on. It was whirled round by the torrent—tossed fearfully—and hurried on again. It shot over a smoothness more dreadful than the eddying whirl. It rose upon its prow. Laura clung to it in the convulsion of terror. A moment she trembled on the giddy verge. The next, all was darkness!

Readers brave enough to open their eyes on the next page discovered that she had survived, to be rescued by a Scottish ship's captain, who would prove to be the sensible and reliable catch that every girl hopes to find in a murky pool. Jane Austen, who was about to publish *Sense and Sensibility*, was seriously worried that her novel—which has a similar theme, if a drier line in plot development—had been scooped.

Her fear was justifiable. For the next 50 years, Austen's novels failed

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Those Who Write for Immortality

*Romantic Reputations and
the Dream of Lasting Fame*

by H.J. Jackson
Yale, 312 pp., \$35

to outpace Brunton's in sales. Austen died in 1817, aged 41; Brunton in 1818, aged 40. There is evidence that some contemporary readers couldn't tell the difference between them (Queen Charlotte's library catalogue attributes Brunton's novels to Austen) or, like the actor William Macready, actively preferred Brunton. Nobody in 1840 could have predicted that rather than idolizing Sir Walter Scott, whose level of superstardom in that era was supreme, or catapulting over cataracts with Brunton, readers in 2015 would prefer the tea-table realism of Jane Austen, whose fame would resound triumphantly from Harvard to Hollywood.

Professor H.J. Jackson sets out to analyze the factors that affect literary renown and to consider why some authors become permanent exhibits in the gallery of public memory, while others molder forgotten in backrooms. One possible reason, of course, is that quality triumphs in the end. As Austen herself remarked, Brunton's *Self-Control*, while "elegantly-written," has nothing of "Nature or Probability" in it. Scott's novels are mostly long and feature tartan-clad historical melodrama of a kind that modern audiences relish less than witty domestic romance. But was this evolution of taste inevitable, and Austen inexorably fated to become a sleeper hit? Jackson suggests not. Indeed, she

argues that "what happened to Brunton—the gradual fading and extinction of her name—could easily have happened to Austen."

One thing that made all the difference, Jackson posits, was family. Brunton had none. Austen had a nephew, James Austen-Leigh, who in 1870 published a memoir of his aunt that was a key text in reviving interest in Austen's life and work. Austen-Leigh conflated Austen with the heroines of her novels, extolling her love of dancing, her lack of pretension, and the bank of green turf at the back of her childhood home down which, like Catherine Morland, she must have rolled. He tactfully omitted details such as the aunt who was a shoplifter and the brother who went bankrupt. His nostalgic myth of Jane Austen was one of minimally educated "natural genius" and rural seclusion. He (falsely) presented her as an author who had no popular following: By claiming that she was an acquired taste, he encouraged hundreds of discerning readers to acquire it.

Jackson notes that it is often authors who have only a coterie readership at first who become the darlings of posterity. (Think of Emily Dickinson and James Joyce.) It is especially useful to an author's posthumous success if there is more to discover: letters, unpublished work, fragments, romantic scandal. If you are an author who wants to be remembered, I advise you right now to develop a secret cache of writing. And to leave behind, if possible, some helpful relations who can drip-feed the oil of biographical speculation onto the pyre of your reputation, to keep the flame alight.

You should also think carefully about your name and where you live. If your surname is Sim and you reside in Dullsville, you may have a problem. For, Jackson astutely observes, authors whose names can be made into pleasing nouns or adjectives are advantaged in the fame stakes. Devotees of the cult of Jane Austen early became known as Janeites. Poems can be Blakean, Keatsian, Coleridgean, or Wordsworthian. Whereas a Simian poem would just be bananas.

Moreover, those authors whose

oeuvre is associated with a picturesque locale, as William Wordsworth's verse is with the Lake District, can create a compelling tourist tie-in, offering the possibilities of pilgrimage and purchase. Those who have visited Jane Austen's house at Chawton in Hampshire will know that "Georgian gingerbread" and I Love Mr. Darcy T-shirts are a significant element of the experience.

In her fascinating account of why some authors' stock has sunk, and others' has risen, Jackson examines various triumvirates of Romantic-era authors, where one writer has triumphed while the other two have not. The first "three men in a boat" are Wordsworth, Robert Southey, and George Crabbe. Crabbe was an excellent poet whose work was original and satirical. He wrote sympathetically about the lives of the working poor in poems such as "The Village" (1783), which, while introducing multiple characters in a kind of early precursor to TV drama, did not shrink from difficult topics such as domestic violence, sibling incest, prostitution, and alcoholism. His poems were both critically acclaimed and popular, and Wordsworth himself thought they would "last, from their combined merits as Poetry and Truth, full as long as any thing that has been expressed in Verse."

Sadly, he was wrong. Why don't we read Crabbe now? Well, certainly his unmelodious name was not helpful in creating a Crabby, or even Crabbesque, following. But there were other factors. Like most of his contemporaries, including Scott and Wordsworth, Crabbe wrote long narrative poems. In the 21st century, poetry is the caviar of literature: enjoyed occasionally by a few, in canapé-sized bites. Long poems are, by definition, history. Also, Crabbe wrote in heroic couplets, a poetical form that was already rather dated in his era. And his life as a clergyman was modeled on the "plain sense and sober judgement" he professed in his realist works. Here was

none of the ardent zeal for the French Revolution and then horrified apostasy that characterized Wordsworth's early career. Crabbe had no Romantic circle; he left no illegitimate daughter in France. Like Robert Southey,



Jane Austen



Mary Brunton

the overweening poet laureate from 1813 to 1843, he may have produced good work, but his career didn't make exciting copy.

Wordsworth had more luck. As well as long poems he penned short lyrics, which would be widely anthologized in the late 19th century. His tone and subject matter commended themselves for inclusion in textbooks.

Yet his biography had a dramatic arc. And his controversial "Essay Supplementary to the Preface" to his *Poems* (1815) became a statement of poetical theory with which students continue to do intellectual battle. Wordsworth claimed, loosely following the classical dictum of Horace, that great, game-changing authors were never immediately popular or critically acclaimed. Rather, they must cultivate a small group of "fit" readers—thoughtful intellects, open to new ideas—and thereby creates the taste by which they may be enjoyed.

Professor Jackson is not persuaded by Wordsworth's theory: On the whole, she prefers Samuel Johnson's notion that the mass of common readers will, over the course of a century, determine an author's survival value. However, as Jackson is at pains to demonstrate, fame is not monolithic. It consists of reputation among various different groups: nonreaders of that author (who nonetheless recognize the author's name); leisure readers (who may know only one work); academics (who analyze literature professionally); and writers (whose relationship with the author may involve practical influence). An author may have a graph of reputation that charts high with one group and low with another.

John Keats, for example, was not in his lifetime particularly popular with academic readers or professional writers. His early mentor Leigh Hunt was much better known: for his political interventions, his friendship with Lord Byron, and his editorship of magazines that published liberal writing. Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge preferred the poetry of Barry Cornwall, an established poet who wrote thrilling dramatic scenes that particularly appealed to a female audience.

However, after his painfully early death at 25 in Rome from tuberculosis, Keats acquired a symbolic value as an emblem of aesthetic martyrdom. It was rumored that his fatal illness had been instigated by a damning review.

His slim but sensuous output was reassessed and found to be the nipped bud of a glorious poetic flowering: a totem of aspiration and promise cut tragically short. Keats's posthumously published letters—which are some of the most playful, passionate, and profound in English literature—fed this narrative of unconsummated love, both between Keats and his fiancée, Fanny Brawne, and between Keats and his public: a host of future fan(nie)s, who never got to embrace him in anything but imagination. Keats's short and fiery life became inescapably part of his enduring literary brand.

We love to love those whom we appreciate too late. Thus, William Blake, an artist and poet who died largely unknown, was championed by later 19th-century writers and artists including Algernon Charles Swinburne and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, becoming much more famous than other working-class poets such as Robert Bloomfield and John Clare. Blake fitted the ideals of the Victorian arts and crafts movement as an artisan who created his own, experimental, self-published texts, integrating painting, engraving, and writing. In America, he became celebrated as a libertarian, a political radical and religious iconoclast.

As Jackson argues, different eras have made their own Blake. In the 1960s and '70s, he was cited as an exponent of free love and a critic of the repressive forces of state control; now, in Britain, Hubert Parry's 1916 setting of Blake's poem "Jerusalem" is routinely chosen as a favorite anthem by both the Conservative and Labour parties. The importance of his words and of his reputation is sustained by the fact that they are contested; old bones that are constantly picked remain unburied.

Jackson explores the competing forces in the Internet age that affect the progress of fame. One is the fact that it is easier now than ever before to discover and champion a "lost" author. Many Romantic-era women writers, like Mary Brunton, whose work for years was neglected, have resurfaced thanks to projects that post

their novels for free online. Academia is overpopulated, and young scholars, who need to find space to colonize, may well move out from the Manhattan of Byron to the Staten Island of Southey. Yet the globalizing tendency of digital culture and the gravitational pull of Google also create a self-reinforcing feedback loop of celebrity, where publishers sell (and thus commission) most books on well-known figures and university courses are safely built around the Big Six (Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, Byron, Keats, and Percy Bysshe Shelley).

Those Who Write for Immortality comprehensively demonstrates that

this list of six is not reflective of the diversity of authors who were valued in the 18th and 19th centuries. H.J. Jackson urges us to read widely, to think outside the box set of Romanticism, and to remember how much accident and afterlife have contributed to creating a canon that would have mystified many of those who were part of the era's literary scene. Her book is also a timely reminder to any writer dead-set on immortality that it is foolish to court such a fickle mistress. Better to espouse Woody Allen's dictum: "I don't want to live in the hearts of my countrymen. . . . I want to live on in my apartment." ♦



Scholars and Politics

The AAUP's devotion to freedom has its limits.

BY JONATHAN MARKS

If I were dismissed from my college faculty for writing for THE WEEKLY STANDARD, the American Association of University Professors, founded in 1915, would be on my side. It wouldn't matter that, as seems likely, many of its 45,000 members loathe *TWS* and all that it stands for. After all, the AAUP supported Mike Adams, a professor denied promotion at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, allegedly because of columns he had written for the conservative website *Townhall*. Presumably, few in the membership approved of columns such as "Liberal Lawyers and Litigious Lesbians," but the AAUP has been good at distinguishing its commitment to academic freedom from the generally liberal political commitments of its members.

It may, therefore, seem churlish to complain that AAUP has my back for the wrong reasons. Yet Hans-Joerg

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University Reform

The Founding of the American Association of University Professors
by Hans-Joerg Tiede
Johns Hopkins, 288 pp., \$34.95

Tiede's meticulously researched and absorbing history of the founding and early years of the organization reveals, without intending to, a weakness in our understanding of academic freedom that continues even now to undercut its defenders. Tiede chairs the AAUP's Committee on the History of the Association.

It is "something of a founding myth" that the AAUP was begun primarily to defend academic freedom. Tiede embeds the early AAUP in the politics of progressivism, a politics favored by a number of its founders, including its first president, John Dewey. Just as progressives like Herbert Croly, and Dewey himself, considered the ideas of the Founders unsuitable for modern industrial conditions, the founders of the AAUP

thought that “the traditional mode of governance, in which a lay governing board appointed and empowered a president, was no longer adequate for the modern university.” To establish the claim that the American conception of academic freedom emerges out of this progressive context, Tiede draws on the writings of the Johns Hopkins philosopher Arthur O. Lovejoy, arguably the most influential figure in the early history of the association. But he also does us a service by drawing our attention to James McKeen Cattell, then a renowned experimental psychologist, now neglected even in the history of academic freedom, although he was evidently the first to call for the establishment of the AAUP.

Cattell decried the university “president under the existing system” as “not a leader, but a boss” responsible to a board of trustees that is responsible to no one. He and Lovejoy, whom Cattell “directly influenced,” advocated “sweeping changes to the governance of colleges and universities,” the end of which was to establish (as Lovejoy put it) a “self-governing republic of scholars,” a “virtually autonomous body . . . with approximately complete control over all the activities of the institution.” Or as Cattell said, “the university should be a democracy of scholars serving the larger democracy of which it is part.”

This reference to the “larger democracy” is important because Cattell, at least, tied university reform to political and social reform. Tiede begins his book with a quotation in which Cattell drew a parallel between his hope for university reform and his notion that “the industrial trusts will in the end be directed by the world’s greatest democracy.” Cattell did not conceal his expectation that academic experts would, and should, come to constitute a “scientific or advisory department of the government [that would] rank coordinate with its executive, legislative, and judicial departments.” Although the AAUP was formed in large part to increase the influence of professors over higher education in a period of

rapid expansion and new demands for national education standards, its disposition toward academic freedom was also shaped by the view that academic freedom is good because it enables academics to have political influence.

That was not merely an idea of Cattell, whose attitude toward the “role of experts in a democracy” was standard progressivism. The AAUP’s distinctive emphasis on “extramural speech,” or “speaking on matters of public concern, whether or not as an expert in these matters,” had much to do with the ambitions of a “professional class of faculty that included members who used their expertise to advocate the reform movements of the Progressive era.” In this advocacy, they found themselves “in conflict with powerful interests.” Cattell named these powerful interests, the “political machine” and the “business corporation” and their “materialistic aims and autocratic usurpations.” It was part of “educational and scientific work” to oppose these forces “with all our power.” Tiede shows that Cattell’s anticorporate bent, although it was certainly not shared by every member of the AAUP, was influential. The AAUP’s archrival in its early years was the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which “appealed to business interests” and encouraged universities to “adopt business practices.”

Of course, the AAUP also championed—and still champions—the idea of the scholar as above the political fray. The “liberty of the scholar,” declares the 1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure, depends on his conclusions being “gained by a scholar’s method and held in a scholar’s spirit.” But that conception of scholarship sat uneasily with the AAUP as representative of a distinctive political movement. This tension could be resolved in the minds of people like Dewey because they thought that their politics were a product of the scientific spirit—that is, like many partisans, they were quite sure that their partisan views were true. But

it is not hard to see how the public might balk at conferring a special status on academics—a status that gives their speech even more protection than the First Amendment already confers—when they offer themselves not as gadflies but as advocates and potential rulers.

The AAUP’s interest in furthering the political influence of scholars may have had something to do with one of the more shameful episodes in the organization’s history, its nearly complete silence about the dismissal of professors by overzealous, or sometimes just cynical, boards during World War I. Dewey, at least, thought that the “social mobilization of science” for war would help to initiate a “new type of democracy” characterized by (among other things) deference to progressive elites. Such a goal might be worth the sacrifice of a Socrates or two. We need not imagine that advocates of academic freedom cynically traded principles for power—indeed, many were ardent and genuine proponents of America’s role in World War I—to suspect that the marriage of their concept of academic freedom to particular political aims clouded their judgment.

As I was writing this, I received an email from Rudy Fichtenbaum, president of the AAUP, urging me to sign the AAUP’s Centennial Declaration. That declaration denounces “corporatization” and the influence of “business interests” as very nearly the sole enemy of the common good for which we scholars are said to stand. Whatever one might think of the claim that institutions of higher learning emulate (and seek to please) the private sector to the detriment of their missions, the AAUP’s focus on this issue alone in a declaration meant to sum up its principles advances the organization’s most partisan, and least attractive, legacy.

It helps to explain why, in spite of the organization’s record of defending academic freedom, even for conservatives, it is sometimes hard to believe that the American Association of University Professors is serious about academic freedom. ♦

Maestro Meteor

The irresistible rise of Andris Nelsons.

BY PAUL A. CANTOR

On the international music scene, conductor Andris Nelsons is clearly on a roll. He has come a long way from the days when he played trumpet in the Latvian National Opera Orchestra. In the past season, he completed his contract with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) and simultaneously began his tenure as music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO). His inaugural BSO concert was recently broadcast on television in PBS's *Great Performances* series.

Nelsons has been celebrated in a DVD documentary entitled *Genius on Fire* and in recent feature articles and interviews in *Gramophone* and *BBC Music* magazines. To complete his CBSO tenure, he was given the honor of conducting Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the Royal Albert Hall in London in July. Not to be outdone, the BSO gave Nelsons the rare opportunity to conduct Gustav Mahler's gargantuan Eighth Symphony at Tanglewood Music Center in August. When you lead Beethoven's Ninth and Mahler's Eighth on two different continents in the space of a few weeks, you've arrived as a full-fledged international jet-setting conductor.

Nelsons's rise to prominence has been so meteoric that he was widely rumored to be next in line to become chief conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. When that post surprisingly went to the relatively

unknown Kirill Petrenko, the BSO responded immediately by extending Nelsons' contract for three years through 2022.

Crowning all these milestones in Nelsons's career, he accomplished something unfortunately all too rare these days: He secured a contract with a major label to record with a major American orchestra. Over the next few years, Deutsche Grammophon (DG) will be presenting Nelsons and the BSO in Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphonies 5-10.

In a gesture halfway between a marketing ploy and a political statement, DG has labeled the series "Shostakovich Under Stalin's Shadow." The world has generally (and unfortunately) tried to forget Joseph Stalin and his regime's horrors. If it takes Shostakovich's music to keep alive the memory of Stalin's brutality, it will be profoundly ironic. Stalin did all he could to suppress Shostakovich's music, short of killing him—and he no doubt entertained that possibility. As a mere composer, Shostakovich must have wondered how he could ever stand up to the Soviet Union's all-powerful tyrant. I hope this doesn't happen, but we may be approaching the point where Stalin will be remembered by the public not for the Gulag and his mass murders but for trying to silence a lone voice of dissent in Soviet music.

The first release in DG's series highlights the Stalin versus Shostakovich conflict. It pairs his well-known Tenth Symphony with his lesser-known Passacaglia from his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. In 1936, Shostakovich was the *Wunderkind* of Soviet music when Stalin took an instantaneous disliking to this suc-

cessful opera, which transposes the *Lady Macbeth* story to a Russian setting. Stalin's displeasure resulted in an editorial in *Pravda* entitled "Muddle Instead of Music" that condemned the opera for its modernist dissonance.

With an official party attack on Shostakovich, his career was almost ruined. He was forced to withdraw his modernist Fourth Symphony from performance, and only in 1934 did he begin to rehabilitate his reputation with the popular triumph of his Fifth Symphony. (It is a great symphony—perhaps his greatest—but the music is more accessible to ordinary audiences and thus more in line with Soviet artistic standards.)

Stalin died in 1953 and Shostakovich soon got his revenge on the dictator with his Tenth Symphony. He found a way to give a chilling musical expression to the Great Terror Stalin perpetrated. This brooding, unnerving symphony conveys all the anxiety and fear of the Stalin years, and the frenzied, brutish second movement has been interpreted as a portrait of Stalin himself. In the third and fourth movements, Shostakovich repeatedly sounds the four notes that had become his personal musical motto. As Nelsons says in the CD booklet, "With the frantic repetition of D-S-C-H [the musical notes D, E flat, C, B] I hear Shostakovich saying to Stalin with sarcasm and irony: 'You are dead, but I am still alive! I'm still here!'"

Nelsons was born in 1978 in Latvia, when it was still under the Soviet Union's iron fist, and he claims an affinity with Shostakovich as a victim of Communist oppression. Nelsons attributes his understanding of Shostakovich's music in its Soviet context to his "connection to the conducting tradition there in St. Petersburg, his hometown, where I studied." Nelsons's grasp of Shostakovich is evident throughout this impressive new CD.

Nelsons plunges right into the opening chords of the *Lady Macbeth* interlude, emphasizing their cacophony as if to wake Stalin from the dead (not a great idea, come to think of it). Nelsons makes the Passacaglia

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sound like a proper prelude to the symphony. We can hear the way Shostakovich's symphonic idiom developed out of all his work on operas, theater music, and movie music. He has become one of the most popular 20th-century composers because, unlike many modernists, he worked in several popular genres and thereby kept in touch with real, live audiences. How many other modernists ever supported themselves by playing piano to accompany silent movies for crowds in theaters?

When Nelsons gets to the more familiar territory of the Tenth Symphony, it is thrilling to hear Shostakovich played by one of the world's great orchestras.

The string sections are warm and rich in tone, but the cellos and basses can growl ominously when they have to. The percussion section delivers all the punch needed in the thunderous climaxes to suggest the Stalin regime's militarism. And the wind solos—which often seem like lonely voices crying in despair—are particularly moving, with special credit going to James Sommerville on horn and William Hudgins on clarinet.

The historic recordings of Shostakovich—for example, those with the great conductor Yevgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic—do not always measure up to the playing standards of today's best orchestras. The tone of the woodwinds can sound pinched and a bit sour to our ears, while the brass can be coarse. Don't get me wrong: These *are* great performances, and the very rawness of the playing is appropriate. This is, after all, the orchestral sound Shostakovich heard in his head when he composed his symphonies. Moreover, conductors like Mravinsky worked directly with Shostakovich, often giving the premieres of his symphonies. Still, the BSO makes a glorious sound under Nelsons's conducting, and it brings Shostakovich's Tenth to new life.



Andris Nelsons conducts the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Mahler's Sixth Symphony (2015).

In fact, the highest accolade I can pay this performance is that it combines the sheen and polish of a top American orchestra with the gutsiness of the great Russian recordings. Counting Nelsons's, I own 12 versions of the Tenth Symphony, and I listened to all of them (sometimes repeatedly) to evaluate this new CD. Discounting the Mravinsky only because of the recording's dull sound, I would place Nelsons's Tenth in the top three, equal to the famous 1966 Herbert von Karajan version and surpassed only by Kirill Kondrashin's 1973 performance with the Moscow Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra (which, truly inspired, plays well above the normal level of Russian orchestras at that time).

To capture the mood of the Stalin years, a performance of the Tenth needs to convey the brutality and savagery Shostakovich built into the music, and as powerful as Nelsons's interpretation is, Kondrashin takes the drama to an even higher level of intensity and urgency. In Nelsons's concern for shaping every musical phrase, he threatens at times to lose momentum, especially in the long first movement. By contrast, Kondrashin is relentless and implacable.

Under his baton, the Tenth unfolds with grim determination and his performance simply has more energy than Nelsons's.

The sheer sound of Nelsons's CD is, of course, superior to that of Kondrashin's—although the Melodiya recording is surprisingly good for its day. I can vouch for the sonic accuracy of DG's recording because I was at one of the live performances last April from which this CD was put together. And before I come across as an uncritical Nelsons fan, I will add that this concert also included Beethoven's Violin Concerto, with Christian Tetzlaff as soloist. I am sorry to report that this was one of the most disappointing performances of mainstream repertory I have ever heard from world-class musicians. Tetzlaff is one of my favorites among contemporary violinists, but on this occasion, he and Nelsons couldn't get their act together.

The normally clear lines of the concerto were twisted and bent out of shape in a mannered performance that featured exaggerated dynamics, shifting tempi, and overaccented downbeats. I saw Nelsons conduct four concerts in the most recent winter-spring season in Boston and

found him inconsistent. Judging by his performances of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, I am not convinced that he has mastered the classical mainstream—although at times, particularly in the Haydn Ninetieth Symphony, he caught the music’s spirit, both its elegance and humor.

Fortunately for his career, Nelsons excels in the kind of blockbuster pieces that allow a great orchestra to strut its stuff. In addition to the Shostakovich Tenth, I heard him conduct Mahler’s Sixth Symphony and Richard Strauss’s grandiose tone poem *Ein Heldenleben*. Nelsons always managed to make the big moments in these pieces come off splendidly, but in the Mahler symphony, he had not fully worked out its overall musical logic. The orchestra played individual moments masterfully, with careful attention to the phrasing, but Nelsons did not seem capable of maintaining the long line and making whole movements cohere the way the great Mahler conductors such as Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, Jascha Horenstein, and Leonard Bernstein could.

The *Heldenleben* was more successful, but even here, Nelsons sometimes lingered too lovingly over individual details. Still, when he got to the last section, “The Hero’s Retreat from the World and Fulfillment,” he got the BSO to produce the most beautiful string tone I have ever heard live—heart-breakingly, gut-wrenchingly, bloodcurdlingly beautiful. For a few moments the notes just seemed to float in the air, suspended in time, so entrancing was the music.

I’d rather have an uneven conductor than one who performs all music at a steady level of mere competence. Andris Nelsons may have botched the Beethoven Violin Concerto, but he also revealed depths I had never heard in *Ein Heldenleben*. So, even with my doubts, I came away from his first season believing that the BSO had made a wise choice. Boston audiences certainly think so. On several occasions, I heard patrons after the concerts say knowingly: “We’ve got our conductor.” What is more, the

BSO musicians seem willing to play their hearts out for Nelsons. After the performance of the Shostakovich Passacaglia, I noticed Jules Eskin beaming with delight. Eskin has been first cellist with the BSO for over 50 years, and at 84, he still plays with boyish enthusiasm. The smile on his face seemed his way of saying of the rarely performed Passacaglia: “Look what I just learned to play.”

Nelsons seems to have what great conductors need: the ability to inspire musicians and lead them into new territory, whether of reper-

tory or interpretation. He has already proven himself a champion of some of the most challenging musical masterpieces, from Strauss to Shostakovich. He has Shostakovich’s Fifth, Eighth, and Ninth symphonies scheduled for the upcoming BSO season. Boston audiences are in for a treat, as we all are once DG releases these recordings. The series is scheduled to be fully issued by summer 2017.

Who knows what musical heights Nelsons will have scaled by then? In the meantime—Berliners, eat your hearts out. ♦



A Critic’s Confession

In a lifetime of viewing, some things can’t be watched.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

You readers flatter me. You send me emails and letters asking me to review certain movies you’ve seen because you want to know what I have to say about them. At times these missives make me feel guilty, because I know I’m going to let you down. Because it’s often the case that you want to hear my views on a movie I have simply decided I cannot bear to see.

Consider this a critic’s confession.

This month marks the 36th year of my life as a film reviewer (and it was 20 years ago this fall that I wrote my first piece about the movies in *THE WEEKLY STANDARD*). It is said that familiarity breeds contempt—and indeed, when you’ve seen enough movies and learned enough tropes and clichés that you know who the killer is five minutes in, or you start anticipating dialogue and reciting it 10 seconds before the dialogue is spoken, it’s hard not to feel a certain level of disdain for the entire medium.

But it’s not the movies inspiring

this world-weariness that I avoid like the plague, and it’s usually not these kinds of movies that readers kindly ask me to enlighten them about. There are three kinds of movies I now find it advisable to avoid, lest my general disposition turn black as pitch.

The first level of avoidance is strictly neurotic. As I’ve gotten older I’ve lost my tolerance for being frightened at the movies. This was a tolerance I actually acquired, deliberately and with effort, after a childhood in which even being told the plot of a scary movie would make me lose sleep. I mean literally: One Sunday afternoon, when I was 7, my thrill-loving sister revealed she had stayed up late the night before with her friend Daniela to watch *The Blob* on Chiller Theatre and recounted it to me in moment-by-moment detail; I literally wept with fright. Later, I forced myself to watch scary movies until I became “desensitized” (as they say).

I feel the same way about movies set in confined spaces, which induce a claustrophobia I also feel in crowded arenas and stadiums. When I was asked by one of my friendly readers earlier this month to share my

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Falling for the con: a scene from 'Truth'

thoughts about the celebrated *Room*, a film about a woman and her 5-year-old son who have been trapped by her rapist (his father) in a 10x10 backyard prison for years, I replied that I was unable to read through a single review of the novel on which it was based, or even its dust jacket.

The second, which is related to the *Room* example, is sheerly autonomic: I cannot sit through any depiction of child abuse or any film in which a child is placed in physical or emotional jeopardy. This came upon me unexpectedly, and is entirely the result of having had children myself. A friend of mine made a movie a year back in which two little girls accidentally kill a baby. He showed me a scene from it (on his iPhone!) because he loved what the cinematographer had done with a camera angle. I watched after he assured me the scene had nothing to do with the plot. It was indeed beautifully conceived. Then I told him, calmly,

that I would actually rather die than see the whole thing.

The third level of avoidance is ideological. I am increasingly unable to pass any kind of aesthetic judgment on fact-based films whose primary purpose is the naked advancement of a left-wing agenda. The most recent example is, of course, *Truth*, the alternate history of the 2004 incident in which CBS anchor Dan Rather and his producer Mary Mapes fell for a con in which she was passed fraudulent documents about George W. Bush's National Guard service. I know too much about this case not to know that every second of *Truth* is a lie, and I know too much about myself not to know that the sight of Cate Blanchett and Robert Redford whitewashing one of the greatest journalistic crimes of my lifetime would fill me with an unappeasable rage that would last days beyond my viewing of it.

The same is true of *Kill the Messenger*, a similarly shocking effort to reha-

bilitate the posthumous reputation of a conspiracy-mongering obsessive from the 1990s named Gary Webb—who wanted the world to believe that the CIA was responsible for the crack epidemic and whose own newspaper disavowed him and his story on it.

Earlier in my life as a critic, I would have relished the opportunity to take these movies down, to expose their falsities and fallacies and deceptions. And I salute those, like my friend Kyle Smith at the *New York Post*, who do so. But the anger the mere thought of these films provokes in me no longer motivates; it depresses. I will force myself to do it if I have to, if I feel the record simply must be set straight, but I admit I was thrilled when Scott Johnson of *Powerline*, the blog that first surfaced the Rattergate fraud, took on the task of debunking *Truth* in these pages so I could spare myself the pain.

I may be neurotic, but I'm not a masochist. ♦

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