the weekly Standard

TRUMP AND RUBIO AND CRUZ . . . OH MY
FRED BARNES • JAY COST

$4.95

# The Cultural Contradictions of Islam in America

PETER SKERRY

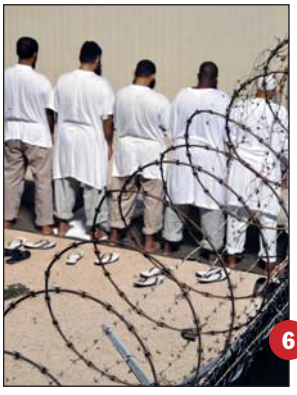
Participants in the American Muslim Parade in New York City, September 14, 2014

DECEMBER 28, 2015 / JANUARY 4, 2016
WEEKLYSTANDARD.COM

THIS IS A COMBINED ISSUE. THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE WEEKLY STANDARD WILL APPEAR IN TWO WEEKS.

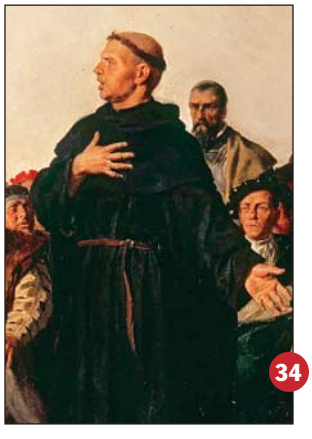
# Contents

December 28, 2015 / January 4, 2016 • Volume 21, Number 16


NEWSCOM













COVER: NEWSCOM

# A Visit from Chair Priebus

'Twas the night before Christmas, when out on the stump
Not a creature was stirring, not even a Trump;
The pundits were poring o'er laptops with care,
In hopes that enlightenment soon would be theirs;
The pollsters were nestled all snug in their beds;
While margins of error tapdanced in their heads;
And Susan with Chekhov, and I with Lee Child,
Had just settled down for a fun evening wild.

When out in the drive there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my chair to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters, and threw up the sash.
The moon shining down on the non-fallen snow
(Climate change is destroying our planet, you know),
Now dimly reveals where the darkness once fell,
A passel of pols in some Uber XLs,
With a perky young leader so lively—Bejeebus!
I knew in a moment he must be Chair Priebus.

More rapid than eagles the others all came,
As Reince whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now! *Marco*, now! *Ted Cruz*, now! *Jeb Bush* and *Christie*;
On! *Kasich*, on! *Carson*, on! *Rand Paul* and *Carly*;
To the top of the porch! to the end of the wall!
Now hurry in! hurry in! hurry in all!"
From far they had come and long distances rode.
They rushed through the door of our modest abode;
Into the fam'ly room candidates drew
With a bevy of donors, consultants, too.

And when, in a twinkling, I came down the stair,
The meeting had lately begun with a prayer.
As I stuck in my head, and was looking around,
Across the room came Chair Priebus with a bound.

"No media allowed! Strictly off the record!"
(But I left the door open; here's what I observed).

A bundle of polls Reince had high on his back,
He looked like a peddler just opening his pack.
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples, how cute!
He called the meeting to order without dispute.
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
But beneath it, his poor face was whiter than snow;
He feigned a broad smile behind grim gritted teeth,
But the tension encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a kind face and a little round belly
But tonight he looked like a very nervous Nelly.

He tried to be friendly, an earnest young man,
While telling himself, "Yes, we can, yes, we can";
But a glimpse of his eye and the cast of his head
Soon gave me to know he was trembling with dread;
He spoke not a joke, but went straight to his work,
And briefed all on the plan; then turned with a jerk,
And grabbing his bag with a shake of his head,
And giving a nod, out the front door he fled;
He sprang to his car, gave his driver
a whistle,
Away they all fled like the down
of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he
drove out of sight—
"*If we don't beat the Donald, for us
it's goodnight!*"

(*as recited to* The Scrapbook
*by an elf bearing a
mysterious resemblance
to William Kristol*)


## The *Narcissist Post*

The self-regard of journalists, the plain old-fashioned infatuation they feel for themselves and for their jobs, is familiar to readers. But this past week, even by the onanistic standards of the trade, the *Washington Post* set a new high-water mark for professional narcissism.

The *Post*, which was sold two years ago to Amazon.com mogul Jeffrey Bezos, has moved three blocks from its brutalist 1972 headquarters in downtown Washington to several floors of a nearby office building. In one sense, of course, this transition is a metaphor for the state of the newspaper business: When the *Post*'s huge concrete bunker opened during Richard Nixon's presidency, no one among its business or editorial staff would have guessed that, some decades later, they would be "downsizing" into somebody's else's real estate. Indeed, the word "downsizing" didn't exist at the time.

But the *Post* is nothing if not resourceful, and so turned this retreat into a kind of advance: Thirty of the 40 pages of the December 13 issue of the

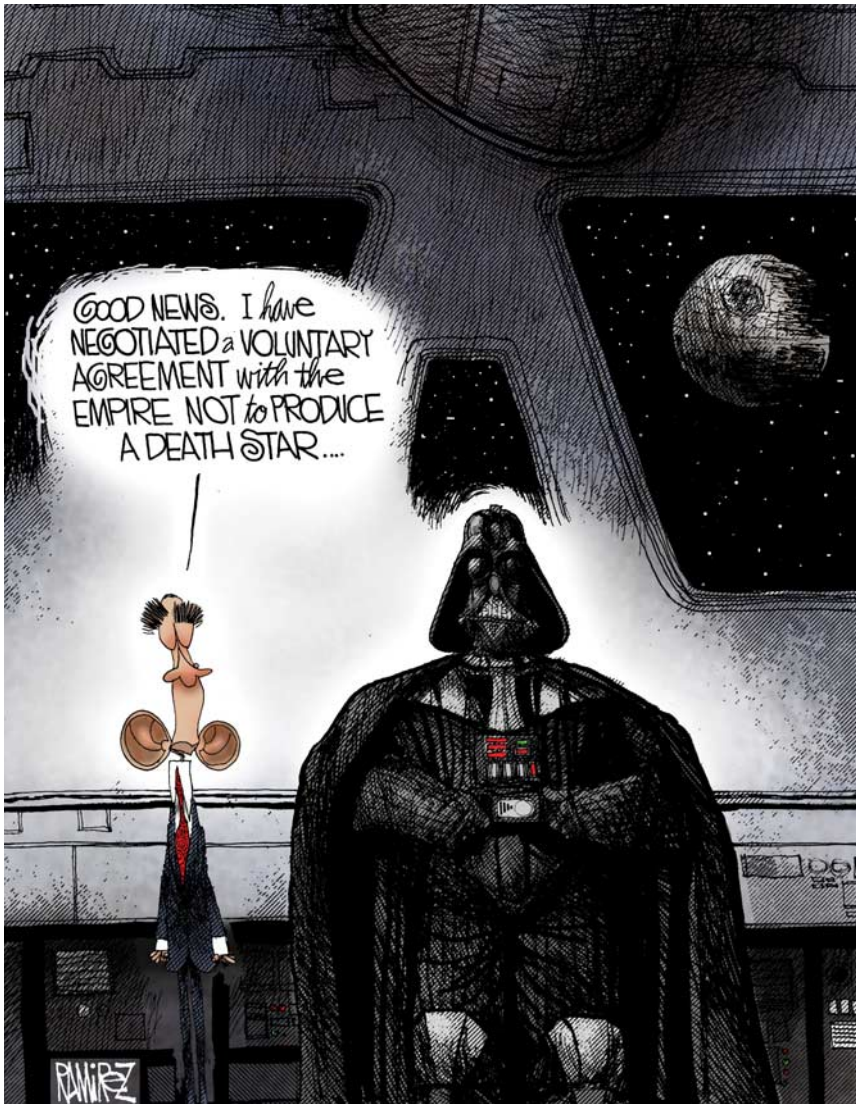
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION, THE WEEKLY STANDARD; IMAGES, GETTY

*Washington Post Magazine* were devoted exclusively to the *Post*, to the joys and sorrows of its move across town—not least, to the amazing men and women who work for the *Washington Post*. As we say, in the wearisome annals of media vanity, The Scrapbook has never seen anything quite like it.

The cover featured Bob Woodward, naturally, surrounded by storage boxes and decorative reminders of the Watergate scandal. The three *Post* front pages reproduced within—"President Kennedy Shot Dead," "Nixon Resigns," "Obama Takes Charge"—neatly summarized, by *Post* lights, the three most important events of modern history. A long, lachrymose essay on the Graham family's ownership included various quotations from the late Benjamin Bradlee and several invocations (with straight face) of onetime owner Eugene L. Meyer's "Seven Principles for the Conduct of a Newspaper."

The centerpiece of the issue was a lavishly detailed description of the *Post*'s new quarters ("The new *Post* will commemorate the old *Post*, the historic *Post*. Near the Hub will be a wall reserved for Pulitzer Prize winners—with much of the wall empty, in deference to future excellence") interspersed with *Vogue*-style fashion shots of *Post* celebrities, including op-ed columnist Eugene Robinson pushing "fashion critic" Robin Givhan on a mover's dolly, and the *Post*'s "innovations blog" editor, among others, poised on a hoverboard.

In keeping with the pledge to commemorate the old *Post*, there was an obligatory fawning reference to the current boss ("Even Executive Editor Marty Baron's office will be about half as large as his old one, an obvious injustice given Marty's emergence as a Hollywood hero in the new movie 'Spotlight'") and reassurances to readers that the exclusive *Post* zip code (20071) will remain the same. Thirteen reporters wrote essays on "objects they could never leave behind." One chose a "Thank God for the *Washington Post*" bumper sticker, autographed by (you guessed it) Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein.




Above all, there was a lot about Watergate. Admirers of Laurence Sterne's classic novel *Tristram Shandy* (1759) will remember the character of Uncle Toby, whose singular obsession was military fortification and main topic of conversation was the wound he sustained in the groin at the Siege of Namur (1695). The *Post* has long since achieved Uncle Toby status: The Watergate break-in occurred 43 years ago, and America has lived through seven presidencies since Nixon's. But even now, under new ownership and ensconced in newer quarters, the *Post* remains fixated on its brief, transitory lodestar from the middle of the previous century.

The vanity of journalists is torturous enough, but the *Post*/Watergate fixation is a pain in the groin. ♦

## The Air Grows Thin at the Summit

Recently, the *Atlantic* magazine held a summit in Washington on gay rights. Describing what took place as a "summit," however, might be generous. As far as civil discourse goes, what took place was more of a nadir. And it is a worrying sign that the antidemocratic mania we've seen on college campuses of late is gaining a toehold among the nation's ostensible elites.

During lunchtime, the conference scheduled a panel on transgender rights. The Scrapbook (mercifully) was not in attendance, but Elizabeth Nolan Brown of *Reason* magazine was there to chronicle the ensuing mockery of civil rights:

> On her first turn speaking, a trans woman named Allyson Robinson started by criticizing the fact that less than half of the nine panelists were transgender. Good cisgender allies would have declined the invitation to participate, she suggested, because they were taking up space that could have gone to trans people. The audience and other panel members nodded along enthusiastically.
>
> Erasing marginalized people from discourse about their own communities has long been a problem, of course. But the fact remains that, at the moment, there are no trans EEOC commissioners. There is no trans executive of the American Civil Liberties Union D.C., or on the White House outreach team. Considering that this was not a panel on the trans experience per se but a dialogue on legal barriers to equality, the inclusion of cisgender people who work directly on these issues hardly seems a mystery or a microaggression.

It went downhill from there. When the *Atlantic*'s Steve Clemons and EEOC commissioner Chai Feldblum pushed back against Robinson's logic, "those who thought having cis people on the panel was OK were branded complicit in the fact that trans people are often the targets of physical violence. Once again, nods and murmurs of approval from the audience."

While it's tempting to dismiss what happened as the ravings of a few identity politics obsessives, note that Robinson, a onetime West Point grad turned preacher on the margins of the Baptist church, has also been an executive director at the Human Rights Campaign, where, according to the *Huffington Post*, Robinson "drove the design and delivery of HRC's broad portfolio of training and curricula for corporate leadership and employee audiences to improve LGBT cultural competence and inclusion in the workplace." If you know how influential and well-funded an organization HRC is, it's terrifying to think that Robinson's fringe ideas about inclusion and diversity might be dictating training in a workplace near you.

As a general rule, more speech is better. But sometimes the best way to preserve free speech is to tell people falsely claiming to be victimized by it to put a sock in it. That's what all those present for the *Atlantic*'s panel should have done. As it is, the tacit willingness to politely entertain quasi-totalitarian attitudes at a prominent public forum does not bode well. ♦




the weekly Standard

*www.weeklystandard.com*

**William Kristol,** *Editor*
**Fred Barnes, Terry Eastland,** *Executive Editors*
**Richard Starr,** *Deputy Editor*
**Claudia Anderson,** *Managing Editor*
**Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson, Victorino Matus, Lee Smith,** *Senior Editors*
**Philip Terzian,** *Literary Editor*
**Stephen F. Hayes, Mark Hemingway, Matt Labash, Jonathan V. Last, John McCormack,** *Senior Writers*
**Jay Cost, Michael Warren,** *Staff Writers*
**Daniel Halper,** *Online Editor*
**Kelly Jane Torrance,** *Assistant Managing Editor*
**Ethan Epstein,** *Associate Editor*
**David Bahr, Jim Swift,** *Assistant Editors*
**Erin Mundahl,** *Editorial Assistant*
**Shoshana Weissmann,** *Web Producer*
**Philip Chalk,** *Design Director*
**Barbara Kyttle,** *Design Assistant*
**Teri Perry,** *Executive Assistant*
**Max Boot, Joseph Bottum, Tucker Carlson, Matthew Continetti, Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht, Michael Goldfarb, Mary Katharine Ham, Brit Hume, Frederick W. Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Yuval Levin, Tod Lindberg, Robert Messenger, P.J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer,** *Contributing Editors*

**MediaDC**
**Ryan McKibben,** *Chairman*
**Stephen R. Sparks,** *President & Chief Operating Officer*
**Kathy Schaffhauser,** *Chief Financial Officer*
**David Lindsey,** *Chief Digital Officer*
**Catherine Lowe,** *Integrated Marketing Director*
**Mark Walters,** *Sr. V.P. Marketing Services & Advertising*

**Paul Anderson, Rich Counts, T. Barry Davis, Andrew Kaumeier, Brooke McIngvale, Jason Roberts, Elizabeth Sheldon,** *Advertising Sales*

***Advertising inquiries: 202-293-4900***
***Subscriptions: 1-800-274-7293***

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of Clarity Media Group, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, and fourth week in August) at 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 421203, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1203. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-274-7293. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders and changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 421203, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1203. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-386-597-4378 for subscription inquiries. American Express, Visa/MasterCard payments accepted. Cover price, $4.95. Back issues, $4.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036.

# Our Daily Egg

Every morning, I make an egg for my son. The task doubles as a chance for daydreaming, a rare occurrence when you're the parent of a toddler. I strap Henry into his chair, toss a few Cheerios in his direction, and get to work.

He doesn't have exacting tastes, so I've learned to ditch the skillet and stovetop in favor of a coffee mug and the microwave. The process takes about a minute and a half: Spray down the mug with a little oil, crack the egg and use a fork to scramble the yolk, nuke it for 25 seconds. I do all this in what feels like a single motion, often before I've had my coffee. At this point, Henry is engrossed in his cereal, and I contemplate, well, eggs.

It started with YouTube. The British celebrity chef Jamie Oliver, has posted a video in which he demonstrates how three nationalities make scrambled eggs. The English method is, of course, practical and disciplined: Stir the egg at a medium pace, in a medium-sized saucepan, over medium heat. The result is uniformly medium-sized curds that fit neatly on a slice of toast.

According to Oliver, the French, being French, have developed an elaborate technique requiring a whisk, a glass bowl suspended over a hot-water bath, and a lot of time. Their *œufs* eventually end up as curds Oliver describes as "very, very fine." Who's got the time and patience for that? *Non, merci.*

Finally, Oliver cooks good old-fashioned American "diner" eggs, folding them into large, untidy curds that, when finished, sit on the plate in a beautiful blob. They look delicious. I like to imagine making eggs like that one day, but for now, I'm sticking with the mug.

The microwave timer goes off and momentarily distracts my son from pushing his remaining cereal pieces around his highchair tray. He gives me a look that says, "Wasn't there talk of more food earlier?" Another round of stirring, and the mug goes back in for another 23 seconds (precision being the key to a good microwave egg). My mind wanders.

DAVE CLEGG

Maybe it was the food writer Michael Ruhlman's obsession with the egg that's led to my own. His how-to book of techniques and ingredients essential for anyone from the casual home cook to the restaurant chef contains a whole chapter on the egg—"A Culinary Marvel." It features recipes for mayonnaise, bread pudding, cheesecake, and, of course, scrambled eggs.

"If you could choose to master a single ingredient," Ruhlman writes, "no choice would teach you more about cooking than the egg. It is an end in itself; it's a multipurpose ingredient; it's an all-purpose garnish; it's an invaluable tool. The egg teaches your hands finesse and delicacy. It helps your arms develop strength and stamina. It instructs in the way proteins behave in heat and in the powerful ways we can change food mechanically. It's a lever for getting other foods to behave in great ways. Learn to take the egg to its many differing ends, and you've enlarged your culinary repertoire by a factor of ten."

The timer beeps again, and Henry's egg is done. By now, he's spent a discernible portion of his morning waiting for his breakfast, a point he makes through a series of increasingly loud grunts. I tip the mug over a plate, and, thanks to that strategic spray of oil, a disc of perfectly cooked egg slides out. A culinary marvel!

Before Henry can eat his egg puck, it needs to cool and be cut into bite-sized pieces. This I try to do in orderly, 90-degree slices—the English way, I like to think. But the finished product is a haphazard mess. Over in the highchair, we've reached DEFCON 1, so there's a quick transfer from plate to tray. His mood shifts immediately as he stuffs his face with eggy gold.

Which brings to mind that riddle from *The Hobbit*: "A box without hinges, key, or lid, yet golden treasure inside is hid." Gollum guesses correctly—an egg—though I always thought of it as one of the more difficult riddles in the book. It's simple and elegant and a little tough to crack.

I'm chuckling to myself at this witty observation when I look up from my coffee. Most of the egg has ended up on the floor, in Henry's bib, on top of his head—everywhere but in his mouth, where it's supposed to go. He flashes a toothy, knowing grin.

That's okay. I'll make him another one tomorrow.

**Michael Warren**

the weekly Standard

# Lying About Gitmo

Let's begin with the conclusion: Barack Obama is releasing dangerous terrorists against the recommendations of military and intelligence professionals, he's doing so at a time when the threat level from radical Islamists is elevated, and he is lying about it. He is lying about how many jihadists he has released and lying about their backgrounds, all part of his effort to empty the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay.

We write this knowing the accusation is a strong one and that the word *lying* will offend the sensibilities of the establishment media. There is an unwritten rule that requires euphemizing lies with gentler descriptions, especially when talking about the president of the United States. There is a veritable thesaurus of verbal politeness one can deploy: deceiving, dissembling, misleading, prevaricating, being duplicitous, evasive, fallacious, mendacious, dishonest, disingenuous, specious, spurious, untruthful.

Not this time. The president is lying.

The facts: Ibrahim al Qosi was a senior al Qaeda operative and a close associate of Osama bin Laden. An 11-page classified assessment of Qosi from U.S. military and intelligence professionals on Joint Task Force Guantánamo was made public by WikiLeaks. From that assessment: "Detainee is an admitted al Qaeda operative and one of Usama bin Laden's (UBL) most trusted associates and veteran bodyguard." And: "Following a 1994 assassination attempt against UBL, UBL chose detainee to be one of approximately ten individuals assigned to his protection detail." And: "Detainee has been very forthright regarding his commitment to UBL and al Qaeda. He explains his commitment to UBL as a religious duty to defend Islam and fulfill his obligation to jihad." The assessment concluded: "Detainee is assessed to be a HIGH risk, as he is likely to pose a threat to the US, its interests, and allies."

Barack Obama approved Qosi's transfer to Sudan in July 2012.

Earlier this month, Qosi resurfaced as a leader of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, appearing in a propaganda video for the group, which administration and intelligence officials have consistently identified as a direct threat to the United States. He joins a growing list of terrorists once held in American detention facilities and now leading the global jihadist movement and plotting attacks against the United States—a list that includes Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS.

In an interview broadcast December 14, Olivier Knox, chief Washington correspondent for Yahoo News, asked Obama about Qosi and Guantánamo.

Obama reiterated his call to close Guantánamo and repeated his disputed claim that jihadists use Guantánamo as a major recruiting tool.

Then he lied:

"Keep in mind that between myself and the Bush administration hundreds of people have been released and the recidivism rate—we anticipate," Obama said. "We assume that there are going to be—out of four, five, six hundred people that get released—a handful of them are going to be embittered and still engaging in anti-U.S. activities and trying to link up potentially with their old organizations."

A total of 653 detainees have been released. Of those, 196 are confirmed (117) or suspected (79) of returning to jihadist activity. That's not a "handful." It's almost a third. The president knows this. The numbers come from the man he chose as the nation's top intelligence official, James Clapper, the director of national intelligence. Military and intelligence officials who study the global jihadist movement tell The Weekly Standard that Clapper's assessment undoubtedly understates the recidivism rate, given the uneven commitment to tracking former jihadists by host countries and the lag times between release and reintegration.

The president continued. And he lied again:

"The bottom line is that the strategic gains we make by closing Guantánamo will outweigh, you know, those low-level individuals who, you know, have been released so far."

There's scant evidence to support the president's assertion about "strategic gains" associated with the closure of Guantánamo. But it's a speculative claim, impossible to disprove. That's not true of his claim that those released from Guantánamo "so far" have been "low-level individuals."

That's demonstrably false.

President Obama himself approved the exchange of the so-called Taliban Five, all senior leaders, for Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl. Not one member of the Taliban Five can be considered "low-level." Indeed, all five were senior Taliban commanders judged "high risks" to the United States and its allies by Joint Task Force Guantánamo. All five worked with al Qaeda prior to the 9/11 attacks. U.S. intelligence officials suspect that one or more of them has already reconnected with jihadist brethren and may be assisting the Taliban's fight. When U.S. intelligence officials asked a foreign intelligence service, likely the Saudis, to rank more than 100 detainees by threat level, Youssef Mohammed al Shihri, transferred in 2007, ranked

fourth. Other released detainees fought alongside Osama bin Laden at Tora Bora, played senior roles in al Qaeda's financial front groups, and led al Qaeda affiliates. And, of course, the Guantánamo recidivist who prompted the question, Ibrahim al Qosi, was "one of Usama bin Laden's closest associates."

Obama has also downplayed the threats from Guantánamo releasees in other ways. He describes the detainees as "embittered," as if the hatred that inspires them grows from their time in Guantánamo rather than their devotion to a murderous cause. Instead of rejoining the war, the recidivists are merely "trying to link up with their old organizations." Perhaps most bizarre is his description of the process he's using to determine which detainees can be transferred or set free. "The judgment that we're continually making is: Are there individuals who are significantly more dangerous than the people who are already out there who are fighting? What do they add? Do they have special skills? Do they have special knowledge that ends up making a significant threat to the United States?"

Those are the criteria? Detainees can be released if the White House determines that they are no more dangerous than, say, the leaders of ISIS, AQAP, Boko Haram, Jabhat al Nusra, the Haqqani network, the Khorasan group? If this is actually the way the administration evaluates potential releases, it would explain why so many veteran jihadists have been freed. It's a process that prioritizes emptying the facility over the security of the country.

Obama's comments on Guantánamo come in the middle of a concerted White House public relations campaign to convince the American people that the president is redoubling efforts to abate the threat from radical Islam (which the administration persists in calling "violent extremism"). In the space of two weeks, Obama delivered an Oval Office address on ISIS, traveled to the Pentagon for a meeting and photo-op on the military campaign in Iraq and Syria, and paid a visit to the National Counterterrorism Center for a briefing and remarks to reporters. The president didn't announce any significant changes to his strategy. But with his approval on handling terrorism at just 34 percent, the lowest level of his presidency, Obama has been eager to demonstrate he's paying attention to the issue.

It's a political solution to a national security problem. And the entire exercise has been revealed as a fraud by the president's dishonesty on Guantánamo, which conceals a policy that will increase the very threats he'd have us believe he's now taking seriously.

We would think all of this might be newsworthy: The president of the United States is releasing dangerous terrorists, and he's lying about it. And yet none of the country's leading newspapers or broadcast networks has reported Obama's comments. If you get your news exclusively from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, or from ABC, CBS, and NBC, you have no idea what the president said about Guantánamo. And you certainly don't know what he said was untrue.

Not a peep from the legion of self-styled fact-checkers, either. PolitiFact scrutinizes seemingly every guttural noise that emanates from Donald Trump but cannot find the time to assess specious claims from the president on the most pressing issue of the day.

So the president believes, not unreasonably, that he can stack lie upon lie with impunity. Workplace violence. Isolated extremist. One-off attack. Decimated. On the run. Jayvee. Contained. And on it goes.

Three days after Obama's interview with Yahoo, the *New York Times* published an article on Guantánamo. The top of the article broke news: The administration is planning to accelerate the pace of detainee transfers, with as many as 17 coming before the end of January. The rest of the piece amounted to a long complaint about the lack of media access to the facility and those who run it. And what about Obama's lies?

Not a single word.

*—Stephen F. Hayes*

# The Kids Are Alright


As college campuses shut down for winter break, the Maoist insanity that gripped American higher education this fall hit a new high-water mark. At Harvard, little laminated posters began appearing in the student dining halls with instructions on how students should discuss sensitive political topics with the rubes back home over the holidays. For example, what if, over Kwanzaa-eve dinner, a family member says, "We shouldn't let anyone in the U.S. from Syria. We can't guarantee that terrorists won't infiltrate the ranks of the refugees." Well, the poster instructed

HARVARD COLLEGE OFFICE FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

students to respond, "Racial justice includes welcoming Syrian refugees."

Other scripts were offered for discussions about the racial protests at Yale (suggested reply: "non-black students get the privilege of a safe environment") and "Black Murders in the Street" (suggested reply: "in many incidents that result in the death of a black body in the street, the victims are not breaking the law").

Nothing about these scripts was especially shocking. They were lifted almost word-for-word from a handout compiled by an activist group calling itself "Showing Up for Racial Justice." You see these sorts of sentiments on campus all the time.

Yet there was one difference. These conversation scripts at Harvard weren't distributed by student activists. They were circulated by the university administration itself.

According to the Harvard *Crimson* the posters—they're officially called "Holiday Placemats for Social Justice"—were the result of collaboration between the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and the freshman dean's office. Interviewed by the *Crimson*, Jasmine M. Waddell, the freshman resident dean for Elm Yard, explained: "This is a way to say, 'You've been exposed to a lot of different ideas, and particularly in this moment when there's a lot of discussion about various topics, you're going to go home and you may or may not be able to speak the same language. It's not that you have to believe in what's on the placemat, but it gives you some tools to be able to have productive conversations."

In a way, it's a relief to know that Harvard students don't *have* to believe this twaddle—not yet, anyway. But if you want to get really depressed about the state of higher education, imagine, given the size of Harvard's institutional bureaucracy, how many administrators must have signed off on the social justice placemats to make them a reality. And those people are supposed to be the grown-ups.

In fact, the grown-up administrators on college campuses have behaved every bit as badly as—and in many cases worse than—the student protesters. Witness, for example, the insanity at Brown, where the administration tried to get in front of the protests by committing $100 million (not a typo) to create "a just and inclusive campus." The students responded to this largess by staging more protests—they called it a "Day of Reclamation"—at which they berated school officials. The school officials sat there and took it. Here's an account from the *Daily Beast*:

> When Brown University provost Richard Locke asks if they could have a conversation, as opposed to the shouting, he is met in the video with several shouts of "no." A male student says, "Heterosexual white males have always dominated the space."
>
> When Locke appears to correct him and say he is not heterosexual, the student responds, "Well, homosexual, it don't matter. White males are at the top of the hierarchy. Cis gender white males are at the top of the hierarchy."

And so on. Yet amidst all of this there are a few faint glimmers of hope—and it's notable that they come not from adults, but from students who are sensible enough and brave enough to stand up to the mob.

At Claremont McKenna, where protesters succeeded in getting a dean sacked because of a poorly worded email, the student editorial board of the conservative *Claremont Independent* published a firm, well-conceived editorial headlined "We Dissent," in which they took to task everyone associated with the mob scene, from the president on down.

At Princeton, where a group of 15 protesters got the college president to agree to try to scrub Woodrow Wilson from the school, students organized to form the Princeton Open Campus Coalition. The group sent a letter to the school president politely requesting an audience (unlike the protesters, who barged into his office and occupied it for a day) to discuss the future of free speech on campus. "We are concerned mainly with the importance of preserving an intellectual culture in which all members of the Princeton community feel free to engage in civil discussion and to express their convictions without fear of being subjected to intimidation or abuse," they said. Since then, the group has continued with measured, respectful resistance. The contrast is striking.

At Yale, a group of students formed the Committee for the Defense of Freedom at Yale and signed an open letter to the university president explaining how the demands of protesters "violate" the "spirit of a truly liberal education."

At Dartmouth, they performed a clever bit of ideological jiu-jitsu. The antiprotest students there formed a group called Dartmouth Pride that describes itself as "fight[ing] for equality and tolerance." They go on:

> DartmouthPride.org is saddened by the hate speech, race hatred and latent misogyny of certain Dartmouth #BlackLivesMatter protesters.
>
> We're disturbed by Vice Provost Ameer's appeasement of these practitioners of race-based aggression and hate speech. There is no excuse for hate. There is no rationalization for hate.
>
> In a time when people are being gunned down in Paris and in the US, it's disgraceful that some of the safest and most privileged people in the world—certain Ivy League students—are endeavoring to hijack the spotlight and turn attention to what they are falsely alleging is their awful plight.

And at Harvard, the college Republican Club dummied up a "Holiday Placemat for Common Sense" with their own set of tips, suggesting, for instance, that Harvard students needn't be focused on influencing political discussions while home on break and that their family members might not be unsophisticated philistines

in need of guidance about the correct opinions to hold. (After much ridicule, Harvard issued a mealy-mouthed quasi-apology for the placemat on December 17.)

Just when we were about to give in to utter despair about the university, it turns out that good sense does still exist on campus. To find it, you just have to look past the faculty and the administrators and the protesters to the actual student body.

*—Jonathan V. Last*

# Giving Iran a Pass

Throughout the debate over the Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Obama administration insisted that its approach to brokering a deal with the mullahs is guided by a simple principle: "verification, not trust." Of course, by the time a deal was struck the Obama administration had given away the store, so there was precious little left to verify. Recall that prior to the negotiations, the White House position was that Iran's entire nuclear weapons program should be dismantled, centrifuges and all. Well, that didn't happen. Then the administration promised Iran would have to submit to "anytime, anywhere" inspections of their nuclear facilities. Somehow that evolved into letting Iran "self-inspect."

This was already humiliating, but now it appears that the Obama administration has no intention of verifying Iranian compliance with the few requirements Iran accepted. According to the terms of the agreement, Iran was to disclose all "possible military dimensions" (PMD) of its nuclear program. In July, no less than Secretary of State John Kerry said, "PMD has to be resolved—before [Iran] get[s] one ounce of sanctions relief."

But on December 15, the United Nations's nuclear regulatory body—the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—with the encouragement of the Obama administration, voted to sweep the PMD issue under the rug. They did so in spite of overwhelming evidence Iran has not begun to come clean about its nuclear weapons program. Now, with PMD out of the way, the Obama administration can begin lifting sanctions on Iran as early as next month, giving Tehran billions of dollars with which it can export terror all over the world.

The rationale for excusing Iran is a recent IAEA report concluding that Iran pursued a nuclear weapons program through 2009 but hasn't aggressively done so since. Even that minor acknowledgment, however, contradicts Iran's chief negotiator, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who said in August, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has never sought nuclear weapons nor will it ever seek them in the future."

There's also ample reason to believe the IAEA's conclusions about the status of Iran's weapons program are incomplete. Representative Mike Pompeo, a member of the House Intelligence Committee, recently fired off a blistering letter to Henry S. Ensher, the American ambassador to the IAEA, warning the agency was about to make "a grave and historic error."

In the letter, Rep. Pompeo notes that the IAEA's 2011 report identified 12 specific activities Iran had pursued in connection with its nuclear weapons program. In four of those key areas, the IAEA has obtained no new relevant information. This includes such vital areas as Iran's missile program and its ability to equip its missiles with nuclear payloads. (Note that even as the IAEA voted to excuse its ignorance on this matter, the very next day, December 16, another U.N. panel concluded Iran had violated a U.N. Security Council resolution with a missile test it conducted in October.)

As for requiring outside inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities to verify whether the regime is telling the truth, Pompeo slapped the IAEA for being simultaneously feckless and disingenuous:

> Regarding explosive testing activities at the Parchin site, information in the IAEA's possession "does not support Iran's statements on the purpose of the building." Let me take that out of vague diplomatic language: Iran lied to the IAEA.
>
> Further, over the past three years, Iran's "extensive activities . . . seriously undermined the agency's ability to conduct effective verification." Let me again take that out of diplomatic language: Iran stonewalled and destroyed evidence at key sites.

Pompeo's warnings went ignored, and there will be damaging repercussions. Iran now knows it can get away with lying about adhering to the most basic conditions of an already lopsided deal, so the U.N. and the IAEA can't expect to be heeded in the future. Other countries with nuclear ambitions are now empowered to flout the IAEA. And the blown opportunity to determine the extent of Iran's existing weapons program will make it harder to ascertain and impede Iran's nuclear ambitions in the future.

History will judge the Obama administration harshly for striking such a dangerous deal with Iran. But now the Obama administration has also imbued the phrase "verification, not trust" with depressing irony. Paradoxically, the Iranians have proven trustworthy in that they can be counted on to lie. It's the dishonesty and cowardice required to refuse enforcing even the meager terms of the Iran deal that are appalling.

*—Mark Hemingway*

# Can Ted Cruz Actually Win?

## It won't be easy.

**BY FRED BARNES**

Ted Cruz has as good a chance of winning the Republican presidential nomination in 2016 as Donald Trump or Marco Rubio. But there are serious doubts whether he can win the general election.

To capture the White House, Cruz would need to win most or all of the states carried by Mitt Romney in 2012. Romney won 206 electoral votes. Cruz would need to flip enough states won by President Obama to gain at least 64 more electoral votes to win the presidency.

That means winning "purple" or swing states. A Republican operative lists nine of them: New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nevada, Colorado, Florida, and Virginia. Besides being toss-ups, they have something else in common. President Obama won all nine both in 2008 and 2012.

Can Cruz cut into the Obama electorate? That would be difficult for any GOP nominee, but particularly for Cruz. He calls himself the most reliably conservative candidate in the race. And his campaign focuses especially on winning the Christian evangelical vote.

Cruz and his strategists have an answer for doubters. With effective outreach to conservatives, he can gain the votes of the four million conservative voters who supposedly stayed home in 2012.

There are problems with this strategy. Expectations of a surge of new conservative voters if only Republicans nominated a full-blown conservative candidate are not new. Republicans did just that in 1964 with Barry Goldwater

JASON SEILER

as the nominee. He lost to President Johnson by 486 electoral votes to 52.

The bigger problem is that story of the four million missing voters in 2012 has been knocked down repeatedly, and convincingly. "Exit polling doesn't really support the notion that self-identified conservatives were noticeably missing," wrote Dan McLaughlin, an attorney and political analyst, in *Red State*. "The missing potential Republican voters are *mostly* people who have not been regular voters in the recent past, and many of them may not be politically engaged people who think of themselves as conservatives."

Karl Rove has made an even stronger case that the stay-at-home story is a myth. The exit poll in 2012 found that 35 percent of voters were self-identified conservatives. This conservative turnout, Rove wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*, "was the highest since exit polls began asking voters about their political leanings in 1976."

Conservatives who didn't vote "are unreliable voters who are difficult to turn out," Rove wrote. "If the opportunity to vote against Mr. Obama after four years in office wasn't enough to turn them out, the most likely reason is that they are not politically engaged and tend to be drawn to a candidate less on political philosophy and more because of personal characteristics."

According to Rove's math, since 82 percent of conservatives voted for Romney, he would have needed an additional 7.7 million votes to defeat Obama, with the conservative share of the electorate rising to 39 percent. "This has never happened," Rove wrote.

Where might Cruz inspire a fresh wave of Republican voters? They're unlikely to come from the growing Hispanic electorate. Just last week, he insisted that he had never favored a path to legalization for the 11 million illegal immigrants in the country.

Fair or not, Hispanic voters are sensitive to how immigrants are discussed publicly. Cruz has agreed with Trump that a wall should be built along the American border with Mexico to block illegal entry.

When Cruz ran for the Senate in Texas in 2012, he got 35 percent of the Hispanic vote. Compared with other Republicans, however, he underperformed. In 2014, Senator John Cornyn of Texas received 48 percent of the Hispanic vote, and Greg Abbott was elected governor with 44 percent. Marco Rubio, Cruz's rival in the presidential race, got the votes of 55 percent of Hispanics in winning a Senate race in Florida in 2010.

To win in 2016, the Republican nominee will probably need to win at least 40 percent of the Hispanic vote. Romney got 27 percent in 2012.

*Fred Barnes is an executive editor at* The Weekly Standard.

George W. Bush won reelection in 2004 with 44 percent.

Three purple states—Florida, Colorado, and Nevada—have large Hispanic communities. To carry them, Cruz would have to make substantial inroads. In Florida, Romney got 39 percent of Hispanic voters and lost. Had he matched the 56 percent George W. Bush won in 2004, Romney would have won Florida.

Improving on Romney's 59 percent of the white vote would also be tough. Whites were 84 percent of the electorate in 1980. They're expected to constitute roughly 70 percent in 2016.

Obama did poorly among white voters: 39 percent in the last presidential election. In 2004, John Kerry got 41 percent of whites. Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic nominee, could top Obama, assuming she compensates for losing white males by running more strongly among white women.

The point is that gaining a higher percentage of voters in the shrinking white electorate won't help the Republican nominee much. President Reagan, by the way, won reelection with 66 percent of whites in 1984 in a 49-state landslide.

Then there are the moderates Obama won in 2012. As a candidate who brags about the breadth and intensity of his conservatism, Cruz doesn't have much ground to plow among moderates.

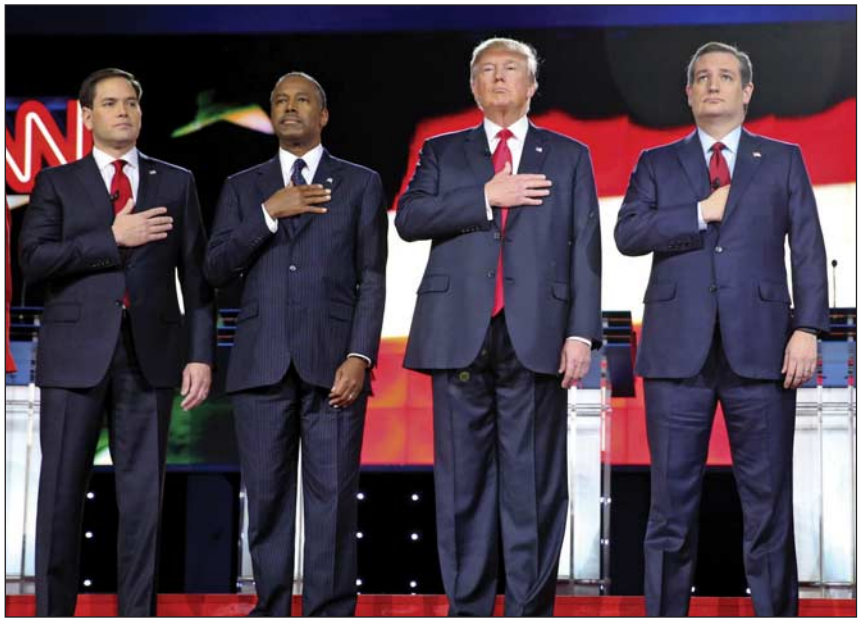
So Cruz is doomed as a general election candidate? I don't think so, just at a disadvantage. He's a dynamic candidate, a strong debater, and extremely clever in his treatment of issues. He's usually adept at not locking himself into positions that might haunt him later.

And there's one big thing. The future in politics is never a straight line projection of the present. And 2016 is likely to be a volatile year with a wide-open race. Millions of voters, and not only conservatives, may balk at electing Hillary Clinton. Around this time in 1979, Ronald Reagan was said by many to have no chance to win the general election in 1980. Cruz is no Reagan, but the precedent is intriguing. ♦

# The Triumph of the Outsiders

## Trump and Rubio and Cruz, oh my.

**BY JAY COST**



*The top contenders*

With just over a month until the Iowa caucuses, the Republican nomination field is taking clearer form. Of the original 17 candidates, only 4 can be said to remain in top contention: Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, and Ben Carson.

What to make of these candidates, and what does their preeminence tell us about the Republican party as it heads into the presidential election year?

Of the top four, only Carson is following a well-worn path. While his personal story is unique, his appeal is traditional. The early date of the Iowa caucuses has long meant that candidates with a strong connection to evangelical Christians endeavor to use Iowa as a springboard to the nomination. Pat Robertson in 1988, Alan Keyes in 1996, Gary Bauer in 2000, Mike Huckabee in 2008, and Rick Santorum in 2012 all tried this strategy. Carson is trying it too.

The remaining candidates look remarkably different from what we have seen in the past. The one most closely resembling a traditional Republican nominee is Jeb Bush, who started in first place, but now languishes at just 4 percent in national polls. The real contenders—Trump, Cruz, and Rubio—can be thought of as three variants of Tea Party candidate.

The term "Tea Party" was grossly overused in its heyday, but it hasn't quite outlived its usefulness. The Tea Party was a challenge to business-as-usual politics—especially Republican business as usual in Washington. The

RUTH FREMSON / BLOOMBERG / GETTY

*Jay Cost is a staff writer at* The Weekly Standard *and the author of* A Republic No More: Big Government and the Rise of American Political Corruption.

Trump, Cruz, and Rubio candidacies can be said to represent different aspects of the movement, and each brings upsides and downsides for voters to consider.

In his disgust with the powers that be, Trump is attuned to the cultural and economic anxieties of the working class. It is supremely ironic that this billionaire real estate mogul who inherited a fortune and has long worked the insider pathways of power should be the avatar of this unrest. Nevertheless, his plain-talking, brash style and unapologetic disregard for political correctness have endeared him to voters who think their country has been hijacked by sneering elites. His economic populism, especially regarding immigration and trade, makes him attractive to the kinds of people who backed Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996. Most of these voters have voted Republican in presidential elections since 1972 and congressional elections since 1994, but their relationship with the party elite has always been tense.

The upside of Trump is that he could scramble the political calculus. On paper, he is formidable: He is a successful businessman who wants to put America first, who does not mouth certain Republican economic shibboleths, and who cannot be bought by special interests. This is a recipe for a broad, populist coalition. Like all populist candidates in American history, however, with the notable exception of Andrew Jackson, Trump is executing his strategy in a manner that has all the makings of a disaster. While his diehard supporters no doubt enjoy his brash style and have no problem with his winging it, the middle of the country is already turned off.

Asked at last week's debate how he would modernize the nuclear triad (the bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and nuclear submarines that can deliver America's nuclear weapons), Trump responded with fluff: "[W]e have to be extremely vigilant and extremely careful when it comes to nuclear. Nuclear changes the whole ballgame," etc. Considering that Trump has been running for president for six months, his answer was inexcusably ignorant. Twice in the postwar era, a major party has nominated a candidate voters did not trust to handle the nuclear arsenal. In both instances—1964 and 1972—the results were disastrous for the candidate in question.

Cruz and Rubio offer a more balanced array of upsides and downsides. Both came to the Senate as outsider candidates who surprised their state establishments to win the Republican nomination. In 2012 Cruz soundly defeated Texas lieutenant governor David Dewhurst in the primary runoff, 57-43, after narrowly losing the first round, 34-45. Two years earlier, Rubio, former speaker of the Florida house, snatched the GOP nomination for Senate from incumbent Republican governor Charlie Crist, who actually left the party to run against Rubio as an independent. Crist's unprincipled maneuver didn't help him a whit; Rubio trounced him in the general election.

Cruz and Rubio have been reliable conservative votes in the Senate. Heritage Action for America gives Rubio a 94 percent rating on its 16 key votes and Cruz 100 percent. Similarly, the DW Nominate system of ideological ranking, designed by Keith Poole of the University of Georgia and Howard Rosenthal of New York University, places both Rubio and Cruz on the far right of the Senate.

Yet there are notable differences between the two, and it is here that Republicans confront significant tradeoffs. While he has been a reliable conservative vote overall, Rubio has tried to work within the normal channels of the Senate. He was a key behind-the-scenes player in getting Obamacare's insurer bailout repealed, he cosponsored a sweeping tax reform proposal with Mike Lee, and of course he spearheaded a bipartisan effort on immigration with New York Democrat Charles Schumer. Insofar as Rubio is considered an "establishment" Republican, this is probably why. He would be more conservative than any GOP nominee since Ronald Reagan, but in the Senate he has typically been collegial and occasionally bipartisan.

Cruz has gone in the opposite direction. He has taken a combative posture in the Senate, even calling out Republican leader Mitch McConnell for allegedly lying to him. This has alienated much of the GOP caucus. Relations are so bad that Cruz often struggles to get members to consent to him on minor procedural votes, a courtesy commonly extended to everybody. But if this adversarial posture has won him few friends in the Senate cloakroom, it has made him a darling of talk radio listeners and Fox News viewers.

If we assume that both Cruz and Rubio would behave as president as they did in the Senate, this gives Republicans a basis for comparison. The upside to Rubio is that he clearly knows how to work with Congress and has the potential to move the legislature in a conservative direction. Indeed, he was a policy entrepreneur on the Obamacare insurer bailout, pushing Congress to do something it might not otherwise have done. The downside of this approach is that he might get rolled, either by go-along-to-get-along Republicans or, worse, by liberal Democrats. Something like this seems to have happened with the Rubio-Schumer deal on immigration reform: Rubio miscalculated and put his name on a bill that was too liberal for most of his Republican colleagues.

With Cruz, the upside is that most of the country, Republicans included, hates Congress, and a president who takes an adversarial approach to the legislature might be just what the doctor ordered. On the campaign trail, Cruz has argued that the two parties behave like a cartel within the legislature. This is true. If one looks behind the heated partisan rhetoric, one sees broad bipartisan agreement on what may be called interest-group liberalism: the use of big government to pay off the pressure groups that work the system most aggressively. The best hope for cleaning out the rot is a president who is committed to such reform, and Cruz might be able to embarrass Congress into mending its ways.

The downside is that Congress is a stubborn, recalcitrant institution. This is especially true of the Senate, whose members are noted for their

unbounded self-regard. Cruz might be right to castigate them, but will his former colleagues be willing to work with him on reform if he continues to denounce them? If they are not willing, a Cruz presidency might amount to four years of gridlock and a continuation of the ugly internecine battles that have beset the GOP during the Obama years.

Ideally, conservatives should hope for a blend of these qualities. The perfect candidate would be gracious and charitable to his colleagues, like Rubio, but firm in his commitment to reform, like Cruz. Alas, the real world disappoints us.

On the other hand, it is rarely as bad as we fear it might be. And conservatives should count themselves lucky this cycle. The establishment types, the go-along-to-get-along Republicans who have dominated the party's nomination for most of its history, are not at the top of the heap this time. Instead, we have the prospect of a genuine break from the past.

Nominating Trump would be unadulterated folly, but Cruz and Rubio are viable candidates who deserve careful consideration. They bring real strengths to the table and would signal a notable change in the party's approach to governance. ♦

# Sex Difference Deniers

## How feminism hurts women.

**BY STEVEN E. RHOADS**

The *Washington Post* has been filled with gender of late. On December 5, a front-page article trumpeted successes in getting toy stores to eliminate separate boys' and girls' aisles. The British branch of Toys "R" Us has been won over online as well, removing gender labels from its website, though the U.S. site retains them—according to a spokeswoman, parents shopping online are still more likely to shop by gender than by age, brand, or category of toy.

Days before, the *Post* heralded a scientific study showing that human brains could not be neatly distinguished as male and female. Most individual brains have a "mosaic" of features, some more common in females and some more common in males. The gender binary had been overturned. The lead author of the study, Daphna Joel, told the *Post* that she hoped her research would help do away with "assumptions about gender differences." Elsewhere Joel has said that research on sex differences can make her "blood boil."

Joel is likely to need tranquilizers for some time to come, because such research is burgeoning. There is a new journal, the *Biology of Sex Differences*; a second edition of *Principles of Gender-Specific Medicine* with more than 100 contributors from all over the world; and the evolutionists spreading throughout the hard and social sciences who see sex differences as central. What might seem surprising is the sex of these scientists: When Robert Pool wrote a book about sex differences some years ago, he concluded that most of the cutting-edge research on the subject was done by women.

Joel's grievance is sex differences research, but the women who spearheaded such research did so because of their own grievances. Columbia University physician Marianne Legato is a prime example. She discovered that the female heart functions differently from the male heart—a major problem given that the existing scientific consensus on the human heart was based on the study of men. (The sex differences researcher Larry Cahill notes that "to this day, neuroscientists overwhelmingly study only male animals.") The longstanding assumption had been that men and women could be considered the same, aside from the differences in sexual organs and function. So scientists studying the heart could use male subjects and avoid the complications of women's hormones.

Legato was upset by the bias toward male subjects. She looked beyond heart research and eventually edited *Principles of Gender-Specific Medicine*. Similarly, *Biology of Sex Differences*, the new journal, is a publication of the Society for Women's Health, which describes itself as "the thought-leader in promoting research on biological differences in disease."

Such differences seem to be popping up everywhere, as *60 Minutes* noted in a 2014 program. Take the heart: Men's heart attacks usually bring sharp chest and arm pain; women are more likely to report nausea, fatigue, even pain between the shoulders. "Typically men get clogs in major arteries that are easy to see on an angiogram. But many women get blockages in tiny microvessels inside the heart," the show reported. And stem cells: "Men's are less powerful to begin with," and they decay pretty dramatically with age. In women, stem cells remain relatively stable through life. And the brain: Women at risk for Alzheimer's and dementia decline twice as fast as at-risk men, and after undergoing anesthesia, older women suffer greater declines in cognition and function than older men.

Men and women respond to drugs differently, too, a discovery delayed by the fact that until recently, all the studies focused on males. Noting that the standard dosage for the leading sleep aid, Ambien, leaves women half asleep in the morning, the FDA

*Steven E. Rhoads is professor of politics emeritus at the University of Virginia and the author of* Taking Sex Differences Seriously.

recently cut the recommended dose for women in half. The Government Accountability Office reports that 8 of the 10 prescription drugs pulled from the market between 1997 and 2001 "posed greater health risks for women than for men." As Cahill points out, facts like these imply studying biological sex differences should be a boon for women especially.

What about Joel's findings on the brain? Cahill says we have known for over 40 years that males and females are exposed to both masculinizing and feminizing influences. But "we aren't unisex, and every cell in the brain of every man and every woman knows it." In her book *Why Men Never Remember and Women Never Forget*, Legato quotes the Institute of Medicine's expert committee: "Sex does matter. It matters in ways that we did not expect."

Granted, feminists are not threatened by studies showing men and women have different hearts and livers. It's deep-seated differences in emotions, talents, and interests that they know would destroy their worldview—that sex differences are few and usually arise from nurture, not nature. But sex differences encompass matters of the mind as well. Men are at greater risk for autism and schizophrenia, women for anxiety and depressive disorders. Men are more likely to have a gift for spatial reasoning, important in technological fields. Women have greater verbal facility and are superior at "reading" people's faces—gifts helpful in a host of "people" professions, such as family medicine. Of course there are marvelous female engineers and male clinicians, but the sex differences on average are significant. It is fortuitous that the sexes' interests are more likely than not to follow their talents.

How can one get to the bottom of the nature-nurture debate? Cahill is as impressed as I am by the brilliant research of Richard Udry. Udry found that women in their thirties who had been exposed to more testosterone in utero were more masculine than women who had been exposed to less. Such women had more interest in careers and less interest in babies, for example. Udry also collected information on whether the parents of these women had encouraged their daughters more toward masculine pursuits, such as careers, or feminine ones, such as homemaking and having children. He found that parents' encouragement of more feminine pursuits was effective with most women, but not those who had been exposed to higher testosterone levels before birth. For them, parental encouragement of femininity actually backfired; high-testosterone women with femininity-oriented parents ended up less feminine in their interests and behaviors than did high-testosterone women whose parents had not emphasized femininity. Testosterone apparently boosts resistance to social construction. Biology matters.

*Very nice, honey. But watch out for those hegemonic males.*

As one might suspect on the basis of Udry's research, differences in hormones do more to explain the most politically sensitive sex differences than differences in brain structure. Testosterone discourages nurturing of infants; thus men and high-testosterone women are less inclined to nurture young children. Oxytocin has the opposite effect. Women have more oxytocin than men, especially after puberty, in pregnancy, and during breastfeeding. Thus, breastfeeding mothers feel worse and are quicker to respond when their babies cry than mothers who are bottle-feeders or "thwarted breastfeeders," who planned to breastfeed but were unable to. Another study found that 12-year-old girls who had gone through menarche were more interested in pictures of infants than girls of the same age who had not.

These hormonal factors also give rise to children's varying preferences in toys. Most young girls love dolls, while young boys love trucks and Legos. So too with young primates. When introduced to human toys, female monkeys were more likely to be drawn to a doll and a pot, whereas the males were more likely to gravitate to a car and a ball.

Feminists, however, are convinced that socially constructed gender roles, not hormones or brain structure, explain the maternal inclinations that lead so many talented women to quit or cut back on their careers when they have young children. This is why they get so excited about children's toys. Their battle for gender neutrality in toys may prove futile. In her book *The War Against Boys*, Christina Hoff Sommers described what happened when the toy company Hasbro tested a playhouse the company hoped would appeal to both boys and girls. The girls dressed the dolls and played house. The boys catapulted the toy baby carriage from the roof.

Feminists persevere, however: According to news reports, one kindergarten teacher on Bainbridge Island, Washington, allows only girls to play with Legos because boys' passion for them leads to high-paying scientific careers and women need to catch up.

But it's not women who need to catch up. Boys are disproportionately likely to languish in slow-learner classes, and men have been less likely than women to earn a four-year college degree for more than 30 years now. Amid these trends, misguided feminism chugs on; it dominates the mainstream media and the educational establishment. When will sex difference deniers begin to face the scorn that climate change deniers do in mainstream circles? It's past time. ♦

NEWSCOM

# The Liquor Stores Prohibition Gave Us

## We're from the government and we're here to pour you a drink. BY MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER

Imagine that your local grocery store is suddenly owned by the state. All the store's products and prices are set by central planners, who control when deliveries are made and which goods are sent to what stores. These stores routinely stock out-of-date products no one wants and refuse to carry new products customers do want. Planners also determine where stores are built, often placing them in remote locations.

This may seem like a description of the Soviet Union in 1960. But it's a situation Americans purchasing liquor face in nearly a quarter of the states today. People who buy whiskey, rum, and other spirits from government monopolies have to deal with arbitrarily high prices, surly clerks, limited selection, and out-of-the-way locations.

Government control of alcohol sales and distribution is a legacy of Prohibition. Previously, breweries and distilleries often either owned bars (with what were called "tied houses") or offered saloon owners extremely favorable loans in return for exclusivity rights. The drafters of post-Prohibition alcohol laws decided to ban tied houses, replacing them with a "three-tier system" requiring that owners of bars and liquor stores buy from distributors instead of dealing directly with breweries, wineries, or distilleries.

Seventeen states and Montgomery County, Maryland, go farther and have government involved in alcohol sales and distribution. Utah has the most stringent laws, mandating that nearly all beer, wine, and spirits be sold in state-run stores. Pennsylvania has state monopolies on wine and spirit sales and distribution. An additional nine states and Montgomery County have government monopolies of liquor sales and distribution, while four more have privately run liquor stores but government liquor distribution monopolies. The remaining two states have strict control over licenses for private liquor stores.


*A Virginia state-monopoly liquor store*

There have been some recent moves towards privatization. West Virginia and Washington state sold their liquor stores in the past decade. But Washington's privatization was botched, as the state imposed taxes on spirits of $35 per gallon—seven times the national average, according to the Tax Foundation. Liquor stores couldn't absorb these high taxes, so consumers flock to Idaho and Oregon for their booze when they can. As for the Washington Liquor Control Board—it is now the Liquor and Cannabis Board.

Governments that control the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages say it's necessary to fulfill their Prohibition-era mandate to restrict alcohol consumption. But a 2012 Mackinac Center report by Michael LaFaive and Antony Davies measured alcohol-related deaths by state and found that lightly regulated "license" states tended to have lower alcohol-related death rates than highly regulated "control" states. Eight of the 10 states with the lowest alcohol-related death rates are license states.

Economist Bruce Yandle once contended that Prohibition was the result of a coalition of "Baptists and bootleggers"—devout Christians morally opposed to alcohol consumption and criminals wanting to reap big profits from high-price booze. Because control states don't restrict liquor sales, but actively encourage them through advertising, most religious voices (except in Utah) have been quiet in the privatization debate. Instead, the primary supporters of government liquor stores are the bureaucracies running these stores and the unions that represent store workers.

In Alabama, for example, the state government has proposed slashing drivers' license offices as a cost-cutting measure. Troy University economist Daniel J. Smith discovered that in 21 Alabama cities, the state proposed eliminating a drivers' license office but keeping the state liquor store firmly in place.

Take the case of Pennsylvania, the only state besides Utah with a government monopoly on wine sales. Pennsylvania has always had a free market in beer, with the unusual twist that buyers had to purchase it by the 24-bottle case. If a consumer only wanted a six-pack, he or she had to go to a bar, which would sell it for a hefty surcharge. The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB) has ruled that

AP / THE ROANOKE TIMES / JOHN W. ADKISSON

*Martin Morse Wooster is a frequent contributor to* Mid-Atlantic Brewing News *and* American Brewer.

a "case" now has only 12 bottles and has allowed some supermarkets to sell six-packs by legally declaring them bars, with the areas selling beer physically separated by barriers from the rest of the store. If you go to a Pennsylvania Wegmans and want to buy a pizza and a six-pack, the PLCB has declared that you must make two trips to checkouts.

The PLCB has tried unusual methods to thwart privatization. In 2009, they set up "wine kiosks" in supermarkets, which were allowed to sell wine provided that customers stare into a screen (monitored by PLCB officials in Harrisburg), allow their drivers' licenses to be scanned, and pass a breathalyzer test. The kiosks were awarded in a single-source bid to a company whose two major investors had contributed $400,000 to the campaign of Democratic governor Ed Rendell. The machines frequently broke down, sometimes shutting for a month at a time. Shortly before they were removed in 2011, the Pennsylvania auditor general's office reported that the kiosks, far from being moneymakers, had cost the PLCB $1.2 million over two years.

Lew Bryson, author of *Pennsylvania Breweries* and a longtime critic of the PLCB, says Pennsylvania state stores are reasonably competent at delivering the products of large wineries and distilleries but quite poor at selling products from their smaller, more innovative rivals. The state stores, he says, "are like pretty good convenience stores. But they're not Whole Foods."

The central planners in Pennsylvania who determine where state stores are located often put them in places the market would shun. A 2014 editorial in the Lancaster *Intelligencer Journal*, which called the PLCB "Prohibition's last bad idea," observed that "the state runs unprofitable liquor stores in rural areas as a customer service, then urges their managers to find more ways to sell more booze. Then Pennsylvania puts state police on the roads to fine people who have been drinking it."

For 30 years, Republican governors in Pennsylvania have seen their efforts to privatize the alcohol business blocked by a Democratic state legislature. In 2014 Republicans captured both houses of the legislature for the first time in decades and passed a bill privatizing the PLCB. The bill was vetoed by Democratic governor Tom Wolf, who has proposed that the management of the PLCB be (somehow) private, while the stores and its employees remain firmly under government control. Members of the Union of Food and Commercial Workers enthusiastically backed Gov. Wolf's proposal, in part because it would guarantee all jobs at Pennsylvania state liquor stores for 20 years.

Alcohol privatization is also an issue in Montgomery County, Maryland, the only county with government control. All elected officials in the county, which controls sales of liquor and distribution of all alcohol, are Democrats.

Justin McInerny, owner of Capital

Beer and Wine in Bethesda, Maryland, freely expresses his frustration with having the county government deliver beer and wine. Victory Brewing, a well-regarded craft brewery in Parkesburg, Pennsylvania, sells 47 brands of beer. Montgomery County allows sales of only four of them.

Government bureaucracy, McInerny says, also blocks spontaneity. Suppose someone comes into his store on a Monday asking for "the special wine they had in Sonoma" on their honeymoon for a weekend party. If his store were in the District of Columbia, McInerny could call a Virginia distributor and ask for a delivery. But in Montgomery County, that distributor has to call the Department of Liquor Control's central warehouse, where a purchase order is placed. The wine is sent to the warehouse, marked up by 25 percent, and then delivered during the regular weekly delivery, which could be as many as seven business days after the original order is placed. Flexibility is impossible when the state controls alcohol distribution.

The Montgomery County liquor monopoly will be vigorously debated in the Maryland legislature's 2016 session, because the state's comptroller, pro-business Democrat Peter Franchot, has endorsed a bill that would allow private distributors to compete against the Department of Liquor Control. Montgomery County, Franchot charged in a November op-ed in the *Washington Post*, has "a Prohibition-era system that eliminates competition, charges higher prices, offers fewer product choices and increases burdens on small businesses. The county alcohol monopoly amounts to nothing more than a consumer tax, charging prices considerably above market rates at the expense of residents and small businesses."

Peter Franchot is correct. Conservatives should have a vigorous debate over the size and scope of government. But we can all agree that selling and distributing beer, wine, and spirits is not a proper function of the state. ♦

# Why Winning in Ukraine Matters

## Don't give up now.

**BY JEFFREY GEDMIN & GARY SCHMITT**

It's said that hopeless causes are the only ones worth fighting for. At first blush, that's Ukraine. On a recent visit to Kiev, we heard account after account of the problems facing Ukraine, the two most serious being corruption and the ongoing conflict with Russia. Two doozies, to be sure.

Corruption is ubiquitous. Famously, Ukrainian oligarchs have stolen massive amounts of the country's wealth and used that wealth to control Ukraine's political order. But corruption is pervasive in daily life as well. It's not uncommon for university students to pay to take their exams, defend a thesis, or obtain their diploma. Diabetics are deprived of insulin, children lack vaccines, and HIV/AIDS patients die because they can't get antiretrovirals, with doctors bilking patients and the system. Want a license for this or that from the bureaucracy? Expect to pay something under the table. Transparency International pegs Ukraine at 142 out of 175 countries in its world rankings. That's on par with Uganda, worse than Nigeria (136th), and far from the league of ex-Soviet republic Georgia, which ranks 50th. By the Ukrainian government's own estimate, the country's off-the-books "shadow economy" is somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 percent of the official GDP figure.

President Petro Poroshenko has been under constant fire both at home and abroad for moving too slowly to put reforms in place, to get the economy going, and to build public confidence in government. A central problem: The legal system remains a mess. The country has 18,000 prosecutors and 10,000 judges, with a very good number thought to be corrupt. Polls show that well over three-quarters of the country doesn't trust the judiciary, and virtually everyone sees the current prosecutor general, Viktor Shokin, as blocking investigations into corrupt prosecutors, judges, and graft. The former KGB, now the Security Services of Ukraine, has 4,000 officers tasked with fighting corruption. It's unclear how many work as double agents and how many simply work full-time for the Chekists in Moscow. More than a few are tied to corruption schemes. The task of getting this country onto the right path is daunting.

Everything moves, it seems, at a snail's pace. For example, Poroshenko has not touched reform of hundreds of the state-owned-enterprises—key components of the system of graft. Ministries point fingers at one another. Critics claim that Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk has not done nearly enough. Everyone's looking for breakthroughs; people are fed up with incrementalism.

None of this should be a surprise. The history of Ukraine since its modern independence with the breakup of the Soviet Union has been one of dashed expectations. Even a previous revolt against Ukrainian political and economic corruption, the Orange Revolution in 2004, only led to more of the same. "Ukraine fatigue" from both Washington and the capitals of Western Europe is not unexpected.

*Jeffrey Gedmin is a senior fellow at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, senior adviser at Blue Star Strategies, and executive director of the Atlantic Council's Transatlantic Renewal Initiative.*
*Gary Schmitt is resident scholar and codirector of the Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies at the American Enterprise Institute.*

But it's also too easily the default position. It's only been two years since peaceful protests began in response to the decision of then-president Viktor Yanukovych to back away from an association with the European Union. And even less time has passed since his violent crackdowns at Kiev's Maidan Square, which led to his ouster and the election of Poroshenko in May 2014 and a new parliament the following October. Rome, as they say, wasn't built in a day, especially a "Rome" with so much muck to first dig out of.

Anders Åslund of the Atlantic Council says follow the model of Estonia and East Germany—sack the judges, prosecutors, and members of the secret services since "all but a few of them are likely to be corrupt." While true, it's not quite so easy to do. The German Democratic Republic was an acquisition, with a new West German parent company free to call virtually all the shots, and Estonia has a tiny population of 1.3 million people, as opposed to Ukraine's 44.8 million.

And there has been progress. Ukraine's fiscal situation has been largely stabilized; the country's GDP has stopped contracting; reforms are underway in the banking system; judges have begun to be dismissed; a top anticorruption prosecutor has been named; a plan for creating an independent judiciary is afoot; an electronic and transparent government procurement system has been put in place; and measures to reduce government red-tape and domestic energy subsidies—both of which were invitations to massive corruption—have been established.

Since the fall of this year, a new police force has taken to the streets in Kiev and several other cities, with officers tooling around in a fleet of Toyota Priuses. Their job: to crack down on police demanding bribes at every turn. The initiative has proven hugely popular. Combine that success with the fact that the country has held three free and fair nationwide elections since the Maidan protests, and perhaps there is hope for Ukraine yet.

And lest anyone forget, all of this is being done while Ukraine is at war.

Vladimir Putin rallied against Ukraine's course correction by annexing Crimea in March 2014 and starting a conflict soon thereafter in eastern Ukraine, where, up until that time, ethnic Russians had been living rather peacefully alongside ethnic Ukrainians. Russian-backed separatists waged insurrections in their self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, and, while the worst of the fighting has died down of late, no one should underestimate the toll this war has already taken. Askold Krushelnycky, a former BBC journalist who has spent more than half of the year on the ground as a freelancer tagging along with Ukrainian forces, says "people have to understand this is a real war, with tanks and artillery and wounded soldiers returning west without limbs, their lives forever changed."

*. . . or we'll all wish we had.*

Putin must not be permitted to win in Ukraine. The first reason is a moral one. Admittedly, it's a hard argument to make now because what's happening in this corner of Europe can look tangential to the pressing matters of the day. Even for Europeans, preventing the next terrorist attack, defeating ISIS, stabilizing Syria, and contending with a major refugee crisis are urgent and vital. Nevertheless, the energy and idealism of Ukraine's younger generation must be viewed with respect and admiration. For all its problems, civil society is alive and well in Ukraine.

The NGOs we met with in Kiev are brimming with remarkable enthusiasm, purpose, and drive. We know of a twentysomething Ukrainian American who had, until recently, lived a safe and comfortable life in Munich, where his German father resides. This young gentleman now spends most of his time in Kiev working with NGOs to help the cause. He's also told his mother if he needs to, he'll enlist and go east "to fight for European values." This is a reminder that there are still people, partly of a new generation, who are prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for freedom and a democratic way of life.

But, frankly, Ukraine is no longer simply about Ukraine. As a matter of power politics, Putin wants the country to fail, which means one thing: Ukraine cannot be allowed to become part of the West in any real sense of the word. No EU membership, no NATO membership, no evolution to the rule of law and well-functioning democratic institutions. For one thing, Ukraine has remained an important piece of the Kremlin's chessboard. As Zbigniew Brzezinski put it in the late 1990s, "if Moscow regains control over Ukraine, with its 52 million people and major resources as well as access to the Black Sea, Russia automatically again regains the wherewithal to become a powerful imperial state." It's why you find a good number of Georgians in Kiev to help pro-Western forces. Georgians and others know that if Ukraine gets sucked back into the Russian orbit, neighboring countries, too, will feel the Kremlin's pull—and stranglehold—even stronger than they do now.

But no less important is the ideological struggle underlying the conflict. Putin cannot permit a country of Ukraine's size, proximity, and cultural affinity—he likes to speak of the "fraternal Ukrainian people"—to create an attractive alternative model to his gangster state in Russia. We've never been clear whether we have merely a

NEWSCOM

Putin problem or a Russia problem. We do know, however, that this Kremlin boss plays it safe, muzzling the media, reining in (or worse) dissidents, and snuffing out where he can all liberal aspirations that crop up in Russia. Success in Ukraine can't help but be a problem for Putin.

More broadly, failure in Ukraine puts a stake in the heart of the idea of Europe "whole and free." It's bad enough that the West has for all practical purposes conceded Putin's military conquest of Crimea and the de facto annexation of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. What accommodationists fail to see, though, is that something larger and civilizational is now at stake. Abandon Ukraine and other euro-Atlantic aspirants and we're not just acquiescing to spheres of influence, we're also giving legitimacy, providing the aura of success, to a form of nationalism and autocratic rule that America and its allies have fought two wars to stamp out. In short, not only must Putin not win in Ukraine, he has to be seen domestically and internationally as losing.

Ukrainians themselves, of course, must ultimately bear the lion's share of responsibility for their own success or failure. But the United States, together with the EU, can do our part: through economic aid (tied to progress on corruption); intelligence and military support (including lethal assistance); and diplomatic solidarity (foremost, continued sanctions against Russia). And while Washington, Brussels, and the other European capitals must continue to press the government of Ukraine to move forward with reforms, they should not throw up their hands in frustration that it hasn't happened overnight. Winning in Ukraine matters—for both Ukrainians and the West. ♦

# Go South, Young Russian

## The Great Game continues.

**BY MARIAN LEIGHTON**

Russia's aggressive moves in the Middle East have raised speculation about a new Cold War. A more accurate description would reference the geopolitical, historical, and cultural factors underpinning Russia's imperial ambitions in the south—ambitions that preceded the Cold War and took root in the czarist era.

In terms formulated by the renowned British geopolitician Halford Mackinder in his 1904 article "The Geographical Pivot of History," Russia occupies the "heartland" of Eurasia, that is, the central position on the Eurasian landmass. According to Mackinder, "who rules East Europe commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island [encompassing all of Eurasia, including Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa]. Who rules the World Island commands the world."

Mackinder foresaw a continuing struggle between land-based and sea-based nations to maintain a balance of power so that no single entity would rule the World Island. Great Britain, whose naval forces commanded the seas in the early twentieth century, and the United States, with its new oceangoing navy, held the fate of the World Island in their hands. A century later, little has changed except that the predominance of American over British seapower is undisputed.

Nicholas Spykman, the preeminent American geopolitician, updated Mackinder by arguing that the littoral areas of the Heartland, or what he called the "Rimlands," held the key to control of Eurasia. Spykman posited, "Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia; who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world."

Czarist Russia's imperial aspirations reflected these verities. The Russian Empire had a harsh climate and was largely landlocked, with direct access to the ocean only in the far north (through the Kola Peninsula) and northeast (via Vladivostok). Thus, the Russians traditionally sought ice-free maritime outlets, especially the warm-water ports of the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

Czarist expansionism followed the path of least resistance, turning eastward and southward until blocked by Ottoman Turkey, British India, imperial China, and the Pacific Ocean. During the "Great Game" in Asia, the Russian and British empires jockeyed for power in this strategic area. Afghanistan, which became known as the "graveyard of empires"—a distinction it retains today—was a buffer between the contestants.

Most of the Russian Empire's expansion occurred in the Caucasus and Central Asia down to the Black and Caspian seas through the defeat or annexation of nomadic tribes and feudal Muslim khanates. The Kremlin also asserted a right to intervene whenever necessary to protect its Orthodox coreligionists and fellow Slavs in the Balkans and other parts of the Ottoman Empire.

During negotiations in 1939 between foreign ministers Vyacheslav Molotov and Joachim von Ribbentrop on the secret protocol for the Soviet-Nazi Pact, Molotov voiced agreement to the protocol "provided that the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf is recognized as the focal point of the aspirations of the Soviet Union." Moscow also aspired to a dominant position around the Turkish

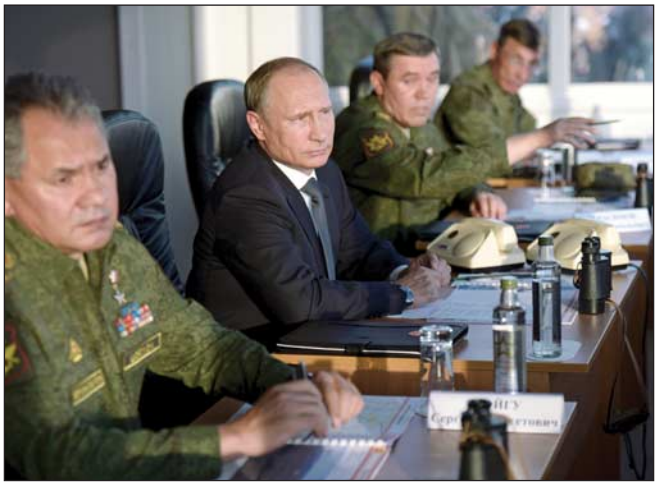
*Marian Leighton is an intelligence officer with a background in the Cold War.*

straits leading from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

At the end of World War II, the Kremlin sought to advance its objectives by staking claims to the Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan and establishing Soviet puppet regimes in the Azerbaijani and Kurdish areas of Iran. President Truman's support to Turkey and Greece against Communist pressure and his demands for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Turkish and Iranian soil were instrumental in frustrating Moscow's ambitions.

Russian president Vladimir Putin's recent forays into Ukraine were apparently designed to reintroduce Russia as a major player on the world stage and to salvage some components of the Soviet Union, the breakup of which he called the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century." (One could argue that its creation rather than its collapse fit that description.) Putin's annexation of the Crimea is the latest chapter in the checkered history of that strategic piece of real estate. The Crimean War of 1853-56 pitted Russia against a coalition of Britain, France, the Kingdom of Sardinia, and the Ottoman Empire. The allied forces succeeded in projecting power onto the Crimean Peninsula more quickly and effectively than Russia despite the greater distance involved. The shock of Russia's defeat spurred a domestic reform movement, including Czar Alexander II's abolition of serfdom.

When the USSR was established in 1922, the Crimea became part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic; but in 1954 Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev transferred it to the Ukrainian SSR. When Ukraine became independent in 1991, the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet was still homeported at Sevastopol in the Crimea. The fleet's assets were divided, with Russia receiving the lion's share, and through an accord of 1997, Russia obtained a 20-year lease on its headquarters. In 2010 the pro-Russian government of Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych agreed to extend the lease for an additional 25 years, but he was ousted in 2014. The subsequent conflict between pro-Russian and Ukrainian nationalist forces resulted in Moscow's military intervention, with the outlook for Ukraine's territorial integrity still in doubt. Russia is now firmly ensconced in the Crimea, with its naval base at Sevastopol and an impressive array of naval and air assets supporting the Black Sea Fleet.



*Is there anyone to stop me? Nyet—didn't think so.*

Putin is equally determined to retain the naval base at Tartus in Syria, which is Russia's only base in the Mediterranean (it is also refurbishing its airbase in Latakia). Retention of the base is a major reason for Moscow's entry into the Syrian civil war on the side of President Bashar al-Assad's regime, a longtime Soviet and Russian ally. Syria has now provided Russia with a springboard for projecting its military power into the heart of the Middle East. But the war has also posed a grave threat to NATO's southern flank, as witnessed in Turkey's recent shootdown of a Russian warplane along the Syrian-Turkish border. Diplomats hurried to dampen tensions, but the possibility of escalation persists.

Although Putin has declared that Moscow will not commit combat forces to the Syrian war, an attack against one of its facilities could cause a change in plans and spark Russia's first military campaign beyond the borders of the former Soviet Union since the final withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. Meanwhile, Russia has boots on the ground in the form of an estimated several hundred elite troops protecting the base at Latakia, as well as military trainers and advisers for Assad's forces. In geopolitical terms, Russia now seeks to revive its presence and influence over the "Rimlands" of the "World Island."

Russia's newly reinforced presence in the Mediterranean region also represents a step on the way to the fulfillment of its historical search for warm-water ports. Russian ultranationalist army officer, politician, and presidential wannabe Vladimir Zhirinovsky offered a vision of this goal in his book *The Final Thrust to the South*. "As I dream of it," he wrote, "Russian soldiers will wash their boots in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and forever change to summer uniforms." Zhirinovsky may be a demagogue, but his sentiments resonate among Russian leaders and ordinary citizens who rue the loss of the country's imperial glory.

Russia's aspiration to renewed superpower status has been exemplified by the growth and modernization of its military apparatus. Upgrades are apparent in every category of military power, from cruise missiles to warplanes to submarines to air-defense systems to equipment for ground forces. Against this backdrop lurks Russia's nuclear arsenal, which is barely diminished by arms control treaties. Putin proudly proclaims his nationalism and rallies support from a patriotic population and the Russian Orthodox church. Having reentered the international arena as an influential player, he is unlikely to retreat. ♦

NEWSCOM

# Clash of Generations

*The cultural contradictions of Islam in America*

**By Peter Skerry**

In the wake of the San Bernardino attacks, Americans must confront the undeniable reality of homegrown Islamist terrorism. We must also confront how little we have learned since 9/11 about Islam and about the Muslims who are our fellow citizens. In recent days our public officials—at least the serious ones—have not been able to articulate anything more cogent than "If you see something, say something," a tired slogan originally developed by the New York City Metropolitan Transportation Authority in 2002 and officially adopted by the Department of Homeland Security more than five years ago.

One reason for this sorry state of affairs is that there are so few Muslims in the United States. There are no definitive numbers, primarily because the census is prohibited from inquiring about religious affiliation. So whatever talk-radio alarmists or self-promoting Muslim leaders claim, the most authoritative estimate is about 3 million, less than 1 percent of the total population. And while Muslims are scattered across the country, most are concentrated in metropolitan areas, including Chicago, Los Angeles, Detroit, and New York. It therefore seems safe to conclude that many Americans have never met a Muslim. Indeed, an August 2011 survey by the Public Religion Research Institute reported that almost 70 percent of Americans had seldom or never talked with a Muslim during the previous year. By contrast, a June 2015 Pew survey found that 9 out of 10 Americans said they knew someone who is gay.

*Second-generation Bangladeshi-American Sharmin Hossain, 17, with her father, before her senior prom in Queens, June 3, 2010*

ROBERT NICKELSBERG / GETTY

More to the point, our political elites have utterly failed us. Our public discourse about Muslims is reduced to simplistic dualisms: assimilated/unassimilated; moderate/immoderate; tolerant/intolerant; good/bad. Conservative leaders either voice their own or tolerate others' wild accusations and conspiracy theories about Islamist extremists infiltrating the government and subverting our way of life. Alternatively, liberal political and media elites, only a little chastened after San Bernardino, seem unable to utter the words "Islam" and "terrorism" in the same sound bite.

Regarding our elites, a telling episode involves two surveys undertaken by the widely respected Pew Research Center. In 2007 Pew published perhaps the most thorough and authoritative survey of Muslims in America, entitled "Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream." Despite that upbeat title, Pew reported only 40 percent of U.S. Muslims saying they "believe that groups of Arabs carried out the attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001." Twenty-eight percent said they did *not* believe it. The remaining 32 percent professed not to know or simply refused to answer!

In 2011 Pew updated its survey and published the results under the reassuring title "Muslim Americans: No Signs of Growth in Alienation or Support for Extremism." Yet disturbingly, that poll reported that in both 2007 and 2011, 8 percent of U.S. Muslims agreed that "often/sometimes . . . suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies." Even more disturbing, Pew omitted—without explanation—the revealing question asked in 2007 about who was responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

Such findings get overlooked or simply ignored in part because these elites reassure themselves that Muslims here are "assimilating," especially compared with their coreligionists in Western Europe. Although generally true, this observation would be more persuasive to ordinary Americans if it were not emanating from the same quarters that in recent decades have loudly denigrated "assimilation" in the name of "multiculturalism."

To be sure, assimilation is a slippery notion. For example, in recent years many Americans, including analysts such as the late Samuel Huntington, have expressed great

*Peter Skerry teaches political science at Boston College and is a senior fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University.*

concern that Hispanic immigrants, Mexicans in particular, are not assimilating into the American mainstream. While such fears are in my view exaggerated, they nevertheless reflect legitimate concerns about the continuing presence of millions of illegal immigrants, relatively low naturalization rates, and various indicators of economic marginality and social dysfunction.

In contrast, Muslims in America might be regarded as highly assimilated. Pew reports that as of 2011, between 83 and 93 percent speak English well or very well, and about 81 percent are citizens, including 70 percent of those who are foreign-born. And while 54 percent have only a high school diploma or less, compared with 44 percent of Americans generally, 26 percent have at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 28 percent of the total population. Then, too, 26 percent of Muslims are currently enrolled in college, but only 13 percent of Americans overall are.

To be sure, Muslims are overrepresented at the low end of the income scale, with 64 percent reporting annual household earnings of $49,999 or less, compared with 57 percent of Americans generally. But then 14 percent have annual household incomes of $100,000 or more, compared with 16 percent of all Americans.

Despite such striking evidence, most observers, me included, would be reluctant to conclude that Muslims are more assimilated than Mexicans, especially when it comes to social and cultural indicators such as marriage rates outside the group and adaptation to our values. Unfortunately, much of the data about Muslims necessary for such a systematic comparison are lacking. But I am confident Muslim out-marriage is limited, especially compared with Mexican and Hispanic rates. So, too, culturally Muslims are self-evidently more at odds with mainstream American values than are Mexican immigrants and their progeny.

Properly understood, assimilation is a complex process unfolding along different dimensions—economic, social, cultural, and political—that do not always coincide neatly. Not only that, but as historian John Higham long argued, assimilation along these various dimensions generates crosscurrents and tensions between immigrants and more established groups with whom they must compete. Thus, the process tends to be rife with conflicts.

Little or none of this makes it into public discourse. For example, in the ongoing debate over immigration, assimilation is regarded, almost without exception, as an unambiguous good; and the inevitable discord generated by the process gets characterized as racism, nativism, and xenophobia. Indeed, these are the only terms in which various elites—in the corporate sector, in social services and education, in health care, in academia, and of course in politics and government—explain the strains generated by mass immigration.

Needless to say, this background is highly relevant to the situation of Muslim immigrants today. In that respect, it is worth noting that the real battleground over assimilation is often between immigrant parents and their children, born or raised in America. This is the locus of what Norman Podhoretz once called "the brutal bargain" of assimilation, and this is what most Americans, including pro-immigration conservatives, consistently overlook.

Generally speaking, immigrant parents reconcile themselves to the brutal bargain by comparing their circumstances in America with those they left behind in their homeland. Such comparisons are never cut and dried, which is why—contrary to America's flattering self-image—so many immigrants never quite decide to stay here. As economist Michael Piore reminds us, at the turn of the last century European immigrants were sometimes disparaged as opportunistic "birds of passage."

**The real battleground over assimilation is often between immigrant parents and their children—what Norman Podhoretz once called 'the brutal bargain' of assimilation.**

For the children of immigrants, things are different. They seldom have either the option or the desire to relocate to their parents' homelands; for them, home is here, in the United States. But because this is the generation that rides the wave of assimilation, whether it wants to or not, this is also the generation that sometimes tries self-consciously to apply the brakes, even to reverse the process, in order to regain what many feel has been lost.

But again, the intergenerational strains of assimilation within families seldom get talked about when we debate immigration policy. A good example is how the authority of immigrant parents gets undermined when their children understand and speak English better than they do. In such already stressed households, the linguistic assimilation of the kids has to be a mixed blessing.

This may not be a big concern among Muslim immigrants, because most have a solid command of English. However, other aspects of assimilation do threaten to undermine the authority and prerogatives of parents. To paraphrase Tolstoy, no two Muslim families are alike. But a great many Muslim immigrant parents are deeply concerned about their children being swallowed up by a contemporary youth culture they disapprove of, by its music, its video games, its movies, its indulgence of alcohol and drugs, and of course its sexual mores—all part of what Christopher

Jencks refers to disparagingly as our "laissez-faire culture."

These concerns are shared by many nonimmigrant parents, but American youth culture is particularly threatening, even downright offensive, to Muslim immigrant parents, including those who are not particularly observant. Mohammad Akhtar, a psychology professor at Slippery Rock University, depicts "the Muslim family dilemma" in broad terms: "The values posing conflicts here are the need for autonomy and independence (Western) as opposed to obedience and compliance (high in immigrants), along with the issues of dating and sex." Akhtar also notes that Muslim immigrants come from cultures where young people, including the males, are "completely ignored" by their elders, to whom it is invariably assumed youth must defer.

This is how a Bangladeshi engineer living in suburban Boston explained the problem to sociologist Nazli Kibria: "The education here is good. . . . Children have opportunities, but it is difficult to raise them well. Here the children have more freedom and the laws are such that you have to constantly watch how you are dealing with the kids. At home we can be more tough and everyone can discipline. We see that there are a lot of children here who don't respect their parents and teachers and who don't seem to care about anything."

To be sure, Muslim parents are more focused on protecting their daughters than their sons from the currents of American society. As anthropologist Nadine Naber reminds us, family honor, both here and among family members back home, still depends on the probity and chastity of daughters. Sons are typically afforded surprising latitude to sow their wild oats—though one would not want to underestimate the final reckoning even for young males in such families.

So far, this may confirm the stereotype of Muslim families held by non-Muslims. Yet the story is more complicated. Contrary to what many Americans might expect, Muslim daughters are with some notable exceptions (for example, impoverished Yemenis) just about as likely as their brothers to be encouraged, even pressured, to earn good grades and gain admission to college or university.

Such expectations may reflect the widespread if not universal emphasis on women being able to read the Koran. But the emphasis, at least here in America, is also on both sons and daughters choosing from a small number of safe, predictable, and remunerative career paths, especially medicine and engineering, the study of which is also presumed to avoid troublesome topics raised in the social sciences and humanities. In recent years Muslim students have begun to branch out into other professions, especially law and journalism. But the pressure on young Muslims to succeed has not abated.

This pressure is not surprising, given that many or most Muslims in America came here as university students in search of degrees and career advancement. Nor is it surprising that Muslim parents turn to Islam as a bulwark against youth culture. Yet as already suggested, many Muslims here are not themselves very observant. Indeed, a consistent if imprecise survey finding is that most Muslims in America do not attend mosque weekly (one of the basic tenets of Islam, certainly for men). Yet many Muslims report being more observant here than in their home countries. This apparent paradox is explained by the Bangladeshi engineer in Boston quoted above: "At home, you get a natural religious education from relatives. . . . Here you have to constantly answer the children's questions. . . . It is a good thing, this American questioning of everything; we did not grow up like that. . . . Because I don't have much knowledge about these [religious] things, I take them to the mosque every week for classes, and we also attend a summer camp where we pray together and talk about the Koran. I do these things for my children, not for myself. I am personally very relaxed about religious matters; I do not pray regularly or fast and I am not inclined to go to the mosque except as a social occasion. But when you are raising children in this country you have to do it."

Thus, about 4 percent of all Muslim children in America attend approximately 250 full-time Islamic schools. Teachers and administrators at these schools readily acknowledge their frustration with parents who are not very observant or knowledgeable about Islam but who turn to Islamic schools in desperation after their kids run aground in the public schools. Yet while these schools are preoccupied with keeping the youth culture at bay, the quality and rigor of their religious instruction typically takes a back seat to the academic curriculum, which is judged by what colleges and universities their graduates attend.

Not surprisingly, children pick up on their parents' ambivalent or at best instrumental turn to Islam. Yet even this turn may lead to a genuine religious commitment. For restless and conflicted adolescents, hypocrisy—especially parental hypocrisy—lurks everywhere. And the more successful and assimilated the parents, the more likely the children will regard a sudden preoccupation with Islam as hypocritical. Newly observant daughters donning the headscarf may suddenly start pestering mothers, who long ago decided against wearing it in corporate America. More discerning youth may notice that, whatever the mix of piety and achievement their parents press on them, very few encourage their sons to become imams.

Sooner or later, Muslim youth are bound to ask why their parents are so eager for them to prosper in a society whose values and culture (not to mention foreign policy) the parents reject or even condemn. One tack pursued by

disgruntled youth, widely noted by social scientists, is to criticize intrusive, controlling parents as mired in a corrupted version of Islam inflected with the ethnic culture of a home village, tribe, or nation; and to lay claim to a "pure," culture-free Islam.

This tack has particular appeal for Muslim college students away from home for the first time and meeting, mixing with, and marrying Muslims from other backgrounds. Indeed, the college campus is often where such youth begin seriously to identify themselves as "Muslim Americans." Then, too, such a culture-free understanding of Islam resonates with Islamism, which affords young people still another way to outflank the religious demands of their parents. Naber quotes a Palestinian youth who grew up in the Bay Area and then attended college there: "Arabism is backward and patriarchal, while Islam is modern and liberatory."

The parents of such a youth are likely to see things in precisely the opposite way. Not only do they object to the disrespect shown to their traditional culture and customs, but they are inevitably fearful that their offspring's turn to Islamism might be the beginning of a path to extremism, or at least might be perceived as such by anxious, ill-informed Americans.

For the young, however, this culture-free version of Islam offers many advantages. For the politically savvy, it helps address one of the central obstacles to uniting Muslims: the extraordinary ethnic, racial, linguistic, and sectarian diversity that fragments and divides them in America, more than in any other country. Then, too, Islamism affords youth the opportunity to challenge what they typically view as the political timidity of their parents with regard to American policy in the Middle East and in the Muslim world generally. Finally, some version of an Islamist identity, as opposed to their parents' ethnically inflected, traditionalist Islam, allows Muslim youth to stake a positive claim to a negative characterization imputed to them by non-Muslims. And their efforts continue to be protected by the First Amendment.

So what are the lessons for non-Muslims? First, we are too preoccupied with what goes on in Islamic schools and mosques. Typically, these institutions are dominated by immigrant doctors, engineers, and businessmen, who pay the bills and sit on the boards, which routinely interfere in day-to-day decision-making. The political views of such patriarchs would not gratify most of us, but more relevant is their rigid, controlling management style, which tends to alienate youth.

Imams do not escape this ethos. Lacking any unique sacramental or ceremonial powers, they can be relegated all too easily to the status of hired hands chosen by the board to lead prayers and perhaps give marital advice. Since most imams come from overseas, where mosques are subsidized and to varying degrees controlled by the state, they are unaccustomed to the day-to-day operation and management of self-sustaining voluntary institutions. Moreover, their English and their understanding of American society may be poor. Such individuals arguably have a difficult time gaining genuine respect from a congregation's lay leaders, never mind young people predisposed to seeing Islamic schools and mosques as the bastions of adults who don't listen to them and certainly don't understand their lives in America.

Second, sweeping, intemperate attacks on Muslims and Islam are not only unfair, they are counterproductive—though not necessarily in the way our political elites invariably claim. The primary objective of Muslim leaders in America is to mobilize and unify a diverse and fragmented agglomeration of coreligionists from all over the world. Casting suspicion on this agglomeration as if it were a coherent whole plays into the hands of leaders who may be unsophisticated or unimaginative—but are hardly out to terrorize America.

Indeed, however much Muslim leaders and their organizations express genuine outrage at inaccurate and unfair characterizations of their faith, they have nevertheless grown dependent on such attacks, not only to sustain themselves and their organizations, but even more critically to pull together a disparate assortment of individuals, many of whom identify more with their countries of origin than with Islam. In this sense, second-generation Muslim Americans, especially those who have gone to university, are leading the way. And the more they are unfairly and intemperately characterized in public discourse and the media, the more they will perceive the imperative to mobilize politically as Muslim Americans.

Finally, the social and psychological turmoil associated with the assimilation of Muslim youth suggests that defining Islam as "a religion of peace" is almost certainly counterproductive. Young people who are already disaffected with their elders, whom they are inclined to dismiss as religious hypocrites, are likely to be highly sensitive to perceived wrongs committed against their fellow Muslims, here and especially overseas. And they are inclined, rightly or wrongly, to interpret these wrongs as the result of American foreign policy and ultimately as the responsibility of the American people.

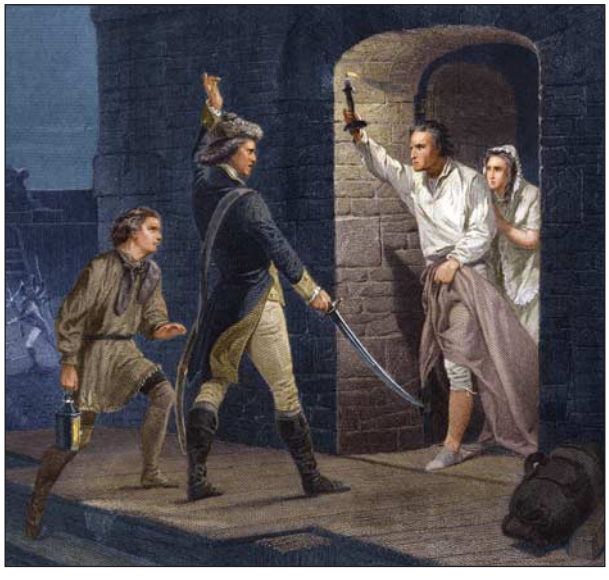
Telling such young people that Islam is "a religion of peace" is likely to come across as self-serving, condescending, and manipulative. Even if the overwhelming majority of them don't feel the need personally to avenge wrongs visited on their coreligionists, they are nevertheless likely to regard their faith as worth fighting for—especially as they struggle to come to terms with their place in a proud religion that understandably sees itself as having been outperformed and overcome by the West. ♦

# Ethan Allen Lives

*The original American populist*

## By Geoffrey Norman

In 1775, Fort Ticonderoga was known as the "Gibraltar of the New World." So when Ethan Allen—who was never one to think small—learned of the unpleasantness at Lexington and Concord, he proposed to muster his troops, the Green Mountain Boys, at the tavern in Bennington that was more or less their headquarters and immediately march upcountry, find some boats for an amphibious assault, and take that fort. He and the "Boys"—who were a blend of militia and vigilante committee—had been fighting their own fight for almost 10 years. It was the fight between the yeomanry and the aristocracy, and it has been going on, in one fashion or another, ever since.



*Allen demands surrender at Ticonderoga.*

His men were armed, probably, with long rifles and muskets, but they were no match for regulars. Even so, they were ready to fight and to follow his lead. But . . . Ticonderoga? Built by the French in the style of Vauban, master of fortifications, the fort guarded the narrow passage between the southerly end of Lake Champlain and the north shore of Lake George, in a natural bottleneck of the water route between New York and Montreal. It was thus of enormous strategic importance and had earned a reputation for impregnability during the Seven Years' War, when 16,000 British troops were unable to take it from 4,000 Frenchmen in the Battle of Carillon.

On a good day, Allen could muster about 200 men, most of them sober.

By 1775, the fort, in truth, was indifferently manned and maintained by the British Army. But it still housed a considerable number of artillery pieces. Among the most pressing needs of the American colonists if they were, indeed, to fight for independence was artillery. Taking Ticonderoga would go a long way toward alleviating that problem.

Still . . . not only was the fort a daunting objective in purely military terms, it was also the property of the king of England. To strike at Ticonderoga was to strike at the crown. It might still be possible to patch things up after the actions at Lexington and Concord. Those could be considered unfortunate episodes where emotions boiled over and things got out of hand. But a deliberate assault on one of the king's forts by a militia and the seizure of his cannons . . . that would be an unmistakable act of war.

For Ethan Allen, that might have been the point. As he wrote later,

> Ever since I arrived at the state of manhood, and acquainted myself with the general history of mankind, I have felt a sincere passion for liberty. The history of nations, doomed to perpetual slavery, in consequence of yielding up to tyrants their natural-born liberties, I read with a sort of philosophical horror; so that the first systematical and bloody attempt at Lexington, to enslave America, thoroughly electrified my mind, and fully determined me to take part with my country. . . . This enterprise I cheerfully undertook.

So he and the Boys marched to Castleton, where they went scouting for the boats they needed for an amphibious assault. They found enough to transport only 83 men and launched before dawn on May 10, 1775.

As it turned out, they had an easy time of it. The few troops garrisoned at the fort were asleep. One sentry who was awake tried to shoot Allen, but his weapon misfired. Otherwise, there was no real resistance, except from a soldier who tried to bayonet one of Allen's men.

STOCK MONTAGE / GETTY

*Geoffrey Norman, a writer in Vermont, is a frequent contributor to* The Weekly Standard.

Allen struck the man on the head with the flat of his sword, then demanded to be taken to the commanding officer's quarters, where he banged on the door and called on him to surrender the fort.

And in just whose name was this demand being made, the British officer asked?

"In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," Allen immortally replied.

Or . . . maybe not.

Like so much about Ethan Allen, there is some question as to whether he actually spoke those words. According to his own bestselling book, he did. But according to one of his biographers, "There were later recollections among those who had been at the fort with him that he had shouted out: 'Come out of there you damned old Rat.' Others claimed that it was: 'Come out of there you sons of British whores, or I'll smoke you out.' Nobody except Ethan seemed to recall anything about the Great Jehovah."

Precisely what Allen actually said, of course, we'll never know. Nor, it seems, will we ever know exactly what he looked like. No painting or sculpted likeness of him has ever turned up. It is not known, even, where his bones are buried. He is, it seems, more myth than man.

Still, there *was* a real man, one who had the audacity to take Fort Ticonderoga, and, as George Washington once observed, there was "an original something in him that commands admiration."

So Ethan Allen became one of the iconic figures of the generation that made the American Revolution, even though he was not a soldier of distinction. He was not on the field at any of the great battles that followed; not in attendance at any of those meetings of large historical significance where the Founders laid down the footings and the design of the new country. When the Declaration of Independence was being drafted and signed, he was a guest of the British, as a prisoner of war. After he was exchanged, he was given a military title but no important responsibilities. But it cannot be said that he *entirely* sat out the rest of the war. He used his time to write the story of his captivity.

He remained the hero of Ticonderoga, the colonists' first victory, making him its first hero, but there was no military second act.

Still, there is a statue of Ethan Allen in the Capitol building in Washington, and the USS *Ethan Allen* is the only nuclear submarine ever to fire an armed Polaris missile. The submerged ship launched the missile in a test on May 6, 1962, and the warhead detonated "right in the pickle barrel," according to the ship's captain, a phrase that Ethan would doubtless have appreciated. He appears in historical fiction, doing impossible deeds. No other revolutionary figure from what became the state of Vermont is so well known, not even close. He is far better known—in legend, at least—than Seth Warner, who was one of his lieutenants on the Ticonderoga expedition and was, a few months later, elected by the Green Mountain Boys as their leader. Warner's performance amply validated their choice. Interestingly, Ethan Allen and Seth Warner shared a cousin, the wonderfully named Remember Baker, who also served with the Boys and was, according to one source, "a tough, redheaded, freckle-faced young giant, a man with whom it was best not to tangle, if it could be avoided."

**No painting or sculpted likeness of Allen has ever turned up. It is not known, even, where his bones are buried. He is, it seems, more myth than man. Still, there was a real man, one who had the audacity to take Fort Ticonderoga, and, as George Washington once observed, there was 'an original something in him that commands admiration.'**

By choosing Warner, the Green Mountain Boys, in effect, voted Allen out of office. But he had earned the rebuke, fair and square. The Boys had looked to him as their leader and had been loyal to him in the hours leading up to the assault on Ticonderoga, when a fancy officer from Connecticut had appeared on the scene. Colonel Benedict Arnold attempted to assume command of the Ticonderoga operation, under some pretext of authority from the state of Massachusetts. Unlike Allen, Arnold actually wore a proper uniform and was plainly confident in the rightness of his position and in his own military fitness and ability to command. So much so that Allen, according to some accounts, almost gave in. But the Green Mountain Boys were not having any. Unless they were led by Ethan Allen, they were not going to attack that fort.

They had a defiant and independent—not to say insubordinate—streak. Like their leader.

The Green Mountain Boys did attack Ticonderoga but only after a compromise of sorts was arrived at. Arnold could march in the lead, shoulder to shoulder with Allen. But he would *not* be in command. His presence was allowed but confined to the ceremonial.

In the aftermath of the fort's capture, though, it became evident that Arnold was the superior military leader and Allen an amateur. The latter rewarded the Green Mountain Boys for their victory by opening up the ample supply of rum that had been stockpiled by the fort's commander. Two days of revelry followed, and the initiative was lost.

Meanwhile, Arnold acted. Shortly after the taking of Ticonderoga, he had acquired some men of his own to command. They had marched up from Massachusetts, and he put them to quick use capturing a British sloop and with it command of Lake Champlain. Allen loaded his men on boats, once they sobered up, and pushed off to take a new objective, further north on the lake. But he neglected to provision the men, who, after two days with no rations, were delighted by the appearance of Arnold in his sloop, with food to spare for them.

That blunder was followed by others, and eventually Allen's attempt to carry the offensive against the British ended in demoralizing withdrawal. It could have been much worse, and soon would be.

By this time, the cannons from Ticonderoga were on their way to Boston, where they were badly needed. So when Allen and Seth Warner appeared in Philadelphia before the Second Continental Congress and petitioned for the Green Mountain Boys to be made a part of the regular army with appropriate titles and pay, they got their wish. This is when the troops gathered to elect their officers and chose Warner to command them, leaving Allen in command of nothing.

This no doubt stung. If there are uncertainties and mysteries around the large person of Ethan Allen, no one has ever doubted his self-esteem. But he took the rejection manfully. He remained both friendly and loyal to Warner and offered to serve in any capacity that might be useful.

The Green Mountain Boys had, as it turned out, gotten it right. Warner was the leader they—and the revolution—needed, as he proved most conclusively at the Battle of Bennington, an American victory in a relatively small fight that made possible the much larger victory at Saratoga, which, as J.F.C. Fuller writes in his *Decisive Battles of the Western World*, was "one of the most fateful in British history."

Ethan Allen was not present at the battle of Saratoga. He was in jail on Manhattan Island in October 1777 when General John Burgoyne's men grounded their arms. (It was the first of only three occasions when a British Army has surrendered in the field, the others being Yorktown and Singapore.) Allen had been captured a few months earlier during the ill-fated campaign to seize Montreal led by Benedict Arnold. His resistance now took a new form.

At first, it was all he could do to stay alive. He was put in irons and held in the stinking bowels of a British ship for several weeks before being taken across the Atlantic, presumably to be hanged as a traitor. But the English were sticklers for the law, and before he could be hanged, he would need to be tried and convicted, which could be messy and provide the rebels with still more justification for their cause. The alternative was to treat Allen as a prisoner of war, which would mean sending him back to America to serve out his time as a POW. Better to hold him than to martyr him.

As a footnote, Allen's time in England generated material for one of Abraham Lincoln's little parables—and it is not surprising that Lincoln, another rough, self-educated son of the frontier, would have felt a kind of fondness for Ethan Allen. According to this tale, Allen was shown, by his captors, to the privy, where a portrait of George Washington hung on the wall. When he came out, Allen was asked how he liked the decor. He answered that he found it appropriate since "nothing would make an Englishman s— quicker than the sight of General Washington."

The story may be apocryphal in both regards. It may not have happened, and Lincoln may not have told it. But it made it into the film *Lincoln*, so like so many other stories it is now part of the Ethan Allen legend.

It is undeniable that the real man suffered—all around him, men were dying of scurvy—but he held up during his captivity. He was harshly treated, and when his conditions improved, he continued to make a nuisance of himself. Paroled in Manhattan and allowed, more or less, to move about at will, he visited prisons where other men were still held and found them, as he later wrote, "in the agonies of death, in consequence of very hunger, and others speechless and very near death, biting pieces of chips; others pleading for God's sake for something to eat. . . . Hollow groans saluted my ears, and despair seemed printed on every of their countenances. . . . I have seen in one of these churches seven dead at the same time, lying among the excrements of their bodies."

He protested these conditions in letters to the British command. They went unanswered. But they did stimulate action. He was offered his release in exchange for . . . well, an act of treason. His jailers offered to make him a colonel in command of a regiment of Tories.

Unlike his old rival, Benedict Arnold, he passed, and in his usual spirited fashion. According to his own account (the only one we have), he compared himself to Jesus Christ refusing the devil's offer "to give him all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship him."

Thirty-two months after he was captured, Allen was exchanged for a British officer, the result of long and acrimonious negotiations between Generals Howe and Washington. "In a transport of joy," Allen later wrote, "I landed on liberty ground, and as I advanced into the country, received the acclamation of a grateful people."

Allen went promptly to Valley Forge after his exchange and saw there evidence of the hard winter that Washington and his troops had endured. The general met him cordially and was impressed enough to write of Allen, "His fortitude and firmness seem to have placed him out of reach of misfortune."

Washington's letter of recommendation accompanying Allen's request for a commission and command in the army was tepid, though, saying only that he expected that the Continental Congress would "make such provision for him as they think profitable and suitable."

Which amounted, in the event, to not very much—a commission and pay, but no command. And, as with the election of Warner to command the Green Mountain Boys, this was not so much a matter of talent neglected as character wisely appraised. Ticonderoga had been a long time ago. The aspiring nation now had a real army and real allies, the French. This was real war and not impulsive adventurism.

So Allen finished writing his book, *A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity, from the Time of his being taken by the British, near Montreal, on the 25th Day of September, in the year 1775, to the time of his exchange* [there is more here but skip to] *with the most remarkable Occurrences respecting himself and many other Continental Prisoners* [fast forward] *Particularly the Destruction of the Prisoners, at New York, by General Sir William Howe* [fast forward, again] *Interspersed with some Political Observations, written by himself and now published for the Information of the Curious in all Nations.*

The unwieldy title and florid style did not inhibit sales, and the short book is still worth a read. Its publication stimulated people's appetite for the cause and enhanced the author's already outsized reputation.

*The statue of Allen in the U.S. Capitol*

There was a third act. The real Ethan Allen was a major player in the history of the Republic of Vermont. And he completed another book, one he had begun as a collaboration when he was a young man. The book, called *Reason, the Only Oracle of Man*, is an overwrought polemic attacking religion and endorsing a sort of deism. It was a failure.

Allen died in 1789, at the age of 51, two years before Vermont became the fourteenth state. There is controversy to this day over whether he attempted to manipulate Vermont into some kind of alliance with the British during the interim. There is, in fact, a lot of controversy about Allen. Questions that go deeper than the exact wording of his surrender demand at Ticonderoga.

A lot about the legendary Allen is not merely open to question but dismissible on common-sense grounds. Over the years, he has been made into one of those mythic American frontier characters, like Mike Fink or Davy (who preferred "David") Crockett or Daniel Boone or Timothy Murphy, the man who supposedly turned the tide of battle at Saratoga with a single 300-yard shot.

It is probably safe to assume that Ethan Allen was not, while passed out drunk, bitten several times by a rattlesnake, then woke up sober to find the snake dead drunk (or, maybe, just dead). Also that he never picked up a bushel bag of salt with his teeth and tossed it over his shoulder. And on and on.

The Allen of myth was seductive enough, however, for Herman Melville to write, "He was frank, bluff, companionable as a Pagan, convivial as a Roman, hearty as a harvest. His spirit was essentially Western; and herein is his peculiar Americanism." And for Melville to give him a walk-on role in his historical novel *Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile*. The Ethan Allen who appears in Melville's book is the one who was a prisoner in England. The novel's narrator likens him to a "baited bull in the ring . . . outlandishly arrayed in the sorry remains of a half-Indian, half-Canadian sort of dress." His "whole marred aspect was that of some wild beast; but a loyal sort and unsubdued by the cage." Melville even has Allen shout his

defiance, bellowing, "You may well stare at Ethan Ticonderoga Allen, the unconquered soldier."

This Allen of legend worked his way into historical novels and even a few episodes of a long running television serial called *Hawkeye and the Last of the Mohicans* based loosely on the James Fenimore Cooper novels, which, according to D.H. Lawrence, revealed that "The essential American soul is hard, isolate, stoic, and a killer. It has never yet melted."

Mark Twain had a more American take in his classic literary demolition job, *Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses*, from which Cooper's reputation never recovered. So much of the frontier stuff was, indeed, Cooperesque sensationalism, like the illustrations of Allen demanding the surrender of Fort Ticonderoga that showed him in full dress uniform, complete with epaulets, holding a very large sword. A preposterous representation, helping to stimulate a revisionist attitude toward the entire Ethan Allen legend that has reduced him to a minor, eccentric figure not to be taken seriously.

But, but . . . he *did* march on Ticonderoga, and it was an undeniably audacious thing to do. And, one wonders, how did he happen to be there, at the ready, with men willing to follow him in the attempt? This, it can be argued, is the Ethan Allen story that resonates. And should.

It's a story of yeomanry in conflict with aristocracy, and in it one can detect chords of so many later American conflicts, including one that endures still. If "populism," a word that gets much used these days, can be defined as politics based on a belief in the inevitable conflict between a moneyed elite and the common people, then Ethan Allen was the first American populist.

He came to the role through a dispute over title to the lands west of the Green Mountains and east of the Connecticut River. There were rival claims to much of this area when Allen arrived there in 1766. The governor of New Hampshire had issued grants (for a price) to lands in this area, as had the authorities in New York. The dispute over which of these were legitimate came down to a fight between pioneers from Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts who arrived with an ax and a plow and a dream, on the one hand, and the large aristocratic landholders of New York who operated on a system of tenant farming or "sharecropping," on the other. It was, at bottom, a fight between feudalism and a new kind of arrangement based on freeholds and a "middle class."

When Allen arrived in this territory—which came to be known as "the Grants"—he was interested more in speculating on land than farming it. But if he was a speculator, he was also a leader and a dynamic and forceful personality, recognized as such by people fighting for land they believed they had paid for and owned fair and square. They turned to Allen for leadership, first in court and when that failed—as it was bound to since the judges were "Yorkers"—in the field at the head of the ad hoc militia that became the Green Mountain Boys.

The struggle went on until the revolution, and in the abstract, it was never a fair fight. The Yorkers had control of the legal machinery and the courts; if that was not enough, they could, in theory, bring out regular troops—Redcoats—to enforce their claims. But the people of the Grants managed to hold out, and this was due, in no small measure, to Ethan Allen and the force of his personality. If he had started as a land speculator (and never stopped being one), he also picked up and internalized the cause. After a defeat in court, he was approached by his antagonists and offered what amounted to a bribe to induce him to turn against his own side, which he refused. Well, someone supposedly said, he might want to remember that "might often does make right."

To which Allen famously replied, "The gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills."

One of the men asked just what that was supposed to mean. "If you will accompany me to the hill in Bennington," Allen said, "the sense will be made clear."

So the fight was on. A reward was put out on Ethan Allen, and he countered by putting out a reward of his own against the Yorkers who had bested him in court. And then, to drive his point home, he rode over to Albany, which was enemy territory, and hoisted a few at a tavern where he made sure that everyone knew exactly who he was. He even asked the proprietor to nail the poster offering a reward for the capture of his enemies to the tavern wall. Then, in his own good time, he mounted up and rode, unmolested, back home.

On another occasion, Ethan and the Boys "arrested" one of their antagonists and held a "trial" at the tavern where they were accustomed to gather and make plans over cups of rum flip. The man was, unsurprisingly, found guilty, and his punishment was to be tied to a chair and hoisted 20 feet off the ground on the tavern flagpole and left there for a couple of hours.

There was, inevitably, more to the friction over the Grants than this Robin Hood stuff. It was serious business, and from 1771 until the opening of the revolution, there were incidents, many of them violent, almost every month. Some people were burned out. Some whipped. But there were no killings, right up until the day when Redcoats and militiamen fired on each other at Lexington and Concord and Ethan determined to march on Ticonderoga with the Green Mountain Boys, who were ready and willing.

He—and they—had been fighting the good fight for years. Ethan Allen does, perhaps, exist mostly as legend, but when you read the stories of the struggles over the Grants, you understand that, whatever else he might have been, he was an American original.

Accent on the first word. ♦

# Coming Apart

*The decline of the European Union*

**By Dominic Green**

The walls are going up all over Europe; we shall not see them lowered in our lifetime. The dream of "ever-closer union," and the eventual merging of nations into a United States of Europe, is over. From the white cliffs of Dover in the west, where David Cameron refused to follow Brussels's orders to grant welfare payments to working migrants, to the east, where Hungary's border with Romania is marked with razor wire; from Athens in the Mediterranean south, where a populist government mocks Germany, the architect of the union's fiscal policy, to Stockholm in the Baltic north, where the government has closed its borders to immigrants: The European Union has not only stalled on the road to union—it is coming apart.

Here is the news from Brussels. The political expansion of the European Union stopped a decade ago, when voters in France and the Netherlands, two founding EU states, rejected a draft of a European constitution. The euro, once vaunted as an alternative to the U.S. dollar, is weak and will remain so as long as its political future is uncertain. Since the crash of 2008, the European economy has only contracted or stagnated. Half the young people in southern Europe are unemployed. In 2015, the eurozone's economy grew, it's projected, by only 1.5 percent; the IMF dares hope for 1.6 percent in 2016.

Across the Continent, popular resentment at large and apparently uncontrolled inflows of migrants is carrying ultranationalist parties, all of them hostile to the Brussels government, from the disreputable fringe to the parliamentary center. As last summer's immigration crisis becomes this winter's security crisis, the Schengen system, which guarantees the free movement of people between the EU's member states, continues to disintegrate. Members are instituting ad hoc border controls, and voters are turning to parties who seek to repatriate powers from Brussels.

In the last fortnight alone, Marine Le Pen and the National Front swept 6 of the 13 regions of mainland France in the first round of regional elections, taking nearly 30 percent of the national vote and more than 40 percent in two regions. Her turnout increased in the second round, but the strategic voting of François Hollande's left-wing supporters for his rival Nicolas Sarkozy prevented her from repeating her success. In Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orban, another ultranationalist of dubious provenance, called for the Schengen rules to be rewritten. In Greece, the socialist Syriza government refused to comply with a Brussels directive that imports from Jewish settlements in the West Bank be marked. And in Britain, advisers to David Cameron leaked that if Brussels continues to block the prime minister's request to renegotiate the country's treaties with the EU, he will lead the campaign to vote "No" in the U.K.'s forthcoming referendum on EU membership.

We are witnessing the decline and fall of the European Union as we know it: the beginning of the end for the last of the twentieth century's grand political experiments. The speed of the decline and the extent of the fall are not certain; Brussels still has plenty of options. But it is clear that the EU, having ceased its geographical and institutional expansion, is entering a period of contraction, and quite possibly disintegration. The lines of fracture are clear, and so are the indicators that the stresses will only intensify. Divisions between the rich north and the poorer south, between the new recruits in Eastern Europe and the "Inner Six" founders in Western Europe, and between the core partners, France and Germany, are all compounded by Brussels's long-term lack of democratic legitimacy and accountability.

The faltering of the EU is not just a problem for Europeans. Collectively, the European Union is the United States' biggest trade partner. In 2014, only Canada bought more U.S. exports than the EU, and only China supplied more U.S. imports. Like the United States, the European Union produces about a quarter of the world's GDP. Together, the United States and the EU control more than half of the world's economy, as well as three of

GARY LOCKE

*Dominic Green, the author of* Three Empires on the Nile, *teaches politics at Boston College.*

the five permanent seats on the U.N. Security Council. At a moment of global disorder, a pillar of the global economy and the United States' global strategy is crumbling.

For sixty years, from the Congress of Europe in 1948 to the Great Recession of 2008, the European states slowly worked towards convergence into a single federation. By 2008, the union's membership had grown from 6 states to 27, 19 of which had exchanged their national currencies for the euro. The union expanded by promising affluence and security. It is no longer capable of guaranteeing either. With the stalling of political convergence in 2005, territorial expansion has ground to a halt. Since 2008, only Croatia has entered the union. Iceland applied in 2009, when it was on its knees economically, but in 2013, having regained its feet, it suspended its application. Economically, Europe is becalmed. Politically, the union is paralyzed. And as there is no European military, Europe's collective security policy has no substance. If Vladimir Putin sends Russian troops into the Baltic states, who will they turn to: Berlin, Paris, and London—or Washington, D.C.?

Now, the impetus in European politics belongs no longer to convergence but to a democratic revolt towards divergence. The twinned topical issues, immigration and security, reflect a deeper pair of problems. The first is popular resentment of the "democratic deficit": the EU's failure to establish its legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens. Turnout for European parliament elections is consistently low. The Council of Europe, composed of the national heads of state, selects its president by secret horse-trading. His rival for the EU crown, the president of the European Commission, is also unelected by his subjects. This does not stop him from giving an annual, American-style State of the Union address to the European parliament.

The second problem is anger at the incompetence of the Brussels authorities. Having accumulated sovereign powers by promising affluence and perpetual peace, they have wrought economic stagnation, an immigration crisis, and an often illiberal nationalist backlash.

According to Frontex, the EU's border security agency, 1.2 million "irregular migrants" entered the Schengen zone this year, a rise of 431 percent on 2014. Over the summer, as the EU's system for the internal management of immigration collapsed under the weight of numbers, Germany, Austria, and Denmark restored border controls. Next, when the EU ordered member states to accept quotas of migrants, most of whom are Muslim, the Eastern European states revolted. Now, with the EU expecting more than 1.6 million migrants in 2016, member states are improvising their own border controls and setting independent immigration policies. The summer's temporary measures, the barbed wire and checkpoints that sprang up along the overland route to Austria through the western Balkans, are becoming permanent.

In November, Austria barricaded its border with Slovenia with barbed wire. "A fence is not a bad thing," Johanna Mikl-Leitner, Austria's interior minister, told ARD TV. Sweden, a country of 10 million that has been accepting up to 10,000 migrants a week, reinstituted border controls and refused to accept more immigrants. In France, a leaked letter revealed that Hollande's government intended to start passport checks on all its borders to "maintain order" during the monthlong U.N. conference on climate change. That was before the terrorist attacks of November 13, when Islamists murdered 130 and wounded 368 in Paris. Since then, the Hollande government has demanded and obtained the systematic security screening of all EU passport holders as they enter the union and indefinitely extended its own border controls. Bernard Cazeneuve, France's interior minister, promises to retain them "for as long as the terror threat requires us to do so."

EU law allows member states to suspend their Schengen obligations for six months in cases of "emergency." On December 1, the European Council, admitting "serious deficiencies" in its management of the EU's external borders, recommended raising the limit for internal border controls from six months to two years. Henceforth, Schengen is honored in the breach: Two years is an eternity in politics. With thousands of EU citizens training or having trained as jihadists in Syria, the EU has recognized the immigration and security "emergency" as a permanent state of affairs. The union's founding principle, the free movement of its citizens, is no longer compatible with the security needs of its member states.

The security crisis demonstrates to Europeans the extent to which their national governments have alienated their powers to Brussels—and how poorly the EU has exercised them. But terrorism is the law and order aspect of a larger problem in European society. The arrival in Europe of large numbers of mostly Muslim immigrants has overloaded schools, social housing, and hospitals, threatened social cohesion in many cities, and forced cultural identity to the forefront of national politics. Hence the popular turn towards parties of ethnic grievance. Not all of them have undemocratic and illiberal roots, but all of them promise to restore national sovereignty and cultural cohesion. All of them vow to repatriate powers from Brussels, especially on immigration and border controls, and many talk of throwing off the EU's yoke entirely.

In France, the National Front's share in regional elections has risen from 11 to 28 percent in five years. Given the complexity of Europe's problems, the ineptitude of its leaders, and the long-accumulated fund of resentment on

which the nationalists draw, there is every reason to expect that Marine Le Pen will better this month's performance in 2017's presidential elections.

What will happen next? The European Union will not collapse in the old European way, violent revolution. We are unlikely to see a mob of angry Belgians throwing bricks through the glass walls of the Europa building, the unfinished future home of the European government in Brussels. In a sense, that's a tribute to the union's positive achievements. Instead, voters will, like the Greeks, elect insurgent parties committed to renegotiating their national treaty obligations; or the established parties, harried by public opinion, will renegotiate the treaties in order to retain power. This latter pattern is emerging in both Britain and France.

In the first round of the French regional elections, the governing Socialists, who are committed to the EU, came in third with 23 percent. The anti-EU National Front took nearly 28 percent of the vote, and Nicolas Sarkozy's center-right party, the heir to de Gaulle's ambivalence about the EU, were second, with 27 percent. Since losing the presidency in 2012, Sarkozy has positioned himself as the responsible opposition. In 2014, he called for the EU to lose half its powers. In September, he called for the suspension of Schengen and the processing of potential immigrants outside the EU's borders.

*Internal borders are back: Adieu, Schengen.*

NEWSCOM

Across the Channel, David Cameron has arrayed himself similarly. In 2013, Cameron called for "fundamental, far-reaching change" in the union's structure. Earlier this year, he successfully campaigned for reelection on promises to "end our commitment to ever-closer union" and hold an "in-out" referendum on Britain's EU membership by 2017. Cameron may want Britain to remain in the EU for economic reasons, but he must also position himself ahead of public opinion. A November poll found 52 percent favor a "Brexit."

Whether led by new parties or old, the net effect will be the same: divergence from a united Europe and the weakening of Brussels. The coming Europe will be a hybrid. The German-led core states will remain tightly federated within a Schengen-style system. But a large group of states will seek a looser relationship: a customs union, with or without a common currency. These states will seek to retain or recover authority over immigration policy, border control, and foreign policy—and may also pursue protectionist policies. If they are not able to accomplish this within a relaxed EU framework, rising anti-EU public sentiment could force their withdrawal from the union. And if one state leaves, there may be a rush to the exit.

Can the EU save itself? Probably not, but it can do a lot to soften its fall, and even recover its footing. The idea of a "two-speed" Europe, where the founders proceed with unification and the latecomers catch up when they are ready, has always been anathema to Brussels, but it may represent the EU's best hope of retaining members. The immigration and security crisis may force it in that direction, anyway. In late November, Dutch finance minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem proposed radical surgery: shrinking the 26-nation Schengen zone into a "mini-Schengen" in the EU's heartland. Only five states—Germany, Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands—would remain a passport-free zone.

These states are four of the "Inner Six" founders of the European Economic Community. They were also the first signatories to the Schengen Agreement. Significantly, the Dutch proposal excludes Italy, the fifth founder of the EEC, and France, the sixth founder and Germany's historic partner in the construction of the EU. And an EU without France and Italy would be no EU at all.

The economic weakness of the eurozone and the euro's uncertain future are a drag on the U.S. economy. The prospect of member states leaving the union or the euro will favor neither the European economy nor the long-term health of its currency. But will the United States be better off strategically if it deals with the major European states on a one-on-one basis, rather than negotiating with the democratically impaired authorities in Brussels, who have often proposed the EU as a counter to American influence, rather than a complement?

As with the Dutch proposal for a "mini-Schengen," we may be seeing the emergent contours of this future. In recent weeks, the French, British, and Germans have joined the United States in bombing ISIS in Syria after votes in their national parliaments. Meanwhile, the EU has issued only protests to the various parties. So long as there is no EU army—and the prospect of its formation gets less and less likely—Euro-American alliances will continue to be organized at the national level and through NATO.

Back in 2005, the CIA warned that the EU, with its aging population, slow growth, and "unsustainable" welfare systems, was heading for "splintering" or even "disintegration" by 2020. Convergence towards a single Europe changed the map of the postwar world, and so will divergence in the coming years. The United States needs to prepare for Europe's new reality. Even the CIA gets it right now and then. ♦

*'Luther Before the Diet of Worms' by Anton von Werner*

# Here He Stands

## *The 'unheralded monk' who transformed Europe.* BY MALCOLM FORBES

"The history of the Reformation is very largely a history of books and publication," writes Marilynne Robinson in an essay on the schism within Western Christianity and one of the great seismic movements of the last millennium. On the eve of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation comes this volume by the British historian Andrew Pettegree, which demonstrates how the writings of the seminal figure in the movement, Martin Luther, electrified Germany, recasting religious thought and revolutionizing the printing industry. What Robinson calls the "bookishness" of the Reformation can be attributed to Martin Luther and his proficiency with the written word: his style, his output, and his fascination for (and close involvement with) the printing process. Luther, Pettegree argues, became the world's first mass media figure, an instantly recognizable and eminently profitable product. *Brand Luther* is the original tale of an unparalleled marketing force.

**Brand Luther**
*How an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe—and Started the Protestant Reformation*
by Andrew Pettegree
Penguin Press, 400 pp., $29.95

Pettegree opens with an interesting conceit, imagining Luther on a walk through provincial Wittenberg in 1513—four years before he ignited the Reformation by tacking his 95 theses against corrupt practices to the door of a local church—and then contrasting it with a similar walk in 1543, by which time the city was irredeemably changed, the country split, and the continent convulsed. In 1513, Luther was unknown and could walk undisturbed to the university through poor, dirty streets. Pettegree then shows how, 30 years later, Luther would have taken the same steps but in drastically transformed surroundings. This one-print-shop town—a city Luther previously declared on the edge of civilization ("*in termino civilitatis*")—is now a teeming,

NEWSCOM

*Malcolm Forbes is a writer and critic in Berlin.*

thriving powerhouse of the publishing world whose economic renaissance is entirely due to its favorite son.

Wittenberg's transformation is only one of three at the heart of this book. The other two—the metamorphosis of an earnest young monk into a bestselling author and the emergence of a mass-market book industry from a scholarly, Latinate book world—are given more coverage and consequently prove to be more interesting. Pettegree's treatment of Luther's early years constitutes a vivid portrait of a preacher as a young man. We see how Luther's spiritual journey was fraught with theological struggles. Chief among them was his opposition to the trade in indulgences, which for him was a crude financial transaction that cheapened repentance: "As soon as a coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs."

His condemnation of indulgences—or rather, his "disputation" on their "power and efficacy"—is outlined in his 95 theses, and Pettegree singles out and skillfully analyzes those that show Luther at his most provocative. In thesis 86, Luther's words are not so much bold as rash:

> Why does not the pope, whose wealth is today greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build this one basilica of St. Peter with his own money, rather than with the money of poor believers?

And so the *causa Lutheri*, or Luther affair, begins with Luther's opponents from Wittenberg to Rome at loggerheads over how best to deal with the "insolent monk" or "son of perdition." In the meantime, an unsilenced Luther spreads his message, from pulpit and, crucially, in print. Pettegree explains that in 1518 and 1519 Luther became Europe's most published author, with printers churning out numerous editions of his books and pamphlets. His phenomenal success was, in part, a result of his facility as a vernacular writer. Unlike the traditional verbose discourses of the day, Luther's *Sermon on Indulgence and Grace* was a master class in brevity that got straight to the heart of the matter.

But while Luther started a revolution in theological writing and secured an even greater readership in 1520-21, it was in this period that he was officially pronounced excommunicate and outlaw. With tracts such as *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, in which he proclaims that the papacy is so corrupt it is beyond reform and that "Antichrist himself could not possibly rule more abominably," it was only a matter of time before Luther was brought to heel. Forced to swap his freedom in Wittenberg for isolation in the Wartburg, Luther goes from heretic to hermit. But Pettegree reminds us of how Luther put his punishment, or rather containment, to good use: translating the Bible into German. In only 11 weeks he had completed a first draft of the New Testament.

With Luther's release, reappearance in Wittenberg, and increased efforts for a reformed Christianity, Pettegree opens up a new strand and focuses on that other fundamental transformation, the explosion of the publishing industry. Enter artist, businessman, and "master technician" Lucas Cranach, who provided strikingly exquisite woodcut title-page designs for Luther's works and painted iconic "propaganda piece" portraits of the reformer. According to Pettegree, "It was Cranach who would be the authentic creator of Brand Luther" and who ensured that, by the time of his death (1546), Luther's was one of the most famous faces in Christendom.

The combination of distinctive art and succinct written word (in colloquial German) was a winning formula. To cope with the demand, printers risked larger editions of Luther's writings, at times up to 3,000 copies against the standard run of 300-700 for small pamphlets. Between 1521 and 1526, 85 percent of the published editions of Luther's works, and those of his followers and allies, were in German. In the same period, when sales of pamphlets were at their height, Luther and his supporters outpublished their Roman Catholic rivals by nine to one.

Pettegree states at the outset that it was not his intention to offer another biography of Martin Luther. This is clear: *Brand Luther* is far more than a biography. That said, it is difficult to relate how (as the subtitle has it) "an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe—and started the Protestant Reformation" without recourse to biographical elements. There are plenty of them, but *Brand Luther* is all the better for it. We learn about Luther's loyal flock and black sheep—those prepared to follow him and those he repudiated—his conflicts with the likes of Erasmus, his pleasures (food, beer, music, and family) and his principles—one being his preference to make no money from his books. When he died "there was no roaring and no groaning. The Devil did not come to claim him, as his enemies had so gleefully foretold." Pettegree astutely notes that, by publishing Luther's funeral orations in over 30 editions, the printers turned out to be as instrumental in his death as they were in his life.

Some readers may argue that in clinging to Luther's life story Pettegree veers off topic and incorporates too much peripheral detail. To some extent this is true, particularly when that detail is inconsequential (do we need to know that, while holed up in the Wartburg, Luther suffered from chronic constipation?). And yet it must be said that the bulk of Pettegree's tangents yield riveting lesser-known facts. How many of us knew that Luther was a pioneer in the field of female education, calling for the establishment of new schools for girls that followed a similar curriculum to that of German boys' schools? Or that he produced a splenetic tract on Jews in Germany that was so antisemitic it was avidly cited centuries later by the Nazis?

Pettegree expertly guides us through Luther's years and achievements and impresses with thorough readings of Luther's various works: not only his famous theses but also his treatises, manifestoes, lectures, catechisms, and correspondence. He also gives edifying commentaries on the classical motifs and biblical scenes that comprise Cranach's beautiful and innovative designs, many of which adorn the book's pages. Most of all, though, Pettegree deserves credit for his fresh

slant on the Reformation and his dynamic storytelling. There are junctures where he tries to crank up tension by inserting jarring modern-day clichés ("Luther had truly burned his boats. . . . Luther had attempted in some way to pull a fast one. . . . From this point on Luther would be a marked man") but he has far more success when holding back and trusting history alone to keep the reader entranced. One of the book's standout sections—Luther incurring the wrath of Rome and awaiting final papal judgment—is genuinely thrilling, precisely because Pettegree allows events to unfold, unembellished, on the page.

*Brand Luther* is a neat blend of two stories, the theological and the commercial. At the same time it is a shrewd character study of one who was revered by some and reviled by others. Contrasts and divisions abound, but what also emerges is an intriguing paradox, which Pettegree describes thus: "Printing was essential to the creation of Martin Luther, but Luther was also a determining, shaping force in the German printing industry." Each depended on the other. And as this absorbing and illuminating book capably shows, after Luther, print and public communication—and indeed, religion—would never be the same again. ♦

B&A

# Britain's First Lady

*The great woman beside the Great Man.*

BY CITA STELZER

**Clementine**
*The Life of Mrs. Winston Churchill*
by Sonia Purnell
Viking, 448 pp., $30

Clementine Churchill (1885-1977) is best known as Winston Churchill's wife. But as Sonia Purnell's deeply researched and readable biography demonstrates, she was much more than that. Clemmie—she allowed only Winston to call her Clemmie—was both a supportive and loving wife, yet developed sufficient independence to live outside the shadow of perhaps the greatest man of the 20th century.

The title of the British edition of this book—*First Lady: The Life and Wars of Clementine Churchill*—best captures its theme: For the first time in British history, the wife of a prime minister could reasonably be called a "First Lady." Here in America we have had our Edith Wilson, Eleanor Roosevelt, and the two-for-the-price-of-one administration of the Clintons. But while British history is replete with stories of women who served prime ministers in a variety of ways, before Clementine Churchill and since, none rose to the rank of First Lady.

Born, like her husband, into an aristocratic family with little money, the daughter of Lady Blanche Hozier—who had numerous love affairs, more even than Churchill's mother—was unsure just who her father was. Her childhood was rackety, money was scarce, and her position in society unsettled. She supplemented her meager allowance by giving French lessons. Little wonder that, as a young girl, she lacked self-confidence despite a rigorous education from French and German governesses (likely funded by one or another of her mother's serial lovers) and winning several academic prizes at a local grammar school.

She was quite beautiful and much admired. At a dinner party in March 1908, for which she had to sew her own dress, she caught the eye of another unrich member of the upper classes, Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill. According to other diners, he was immediately smitten. They were married six months later and, as Winston Churchill said, "lived happily ever after."

At that time, Churchill was a member of Parliament and president of the Board of Trade in H.H. Asquith's government. The new Mrs. Churchill immediately found herself in the thick of London political life. Their politics differed: Clementine Churchill was a Liberal, understanding from an early age the plight of the underdog, able to sympathize with those in need. Her husband, born in Blenheim Palace, did not come by his sympathies for the less well off quite as naturally or as early in life.

From the early days of their marriage, Churchill kept his wife fully informed of all aspects of his life, "sending her detailed bulletins on his political strategies," a habit he continued after he became prime minister in 1940. Even the most secret military information, including the ULTRA decrypts of German coded messages, were shared by her husband, who trusted her completely. She had access to Churchill's famous map room, denied to many: "Winston briefed her so thoroughly on naval operations that she was better informed than most cabinet ministers."

So how did Clementine Churchill manage to earn the title Purnell uses? She chose to make Winston's life as smooth as possible, ensuring his meals were prepared the way he liked them, organizing the lunches and dinner parties he prized, visiting battleships and bomb sites with him, and keeping in contact with political allies when he was in the trenches during World War I and, in World War II, away at the White House in Washington. She became an expert at soothing hurt feelings.

At the same time, as she was tending to his needs, she began to step out on her own. During the 1914-18 war she spearheaded a campaign to recruit

*Cita Stelzer is the author of* Dinner with Churchill: Policy Making at the Dinner Table.

*Winston and Clementine Churchill in Whitehall (1940)*

H.F. DAVIS / TOPICAL PRESS AGENCY / GETTY

housewives to make emergency gas masks for soldiers at the front. She opened, staffed, and ran nine canteens to feed some 500 munitions workers at each manufacturing location.

Acquiring new positions of authority added to her self-confidence, from which flowed greater independence from her formidable spouse. She argued forcibly with her husband for votes for women and in the canteens introduced a rule that allowed female workers access to smoking areas previously reserved for their male colleagues. Seeing female munitions workers protecting their hair inside turbans, she took to wearing a turban in public—a shrewd way of identifying herself with them and creating a bond with ordinary British women.

In 1918, her war work was recognized by King George V, who made her a commander of the Order of the British Empire. This, combined with her increased experience, enabled her to fashion a more independent life, traveling abroad on her own for pleasure, skiing, swimming, and playing competitive tennis. She had no compunction about besting Field Marshal Montgomery in fiercely fought croquet matches.

She began to add her own list of requirements to those of her finicky husband, insisting that her pillowcases be changed after an afternoon nap, fresh flowers be placed in every room, and a thousand tulip bulbs be planted every year at their country home, Chartwell. Her goal was casual perfection. To arrange her flowers, she would "Grab them by the neck and just drop them in the vase." Small things, but important assertions of self in a life lived with a man who required that everything be just as he wished and who worked at a frantic, chaotic pace that placed great demands on her, and not only during the war years.

Indeed, during the 1939-45 war, Clementine acted in her husband's place as member of Parliament, taking care of constituency business and continuing her role as hostess at lunches and dinners. As we know, Winston Churchill worked during all his meals: She attempted to keep him on schedule—no easy chore.

During Harry Hopkins's important first visit to London—sent by Franklin D. Roosevelt in early 1941 to appraise Britain's ability to survive alone—Clementine "planned virtually every moment of his day with the aim of furthering the British cause," even putting hot water bottles in his bed. Hopkins was so grateful that he sent her cheeses, ham, chocolates, lipsticks, nail polish, and a satin nightdress. She was doing her bit to personify British courage, resolve, and determination.

And not only to Harry Hopkins. When Eleanor Roosevelt visited American troops in Britain in 1942, Clementine accompanied her and came to value Eleanor's outspokenness and energy. She worked also with Agnes Maisky, wife of the long-serving Soviet ambassador in London, on joint philanthropic projects.

Her most significant work was for the Red Cross Aid to Russia Fund, started in late 1941 after Hitler's

armies invaded the Soviet Union and Britain found itself with a new ally. Raising over $8 million—some $300 million in today's money—Clementine tirelessly "recruited factory workers, millionaires and widows; organized auctions, flag days and galas; and persuaded celebrity musicians to give concerts." She asked schoolgirls to knit gloves and hats for Red Army troops.

Stalin invited her to tour the Soviet Union, on her own, in order to thank her personally for her fundraising efforts on behalf of his country, a "singular and rare personal honor." She reveled in the enthusiastic attention that greeted her hastily learned Russian as she traveled from Leningrad to Stalingrad, visiting hospitals built with donated British funds. She was given the Soviet Red Cross Distinguished Service Medal and was cheered at the ballet in Moscow. Away for six weeks, Clementine returned to London a more confident woman, at ease on a public platform and with the press.

There is no doubt that Clementine Hozier's rise from genteel poverty to wealth and power, and, more important, from a young woman unsure of herself to one capable of dealing with politicians and tyrants, depended in part on the access to power generated by her husband. Sonia Purnell gives less weight than she might have to the advantages in life for Clementine—as well as the costs of being married for 57 years to the demanding, famous, and often mercurial but always loving man that was Winston Churchill—and to explaining that one of her important roles was a traditional wifely one: to shower care, advice, and affection on a man given to brooding over political defeats and subject to enormous pressures that dictated so much of her life.

That Winston Churchill appreciated all that she contributed to his life is revealed in their voluminous correspondence, and by his response to a journalist who asked who he would like to be in a second life: "Mrs. Churchill's second husband," Winston replied. ♦

B&A

# Classic Lessons

*How Greek drama speaks to modern-day heroes.*

BY BLAKE SEITZ

**The Theater of War**
*What the Ancient Greek Tragedies Can Teach Us Today*
by Bryan Doerries
Knopf, 304 pp., $26.95

The launch party for this book featured a reading from the Greek tragedy *Ajax* by Sophocles. Emmy-winning actor Reg E. Cathey played the tragic hero, brought to despair by his feeling that the Athenian military leadership had betrayed him, and by his sense of revulsion for an atrocity he had committed while in a fit of rage. He stared down at his sword and contemplated killing himself.

> *But I shall miss the light of day and the sacred fields of Salamis, where I played as a boy, and great Athens, and all my friends.*

The regretful words strike a chord in listeners because, with few alterations, they could be spoken today by a person in distress. That is the point of *The Theater of War*, and the reason its author founded a theater company that performs Greek tragedies at military bases across the country. When they encounter tragedy, Bryan Doerries writes, "Audience members are, in a way, healed by the realization that they are not alone in their communities, not alone in the world, and not alone across time."

Doerries is a somewhat unusual candidate for the role he now plays in military communities. He is a New York-based theater director with no military background, no family ties to the armed forces—and an outlook on politics that is typical of such individuals. But Doerries is well educated in the classics and in human suffering, which has opened his eyes to the therapeutic potential of art. He describes his father's slow descent into madness from diabetes and how, at the end of his life, he thought he was being watched over by black crows—persecuting Furies who had come to carry out his fate, largely the result of his own life choices. Doerries likewise describes the slow death of his girlfriend from cystic fibrosis, which was preceded by a double lung transplant, bacterial infections, and the ultimate rejection of the donor organs by her body. He saw from these trials that there is a universal, timeless element to suffering, the psychological dimension of which can be alleviated through drama.

As it relates to war, this psychological dimension he calls "moral injury," a syndrome that occurs when a soldier perpetrates or witnesses "acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations" on the battlefield, as the psychiatrist Jonathan Shay has written. These are the psychological injuries portrayed so vividly in dramas like *Ajax*. Doerries hypothesizes that such plays are not just expressions of a great culture but tools used by the Athenians to heal and commune during dark times.

His hypothesis is supported by the tragic history of Athens. At the height of its cultural output, Athens was not only in the midst of a long and brutal war with Sparta but also a devastating plague that killed thousands. Athenian

*Blake Seitz is a media analyst at the* Washington Free Beacon.

tragedies were not originally staged for small audiences of cultural elites, as they tend to be today; rather, they were performed for over 10,000 Athenians at a time. Present were generals and citizen-soldier hoplites—young men coming of age and facing the prospect of military service. Doerries notes that Sophocles, in addition to being the commander of an Athenian fleet, was a member of the healing cult of Asclepius. He also notes the proximity of the Theater of Dionysus to a temple where invalids gathered to be healed as evidence that drama performed a major healing function in a society with rudimentary medical knowledge.

Judging from Doerries's anecdotes, *The Theater of War* seems to be having some success in binding moral injuries not responsive to medicine, a cathartic experience that has contributed to the resiliency of military families. Doerries devotes a chapter to recounting the experience of one such family whose veteran father had sunk into a suicidal depression. He sought treatment after he identified with the plight of Ajax during a performance of Sophocles' tragedy.

If there is a problem here, it is the author's tendency to write as though there is an Ajax inside all soldiers—as though service to the country is, somehow, a uniformly damaging experience. Doerries knows that this is not the case—he states, at one point, that "a majority" of soldiers who speak after performances have been "made stronger by their war-related experiences," an observation that comports with the traditional view of returning veterans as good citizens and leaders—but readers are left with the impression that soldiers are, as a class, wounded. This is due, in part, to Doerries's emphasis on tragedies.

But what might veterans gain from other forms of art valued by the Greeks—epics, for example? *The Odyssey* opens with this invocation: *Tell me, O muse, of that ingenious hero who traveled far and wide after he had sacked the famous town of Troy*. Such works may contain impolitic lessons, but their talk of heroism might also complement the tragic offerings of *The Theater of War*. ♦

B&A

# Poet as Visionary

## *The strange, singular journey of William Blake.*

BY CHRISTOPHER J. SCALIA

In a lighter moment of William Blake's life, a friend encountered him and his wife Catherine reading *Paradise Lost* in their garden. Naked. Blake supposedly told the friend, "Come in! It's only Adam and Eve, you know."

My English professor told this story early in our discussion of the Romantic poet, knowing it was a good way to get the attention of college freshmen. But Leo Damrosch hurries through the anecdote during a very late chapter. Damrosch, a Harvard professor whose works include biographies of Jonathan Swift and Jean Jacques Rousseau, is more interested in explaining Blake's artistic accomplishments than in telling the story of his life, which he calls "relatively uneventful." Blake's work may have inspired rock bands, but he did not live like a rock star. Damrosch wisely offers this insightful book as "an invitation to understanding and enjoyment."

Born in London in 1757, William Blake demonstrated a penchant for prophetic visions early in life: His parents were not pleased when he reported seeing the prophet Ezekiel on one occasion and a host of angels on another. But they did encourage his artistic talents. When he was 13, Blake began a seven-year apprenticeship with an engraver for the Society of Antiquaries. His training also included a brief time at the Royal Academy of Arts, where he at least learned to dislike the academy's president, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Blake resented what Damrosch calls "the condescension of Sir Joshua and the teachers." Many years after leaving the academy, Blake wrote vituperative marginal notes in his copy of Reynolds's *Discourses*: "Such Artists as Reynolds, are at all times Hired by the Satan's [sic] for the Depression of Art."

*Christopher J. Scalia is a writer in Washington, D.C.*

**Eternity's Sunrise**
*The Imaginative World of William Blake*
by Leo Damrosch
Yale, 344 pp., $30

After the Royal Academy, Blake's taste for the unconventional inspired him to develop his own unique method of etching. Using an acid-proof varnish, Blake would write—backwards—text and graphics on a copper plate, then drop the plate in an acid bath. When he removed the plate from the bath, the inked areas would be left in relief. He then dabbed ink onto the elevated text and design, printed it onto high-quality paper, and, finally, hand-painted the pages in watercolor (which he and Catherine mixed themselves).

Whereas traditional methods separated text and image, Blake's innovations allowed him to blend the two seamlessly. The results were stunning and distinctive, and the technique gave him what Damrosch calls "complete control of the entire process from start to finish." It also meant that there was greater variation between printings, as each copy was essentially handcrafted. These illuminated books are Blake's most impressive creations and rightfully receive the bulk of Damrosch's attention.

Blake published his first books with this process in the late 1780s, including *Songs of Innocence* in 1789. Though far from straightforward, these are easily his most accessible works. Adopting the ballad stanza form of contemporary songs for children, *Songs of Innocence* presents a view of childhood that "is trusting but not naïve, inexperienced but already anticipating immersion in Experience."

*'Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing' (1786)*

The poems are deceptively simple. Consider this stanza from "The Shepherd."

> *How sweet is the Shepherd's sweet lot!*
> *From the morn to the evening he strays:*
> *He shall follow his sheep all the day,*
> *And his tongue shall be filled with praise.*

The light rhythm and idyllic setting are subtly undercut by the diction. Why is the shepherd following his sheep? A good shepherd might walk behind them—but to direct, not follow, them. Nor should shepherds "stray." The collection teems with such ironizing details.

*Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, completed in 1794, includes many poems that repeat the titles or subject matters of the previous collection, but which condemn British beliefs and institutions much more aggressively. It is, as Damrosch says, "an altogether different imaginative world, one haunted by loneliness, frustration, and cruelty." During these years, Blake was also writing more abstract works, including his aphoristic satire of Swedenborgian religion, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and overtly political poems responding to the time's revolutionary spirit. All of these works express Blake's belief that oppressive laws and institutions—religious, civic, and state—cause human suffering, and that their victims have (as Damrosch puts it) "internalized a cruel ideology."

Yet Damrosch challenges E.P. Thompson's influential claim that Blake was deeply involved in radical politics. Although he sympathized with his radical contemporaries, Blake was not part of any underground political movement, and his most remarkable political acts were accidental. In 1780, he was arrested under suspicion of spying for the French because he went on a sketching expedition too close to a naval fleet. More than 20 years later, he was put on trial for sedition after throwing a drunken sailor out of his garden. (Blake was acquitted.) Damrosch contends that "by the mid-1790s he was retreating from any active political stance" and "becoming apolitical in any activist sense." His poetry, too, became less politically engaged "and instead explored perennial tensions in human experience in ever-increasing depth."

Damrosch's greatest challenge is explaining Blake's longer and very strange prophetic works, such as *The Book of Urizen*, *Milton*, and *Jerusalem*. "Many parts of the long poems are difficult," says Damrosch, "at times impenetrably so." The experience of reading these maddening and fascinating works is like a conversation over a bad telephone connection: Just when you think you understand what's being said, the voice becomes indistinct, unclear, followed by a lucid moment, then another breakdown. The works develop an elaborate mythological system of recurring characters—with names like Orc, Urizen, and Los—and preoccupations. Just as the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* include multiple poems with the same titles, or companion pieces on the same subject matter, Blake's long pseudonarratives integrate variations of the same events. Blake was not interested in traditional narrative but in depicting what Damrosch calls "the dynamics of psychic experience" through characters who represent "conflicting aspects of human consciousness."

Fortunately, Damrosch excels at helping readers understand Blake's unorthodox ideas, complex symbolism, and allusive imagery. Blake's "goal is not to convey an explicit message but to rouse the faculties to act." He "emphasize[s] symbolic significance, not literal imagery" and uses "symbolism that is equivocal." The book also includes nearly 100 reproductions—with 40 color plates—of Blake's stunning artwork, brimming with mesmerizing watercolors and muscular physiques. Damrosch's interpretations of Blake's illustrations are consistently sharp. Because Blake's visual representations often vary from or even contradict the text to which they correspond, they challenge readers to reconsider the text itself. Why does the plate of "The Tyger" include a beast that looks more like a docile Labrador than anything fearful? Is Blake suggesting something about the limitations of human perception? The deceptive nature of evil?

Despite receiving compliments from the likes of Wordsworth and Coleridge and attracting a group of young acolytes that included the painter Samuel Palmer, neither Blake's poetry nor his art drew much contemporary acclaim. The meager living he earned was based in occasional commissions, often from friends, to illustrate other works, such as the Book of Job, *The Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost*, and collections by 18th-century poets. But as Damrosch explains, "mere illustration bored him profoundly." At one point, he went nearly 10 years without a commission. He wrote very little of his own original work for the last two decades of his life, and his final years were marred by sickness, to which "years of inhaling copper dust, as well as fumes from nitric acid biting into copper," probably contributed.

Blake finally ascended into the canon

in the mid-20th century, and he has had much more influence on recent generations than he had on his own. He has inspired band names (The Doors, of course), song lyrics (World Party's "Put the Message in the Box"), album titles (U2's *Songs of Innocence*), modern sculptures (Paolozzi's statue of Newton outside the British Library), and fictional serial killers (in Thomas Harris's *Red Dragon*). The same unconventional ideas and abstract prophecies that baffled his contemporaries are appealing now. This does not mean that Blake is a poet for our times: His work is still startling and strange, and his allure relies less on the coherence or persuasiveness of his ideas than on the intensity and originality of his execution.

Although Damrosch clearly admires Blake, this is not a hagiography. He is particularly sensitive to Blake's treatment of women and sex. Despite his many radical social views, Blake is "not really a prophet of unconflicted sexuality" but "was aware that sex can be a means of exerting control, and at times he was tormented by it." And Damrosch is blunt in his analysis of Blake's mental state: "It is hard to doubt that deep psychic disturbances lie at the heart of his work." Damrosch's laudable attention to the details of Blake's art occasionally distracts him from larger points, resulting in paragraphs and chapters that end with vague or anticlimactic observations unrelated to a broader claim. Nor is this the book to study for the most recent trends in Blake scholarship: Damrosch's references to Freud and Jung hint at an old-school (though not necessarily irrelevant) approach. So does his apparent lack of interest in Blake's representations of race and empire—although that oversight may be a selling point for some readers.

Damrosch succeeds in making a notoriously difficult poet and artist more accessible without resorting to *Blake for Dummies*. His sharp insights clarify both the context and originality of Blake's art, and his passion for Blake's work is often magnetic. Readers who accept Damrosch's generous invitation will better understand and more deeply enjoy the enduring distinctiveness of Blake's vision. ♦

B&A

# Two Second Acts

*For these venerable series, everything old is new again.*

BY HANNAH LONG

In many ways, the current TV scene resembles a time warp. From *The Muppets* to *Fargo*, it's a good season for nostalgia. As the first ads for a miniseries revival of *The X-Files* begin to air, production is well underway on another '90s cult classic: *Twin Peaks*. Of course, the sudden spate of remakes, reboots, and revivals is partly an effort to capitalize on the security of an established title, but in the case of *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files*, their longevity requires more explanation.

The two have much in common: memorable characters, dry humor, superior writing, and dark atmosphere centered on investigations into the paranormal. Douglas fir forests, secretive small towns, and an abstruse mythology form the shows' connective tissue, and despite a dip in quality late in their runs, they maintain a faithful following. Of course, mysteries are perennially popular, but the shows delve into more than mere commonplace crime, seeking to understand the problem of evil on a broader scale. Both *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files* step into the unknown and attempt to grapple with that mystery rather than explain it away.

For *Twin Peaks*, the mystery is the death of Laura Palmer, the first skirmish in a broader supernatural conflict. When the teenage girl's body washes up on the beach, the whole community is shocked. Laura seemed to touch everyone in Twin Peaks, Washington: She worked at Horne's Department Store, delivered food to shut-ins, dated hotshot Bobby Briggs, and was homecoming queen.

Around the central investigation exists an atmosphere of quirky humor that revels in its own weirdness. Discordant music plays as the characters deliver ridiculously overwrought dialogue: "When these frail shadows we inhabit now have quit the stage, we'll meet and raise a glass again together in Valhalla." It consciously parodies the excesses of soap operas with melodramatic side plots. A handful of eccentric characters—Sheriff Harry Truman, Big Ed and his unbalanced wife Nadine, grandiloquent Major Briggs, the lady toting a log about ("Who's the lady with the log?" "We call her the Log Lady")—occupy the town and act as suspects. Director David Lynch (who had examined the monstrous before in *The Elephant Man* and *Eraserhead*) provides a highly stylized visual palette, mixing garish reds with dark shadow.

It's not long before optimistic, freshfaced special agent Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) rides into town, ready to set things to rights. He's the monster slayer, the white knight. Twin Peaks is Eden, an idyllic haven stuck in the 1950s: "a town where a yellow light still means slow down, not go faster." But the murky pine forests loom over the borders of civilization. It's said that "There's a sort of evil out there. . . . A darkness, a presence. . . . [I]t's been out there for as long as anyone can remember." As the story progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that the darkness has already crept into Twin Peaks.

After *Twin Peaks* was canceled in 1991, *The X-Files* (masterminded by Chris Carter) came along to fill the gap. FBI agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) investigate the odd, unusual, and just plain bizarre. When people rise from the dead, or a case is left with suspiciously mystic loose ends, Mulder and Scully are first to the scene.

*Hannah Long is a writer in Rural Retreat, Virginia.*

*Sherilyn Fenn, Kyle MacLachlan (1989)*

Passionate, needy, and immature, Mulder is eager to accept any far-fetched story, while the more professional Scully must dissect and quantify, fitting the data into a logical framework. They are exaggerated stereotypes: the Believer and the Reasoner. Scully is an eternally present representative of the Enlightenment, even if *The X-Files* tends to agree with "spooky" Mulder.

The central plot concerns the abduction of Mulder's sister as a child, but most of the episodes revolve around a "monster of the week." From occultist serial killers, to mutated cavemen, to a psychotic mind reader, the monsters of *The X-Files* frequently bring Mulder and Scully into contact with the most elemental manifestations of evil. Their response is to attempt to explain these events in a more or less scientific fashion—Scully more, Mulder less—but the answers are usually left open to interpretation.

Human beings like simple answers. Sherlock Holmes strides into the drawing room and makes order out of chaos, reason out of superstition, answers out of emptiness: *Here is how it was done. Mr. Green in the drawing room with a candlestick. The end.* Psychologists squirm out of the simple word "evil" by applying labels and phobias. The monsters of the Middle Ages have all been categorized and named. "People believe in authority," observes one of the mysterious government officials in *The X-Files*. "They've grown tired of waiting for miracle or mystery. Science is their religion." And, he might have added, the opiate of the people.

But merely to name a thing is not to understand it. In fact, long scientific words tend to obscure more than they illuminate. They promise power over the unknown but in truth offer only a spurious comfort. They are imprecise and abstract, implying settled answers that seldom reflect the complicated reality. G.K. Chesterton observed that "there is much more metaphysical subtlety in the word 'damn' than in the word 'degeneration.'"

This is a truth that *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files* recognize. They eschew comfortable answers and do not provide a neat and tidy solution at the end of each episode. Furthermore, they externalize evil in the form of monsters that are to be not analyzed but slain.

That said, the question of belief is an important one. *Twin Peaks* is more likely to accept the supernatural at face value. Strait-laced Agent Cooper projects a Boy Scout integrity, but more than half of his professional method consists of heeding obscure messages in dreams, decoding signs from the stars, and learning from the hierarchy of the ancient kingdom of Tibet. When he finally sets the stage to unveil Laura's killer, he finds himself "in need of something new, which, for lack of a better word, we will call magic."

As the protagonists of *The X-Files* and *Twin Peaks* come face to face with real supernatural powers they are forced to question their assumptions. Scully is a holdout: "I'm afraid. I'm afraid to believe," she says, but "I've seen things that I cannot deny." *Twin Peaks*'s killer rants and raves, a possessing spirit driving him mad. The townspeople stare in horror. Could it be a demon? "Schizophrenic," diagnoses one character. Another avoids the issue: "An evil that great in this beautiful world. Finally, does it matter what the cause?" Cooper is indignant: "Yes. Because it's our job to stop it."

What both shows ultimately offer is a refusal to take refuge in long words. The monsters lurk in the dark places, and the truth is out there in the wild woods. Evil is a reality, whether within or without us, monstrous or prosaic. Either way, it's still our job to stop it, and while that is the case, we will still turn to heroes like Mulder, Scully, and Cooper to fight our monsters and solve our mysteries. ♦

ABC / GETTY

B&A

# The Best Men

*Political life imitates cinematic art.*

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

There is a video on the World Wrestling Entertainment's website called "Donald Trump's Greatest WWE Moments," which invites you to "Watch Donald Trump put his money where his mouth is in some of his most memorable WWE appearances." The video lasts for three minutes. In it, you can watch Trump slam into and pummel Vince McMahon, WWE's color commentator and commissioner, and later shave McMahon's head in the ring. This was all part of what the WWE itself calls a "storyline," in which Trump "bought" the fake sports league from McMahon and then sold it back to him in 2009.

Three years earlier, a movie called *Idiocracy* sent its protagonist, a totally average guy named Joe, from the present day into an America 500 years in the future. There he finds that five-time Ultimate Smackdown Champion and porn star Dwayne Elizondo Mountain Dew Camacho is the president of the United States. Camacho is the leader of a country that has gone almost literally brain-dead, because for hundreds of years stupid people have been reproducing mindlessly while smart people argue with each other over whether it makes sense to bring children into the world.

In his address to the nation, which takes place in the wrestling ring that has replaced the Oval Office, Camacho tries to be empathetic: "I know s—'s bad," he says. "We running out of french fries and burrito coverings." The world has become potato-free as a result of the fact that water has been replaced by Brawndo, a bright-green energy drink that has "what plants crave—electrolytes." What, Joe asks, are electrolytes? Well, he's told, they're what Brawndo has.

Camacho announces he has a plan to save everybody. An IQ test has proved that Joe is now the smartest man alive. "He's so smart, he's going to do it all," Camacho says. Joe will make plants grow. He will heal the economy. And he will cure acne.

*The cabinet of President Camacho*

No one saw *Idiocracy* when it was first released, and I mean no one. It was dumped into 100 theaters by its studio, 20th Century Fox, and went on to a total gross of $440,000. This happened notwithstanding the movie's impeccable comic provenance as the brainchild of its cowriter and director Mike Judge, one of America's visionary comic intelligences over the previous 15 years. Judge's work up to that point had included MTV's *Beavis and Butt-Head*, the landmark act of pop culture self-criticism about the banality of music videos and the stunted sensibilities of their teenage male audience. Aside from the successful 1996 movie *Beavis and Butt-Head Do America*, Judge also helmed the hit Fox animated series *King of the Hill* and 1999's *Office Space*, an instant satirical classic.

*Idiocracy* sent Judge into a kind of cultural wilderness from which he finally emerged when his brilliant HBO show *Silicon Valley* premiered eight years later in 2014. Like *Office Space* before it, *Silicon Valley* is a sun-dappled satire. *Idiocracy* was and is something entirely different. If anything deserves to be called Swiftian these days, *Idiocracy* is it—a "modest proposal" about a country and a culture that is entertaining itself into oblivion. There isn't even a sliver of cheer. It is cheerlessly dark, purposely ugly, and entirely uncompromising. Even its relatively happy ending is a bummer. You can't really blame Fox for taking one look at it and running fast in the other direction.

But, my God, is it brilliant, and frighteningly so, because at least one aspect of its vision of the future has now come true in the present—in the candidacy of Donald Trump. What is Joe, the average guy being tasked to solve every problem, but a prophecy of Trump's ready answer to every problem—that he will hire "the best men" to figure out what needs to be done and then he'll just do it and we'll be great again? The footage of Trump in and around that WWE ring is so uncannily similar to the scenes of Camacho strutting around his Oval Office ring it matters not a whit that Camacho is black and Trump is white.

Add to that the footage of Trump arriving late to the debate in Las Vegas on December 15 in a fleet of SUVs and then interviewed in the garage of the Venetian hotel on CNN with a camera at his feet looking up—not only similar to a shot in *Idiocracy*, but also to classic WWE camerawork. One is forced again to reckon with the fact that the Trump candidacy seems to be a giant put-on in the way the WWE is, except it isn't.

It will be up to Republican voters, beginning in February, to determine just how far down the road to *Idiocracy* the GOP has traveled. Trump is clearly betting we're almost there. ♦

20TH CENTURY FOX

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

**PARODY**

***"With the all-important Iowa caucuses drawing near, O'Malley badly trails the Democratic field. In the latest poll, Hillary Clinton leads with 54 percent support, Bernie Sanders has 36 percent and O'Malley remains in single digits at 4 percent."***

***—News item, December 8, 2015***

DECEMBER 20, 2015 washingtonpost.com • $1.50

# O'Malley dominates undercard debate

## TABLE FOR ONE

*'I'm the one I've been waiting for'*

BY JOE BRADLEY

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Recent rule changes issued by the Democratic National Committee resulted in presidential candidate Martin O'Malley taking part in the undercard debate. The former Maryland governor fell just below the newly established 5 percent threshold. And because the other two contenders, former secretary of state Hillary Clinton and Vermont senator Bernie Sanders, have substantially higher support in the polls, O'Malley was left to debate himself. It was nevertheless a masterful performance.

"Why don't we talk about immigration?" asked O'Malley, before answering his own question. "Why, I'd love to, thanks, but you first. No, please, I insist, you start. Oh, alright, handsome—but only this once!" Such pleasantries were exchanged throughout the program, followed by in-depth policy discussions. This also allowed ABC moderators David Muir and Martha Raddatz to take a bathroom break during one of O'Malley's on-air disquisitions.

NEWSCOM

Martin O'Malley celebrates his debate victory with fellow musicians.

The candidate did not seem to notice he was alone in the room during this 30-minute stretch (a meditation on the relationship between socialism and fascism). "I'm sorry, you were saying?" O'Malley asked Raddatz, who had just returned to her seat. "Um, Black Lives Matter?" she ventured haphazardly, and the former governor continued for another 15 minutes. Following his closing statement, O'Malley pulled out an acoustic guitar from behind the podium. Members of his band, O'Malley's March, then joined him on stage, and the group played several tracks from their latest album, "Crabs for Hillary."

"Honestly, I've never seen anything like it," marveled polling analyst Frank Luntz. "The governor just crushed it in terms of debate time." Still, the pollster added, "Our focus group gave him the strongest marks when he wasn't talking, like whenever he took a sip

CARCETTI CONTINUED ON A4

## Paul Ryan's beard derided as 'Rugged In Name Only'

the weekly Standard

DECEMBER 28, 2015 / JANUARY 4, 2016