

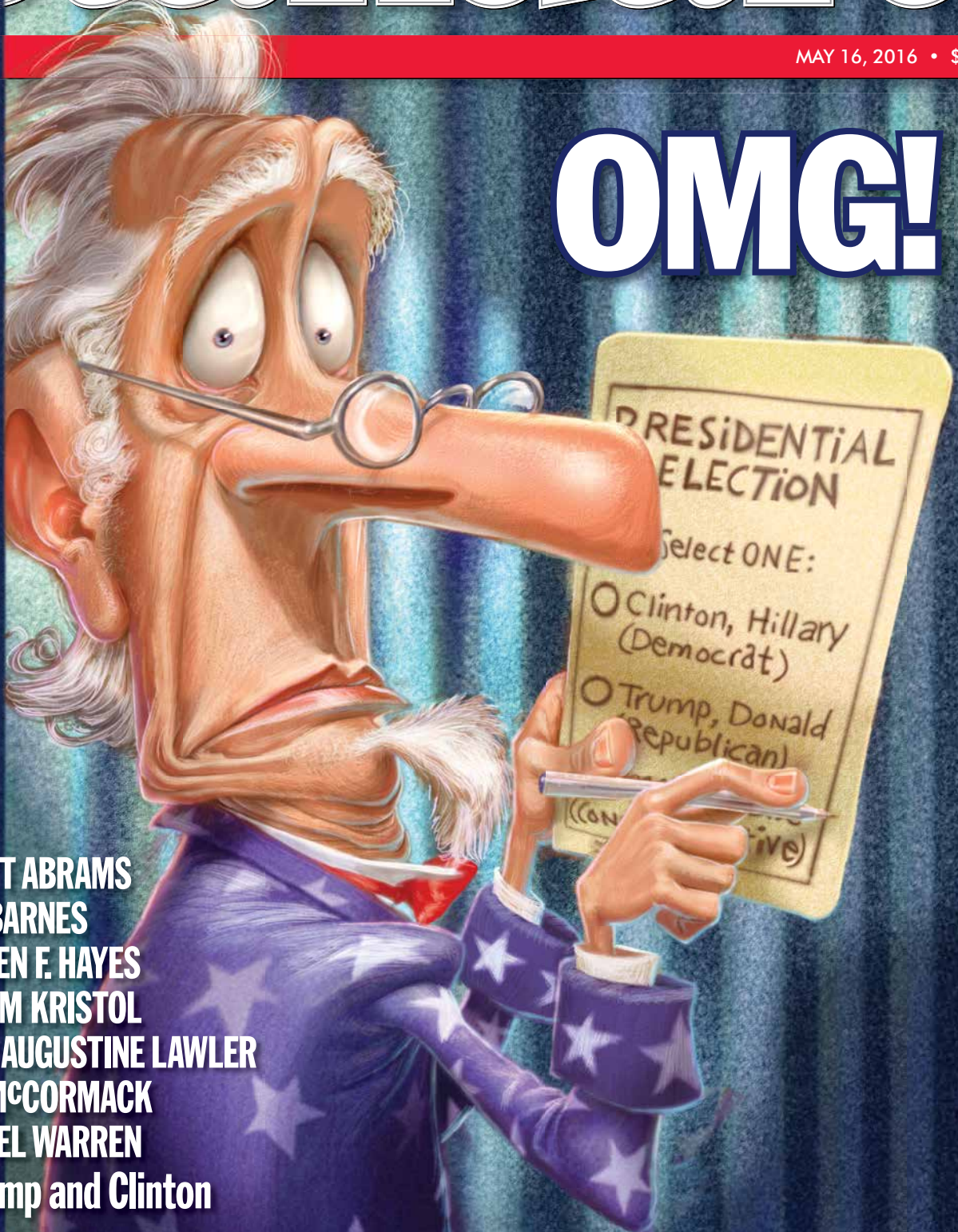
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the weekly

# Standard

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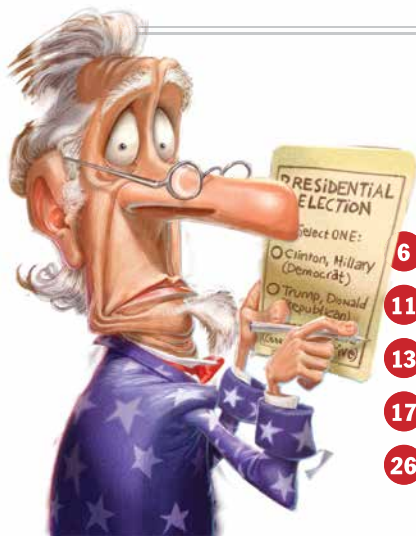
# OMG!



**ELLIOTT ABRAMS  
FRED BARNES  
STEPHEN F. HAYES  
WILLIAM KRISTOL  
PETER AUGUSTINE LAWLER  
JOHN MCCORMACK  
MICHAEL WARREN  
on Trump and Clinton**

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COVER BY GARY LOCKE

## The New Black List

When it comes to Hollywood, THE SCRAPBOOK is grateful for small favors. And last week we got a very small favor from Hollywood, for which we are suitably grateful.

Readers may not be aware that the new meaning of “Black List” in Hollywood has nothing to do with Sen. Joseph McCarthy or membership in the Communist Party. It refers, instead, to a ranked list of popular film and television scripts, floating around town, that have yet to be produced. Sometimes scripts on the Black List find a studio or production company willing to take the plunge and turn them into movies; but usually not.

One of the most “talked-about scripts” on the Black List these days, according to *Washington Post* gossip columnist Helena Andrews-Dyer, is the screenplay for *Reagan* by Mike Rosolio, a comedy (or so the *Post* tells us) set in Ronald Reagan’s White House. It’s the beginning of his second term, and the comic premise is that Reagan is already showing symptoms of the Alzheimer’s disease that would ultimately kill him. To save the country, a young intern is set the task of convincing Reagan that he is, in fact, still a movie actor—and an actor merely playing the role of president!

The night before Nancy Reagan’s death this past March, a public reading of *Reagan* was held at the Montalban Theatre in Hollywood, featuring James Brolin, Dennis Haysbert, and other stars. Of course, THE SCRAPBOOK doesn’t mean to imply a connec-

tion between that gala performance and the 94-year-old Mrs. Reagan’s demise. But we were surprised, several weeks later, to read in Helena Andrews-Dyer’s *Post* column that



The New York Post’s depiction of Ferrell

Will Ferrell, the ex-*Saturday Night Live* player who once impersonated George W. Bush on Broadway, “will play GOP fan boy favorite President Reagan in a comedy about the commander-in-chief’s struggles with dementia.” And not just play the part of the GOP fan boy favorite and his comic dementia: “Ferrell . . . signed on to not only star in the movie, but also produce the project through his [production] company.”

At which point, the dam burst in loud, insistent public criticism of *Reagan*’s premise and Will Ferrell’s judgment. To be sure, THE SCRAPBOOK assumes there isn’t much residual affection for Ronald Reagan in his

old stomping grounds; and it need hardly be said that public figures, including “GOP fan boy favorite” Ronald Reagan, aren’t exempt from criticism or satire. But building a comic turn on the gimmick of a tragic disease—one that makes no partisan distinction about suffering—must give even left-wing Hollywood pause. Or so we think, along with Reagan’s younger daughter, actress-novelist Patti Davis, who wrote an eloquent open letter on social media to Ferrell about Alzheimer’s and her father’s struggle with the fatal brain malady: “Perhaps if you knew more,” said Davis, “you would not find the subject humorous.”

To his credit, Ferrell seems to have taken the hint, and a few days later, his authorized “representative” told the *New York Post* that Ferrell “is not pursuing this project”—which, by the way, is only “one of a number of scripts that had been submitted to Will Ferrell which he had considered.”

In THE SCRAPBOOK’s charitable view, Will Ferrell is entitled to distance himself from this grotesque project any way that he can. Maybe the original story was inaccurate, and he was only thinking about starring in *Reagan*. Maybe he saw that the story was not just drawing bad publicity, but raising questions about his humanity. Maybe. The only certainty, so far as THE SCRAPBOOK is concerned, is that *Reagan* ought to remain permanently on the Black List. ♦

## Ap-paw-ling

The child-free are getting uppity again. Last week *USA Today* reported on a minor trend in Britain, where a few companies are now offering employees paid leave upon the occasion of the worker getting a pet. It is called “paw-ternity” leave.

As is the case with most shocking lifestyle trend articles, it’s not clear how much of a trend paw-ternity leave really is. For starters, there’s the smell test: Has any labor market ever been so tight that employers felt they needed to give workers time off for a new cat? Then there are the dubious statistics: *USA Today* offered only

one example of a company granting paw-ternity leave. The best evidence of the “trend” seems to be a slapdash survey, done by a company that sells pet insurance, which claims that 5 percent of pet owners in the U.K. reported being offered time off to take care of their pets.

Even so, paw-ternity wasn’t the

most offensive entry in the child-free sweepstakes. The week before, the *New York Post* published an interview with author Meghann Foye, who has decided that she wants maternity leave, even though she doesn't have kids. She wants "meternity" leave. Here's Foye:

I was 31 years old in 2009, and I loved my career. As an editor at a popular magazine, I got to work on big stories, attend cool events, and meet famous celebs all the time.

And yet, after 10 years of working in a job where I was always on deadline, I couldn't help but feel envious when parents on staff left the office at 6 P.M. to tend to their children, while it was assumed co-workers without kids would stay behind to pick up the slack.

"You know, I need a maternity leave!" I told one of my pregnant friends. . . .

It seemed that parenthood was the only path that provided a modicum of flexibility. There's something about saying "I need to go pick up my child" as a reason to leave the office on time that has far more gravitas than, say, "My best friend just got ghosted by her OkCupid date and needs a margarita"—but both sides are valid.

Oh yes, quite valid. Raising a child entails substantial personal sacrifice and expense so that the next generation of Social Security payments will keep flowing and society can continue. Just like getting a drink with your bestie because she's sad that her iPhone couldn't deliver true love.

In a speech to the National Congress of Mothers in 1905, Theodore Roosevelt said,

There are many good people who are denied the supreme blessing of children, and for these we have the respect and sympathy always due to those who, from no fault of their own, are denied any of the other great blessings of life. But the man or woman who deliberately forego these blessings, whether from viciousness, coldness, shallow-heartedness, self-indulgence, or mere failure to appreciate aright the difference between the all-important and the unimportant,—why, such a creature merits contempt as hearty as any visited upon the soldier who runs away in battle, or upon the man who refuses to



work for the support of those dependent upon him, and who the able-bodied is yet content to eat in idleness the bread which others provide.

The Rough Rider's judgment would seem overly harsh if today's child-free weren't so insipid. ♦

## Transgender Triumph (cont.)

THE SCRAPBOOK would like to take a break from chronicling transgender idiocy week in and week out. But the Obama administration's latest threat to North Carolina simply can't go unmentioned. "The federal

government took on North Carolina's controversial 'bathroom bill' Wednesday, giving the governor until Monday to pledge that he will walk away from the law, which Justice Department officials said violates civil rights," reports the *Washington Post*. This would be laughable if five different federal agencies weren't already threatening to withhold hundreds of millions of dollars from the state.

The federal government has all sorts of silly regulations, but transgender advocacy is such a novelty that, aside from a few executive orders regarding federal contractors, there's basically no statute that would grant the Justice Department

authority to go after North Carolina for passing a law that stops local governments from passing ordinances forcing businesses to allow biological men into women's restrooms and vice versa.

According to the *Charlotte Observer*, the letter the Justice Department sent to North Carolina says the state law "violates Title IX, which bars discrimination in education based on sex, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which bans employment discrimination."

The idea that the Civil Rights Act has any bearing on a state law that prevents localities from outlawing single-sex bathrooms is preposterous. Suffice it to say, it's more than a little odd that the left that likes to scold every backwater school district that regards evolution as merely an instructive theory has lately become adamant in insisting that the sexual distinctions that make evolution possible are a matter of feelings.

Regardless, if the federal government goes all in on the idea of infinitely malleable biological identity, all manner of exciting legal possibili-

ties are going to open up. To cite just one example, if one can self-define as male or female, it can't be long before people start defining themselves as members of a minority group that is presumed to be disadvantaged, thereby gaining government favor for their minority-owned businesses. What will be the argument against it? Biology? Fat chance. It will come down to the willful and arbitrary exercise of power. Then again, a dedication to "willful and arbitrary exercise of power" might be the only consistent and shared value on the left these days.

Meanwhile, we're really looking forward to the lectures sure to accompany an upcoming *Sports Illustrated* issue, on the cover of which "Caitlyn" né Bruce Jenner will appear naked. The nakedness will apparently be strategically covered with a flag and Jenner's gold medals. But why? We can't think of a better test of one's commitment to social justice than being forced to confront the 66-year-old transgender emperor with no clothes. ♦

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## Words at Work

**B**usiness schools are like sanatoriums for the English language—places where words go to languish and softly fade, easing towards a coughing, clichéd death.

It's not so much that a word ceases to exist (though this can happen—when was the last time you used “fluey”?) but rather that it ceases to convey meaning. While these good, solid business words take up space in your inbox, blinking there in 12-point Times New Roman, they seem more like a placeholder for productivity, a means of spewing forth more chatter in the ever-present quest to hide that there is very little that needs to be said.

Don't believe me? Just open your company-issued email account and brace for the barrage. It likely reads something like this:

“Glad you circled back on this. Let me reach out to the other members of the team about this dynamic new opportunity that should really empower us to remain relevant and competitive in this challenging work environment.”

Or: “Later this week I'll touch base with the client just to get them up to speed on new developments, and to make sure that we really keep our eyes on the ball and stay on our toes with this.”

They generally end with *Best*. Just Best. A lonely adjective without a noun. Best what? Best wishes? Best thoughts? The best possible version of the coworker who has sent the email? Doubtful. But you have to say something so as to avoid sounding abrupt. *Sincerely* overstates the importance of the missive, and expressions

of affection are not office-appropriate. Thus, Best it is.

The unspoken corporate agreement is never to ask what noun Best modifies. Of course the gist of what they're trying to say is clear, but it makes words tired, keeping up with all of this.

And it doesn't end with corporate emails. Business books are stuffed to the gills with these phrases. MBA programs and HR departments seem to sustain themselves by generating a new vocabulary list every few years.



Fluent speakers of Business English are made, not born. It's a learned lexicon, the phrasing of business strategy books and courses in marketing.

Still, the contagion spreads. We've tacitly agreed to network and strategize (though thankfully synergy has been beaten back). It's a strange new LinkedIn world where being “off-boarded” from a “jobvite” because it wasn't the right fit and “onboarded” by different HR faces in another building across town has replaced, in plain English, being fired from a place you didn't like and hired by one you do. Fear not, soon you too will love Business English.

George Orwell famously wrote

about the effect of politics on the English language. One can only imagine the fright he would have gotten had he encountered the effects of Business English. It's a sea of dead metaphors and quirky catchphrases that have lost both their quirk and their catch.

Seventy years ago Orwell wrote that bad prose “consists in gumming together long strips of words which have already been set in order by someone else, and making the results presentable by sheer humbug.” The words of the working world share the flaws of Orwell's political speech. It shouldn't come as much of a surprise. Bad writing is bad writing, both in politics and in business. A loss of

clarity comes along with stale phrasing. Just as the soft dim light of the sick-room might obscure the difference between mumps and measles, so these pleasantly inoffensive terms have wiped away any distinction between circling back and closing the loop.

This isn't a cry to take up literary arms. There is a need for daily workman-like English. It's direct and to the point and answers important questions like “When's lunch?” or “What street is this?” With all

due apologies to Orwell, there may even be a need to ask about cul de sacs rather than roads. Rereading Orwell's essay can be somewhat encouraging. For all of the stale phrases that have lingered, some that drew his ire have, in fact, vanished.

And yet, the rise of Business English cannot be ignored. It's a matter of individual choice. Stop before you send! Think: Is this email stripping any word of its hard-earned meaning? Are my metaphors true images or just ways to pad an email enough to justify pressing send? The problem and the solution start in your inbox.

**ERIN MUNDAHL**

# Neither Clinton Nor Trump

*"Sometimes party loyalty asks too much."*

—John F. Kennedy, 1960

I have always voted for the Republican presidential candidate. From Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford to Ronald Reagan (twice) and George H. W. Bush (twice) and Bob Dole, from George W. Bush (twice) to John McCain and Mitt Romney—I've checked the box next to those eight names on all 11 occasions I've had the chance. About half the time, I've voted for someone else in the primary. But even in those cases I never hesitated before supporting the Republican nominee in the general election.

I regret none of those votes. I believe in retrospect, as I believed at the time, that in every case these men would have pursued policies better for the country than their opponents would have, and I believe now, as I did then, that in almost every case the Republican nominee was also superior to his opponent in terms of character and temperament and judgment.

My GOP presidential voting streak will end at 11. I cannot vote for Donald Trump. It's not clear that his mixed bag of motley policies would be superior to those of his Democratic opponent. He could well pick better Supreme Court justices, which is important; but he could well pursue a less sound foreign policy, which is also important. But policy is not the issue. Character is. It is clear that Donald Trump does not have the character to be president of the United States.

And it is clear Hillary Clinton ought not to be our next president either.

What to do?

Find a better choice. Recruit and support an independent candidate.

I'm not prone to encouraging or supporting independent candidacies. I've never done so. I think the two-party system has served America well. I think, all in all, the Republican party has served the country well. I could even make a case that, of all the political parties in the world, the Republican party is one of the most impressive: It's been right more often about more consequential things than almost any other.

But it was wrong to nominate Donald Trump.

The good news is that it is not too late to give Republican voters, a majority of whom have not supported Donald Trump in the primaries, an alternative. An independent Republican candidate can help prevent the conflation of the Republican party with Trump and of conservatism with Trumpism. Such a candidate could also appeal to many independents and some Democrats. He or she could win.

Really? Yes. Getting an independent candidate on the ballot in all 50 states is less difficult than conventional wisdom has it. The only states whose ballot access deadlines are before the end of June are Texas and North Carolina, and those deadlines are susceptible to legal challenges that are being drawn up as I write. Those challenges will probably succeed—but if they fail, one would have to resort to a write-in campaign in those two states. A U.S. Senate candidate won a write-in campaign in 2010.

Of course, putting together a serious independent campaign is a formidable task—but plenty of operatives and aides and donors and lawyers stand ready. They are at present only loosely organized, if at all. But it is appropriate in this era of distributed intelligence that this independent campaign start as a distributed campaign, especially since the need for a far broader distribution of power and responsibility to citizens and for bottom-up policies is likely to be a theme of such an effort.

And the fact is that an articulate and independent-minded conservative, perhaps a generation younger than the two elderly plutocrats between whom the parties are asking us to choose, could make a real race of it. He or she could build enough momentum over the summer to get into the debates, and then . . . couldn't the debates be a moment when large numbers of our countrymen might awaken with relief and greet with excitement the possibility of liberation from the nightmare of Clinton or Trump? How exciting would it be to inaugurate an attractive candidate who's neither Clinton nor Trump on January 20, 2017?

—William Kristol



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# Our National Dumpster Fire



It was almost as if Donald Trump wanted to give Republican voters one last look at what they would be getting if they chose to nominate him as the head of their party—as if he wanted to show officeholders who would endorse him exactly what they’d have to explain and rationalize over the next six months, wanted to remind conservatives that he doesn’t share their worldview and is willing to advance the policies of the radical left if it’ll help him win, and wanted to make clear to his boosters in the media that they really would have to defend statements so absurd that the only proper response is laughter.

It’d be one more week of crazy before Trump completed his conquest of the conservative party.

The week began with the news that a New York judge had allowed a lawsuit alleging fraud against Trump University to proceed to trial. The same day, a California judge cleared the way for a similar lawsuit to go ahead there, setting the first hearing on July 18—the first day of the Republican convention. It continued with Trump announcing, after his five-state northeast sweep, that he intended to campaign for president on a “message” borrowed, in part, from Bernie Sanders, the nation’s leading socialist. As the campaign moved to Indiana, Trump touted the endorsement of “tough guy” boxer Mike Tyson, who was convicted in 1992 of a rape in Indianapolis and whom Trump had defended at the time. Next Trump declared a core economic principle of his adopted

party was no longer operative: “You can throw free trade out the window.”

And then, on the day he was expected to clinch the Republican nomination, Trump gave voice to the kind of conspiracy theory you might expect to hear from a disheveled drunk mumbling through the train station.

In a telephone interview on *Fox & Friends*, Trump cited a baseless story in the *National Enquirer* to suggest that Rafael Cruz, the father of his chief rival, had worked with Lee Harvey Oswald in the months before Oswald assassinated President John F. Kennedy. There is zero evidence to support the accusation. Pressed repeatedly to substantiate his calumny, Trump could not, but nonetheless defended his behavior, yielding headlines like this one from ABC News: “Trump Defends Linking Cruz’s Father to JFK Assassin.”

Ted Cruz immediately held an impromptu press conference to reject Trump’s claims and denounce his slander. The cable networks covered it live, and his comments generated a flood of news stories. Rafael Cruz also denied the tabloid report. And yet Trump, with the casual dishonesty that has come to characterize his campaign, as it does his life, said hours later: “I don’t think anybody denied it.”

It was a week of quintessential Trump: reminders of past cons, recycled leftism, stunning misogyny, populist pandering, conspiracy mongering, and, like a cherry on top of this sundae of insanity, an easily disprovable lie.

This wasn’t a bad week for Trump. It was a typical week for Trump.

And now he will be the Republican party’s nominee for president. Reince Priebus, the party’s chairman, called for Republicans to unite around Trump and rally to his cause. One by one they fell in line—the unprincipled sellouts, the rising stars, the veteran officeholders, the would-be nominees. Jon Huntsman and Rick Scott. Nikki Haley and Brian Sandoval. Rob Portman and Kelly Ayotte. Marco Rubio and Bobby Jindal.

Some of these people had previously warned in the starkest terms about Trump—with Rubio calling him “erratic” and a “lunatic” and Jindal suggesting he’s “dangerous” and a “hothead” who should be kept away from the nuclear codes.

This wasn’t overheated campaign rhetoric. It was the truth. It is the truth. And that’s what is remarkable about many of the Republicans lining up to support Trump: They are choosing to support a man they recognize as unfit for the office.

Representative Peter King of New York described Trump as “a guy with no knowledge of what’s going on.” He then told the *New York Times* that he would support Trump for president and was open to campaigning for him.

We are watching as the Republican party moves from an imperfect vehicle for advancing conservative ideas to a hollow institution devoted to little more than winning elections for the sake of winning elections. That’s the

IMAGES: NEWS.COM

prerogative of Republican leaders and is plainly the preference of a vocal minority of Republican voters, but it's not the only option.

Some Republicans have indicated a willingness to support Hillary Clinton. We are not among them. Clinton is a longtime progressive campaigning to serve the third term of Barack Obama. Obama's expansion of government at home has been a disaster and Clinton promises to expand it further. His administration has empowered enemies, abandoned allies, and abdicated America's leadership role in the world; Clinton led these efforts in Obama's first term and defends them to this day.

Beyond that, Clinton is a creature of corruption, whose dishonesty defines her. There are too many lies to catalogue in one editorial—or one magazine, for that matter—but think of just a few she's told since launching her campaign: that she and Bill Clinton were “dead broke” when they left the White House; that she set up her private email server for mere “convenience”; that she neither sent nor received anything classified; that everything she did was in accordance with government rules; that Sidney Blumenthal was never an adviser of any kind.

And then there is her most morally offensive lie. Clinton looked Charles Woods in the eye and lied about his son's death. We spoke to him shortly before Clinton's appearance before the Benghazi Select Committee last fall. He pulled a black leather datebook so that he could read her words as he recorded them immediately after she spoke them on September 15, 2012—four days after his son, Ty Woods, was killed in the attack on U.S. facilities in Libya. “We are going to have the filmmaker arrested who was responsible for the death of your son,” he read aloud. Then he looked up. “I remember those words: ‘who was responsible for the death of your son.’ She was blaming him and blaming the movie.” There is little reason to doubt Woods's account. Relatives of others killed in the attacks have said Clinton told them the same thing, and Clinton's story was consistent with the Obama administration's public account at the time. But at that hearing the world learned that before Clinton blamed the film in her conversation with Woods and other relatives of the fallen, she had told the truth to others. “We know that the attack in Libya had nothing to do with the film,” Clinton told Egyptian prime minister Hesham Kandil on September 12, 2012, according to a State Department memo that transcribed important parts of their conversation. “It was a planned attack—not a protest.”

Woods was stunned. “That was two days before she told me that they would get the filmmaker,” he said to us after the hearing. A local New Hampshire newspaper columnist confronted Clinton late last year. “Somebody is lying. Who is it?” Clinton replied: “Not me, that's all I can tell you.” A lie on top of a lie to cover up a lie.

What kind of a person casually accuses family members of those killed serving their country of lying just to

promote her career and advance her political interests? The kind of person who doesn't belong anywhere near the White House.

If nothing changes, this will be the choice presented to Americans in November. An ignorant, unstable conspiracy theorist with no core principles versus an inveterate liar dedicated to ever-expanding government. Clinton and Trump are the least popular major-party candidates in the history of polling. Hillary Clinton is viewed “very unfavorably” by 37 percent of Americans; Trump is viewed “very unfavorably” by a staggering 53 percent.

Senator Ben Sasse, a newly elected Republican from Nebraska, is one of only a few elected conservatives to demonstrate any political courage. In an open letter to Americans “who think both leading presidential candidates are dishonest and have little chance of leading America forward,” Sasse argued against defeatism and complacency.

“There are dumpster fires in my town more popular than these two ‘leaders.’ With Clinton and Trump, the fix is in. Heads, they win; tails, you lose. Why are we confined to these two terrible options? This is America. If both choices stink, we reject them and go bigger. That's what we do. Remember: our Founders didn't want entrenched political parties. So why should we accept this terrible choice?”

Yes, why?

—Stephen F. Hayes

---

## Unfit to Serve

**D**onald Trump is now the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. But that doesn't change the fact that he is manifestly unfit to be president.

His unfitness has little to do with ideology. Trump doesn't have anything consistent or coherent enough to be called an ideology. Trump has no business being commander in chief, but not because of any particular policy position—Trump's foreign policy agenda, like his domestic agenda, blows with the wind. He was for the Iraq war before he was against it. He backed U.S. intervention in Libya in 2011 before he opposed it. He said the United States shouldn't fight ISIS before he promised to “bomb the sh—” out of them and deploy ground troops to the Middle East.

No, it isn't because of ideology that Trump has no business being commander in chief. It is because he is an unstable conspiracy theorist with an authoritarian streak.

Let's start with the authoritarianism. Trump has long been an admirer of and apologist for autocrats, including

Vladimir Putin. Asked in December to condemn the Russian government's assassination of reporters, Trump suggested the United States is no better. "Our country does plenty of killing," Trump said on MSNBC. "In all fairness to Putin, you're saying he killed people. I haven't seen that. I don't know that he has," Trump said on ABC.

Back in 1990, Trump expressed admiration for the strength of China's Communist dictators. "When the students poured into Tiananmen Square, the Chinese government almost blew it, then they were vicious, they were horrible, but they put it down with strength," Trump said in a *Playboy* interview. "That shows you the power of strength." Trump insisted in a debate this year that he wasn't endorsing the massacre of peaceful protesters but merely describing how the Chinese "kept down the riot." That Trump would describe the Tiananmen protest as a "riot" says it all.

Perhaps even more troubling than Trump's authoritarian streak is his taste for conspiracy theories. His first major foray into politics during the Obama era was in promoting the claim that Barack Obama's birth certificate was fake—that the president, born outside of the country, had been constitutionally ineligible to run for the office.

Trump has been willing to traffic in conspiracy theories of more dangerous consequence: In his effort to dispatch Jeb Bush, Trump made use of the leftist accusation that President George W. Bush lied the United States into the Iraq war: "They said there were weapons of mass destruction, there were none. And they knew there were none."

Is there any nutty conspiracy Trump won't embrace? The day that he effectively wrapped up the GOP nomination, Trump floated the lunatic claim that Ted Cruz's father was involved in the JFK assassination.

Add to this Trump's manifest inability to control his more vulgar impulses. He mocks the disabled. He insults women. He trashes POWs ("I like people who weren't captured"). Have we all forgotten Trump threatening to dish dirt on Heidi Cruz and disparaging her looks? Or the bragging about the size of his manhood? Even some of Trump's top boosters have seemed to admit he is unhinged. Newt Gingrich said that Trump "sent a signal of instability" to voters. "Our candidate is mental. Do you realize our candidate is mental?" Ann Coulter remarked. "It's like constantly having to bail out your 16-year-old son from prison."

Yet, as Trump has marched toward the nomination,

many Republicans have decided to ignore the candidate's serial nuttiness. After Trump read a platitudinous foreign policy address last week, Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said that Trump's speech was "full of substance" and that he was "very pleased" with it.

And then there's Marco Rubio, who suggests that Trump's "performance has improved significantly" over the last few weeks. "I've always said I'm going to support the Republican nominee, and that's especially true now that it's apparent that Hillary Clinton is going to be the Democratic candidate," Rubio said.

Really?

Back in February, Rubio was saying of Trump that we should not hand "the nuclear codes of the United States to an erratic individual." He likened the idea of Trump to the "lunatic in North Korea with nuclear weapons." Asked by Greta Van Susteren if he really believed Donald Trump "is a con artist who should not get access to nuclear codes," Rubio said "Absolutely. Absolutely."

Rubio called Trump "dangerous," and he was right. If Rubio genuinely feared handing Trump control of nuclear weapons in March, there is no reason he should support him in May.

Perhaps Trump will prove over the next 6 months that the last 10 months of kookiness has all been shtick, a big act put on to win the nomination. Maybe he'll publicly recant his conspiracy theories. Maybe he'll demonstrate that he would be serious and sober enough to serve as commander in chief. Maybe pigs will fly.

But what about Hillary Clinton, who would be a disaster as president? She is a habitual liar who believes in a constitutional right to kill healthy and viable unborn infants. That alone ought to be enough to disqualify her.

Conservatives who believe that Clinton and Trump are both genuinely unfit to be president can work to get a principled third-party candidate on the November ballot. Donald Trump is toxic enough among independents that he would most likely lose the election even if conservatives did support him. But by rejecting the Clinton-Trump choice conservatives would at least send a message to the Republican party and the country about the limits of what they will tolerate in a presidential candidate.

They would also get to keep their dignity. That's no small thing.

—John McCormack

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**Even some of Trump's top boosters have seemed to admit he is unhinged. Newt Gingrich said that Trump 'sent a signal of instability' to voters. 'Our candidate is mental. Do you realize our candidate is mental?' Ann Coulter remarked. 'It's like constantly having to bail out your 16-year-old son from prison.'**

# When You Can't Stand Your Candidate

A story of 1972.

BY ELLIOTT ABRAMS



Recoiling on the inside: Henry 'Scoop' Jackson, second from right, shares the podium with nominee George McGovern, third from right, at the 1972 convention.

The party has nominated someone who cannot win and should not be president of the United States. We anticipate a landslide defeat, and then a struggle to take the party back from his team and his supporters and win the following presidential election. Meanwhile, we need to figure out how to conduct ourselves.

No, not Donald Trump and the Republican party today. George McGovern and the Democratic party in 1972. I was in those days a law student and active supporter of Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson, whose staff I joined when I got out of school. Jackson, who served in Congress from 1941 until his death in 1983, ran for president twice—in 1972 and 1976—and led the foreign policy hardliners in his party.

Watching conservative Republicans

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writhe in anguish over Trump, it's worth looking back at what Jackson and the foreign policy hawks who surrounded and supported him—and detested McGovern and McGovernism—did back then.

Jackson's biographer, Robert Kaufman, describes the time well in *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics* (2000):

Jackson regarded McGovern's impending triumph [at the Democratic Convention in Miami Beach, in July 1972] as an unmitigated disaster for the party. . . . [H]e stoutly resisted the inevitability of the McGovern candidacy by all means at his disposal right up until the Democrats nominated McGovern in July.

Supporters of Jackson and Humphrey, southerners, and organized labor had banded together in an abortive effort called "Anybody But McGovern." . . . Even when Muskie and Humphrey formally bowed out, Henry Jackson would not. He received 536 votes for the nomination on the convention floor. I. W. Abel, head of the United Steelworkers of

America, nominated him. Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia seconded the nomination.

So here's a first lesson: Do not allow the Republican convention to be a coronation wherein Trump and Trumpism are unchallenged. There's no reason others who won many delegates, from Rubio to Cruz to Kasich, should not have their names put in nomination. The party needs to be reminded that there are deep divisions, and Trump needs to be reminded of how many in the party oppose and even fear his nomination.

The Jackson biography then recounts an interesting story:

Carter had expressed his loathing for McGovern in several conversations with Jackson. . . . What happened just after McGovern received the nomination irrevocably colored Jackson's view of Carter. . . . Carter called Jackson at 4 A.M. with this request: "Would Scoop be willing to approach McGovern to help get Carter selected as his vice president. . . . Scoop could not ever think of Carter again without a certain feeling of revulsion" [Jackson staffer and confidant Richard Perle said]. McGovern also found it off-putting that Carter solicited the vice presidential nomination so assiduously after saying such nasty things about him during the primary campaign.

There's a second lesson: Watch out about the vice presidency and accepting other forms of favor from Trump. Obviously this episode was buried for many years, and Carter became the next nominee. But had he been McGovern's running mate in that disaster of the 1972 campaign, would he have been nominated in 1976? Keep your distance.

Here's a third lesson: Concentrate on Congress. Robert Kaufman writes, "Alarmed that Nixon's coattails might even imperil the Democrats' control of Congress, Jackson played a pivotal role in forming the Committee for the Reelection of a Democratic Congress." That committee was full of supporters of Jackson and of Hubert Humphrey and chaired by the Democratic lawyer and fixer, and LBJ intimate, Robert Strauss. In the end, "The enormity of Nixon's landslide had virtually no

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effect on the Democratic majorities in Congress.” Very few seats were lost.

And a fourth lesson: Seize the party machinery back immediately after the Trump defeat. Kaufman notes, “In December 1972, the election of Robert Strauss as chairman of the Democratic party over his more liberal rivals . . . appeared to presage a shift back from New Left politics to the mainstream of traditional liberalism.” Just a month after the election, the McGovernites were forced out of control of the Democratic National Committee. It was a close vote, with Strauss winning by a margin of three. That result was the product of a real campaign by Jackson and others, calling governors, mayors, and other DNC members. Conservatives should start planning in the fall for such an effort.

The fifth lesson may be more controversial: Whatever individual Republican voters, donors, and activists do about Trump as the nominee (support, oppose, go to a third party, vote for Clinton, or stay home), conservative Republican officeholders may have to give him a formal endorsement before they walk away. Jackson endorsed McGovern after the convention, when he became the official nominee. But, Kaufman says, “For most of the fall campaign, Jackson did little for McGovern beyond his initial endorsement.” He appeared with McGovern once, in Washington state, in what Kaufman records as “a tepid gesture at best.” It may be asking too much of Republican officeholders, especially in states Trump won in a primary, to oppose him. Nebraska’s Ben Sasse is showing that a principled opposition to the party’s nominee is indeed possible, but in other states and other situations, opposing the nominee may be a formula for political suicide.

A sixth lesson from that 1972 battle over the soul of the Democratic party is to organize. Already in December 1972, right after the Nixon landslide, the late Ben J. Wattenberg started organizing the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, a centrist group with a hardline foreign policy and support from organized labor—then

led by George Meany, a Jackson and Humphrey backer who was a fierce anti-Communist—plus many other Jackson and Humphrey supporters in Congress, universities, and trade unions. (Amazing as it may seem today, the opposition to McGovern by Meany and some other labor leaders was so strong that the AFL-CIO did not endorse a candidate for president in 1972, after decades of automatic backing for the Democrat.) Four years later, in 1976, the Committee on the Present Danger was formed, by people such as (later director of central intelligence) William Casey, (later national security adviser) Richard V. Allen, (later United States ambassador to the United Nations) Jeane Kirkpatrick, (later secretary of state) George Shultz, and a large group of conservative and neoconservative intellectuals. Ronald Reagan himself was a member in 1979.

In 1972 and the rest of the 1970s, the question of changing parties did not arise for many of us. Jackson supporters were hawks, and the alternative—the détente policies of Nixon and Kissinger—were no attraction. The GOP of those days seemed to be the party of the Chamber of Commerce and the country club, not the conservative party William F. Buckley was fighting for—and finally got in 1980 when Ronald Reagan won the nomination and the presidency. Moreover, we thought we could win this battle within the Democratic party. It seemed we had in 1976, when the man who appeared to be second-most-hawkish after Jackson won the nomination—Jimmy Carter, who had as noted put Jackson’s name in nomination in 1972. It was only when Carter turned out to be following his own brand of McGovernism on foreign policy that, in 1980, many of us (myself included) supported the Republican nominee and—whether before or after the election—made the switch.

Today, that same situation will obtain: Conservatives seem unlikely to switch to a Democratic party whose heart and soul are with Bernie Sanders and whose candidate will be Hillary Clinton. Nothing we want is to

be found in that party. Nor did we in 1972 believe a third-party candidacy was a smart maneuver, again because we believed the Democratic party could be won back—and thought a thorough trouncing of McGovern would be useful in winning it back. Republicans who will never vote for Trump need to decide whether the best way to win the party back is to support a conservative third-party candidate who can powerfully make the case for our principles or just vote for the down-ticket races, write in Ben Sasse for president, and let Trump fail colossally. In 1972 and 1973 there were complaints that people like Scoop Jackson had deserted McGovern, but the size of his defeat made it obvious that a few more endorsements or rallies would have done little to ameliorate his crushing loss.

The final lesson of the 1972 campaign and what followed it is that arguments matter. The Jackson Democrats had *views*: strong arguments about American foreign policy and strong critiques of McGovern and for that matter the détente policies the Republicans were following in those years. We argued and argued, and when we saw Ronald Reagan making some of the same arguments we jumped on his bandwagon. Republicans who oppose Trump need to keep making the arguments that candidates like Rubio and Cruz and Bush made this year unsuccessfully. It didn’t work this time but it can work next time, when voters see Trump collapse—and when they see an increasingly dangerous world and a Clinton administration wedded to a bloated federal government as the solution to every problem. Next time, in 2020, we’ll have had 12 years of Obama and Clinton, Hillary will be in her mid-seventies, Trump will be gone, and a new generation of Republican leaders like Rubio and Cruz and Ryan and Cotton and Haley and Sasse will still be in their forties.

The time to start organizing is now, and the time to make the best possible arguments to Republican voters is . . . over and over again, now, and after November, and in 2017, and right through to 2020. ♦

# He'll Do It His Way

Don't expect a New Trump.

BY FRED BARNES

If you're expecting Donald Trump to change now that he's the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, forget it. Trump says he can act presidential any time he wants to. But that time rarely comes. There's a reason for this. Trump equates being presidential with being boring. And boring isn't his style.



Trump will give a few speeches on major issues with presidential-level trappings—teleprompters, prepared texts, invited audiences. He's preparing one on the Supreme Court, a successor to Justice Antonin Scalia, and judges. Others are likely to focus on infrastructure and the scandals at the Veterans Administration.

But that's about it in the boring department. No effort is being drawn up to create a New Trump akin to the New Nixon a half-century ago. When Trump learned Paul Manafort, his convention chief and top adviser, had talked to Republican officials about a change in his style, he nixed the idea instantly.

"We are running a nontraditional campaign," says Corey Lewandowski, Trump's campaign manager. Indeed, they are. Trump is viewed unfavorably by seven out of ten women in opinion polls, but there's no special event to appeal to women planned by his campaign. Nor is there a Hispanic event on Trump's schedule, though his unfavorable rating among Hispanics, potentially a pivotal voting bloc, is sky-high.

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Trump's speeches aren't "designed to speak to one demographic," Lewandowski told me. He delivers the same message to everyone.

As for party unity, regarded as essential to winning the presidential race, Trump insists he can win without it. Based on his minimal effort (so far) to unify the Republican party, he seems to believe this. Democrats take the traditional

approach and expect their party to be unified behind Hillary Clinton.

Asked about unity, Lewandowski says "a lot of that is already happening"—that is, happening without a big push from Trump. Lewandowski mentioned the recent endorsements of Trump by Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell and Republican senators Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire and Mike Lee of Utah.

And he suggested Trump's fundraising has a unifying effect. "We are raising money for down-ballot races," he says, as well as for GOP outfits.

The formal speeches, however, are quite traditional. They represent the "positive Trump," says Newt Gingrich, an unofficial adviser to the candidate. But it's the "negative Trump" that will get more attention. He is very good at "shrinking his opponents," Gingrich says.

Hillary Clinton, Trump's likely Democratic opponent, thinks she knows what to expect from him. Her strategists claim they know how to combat his attacks and boast about this in the media. Perhaps they've figured Trump out.

But Lewandowski doesn't think so.

And now Trump has more free time to devise clever tactics against Clinton. He is very skillful at this. With Ted Cruz and John Kasich having dropped out, Trump no longer has to bother with them between now and the California primary on June 7. He can focus on Clinton and her vulnerabilities.

One adviser says Trump's strategy will run a "scorched earth" campaign like those waged successfully by Republican senator Jesse Helms in North Carolina. Helms put far more pressure on his Democratic foes than they had imagined possible.

Helms, who served five terms and died in 2008, was a gentleman in his races. Trump won't be. His aim will be to make Clinton's already low ratings on honesty and trustworthiness even lower. Can he pull this off? I wouldn't rule it out. "He likes to compete," Gingrich says. Trump will also have to tend to his own favorability, which is lower than hers.

What Senator Bernie Sanders, Clinton's rival for the Democratic nomination, has shied away from Trump intends to exploit. Sanders attacked her highly paid speeches to Wall Street firms and how they affected her willingness to crack down on misdeeds by the financial industry.

Clinton is a broad, soft, and rich target. There is so much to attack that it may be difficult for Trump to decide what to single out. There's the Clinton Foundation, its donors, and what was done for them even as Clinton was secretary of state. That's an under-publicized scandal. There are her private emails that exposed top-secret national security information, now under criminal investigation by the FBI. Her husband Bill Clinton's philandering and her role in preventing his paramours from speaking out publicly is sure to be worked over by Trump.

Trump has gotten lots of advice on running in the general election, including a memo from Newt Gingrich's daughter Jackie Gingrich Cushman, a columnist for Creators Syndicate. Several themes from her memo appeared in her column last week.

She noted the CNN/ORC poll that has Clinton beating Trump, 54 percent

GARY LOCKE

to 41 percent. That poll and others like it are wrong, she wrote. “Clinton is very beatable, especially by Trump.”

When Clinton plays the “woman card,” voters will be reminded that she is “a career politician . . . no different from the rest of the Establishment. . . . She is a professional politician and therefore cannot get anything done.”

Cushman noted that Trump has no interest in leading the Republican party. That’s a positive trait. “Trump is interested in leading the nation—for

all Americans. He happens to be a Republican, but his goal is to win the presidency—not to manage the party.” When Trump says “America First,” it means he’s putting the country “above party, above other nations, and that’s why voters love him.”

Newt Gingrich says being presidential and boring don’t always go together. “Ronald Reagan managed to be presidential without being boring,” he says. Trump might give that some consideration. ♦

believe that the Senate is fully justified in waiting until the presidential election before proceeding to fill the seat.”

Ohio senator Rob Portman said that instead of “having a nomination fight in this partisan election-year environment, I believe awaiting the result of the election will give the nominee more legitimacy and better preserve the Court’s credibility as an institution.” By “nominee,” Portman did not mean Garland but “the nominee of our new president,” as he put it, whether a Republican or a Democrat. South Dakota senator Mike Rounds took that same position, as did South Carolina senator Lindsey Graham and Arkansas senator John Boozman.

Iowa senator Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, said he was not convinced that Garland “would be willing to play the role of a sufficiently aggressive check on an administration.” And Pennsylvania senator Pat Toomey said that the two men “talked about concerns I have about his record and his judicial philosophy,” but that, “unfortunately, for me, throughout the process of this discussion, he did not assuage my concerns,” in particular whether he would play the checking role Grassley described.

Alaska senator Lisa Murkowski said, in the words of the *New York Times*, that she talked with the judge “about state issues like access to public lands and gun rights” and “found his knowledge of Alaska wanting.” And North Dakota senator John Hoeven said he wouldn’t support Garland because, as the *Times* put it, “he had not alleviated his discomfort about his perspective on gun rights and federal regulations that would affect those working in farming, ranching and energy sectors.”

Garland was nominated on March 16, but it was soon after Justice Antonin Scalia’s death on February 13, creating the vacancy on the Court, that Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell announced there would be no hearings this year, regardless of the person Obama might nominate. Says Don Stewart, McConnell’s spokesman: “The White House said that once there was a nominee, we’d break. Then they said we’d hear from constituents over

# Striking Out

The Merrick Garland nomination is going nowhere. BY TERRY EASTLAND

Of the 54 Senate Republicans, only 2—Mark Kirk of Illinois and Susan Collins of Maine—support holding hearings this election year on President Barack Obama’s nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. Kirk, but not Collins, also says he would consider voting for the nominee, making him the lone Republican senator in that column. Importantly, the 11 Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which holds nomination hearings, have stated in a jointly signed letter their opposition to convening them.

Obama aides have tried to schedule one-on-one meetings for Garland with as many Republican senators as possible. The theory here has been, more or less, that to know the judge is to like him and to agree that the Senate should hear the nomination without delay.

Through April, Garland had met with 14 Republican senators, including Kirk and Collins. The pair are still the only GOP senators who favor hearings. Indeed, the remaining 52—including those who met with Garland but are not named Kirk or Collins—oppose either hearings during the



Susan Collins with Merrick Garland, April 5

balance of this election season or the nomination on its merits. Or both.

Consider the views of the Republican senators who met with Garland (again, excluding Kirk and Collins). They made public statements after their meetings. Oklahoma senators Jim Inhofe and James Lankford said that “a presidential election year is not the right time to start a nomination process for the Supreme Court.” New Hampshire senator Kelly Ayotte said that, “given we are in the midst of a vigorous presidential election, I believe the people should have a voice on this important nomination” and that “the confirmation process should wait until the people have spoken in November.” And Arizona senator Jeff Flake said, “Because this nomination has the potential to so dramatically shift the balance of the court, I continue to

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YURI GRIPAS / AFP / GETTY

the Easter recess and we'd break; then they said after Republicans met with Judge Garland, we'd break. But none of that happened."

Despite the evident failure of the meetings, Obama's aides haven't abandoned the effort to arrange more.

Meanwhile, reports *Politico*, Obama allies, coordinating with the White House, are testing this month a new operations and advertising effort in nine states in which Republican incumbents they think are vulnerable are running for reelection: New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Arizona, North Carolina, and Missouri. The message Obama allies want to send is that the Republicans are "shirk[ing] their constitutional responsibilities" by not taking up the Garland nomination.

According to *Politico*, the effort represents "an unspoken acknowledgment that the Supreme Court fight is less about actually trying to get Garland on the bench before November, and more about turning the Republican resistance into a campaign issue to maximize GOP losses in the Senate, and even in the House." The Democrats need to take four Republican seats to control the Senate if a Democrat is elected president and five seats if a Republican is.

As for the conservative groups opposing the Garland nomination, they continue to defend the Senate's position against holding hearings this election year. And the Judicial Crisis Network recently made a combined television and digital ad buy opposing Garland on grounds of his judicial approach, which the ads say, quoting the *New York Times*, would make the Court "the most liberal in decades." The ads are running in mainly red states with Democratic senators, such as West Virginia, whose Joe Manchin, while he favors hearings for Garland, is not sold on the merits of the nomination. Also yet to be persuaded are Michael Bennett of Colorado and Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota, both of whose electorates will see the JCN ads. JCN's chief counsel Carrie Severino says that the organization is now focusing more on the substance

of Garland's views—on the Second Amendment, the administrative state, and executive authority.

So, then, the battle lines over filling the Scalia seat are being drawn. The last thing Senate Republicans should want to do now is repudiate their position against hearings and instead take up the nomination and confirm Garland. That suggestion came last week

from a writer at *Red State*, who thinks it would be better to put Garland on the Court than risk getting a more liberal justice from Hillary Clinton, who will be our next president, the writer declares, because Donald Trump has "absolutely no chance" of winning. Acting on that advice would aggravate the party's conservative base and surely cost the Republicans the Senate. ♦

## Obama and Brexit

He doesn't care about Britain, so why did he butt in? BY JOEL WINTON

President Obama loves the European Union. He believes the British people should too. And to anyone who might dissent from his view when the question of the U.K.'s EU membership is put to a national referendum on June 23, he has a threat: Vote to leave and he'll upend the "special relationship" by sending the U.K. to the "back of the queue" in any future trade negotiations with the United States.

Delivered during a joint press conference in London with Prime Minister David Cameron, the president's threat—the diplomatic equivalent of the Mafioso trope, "nice country you've got there, shame if someone were to wreck it for you"—wasn't merely inappropriate and hypocritical, it was also wrong on substance and revealing of Obama's ideology. With any luck, it will backfire.

Obama knew that his intervention would be contentious and so, as he's fond of doing, took steps to preempt any criticism by denying in one breath what he was about to say in the next: "I'm not coming here to fix any votes.

I'm not casting a vote myself. I'm offering my opinion. And in democracies, everybody should want more information, not less. And you shouldn't be afraid to hear an argument being made.

That's not a threat. That should enhance debate."

That's particularly rich if you recall the Obama administration's reaction last year when Israel's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu offered his "own opinion" on the Iran deal to Congress. Netan-

yahu was of course denounced by the president for meddling in U.S. policy and White House aides were quoted as saying that Netanyahu had "spat in our face publicly."

It's also rich when you consider that the EU is a polity that no American who loves his country would ever countenance joining. The EU precludes Britain from conducting its own trade agreements or fully managing its own borders and immigration policies. Its unelected high court regularly strikes down rulings from the British supreme court; it imposes regulations on the economy that the elected Parliament is powerless to reject and collects about half a billion dollars from the British treasury each week. The net effect is to seriously erode British sovereignty. No wonder, then, that some



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60 percent of Brits disapproved of Obama's intervention, and polls even moved slightly in favor of a British exit in the days that followed it.

But what of the substance? The president made three basic arguments for why Britain would be better off voting to remain in the EU, each of them fatuous.

First, he claimed (threatened) that Britain's economic relationship with America might suffer if it found itself outside of an EU that had secured the free trade agreement currently being negotiated with the United States. The "back of the queue" argument is one the Obama administration has been making for some time now. Last October, U.S. trade representative Michael Froman warned that should Britain leave the EU it would "be subject to the same tariffs—and other trade-related measures—as China or Brazil or India."

And herein lies the absurdity of the president's reasoning. It's precisely because of Britain's membership in the EU that the United States and the U.K. don't presently have a free trade agreement. The EU effectively prevents member states from signing unilateral agreements and seeks instead to negotiate such deals on their behalf. And so rather than securing an agreement with the United States years ago, Britain has had to wait as the broader EU effort founders due to the protectionist demands of special national interests, like the French auto industry and Italian cheesemakers, among others.

Moreover, the implication that the world's fifth-largest economy will suddenly be of less consequence to America if it leaves the EU is absurd. The U.K. is America's largest trading partner within the EU. British companies employ some one million people in the United States. And the flows go both ways. America is Britain's largest trade partner outside the EU. American companies employ approximately 1.3 million people in Britain.

It is an open secret in Washington that if Britain leaves, Obama's successor, whomever it might be, would enter into direct negotiations with Britain on a free trade agreement. And

so the president's threat is an empty one: By the time any of this matters, he'll be gone from office.

The second argument the president made was on national security grounds, arguing that "intelligence sharing and counterterrorism" efforts would be "far more effective" with Britain in Europe. No matter that Sir Richard Dearlove, the former head of MI6, had demolished these arguments a few days earlier: "From a national security perspective," he said, "the cost to Britain would be low." Britain would in fact realize "two . . . important security gains": Control over immigration and the ability to deport terrorists and terror suspects.

Britain's armed forces minister, Penny Mordaunt, went further. In an op-ed directly rebutting the president's remarks, she excoriated Obama's "woeful ignorance of the practical reality of the EU's impact on our security, and the interests of the U.K." and went on to suggest that the president "must be unaware of the alarming weaknesses that allow Daesh terrorists to move unimpeded across Europe."

For those who truly care about Britain's ability to defend itself, it's easy to see why this touched a nerve. When Britain joined the precursor to the EU in 1973, defense spending as a portion of GDP stood at 5.5 percent. Today it hovers around 2 percent. The Royal Navy is less than half the size it was 30 years ago and today possesses no aircraft carriers. Wherever you wish to place the cause of this decline, it seems self-evident that EU membership hasn't encouraged a robust British defense policy in recent years.

The final argument offered by the president was that Britain should remain in the EU to exert leadership and influence. "The United States sees how your powerful voice in Europe . . . keeps the EU open, outward looking, and closely linked to its allies." This line of reasoning might have made sense in the early days of the union when the body was comprised of a smaller number of countries. Today, however, Britain is one of 28 votes. Its influence on the body has declined apace. Since 1996, the U.K.

has opposed 55 measures in the EU's top body, the Council of Ministers. Its objections have been outvoted each and every time.

The other problem with the sane man in the asylum argument is that, left there long enough, he eventually and inevitably goes mad. A case in point: Prime Minister Cameron's effete complicity in the president's intervention. Watching him stand shoulder to shoulder with Obama and smiling blithely as the president blackmailed British citizens laid bare the extent to which the European project necessarily corrodes not just national sovereignty, but also national dignity.

Of course Obama's case was never really about the merits. It's about ideology. The referendum is not a choice between economic uncertainty and the status quo, as the president makes out. It's a referendum on the EU's aspirations, on what membership in the EU will mean for, and require of, Britain in 20 or 30 years.

Britain is really choosing between two competing sets of values for how to structure and govern society: between technocracy and liberal democracy; the centralization of power and its devolution; executive action and the ballot box; soft- and hard-power foreign policy; supra-nationalism and patriotism; between "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" and the EU's alternative, which guarantees such rights as affordable housing and free health care.

It is to these fundamental questions that Americans, particularly those of a conservative persuasion, should be paying close attention. And when framed in this way, the rationale for President Obama's intervention becomes much clearer. The president doesn't care that much about Britain. He cares about the ideology of a federal Europe. He believes that Britain's continued membership of the EU is good because he believes the EU is good. He approves of history marching in the pan-European direction and away from national sovereignty. He recognizes that a vote to leave would rock the European project.

As Daniel Hannan, a British member of the European parliament, pointed out recently in the *Washington*

*Examiner:* “The things that Obama likes about the EU—the judicial activism, the elevation of unelected officials over politicians, the soft foreign policy, the eco correctness, the social democracy, the supra-nationalism” are the touchstones of his own presidency. He is in a way America’s first European president.

Which ideas and values should triumph? The British will answer these question for themselves next month. And while the president has made clear where he stands, nonprogressive Americans have every reason to hope instead that Britain might muster the courage to stand athwart history yelling stop. ♦

## Why Not the Best?

Paul Manafort takes his talents to the Trump campaign. **BY MICHAEL WARREN**

In Washington, the talk of the town for weeks has been Paul Manafort, the adviser recently hired by Donald Trump’s presidential campaign. Just read *Politico*, the insider journal that has mentioned Manafort in more than 100 articles in the last month. Or tune into one of the Sunday political talk shows, where Manafort’s likely to be a guest—he’s been interviewed on half of them since joining the Trump campaign. If you listen closely in cable-network greenrooms and K Street restaurants, you can hear the name “Manafort” exchanged in hushed, excited tones.

What, exactly, does Manafort do for Trump? His official title is “convention manager,” says campaign manager Corey Lewandowski. “The primary focus of the campaign has been, one, running and winning elections. And that’s my job,” Lewandowski told me recently. “And ensuring we amass 1,237 delegates or more to secure the nomination at the convention. And that’s Paul’s job.”

Washington Republican operatives who know him say that Manafort’s real job is to professionalize the Trump campaign, and they all agree on his abilities. He got his start at the 1976

Republican National Convention as a 27-year-old floor manager for Gerald Ford, holding the president’s delegates against the insurgent campaign of Ronald Reagan. After stints in the 1980 Reagan campaign, the Republican National Committee, and the Reagan White House, Manafort helped direct the 1984 Republican convention. That’s where Scott Reed met the man he calls “the ultimate delegate wrangler” and a “convention expert.”

“I first saw Manafort’s skills as we all made that a made-for-TV convention,” says Reed, the current senior political strategist for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Jeff Bell, the veteran Republican strategist who worked for Reagan’s campaign at the 1976 convention, says Manafort brings the Trump campaign “organizational muscle” and a skill for managing complicated systems. “Running a convention is like piloting a very complex ocean liner,” Bell says. “That’s a skill that Paul has.”

“He is one of the best pure tacticians I’ve ever worked with,” Bell adds.

All of Washington also agrees on what Manafort’s addition to the team means: The Trump campaign is getting a makeover. Hailed as a master of delegate and convention strategy, Manafort was initially brought in to help the campaign survive—or, better yet,

avoid—a contested convention. Even though Trump has now effectively secured the nomination, it’s unlikely Manafort’s role will be reduced, at least not without an internal campaign fight.

He’s not known to play second fiddle. Reed ran Bob Dole’s 1996 presidential campaign and hired Manafort as a senior adviser. He says Manafort’s nickname around the office was the Count: “He’d come in with everything but a cape,” Reed says. “He liked to be in charge.”

“In charge” is exactly what Manafort appeared to be shortly after his hiring in late March. It wasn’t just appearing on the Sunday shows. Manafort also began asserting a more active role in shaping the direction of the campaign and the candidate. Manafort was “gaining influence” and “consolidating his own power,” said *Politico*, while Lewandowski was “losing the tug-of-war” and “has been neutered.” *New York* magazine’s Gabriel Sherman reported Manafort had “taken over” the campaign.

At a private meeting between Manafort and members of the Republican National Committee in April, he assured those gathered that Trump was “projecting an image” in public but would tone down the rhetoric in the coming weeks and months: “The part that he’s been playing is evolving into the part that now you’ve been expecting, but he wasn’t ready for, because he had first to complete the first phase. The negatives will come down,” Manafort said, according to audio of the meeting obtained by the Associated Press. “The image is going to change.” And Manafort suggested he was the one implementing the change.

But he may have gotten ahead of himself. Days after the RNC meeting, Trump was back to his old, familiar self, referring to “Lyin’ Ted” Cruz as a “pain in the ass” and calling John Kasich a “slob” who is “disgusting” when he eats. Trump also dismissed the idea that he would be changing anything about his style: “If I acted presidential,” he said at an April rally, “I can guarantee you this morning, I wouldn’t be here.”

And so, two weeks after its article proclaiming Manafort’s new influence



Paul Manafort

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within the campaign, *Politico* reported that Trump was “frustrated with Manafort” and was shifting “some power back” to Lewandowski.

Lewandowski says reports of internal campaign strife are bogus. “This was a narrative that the media wanted,” he told me.

But what about Manafort’s claim that Trump would be changing his image?

“This campaign has been run on four words: Let Trump be Trump,” Lewandowski says. “Mr. Trump was very clear about what he thought about [Manafort’s claim].”

If Manafort is already on the outs with his new boss, it may not be just an issue of him getting out over his skis. Rumors have circulated suggesting Trump is “bothered” by Manafort’s long career representing dictators and thugs. A report in the *Daily Beast* called a group of clients represented by Manafort’s firm in the early 1990s “the torturer’s lobby.”

Since the late 1980s, Manafort has lobbied Congress on behalf of plenty of unsavory international clients: There was everyone from Mobutu Sese Seko of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines to the anti-Marxist guerilla leader Jonas Savimbi in Angola and a number of other African despots and warlords. In the last decade, Manafort has also consulted for European strongmen like Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich.

As Franklin Foer at *Slate* recently wrote, Manafort was instrumental in remaking Yanukovich’s image into that of a pragmatic businessman who could bring order to a divided country (sound familiar?) ahead of Ukraine’s 2010 election.

Some of what Manafort taught Yanukovich could be applicable in the months to come. “He instructed him to refrain from speaking off the cuff,” Foer wrote. “He taught him how to display a modicum of empathy when listening to the stories of voters.”

Less innocently, Manafort encouraged candidate Yanukovich to stoke the underlying tensions within Ukraine by blasting the incumbent

government’s cooperation with NATO and by repeating trumped up stories of the nation’s Russian speakers being abused. It may have helped Yanukovich win the election, but it also helped tear the country apart.

Manafort’s firm, Davis Manafort, had worked on behalf of Yanukovich’s political benefactor, Ukrainian oligarch Rinat Akhmetov, since around 2005. Akhmetov, like Yanukovich, is an ally of, if not a proxy for, Russian president Vladimir Putin.

For his part, Manafort maintains the work was nothing more than routine international political consulting. “The role that I played in that administration was to help bring Ukraine into Europe, and we did,” Manafort told *Fox News Sunday* last month. That’s a curious claim, since Yanukovich’s election—engineered in large part by Manafort—meant plans for Ukraine to join NATO were scrapped. Without the rise and fall of Yanukovich, Crimea might not have fallen into Putin’s hands.

Manafort declined to be interviewed on the record. But I did ask his colleague and rival on the

campaign, Corey Lewandowski, about Manafort’s list of less-than-savory former clients. Was Lewandowski concerned about how it might reflect on Trump and the Republican party?

“I haven’t followed Paul’s career,” says Lewandowski, adding they had never met before Manafort joined the campaign. “I don’t know what Paul’s previous work was. I’ve never asked him about it.”

Removed from much of the business of American politics for more than a decade, Manafort has a ticket back to the Big Show with Trump’s campaign. But why would he want it? An American presidential campaign is less lucrative than international consulting work. Manafort might have retired quietly to his condo in Trump Tower (where he first got to know his new boss). His colleagues suggest he’d be the first to say he’s not particularly interested in issues or ideology.

So why do it? “He loves the game,” Jeff Bell says. “He thinks he’s the best in the business.”

And Donald Trump, as we know, only hires the very best. ♦

## Insurgency on the Left

Challenging Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

BY ETHAN EPSTEIN

*Hollywood, Fla.*  
“Your time is up, Debbie,” the woman says to me, referring to Debbie Wasserman Schultz, the Florida congresswoman, staple of cable news hack-fests, and Democratic party stalwart who has chaired the Democratic National Committee since 2011. “You’ve been in elected office since [age] 25 . . . now you’re in the belly of the beast!”

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the woman intones, her voice rising.

Am I hanging out with a fire-breathing Tea Party right-winger? Well, not exactly. On this balmy Saturday evening in South Florida, I’m at “Millennials for Tim: #CanovaCrawl,” a pub crawl organized by Tim Canova’s campaign, and I’m chatting with a 28-year-old former Bernie Sanders volunteer who may be enjoying her brewskies just a bit too much (hence the theatrics). Canova, as it happens, is mounting a vigorous *Democratic* party challenge to Wasserman Schultz here

in Florida's 23rd Congressional District, which covers much of Broward County, home of Ft. Lauderdale. Billing himself as the "true progressive" in the race, in contrast to Wasserman Schultz, the corporatist centrist Canova, a 55-year-old law professor, is trying to pull a left-wing version of what Dave Brat did to Eric Cantor a couple of years ago: take down a major congressional figure and highly visible party leader in a primary.

He has likability going for him. When a black-T-shirt-clad Canova makes an appearance at the pub crawl a little after 11, he exudes an easy presence, bantering fluidly with the crowd and picking up the tab on a round of beers. He speaks with a typical South Florida accent—i.e., the Long Island accent of his upbringing—and trades jokes, as well as exults over a recent editorial in a local newspaper that hammered Wasserman Schultz for efforts to scuttle regulations that would clamp down on payday lenders. It's hard to imagine the famously frosty Wasserman Schultz, who lives in a gated compound far away from bohemian downtown Hollywood, gabbing at a bar with a bunch of twenty- and thirtysomethings.

Given that Wasserman Schultz is closely associated with the Clintons (she was a co-chair of Hillary's 2008 presidential campaign, an early endorser of her current campaign, and in her position as DNC chief scheduled primary debates in a way that was widely perceived to harm Clinton's opponents), it's perhaps not surprising that Canova's base of support looks a lot like Bernie Sanders's. Many in the crowd at the #CanovaCrawl, drawn heavily from the professional classes (a lawyer, an academic, a professional political organizer), supported or even worked for Sanders's campaign. And like Bernie supporters hammering Clinton for her husband's welfare reform bill, or her own vote for the Iraq war, Canova's fans cite Wasserman Schultz's various deviations from left-wing orthodoxy—her opposition to medicinal marijuana, her support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)—as evidence of her unacceptability.

But as I learn during a slightly bleary-eyed interview with Canova the following morning (even though I'm firmly millennial myself, pub crawls that stretch into the wee hours are a challenge), the Sanders comparison actually sells Canova short in various ways.

For one, in contrast to Bernie Sanders, whose guiding ethos seems to be "Bash the Millionaires and Billionaires—Details TK," Canova actually knows what he's talking about. Although he's never held office, Canova is an expert on banking laws as a law professor at Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale. He has been churning out scholarly works on interest rates, regulatory affairs, and loan practices for decades. (His fierce criticism of big banks is delivered with a scholarly mien quite unlike Sanders's street-corner shouting.) He wants to raise taxes on the super-rich, block the TPP, set up a federal infrastructure bank, and break up banks that are "too big to fail."

But even more un-Bernie-like, Canova is hitting Wasserman Schultz from the *right* on some issues.

For example, Canova is a staunch opponent of the Iran nuclear deal, which Wasserman Schultz supports. "Iran never destroys its centrifuges, and it gets a \$100 billion windfall at once," he laments. "Iran gets it all, and within weeks, if not days, Iran is testing ballistic missiles," he says, shaking his head. "Iran is a regime that can't be trusted." Wasserman Schultz, meanwhile, lost "a lot of credibility" among her constituents by voting for the agreement, Canova charges.

Canova also attributes Sanders's loss in the crucial New York primary to Israel. "He started off at [the New York debate] saying 'I'm 100 percent pro-Israel.' But that was the last thing he said that was pro-Israeli."

Canova's fealty to Israel may look like mere political expedience in a congressional district that is reputed to be among the nation's most Jewish—an estimated 20 percent of residents

are members of the tribe—but he's no Johnny Come Lately to the issue. Though Canova was raised Catholic in Merrick, New York, his stepfather was Jewish. Canova worked on a kibbutz for a few months as a young man and has returned to Israel some half-dozen times, including on a program sponsored by the Foundation for Defense of Democracies—a conservative think tank in Washington not often associated with liberal Democrats. "Where you sit determines where you stand on Israel," he tells me, "and if you sit in a cloistered environment thousands of miles away in the U.S., it's easy to . . .

denounce Israel. If you sit in Tel Aviv, it's a much different reality."

"I would like to see a Palestinian state, [but] to me, I don't see how you have one as long as all of these neighbors of Israel still don't recognize its right to exist," he continues, "as long as Iran is

still funding Hamas, [as long as] Saudi Arabia has telethons for families of suicide bombers!"

Canova also offers his own version of the *What's the Matter with Kansas?* thesis. Thomas Frank argued in the 2004 book that Republicans "trick" the working class to vote against their economic interests (i.e., for Republicans) by stressing cultural issues. But Democrats like Wasserman Schultz do the same thing, Canova tells me. While doing the bidding of the financial industry and big corporations, Wasserman Schultz "shouts about social issues," he says. That ethos has infected the DNC under Wasserman Schultz's leadership, he adds. Even though "economics are the most important issue to people," Canova says, "I got one of those mass mailings from the DNC, a survey, one that asks you to check the 'three most important issues.' And they're all social issues. There's nothing about creating jobs!"

Given Canova's focus on economics and willingness to be ideologically heterodox, I ask him his views on immigration. Reams of scholarly work, after all, have shown that mass illegal immigration hurts U.S. workers' wages,



Tim Canova

particularly among the low skilled. But prominent Democrats like Hillary Clinton and Debbie Wasserman Schultz are increasingly unlikely to say *anything* negative about illegal immigration. “I’ve never been against border security at all,” says Canova, who also notes that fans of Ayn Rand support open borders. While stressing that he wants a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants currently in the country, he makes the point that “if you have an open border it’s a safety valve for the failed regimes south of the border. It’s not really solving the problem.”

Florida’s 23rd district is heavily Democrat—“Broward Blue,” as one pub-crawling activist put it to me. So, whoever wins the primary is essentially assured a seat in Congress. While no polling has been done yet, the race could be tight: Canova won’t be short on funds, as he’s raised nearly \$1 million so far, from donors across the country (his campaign has officially achieved “virality”). Indeed, the day after President Obama endorsed Wasserman Schultz, Canova had one of his biggest fundraising days yet. This may be because Obama’s endorsement read a bit like a teacher’s tepid recommendation of a mediocre student (“excellent attendance!”). “Debbie has been a strong, progressive leader in Congress and a hardworking, committed Chair of our national Party,” the president said. Or perhaps it’s because Obama’s endorsement is now actually a net-negative to many progressive activists. Canova will also benefit from the fact that Florida’s presidential primary has already occurred. The August 30 election, therefore, will probably be a low-turnout affair, which will aid the candidate who has voter enthusiasm on his side. That’s likely to be Canova.

To Canova’s frustration, Wasserman Schultz has yet to acknowledge that her opponent exists. She’s refusing to debate him; in fact, she’s yet to utter his name in public. It appears that Wasserman Schultz, who has never faced a primary challenge before, is going with the time-honored “ignore him and hope he goes away” strategy. We know how well that worked for Eric Cantor. ♦

# Rehab for Reds

The resurrection of American communism.

BY RONALD RADOSH

A new generation of college-aged students, for whom the Cold War and communism is a distant phenomenon, have had democratic socialism legitimized for them by Bernie Sanders. It is just one short step for this same generation to argue that if socialism is a goal worth fighting for, then perhaps communism too was a worthy endeavor. The millions murdered by Stalin, Mao, Fidel Castro, and the other Communist leaders may simply be something they are not aware of. I would suspect that perhaps only 1 percent of Bernie’s supporters have even heard of, let alone read, *The Black Book of Communism*.

Still, it comes as a shock to suddenly find articles in liberal magazines asserting how worthwhile communism was, and expressing sadness and despair at its demise. The historian Paul Kengor writes humorously that “the Sanders campaign could mass-produce bumper stickers boldly touting ‘Bolsheviks for Bernie’ sandwiched between grinning faces of Marx and Lenin and our contemporary products of the American university would shrug and cheer.”

Sadly, Kengor is not far off the mark. In the last week of April, the *New Republic*, for decades an anti-Communist liberal magazine, ran an article by Malcolm Harris titled “Who’s Afraid of Communism?” An editor of the journal *New Inquiry*, Harris writes for the purpose of rehabilitating American Communists as well as the Soviet Union. That is why he sees anyone advocating a hawkish foreign policy as an anti-Communist who is on the wrong side of history. Thus he favorably compares Bernie Sanders to Hillary Clinton. Why? Because Clinton

*Ronald Radosh, an adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute, writes frequently about communism and anticommunism.*

has praised NATO, even calling it “the most successful military alliance in probably human history.” Harris is bothered that many people think NATO had something to do with the victory over Nazism, and he asserts that these deluded people view the World War II Allies as a “proto-NATO.” He is concerned that millennials might believe the Western nations, not the Soviet Union, won World War II. Not only that, the Soviet Union was the power that liberated Auschwitz.

And worst of all, he argues, people believe “capitalism won,” and the history books do not let youth know the truth about the Soviet Union, because “the history books [are filled] with patriotism.” Evidently, Harris is unfamiliar with the widespread influence of Howard Zinn or the leftist gender-race-class construct that now dominates the historical profession and rules the roost in university history departments.

As for anticommunism, he traces it to pro-slavery forces who argued slavery was opposed by Communists and quotes two young historians who argue that pro-slavery writers “formulated the first generation of American anticommunist rhetoric.” He chastises American history books for supposedly not having “room for left-wing internationalism.” Textbooks, after all, were written in a “time when Marxists were the Bad Guys and people who questioned that got in trouble.”

Turning to race, Harris raises the old argument that it was American Communists above all who fought Jim Crow laws in the South. Civil rights history supposedly leaves this out and tells the story of the civil rights movement “within liberal parameters.” Yet Harris’s version will be familiar to anyone who reads widely in scores of books published in the past two decades. The great majority of writers

on the topic discuss the role of Communists in much the same way as Harris. Perhaps America's most celebrated historian is Eric Foner, professor emeritus at Columbia University. In his highly acclaimed book *The Story of American Freedom*, as the historian of American communism Theodore Draper wrote, Foner "shows no such enthusiasm for any other organization [except the American Communist party] in all of American history." Foner's goal, Draper added, was to "rehabilitate American communism."

Harris concludes by falsely arguing that "the story of Communism's struggle against fascism and white supremacy has been suppressed for generations" and that it is only now being rectified, as historians write about the heroism of the Communist-led Abraham Lincoln Brigade, which fought Franco's army during the Spanish civil war. He calls them "American leftists who fought against fascism in Spain," rather than what they actually were—a Comintern army fighting to help turn the Spanish Republic into what would have been the first "People's Democracy," similar to those established by the Soviets in Eastern Europe after World War II. Or, as my friend the late Bill Herrick, a Lincoln Brigade veteran, wrote in his memoir *Jumping the Line*, "Yes, we went to Spain to fight fascism, but democracy was not our aim."

Harris looks forward as well to a new Hollywood biopic by Steve McQueen on Paul Robeson, the African-American singer who was noted not only for his singing and acting, but for his constant defense of Stalinism and the Soviet Union, which he viewed as far superior to American democracy. He proudly quotes Robeson's testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), in which he said, "Wherever I've been in the world, the first to die in the struggle against fascism were the Communists." Nowhere mentioned is the Nazi-Soviet pact, which caused all Communists worldwide to change their line overnight and to argue that Hitler's Germany was a benign power, while the dangerous imperialists were Franklin

D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.

As for Robeson, his bold fight for full rights for African Americans blinded him to the Soviet Union's policies, which were far more repressive than any in the United States. It is well known that Robeson betrayed the Yiddish poet Itzik Feffer. In Moscow in 1949, Robeson asked to see his "good friend" Feffer. The KGB fattened Feffer up and took him out of Lubyanka, where he was awaiting execution. When Robeson met him, Feffer put his hand across his throat to let Robeson know what his looming fate would be. Yet Robeson refused to tell the truth about the Soviet Jewish poet when he returned to the United States. Robeson told the waiting press he had seen Feffer and that the poet was fine and in good health. He later explained to his son that he did not want to give American warmongers justification for their anti-Soviet policies. Feffer was executed in August 1952, and shortly thereafter Robeson was rewarded for his loyalty to the Soviet Union with the Stalin Peace Prize.

The Malcolm Harris essay in the *New Republic* was bad enough. But the same week, a theater critic, Michael Feingold, wrote a two-part article in *Theatermania*, in which he has a regular column. Feingold wrote about the playwright Arthur Miller, whom he does not seem to realize was a secret member of the American Communist party. Writer Alan Wald revealed some years ago that Miller regularly wrote for the Communist party press under a pseudonym. Feingold actually asks, "Were such people, strictly speaking, Communists, any more than those accused in Salem were witches?"

His answer is simple: "in most cases, probably not at all." They were simply "liberal-minded, educated people, seriously concerned about solving America's social problems." It does not occur to him that one could share that concern and deal with it more effectively than by joining America's Stalinist party, whose main goal was always to gather support for Moscow's

foreign policy. Feingold says it's "hard to conceive of the well-paid screenwriters who were stigmatized" and blacklisted as being willing to carry "Kalashnikovs on the barricades."

But no one ever thought or claimed that about them. The role of Stalinist writers was to propagandize for the ideal of communism through their cultural work. (Of course, some American Communists were certainly willing to join the KGB or the GRU's spy networks in the United States.)

Why does Feingold like the Reds? Because, he says, they did things like circulate petitions "for the recall of

some particularly odious right-wing officeholder." Or, as the famous saying of the '30s put it, "Communists were just liberals in a hurry." Turning to the Rosenberg case, about which he clearly knows next to nothing, Feingold notes that any information Julius and Ethel Rosenberg gave the Soviets

about the atomic bomb was only of "secondary importance" and falsely writes that Ethel Rosenberg "had nothing whatever to do with the matter."

He also writes that thousands of Communists exposed by HUAC did nothing and that being an actual party member "was a nebulous concept anyway." Tell that to the many Communists who took Marxism-Leninism very seriously and were willing to give their lives for the cause, as they constantly bragged. Feingold's jejune conclusion: "The Devil was loose in 1956 Washington, as in 1692 Salem: his emissaries were the witch-hunters, not those they accused."

We can no doubt expect more such "revisionist" history of American Communists. Writers concerned with the truth would do better to turn their attention to the thousands of real victims of communism around the world. One suspects that they're not really after the truth, though. Their intention is to provide heroes for today's new leftist movements and to spin an *Aesop's Fables* version of American communism for the edification of progressive millennials. ♦



Itzik Feffer—one of many millions

# 'Der Alte Jude'

*The Jewish life of Benjamin Disraeli*

BY GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

A recent book in the Yale University Press series on "Jewish Lives," a biography of the nineteenth-century British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli, opens provocatively: "Does Benjamin Disraeli deserve a place in a series of books called Jewish Lives?" Perhaps not, a reader of the book might well conclude. Disraeli has always been a challenge, to Jews and non-Jews, contemporaries as well as biographers. But rereading the man himself, I was reassured that he was entirely worthy of a place in "Jewish Lives" (and justified the significant space I gave him a few years ago in my *The People of the Book*).

Though formally Anglican—his father had him baptized when he was 12, before the rite of bar mitzvah—Disraeli identified himself, and was generally identified, as a Jew. He bore a conspicuously Jewish name, changing his father's D'Israeli only by removing the apostrophe. He made no secret of his heritage in his speeches and writings, and flaunted it in his person, deliberately cultivating a Jewish appearance. And his novels dramatized a politics imbued with Judaism and a "New Crusade" that would restore Christianity to its Jewish origins. All of this in mid-Victorian England, when Jews were the villains of novels and the butt of satirists, when they could not even have a seat in Parliament let alone climb to "the top of the greasy pole," as Disraeli put it. (Not one has since climbed it; there has been no Jewish prime minister in the nearly century-and-a-half since his death.)

While climbing that pole, Disraeli wrote no fewer than 15 novels, his first in 1826 at the age of 21 and his last the year before his death in 1881, with another, unfinished one published posthumously. His father, Isaac D'Israeli, a writer, scholar, and man-about-town (who never

converted), once cautioned his son: "How will the Fictionist assort with the Politician?" But assort they did. In 1833 in a private journal, Disraeli implicitly responded to the familiar charge that the novels were frivolous, unrealistic fantasies. *Vivian Grey*, he said, "portrayed my active and real ambition"; *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy* "my ideal ambition"; *Contarini Fleming* "my poetic character." The trilogy was "the secret history of my feelings."



*Benjamin Disraeli in his twenties*

If those early novels, which predated his political career, reveal his private life, another trilogy, in the mid-forties, when he was firmly established in Parliament, are as revelatory of his public persona. *Coningsby* (1844), in effect his political testament, was an attack on the "Tweedledum and Tweedledee" characters (the followers of Prime Minister Robert Peel) who were reducing the Conservatives to a party of "Tory men and Whig measures" and a defense of the "New Generation" of the subtitle (the Young Englanders, led by Disraeli), who sought to preserve the venerable institutions of Crown and Church. *Sybil*, his social testament published the following year, was a commentary on "The Two Nations" of the subtitle, the

ominous class divide between the poor and the rich, which could only be overcome by policies favoring the poor and re-creating the "one nation" of the old Tories.

*Tancred*, which completed the trilogy in 1847, was his spiritual and, one might say, Judaic testament. It is not surprising to find premonitions of *Tancred* in *Coningsby*, in which the "new generation" was called on to restore the historic relationship of church and state. Two years later, in the preface to a new edition of *Coningsby*, Disraeli looked to the church itself for the "renovation of the national spirit." This, in turn, moved him to "ascend to the origin of the Christian Church"—to the "race which had founded Christianity."

The Jews were looked upon in the middle ages as an accursed race, the enemies of God and man, the especial foes of Christianity. No one in those days paused to reflect that Christianity was founded by the Jews; that its Divine Author, in his human capacity, was a descendant of King

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David; that his doctrines avowedly were the completion, not the change, of Judaism. . . . The time had arrived when some attempt should be made to do justice to the race which had founded Christianity.

That “race” had appeared earlier in *Comingsby* in the person of Sidonia, the stranger who inspired the title character to undertake the difficult task of spiritual “renovation.” Sidonia, like Coningsby, is an aristocrat, but of a different order, a scion of that “unmixed race,” “the aristocracy of Nature.” Descended from the *Nuevos Christianos*, the Marranos of Spain and Portugal who secretly observed Jewish laws and rites, Sidonia had emigrated to England, where he could openly profess his faith. It is there he meets Coningsby, infecting him with the ideals that would transform English politics.

Sidonia reappears in *Tancred*, where he delivers the message: “All is race; there is no other truth.” Tancred (Lord Montacute) is also an aristocrat, the only son of a duke. Like Coningsby, he too is at odds with the political establishment. Repelled by the materialism and soullessness of his class, he refuses to enter Parliament, informing his father that he wants instead to make a pilgrimage to the “Holy Land,” the “sepulchre of my Saviour.” He hopes there to discover “what is Duty, and what is Faith? What ought I to Do and what ought I to Believe?” Upon the suggestion of a friend, he calls upon Sidonia, the Jewish banker, for advice: “I am born in an age and in a country divided between infidelity on one side and an anarchy of creeds on the other; with none competent to guide me, yet feeling that I must believe, for I hold that duty cannot exist without faith.” Was it unreasonable, he asks, to do what his ancestors would have done six centuries earlier? “It appears to me, Lord Montacute,” Sidonia replies, “that what you want is to penetrate the great Asian mystery.” It is that mission, the “New Crusade” of the subtitle, that Tancred enthusiastically undertakes.

From London to Jerusalem—it is another world and another time Tancred enters. Disraeli himself had made that voyage in 1831, ending up among “that sacred and romantic people from whom I derive by blood and name.” Now, in the person of Tancred, he repeats it. Walking from the garden of Gethsemane toward Bethany, he sees in its colorful past evidence of “a living, a yet breathing and existing city.” He also meets the woman who personifies that spirit. Fatigued by his walk, he falls asleep and awakens to find a young woman standing before him, richly garbed and bejeweled, her face “the perfection of oriental beauty.” Their

conversation quickly establishes the fact that he is Christian and she Jewish. Exploring the similarities and differences of their faiths, the woman concludes that they have one thing in common. “We agree that half Christendom worships a Jewess, and the other half a Jew. . . . Which do you think should be the superior race, the worshipped or the worshippers?” Tancred is about to answer, but she has vanished. She is later identified as Eva Besso, the “Rose of Sharon,” the daughter of the Jewish banker to whom Sidonia had written a letter of introduction for Tancred.

Much of the rest of the book is an adventure tale in an exotic setting. The adventures are brought about by Eva’s foster-brother, Fakredeem, a clever and unscrupulous Syrian

who is plotting to bring all of Palestine under his control. As a result of his intrigues, Tancred is taken prisoner, wounded, and finally released, all the while engaging with his captor in animated discourses about their respective faiths. At one point, Tancred confesses to himself the failure of his mission. His presence in the Holy Land, he had thought, would bring him into communion with the Holy Spirit. But in spite of his prayers, he had received no such sign, suggesting the desolate thought “that there is a qualification of blood as well as of locality necessary for this communion, and that the favored votary must not only kneel in the Holy Land but be of the holy race.” Was he an unwelcome visitor

to this land, he wonders? Was it only morbid curiosity or aristocratic restlessness that had brought him here? He tries to reassure himself that he is not like the Indian-Brahmin touring a foreign country. It is as an Englishman that the Holy Land has a natural and intimate relation to him.

Vast as the obligations of the whole human family are to the Hebrew race, there is no portion of the modern populations so much indebted to them as the British people. . . . We are indebted to the Hebrew people for our knowledge of the true God and for the redemption from our sins. . . . I come to the land whose laws I obey, whose religion I profess, and I seek, upon its sacred soil, those sanctions which for ages were abundantly accorded.

In the final scene of the book, in the garden of Bethany where they had first met, Eva confirms his doubts. He had come, she tells him, seeking a “divine cause,” looking for “stars” and “angels” in this “peculiar and gifted land.” But it is now all mixed up with intrigue, schemes, and politics. “You may be, you are, free from all this, but your faith is not

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**Disraeli made no secret of his heritage in his speeches and writings, and flaunted it in his person, deliberately cultivating a Jewish appearance. And his novels dramatized a politics imbued with Judaism and a ‘New Crusade’ that would restore Christianity to its Jewish origins.**

the same. You no longer believe in Arabia” (the contemporary term for Palestine). “Why, thou to me art Arabia,” he insists. “Talk not to me of leaving a divine cause; why, thou art my cause, and thou art most divine.” She persists: “There are those to whom I belong, and to whom you belong. . . . Fly, fly from me, son of Europe and of Christ!” Why should he fly, he protests? He is a Christian in the land of Christ. He will not leave until she agrees that “our united destinies shall advance the sovereign purpose of our lives.” If only she declares her love for him, he will sever the “world-worn bonds” that constrain them. That she cannot do. Her head falls upon his shoulder, he embraces her, but her cheek is cold, her hand lifeless. He sprinkles her with water from the fountain, she opens her eyes, sighs, and looks about her in bewilderment. At that moment noises are heard; people come trampling toward them, with shouts calling for Lord Montacute. The party appears. “The Duke and Duchess of Belamont had arrived at Jerusalem.”

That last sentence of the book comes as a shock to the reader. What are the duke and duchess doing in Jerusalem, and what does their arrival signify for Tancred and his divine but perhaps lost cause? Does it mean that the established order is reasserting itself, fettering Tancred again with those “world-worn bonds”? Or have his parents, the most eminent of Englishmen, come to sympathize with his crusade, even accredit his cause? Some critics find this ambiguity a fatal flaw in the book. Disraeli himself never had second thoughts about it or its message. Thirty years later, as prime minister much involved with the “Eastern question” (a variant of the “Arabian” one), he told his friend Benjamin Jowett, the Master of Balliol, that *Tancred* was his favorite of his novels.

‘How will the Fictionist assort with the Politician?’ his father had asked him. Very well, his son could have assured him. Six months after the publication of *Tancred*, Disraeli delivered a speech in Parliament echoing the novel—indeed, going even further in drawing out its political implications. Where William Gladstone and others argued in favor of the Jewish Disabilities Bill on the grounds of religious liberty, and others

opposed it because that liberty violated the established religion, Disraeli insisted that it was precisely for religious reasons that Jews should be admitted to Parliament. “There is something more excellent than religious liberty—and that more excellent thing is religious truth.” And not only religious truth, but “religious truth taking the shape of religious conformity”—that is, a religion consonant with the established church.



Disraeli, at left, in a detail from ‘The Berlin Congress’ by Anton von Werner

Who are these persons professing the Jewish religion? They are persons who acknowledge the same God as the Christian people of this realm. They acknowledge the same divine revelation as yourselves. They are, humanly speaking, the authors of your religion. They are unquestionably those to whom you are indebted for no inconsiderable portion of your known religion, and for the whole of your divine knowledge.

Interrupted by cries of outrage, Disraeli (who would become prime minister twenty years later) went on to defend his position on moral as well as religious grounds. Surely, he argued, those who “profess the religion which every gentleman in this House professes—for every gentleman here does profess the Jewish religion, and believes in Moses and the Prophets. . . . Well, then I say that if religion is a security for

righteous conduct, you have that security in the instance of the Jews who profess a true religion.” However degraded a Jew might have become as a result of centuries of persecution, he was “sustained by the divine law he obeys, and by the sublime morality he professes.” It is as Christians, therefore, and in a Christian assembly, that Parliament should welcome the Jews—those “who are of the religion in the bosom of which my Lord and Savior was born.”

Four years after that speech in the Commons, Disraeli took the occasion to repeat that theme in an unlikely context. In the midst of his biography of the recently deceased George Bentinck, his friend and ally in the Tory party, he gratuitously inserted a chapter entitled “The Jewish Question”—gratuitously, because Bentinck’s name does not even appear in that chapter, and his only connection with Judaism was his support of the Jewish emancipation bills (and then on the grounds of liberty that Disraeli had dismissed). That chapter is nothing less than a paean to “the Jewish race,” a race “sustained by a sublime religion,” which had

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survived the hatred and persecution of centuries. Surveying the accomplishments of Jews in every sphere of life, he concluded that “no existing race is so much entitled to the esteem and gratitude of society as the Hebrew.” So far from being guilty of the crucifixion, they could proudly claim Jesus, “born from the chosen house of the chosen people,” as one of them.

It was an odd and passionate digression in an otherwise prosaic biography of a politician (and non-Jew), all the more conspicuous because Disraeli had nothing to gain from it—indeed, everything to lose by it. He was at a point in his career when he had to present himself to his Tory constituency as a “sound man,” and there was already much about him that seemed to be unsound, in his name and person, his politics and novels. *Tancred* could be read as a fantasy, a *jeu d’esprit*—or “Jew *d’esprit*,” as was said. But his tributes to Jews and Judaism, in and out of Parliament, could not be so easily dismissed.

Decades later, in his second term as prime minister, Disraeli confronted one of the main crises of his career—not the “Jewish Question” but the “Eastern Question.” The growing aggressiveness of Russia and her victory in her war with Turkey, giving her control over the Dardanelles and Mediterranean, were of obvious concern to

Britain and the rest of Europe. Against members of his own party, including the foreign secretary, who, as Disraeli told the queen, was “for doing nothing,” Disraeli took an even more aggressive tone, abroad and at home. In 1878 at the Congress of Berlin, he emerged as the dominant figure and combatant. By being bold and persistent, threatening to break up the congress and even declare war on Russia, he succeeded in reversing Russia’s gains and resolving the crisis in favor of Britain and Europe.

Disraeli returned home in triumph, to the plaudits of the queen and much of the nation. But perhaps his greatest tribute came not from an Englishman or a Jew but from the prime minister of Prussia. It was affectionately and admirably—not cynically or derisively, as one might suspect—that Otto von Bismarck hailed him: “*Der alte Jude, das ist der Mann.*” Almost forty years later, Winston Churchill, whose own praise of “the Jewish race” almost rivals Disraeli’s, recalled “the Jew Prime Minister of England,” who, “true to his race and proud of his origin,” said on one memorable occasion: “The Lord deals with the nations as the nations deal with the Jews.”

Yes, “the old Jew,” “the Jew Prime Minister,” deserves an honorary, indeed, honorable place among “Jewish Lives” and “The People of the Book.” ♦

## Saving Our Energy Future

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

Lower energy prices over the last two years have boosted consumers’ disposable income and have improved our manufacturing competitiveness—good news in an economy that continues to weaken. Falling prices, however, mean falling profits in the U.S. energy industry, a fact that’s already cost our economy tens of thousands of energy jobs and puts other jobs at risk.

What can lawmakers do to make sure we don’t lose more good-paying energy jobs? The answer is simple: drive U.S. energy exports.

Last December, Congress ended the 40-year U.S. ban on crude oil exports. Just a few weeks later, U.S.-produced crude was on its way to Italy. It’s now flowing to all corners of the globe. The highly respected consulting firm IHS predicts that the end of the oil export ban will support an average

of 400,000 new jobs each year.

With the ban lifted, Congress must focus on expediting liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports. This past February, a tanker left a Louisiana port on its way to Brazil, becoming the first-ever LNG shipment from the continental United States. The U.S. Energy Information Administration predicts our country will be a net natural gas exporter by 2017 and remain one through 2040. This means more jobs and more investment here at home.

The House and Senate have each passed comprehensive energy legislation that will expedite LNG permitting. Now the two chambers must work quickly to reconcile their differences and get a bill over the finish line.

There’s also a national security argument for increasing our energy exports. Too many of our allies are dependent on unsavory regimes to meet their energy needs. Adding U.S. supply to the global market will make these countries less dependent on dictators and demagogues.

The number of oil and natural gas drilling rigs operating today in the United States is at a multi-decade low. The current low prices will not last forever, and we must put the proper policies in place to capitalize on our country’s extraordinary untapped resources. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce will continue to push back against burdensome regulations that will stifle the U.S. shale revolution, while Congress must make it easier and less costly to produce energy domestically.

Until recently, the U.S. energy sector was one of the few bright spots in a weak recovery, producing well-paying jobs for American workers. To keep energy-related jobs here at home, lawmakers must pass policies that will expand markets for our energy products and enable the continued prudent development of all traditional and alternative energy resources.



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# 'A Country Is a Country'

*Trumpism and beyond*

BY PETER AUGUSTINE LAWLER

Well, this has been a most unexpected primary/caucus season. More than 45 percent of the voters are for either Donald Trump or Bernie Sanders. For many friends of liberty, this means about half the country has embraced one of the two worst presidential candidates in American history. They've chosen either a nationalist with fascist tendencies or a socialist not without Communist sympathies. They've chosen one or another of the two most prominent forms of tyrannical thuggism of the 20th century! And we've even seen the two kinds of thugs clashing violently at Trump rallies, as if this were the 1930s. What's going on?

This isn't the 1930s or even 1968. There's no depression: The fundamentals of the economy are sound. There's no Vietnam war: Middle-class boys aren't being drafted to fight in some Asian conflict nobody chose. President Obama has pretty much been relying on drones (which don't vote) and Special Forces (who willingly volunteer) to halt the advance of the evildoers who threaten our security these days.

For those who think (correctly) that Obama is the first really progressive president since LBJ, it is confusing to see a candidate to succeed him staking out a position well to the left of him. And if there's one political brand that's been discredited by history, it's socialism. It doesn't work! That's why, with the exception of Obamacare, the president's progressivism has focused more on being green (or for intrusive environmentalism) and expanding personal rights—especially for women and gays, including rich women and rich gays. Obama (with that one great exception) hasn't been pushing bigger or better government much, and his efforts, in fact, have been focused on securing the entitlements we already have. He has our backs, as he said in the 2012 campaign. But Bernie is the kind of progressive who's all about marching forward on the class-based redistribution front. For some Democrats, he doesn't seem to care enough about race, gender, and sexual orientation, because he's so much about being against the rich and for the poor.

And as for Trump, he's not a conservative at all!

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Conservative public intellectuals never tire of making that point. It's not conservative to be all about identity politics. And Trump is an identity-politics candidate just as much as Hillary Clinton is. His is poorly educated white male identity politics, to a point. But more precisely, it's American *citizen* identity politics. He wants to protect American citizens against competition from immigrants and China, and he wants to refocus foreign policy on our security—as opposed to humanitarian interventions conducted in a world without borders. His problem with “free trade” is that it is based on the premise that people are basically just consumers and producers, and not citizens. Our political leader must address the collateral damage free trade has on American citizens in particular, and his first principle should be what's best for Americans. “A country is a country,” Trump correctly says.

Putting Americans first isn't necessarily to be confused with being xenophobic or racist or tribal. And, truth to tell, Trump's policies, at their most coherent, are more about the nation than nationalist. Nationalism, after all, is typically expansionist, militarist, and inflamed by some ideological commitment. But Trump isn't even as nationalist as George W. Bush, who talked of the universal longing for liberty articulated in our Declaration of Independence. Trump is no Declaration man. And he certainly says little about the universal rights shared by all human beings. Most of his schemes for making America great again are rather defensive or “protectionist.” He wants to protect and revitalize the home of free and equal citizens that is our country. That doesn't mean a retreat from the prosperity offered by the global marketplace or the security offered by a muscular military; it does mean putting America and Americans first in making great deals with other countries.

The intersection between the insurgencies of Sanders and Trump is, in fact, putting Americans first. Socialists may be, in theory, all about uniting the workers of the world, but Sanders is about American workers in particular. So both he and Trump are about an industrial policy that will enhance the number and status of men and women with real jobs. And Trump, of course, is particularly “un-conservative” in his refusal to criticize American unions and in his determination to preserve the safety nets the American worker now enjoys. One difference between the two is Bernie's opposition to a more restrictive immigration policy; his understanding of American workers isn't limited to American

citizens. Another difference, to Trump's credit, is that he's in favor of promoting American economic growth, which he, in a conservative way, assumes will benefit all Americans in some way or another.

It might even be the case that Trump's focus on citizenship is more effectively egalitarian than Bernie's focus on workers—on the proletariat. Charles Murray explained in *Coming Apart* that the crisis facing our country is the disappearance of a shared middle-class way of life based on common aspirations and equal respect. Americans used to learn about being equal citizens in public schools, and the educational environment managed to be both leveling and elevated, allowing poor girls, for example, the opportunity to date and marry rich guys (and vice versa). Now the cognitive elite—which is highly privileged in terms of money but civically irresponsible (thinking, meritocratically, that its members deserve what they have)—has its own way of life and is isolated from most other Americans. Mating, as Murray and others observe, has become “assortative,” so that the rich not only get richer, but smarter. Members of this elite view the backward opinions and unproductive habits of most Americans with contempt, and they're content to control the excesses of the many with “nudging” public policy and a welfare system that excels in fending off destitution but does less than nothing in facilitating social mobility.



The astute libertarian Tyler Cowen also observes, in *Average Is Over*, that the middle class is shrinking, with the top 20 percent of the country richer, smarter, and more able in every respect while the bottom half is becoming less productive. We are increasingly dominated by people either on very good terms with “genius machines” or with the high level of literacy required to market what those nerds produce. And there's still a strong place in the service industry for those able to satisfy the preferences of the fabulously wealthy.

In this industry, and in most workplaces in general, the virtues particularly prized are being conscientious and being compliant. Cowen, with a bluntness allowed only to libertarian economists, says that women are simply much better at displaying these virtues than men. More than ever, the work of the many is scripted by the intellectual labor of the few. This means that working in the service industry is more soul-sucking than working as a welder or on the assembly line, where nobody cares what you say or think as long as you get the job done. More work than ever these days, to quote C. S. Lewis, is for “men without chests,” and so it's no wonder that spirited men just won't do it. Everyone knows that the seemingly most superfluous

members of our society are males without a college education, men unable to be proud or productive enough to take care of their families or even themselves.

So Trump's legendary contempt for political correctness resonates most of all as a rebellion against being scripted. Trump, the “alpha male,” speaks his mind, and in some measure he speaks for all who feel unable to do the same.

Some Republicans manage to remain complacent enough that they blame the rebellion on the political correctness of the Obama administration, where euphemisms abound and evil and evildoers aren't branded for what they are. But the truth is that political correctness is generically administrative—infesting corporations and private organizations as much as the government. It's a language that devalues the clash of opinions and the legislative deliberation that are features of real citizenship. It's a language that replaces freedom of speech with a standardized and unironic discourse about the twin pillars of our global technocracy—competency and diversity—a kind of discourse that is egalitarian in principle but elitist in practice. It is language that's become increasingly bipartisan, and its goal is to extinguish what's left of real American partisanship as nothing but the

irrational animosity of those on the wrong side of history.

And it's not just the poorly educated who are on the wrong side of history. When Cowen says “average is over,” what he means most of all is the disappearance of white-collar, middle-class jobs. They're being downsized for good reason. It turns out that they're insufficiently productive to justify their generous salaries and secure perks.

One of these jobs is the college professor. He's been proud of his dignified autonomy guaranteed by tenure, his sovereignty over how and what he teaches, and his membership in a collegial community entrusted with institutional governance. He also halfway knows that he's not really productive enough to justify his salary. His way of life is under siege by those demanding more efficiency and productivity. In the name of reliably delivering the most skills and information at the lowest possible price, instructional autonomy is being replaced by teaching off a script based on “best practices” devised by others. All over the white-collar, college-grad world, downsizing is occurring; career employees with security, benefits, and other perks are being replaced by independent contractors delivering the same service on the screen for little more than subsistence.

Now the middle-class teacher or bureaucrat is very unlikely to be for Trump, thinking him a redneck, racist xenophobe who rouses up the poorly educated. But he (or she) is often just as likely to feel that “market forces”

are eroding his dignified personal identity. That means he votes his “class” by voting for the strong leader Bernie Sanders and the remedies he proposes. The socialist Sanders, ironically, has little appeal for the so-called poorly educated. His candidacy is more about the proletarianization of the well-educated. It’s in education, after all, that the politically correct war on all speech that can’t be reduced to either competency or diversity is most advanced, and where scripting by the disruptive innovators of our cognitive elite might be most degrading.

Consider here the ill-considered and often ridiculous polemics against liberal education associated with Marco Rubio, Scott Walker, and John Kasich. And let me add that it’s easy to see that when Sanders talks about free higher education for everyone, he clearly has in mind the excellent liberal education that was available at the City College of New York when he was young. It may be incoherent for the socialist to think of education as for the humanistic elevation of souls, and not just for productivity. But Bernie’s vision, at least, has room for encouraging our kids to become both welders and philosophers, according to their talents and inclinations.

Every effort to theorize Trumpism, of course, abstracts from the fact that the actual Trump is the buffoon who got himself taken seriously. I would never vote for Trump, thinking him the most ill-prepared, the most unstable, the most shameless presidential candidate ever. Still, it’s urgent that Republicans learn from him. And they have! To sum up what Republicans, including many libertarians, have learned: The Republican party has to purge itself of its recently acquired flirtation with (Ayn) Randism, and it has to separate itself from those individualists who think that citizenship is just another name for “rent seeking.” Republicans have to become more civic and more republican (with a small “r”). They have to remember all that is implied in the fact that “a country is a country.” A shared political life is an irreducible part of who we are as free and relational beings.

What’s wrong with Trumpism, even in its most idealized form? It’s easier to begin with what’s wrong with Sanders. Instead of inspiring civic solidarity or duty-laden activism, he promises, as a strong leader, to envelop Americans in myriad programs that will guarantee their security and prosperity. One reason that Bernie is the overwhelming favorite of the young is that he seems to offer them maximum conceivable personal autonomy with an unprecedented amount of government-mandated security. They will be able to live as they please, without being obsessed with the future, which will be funded by taxing the heck out of the rich.

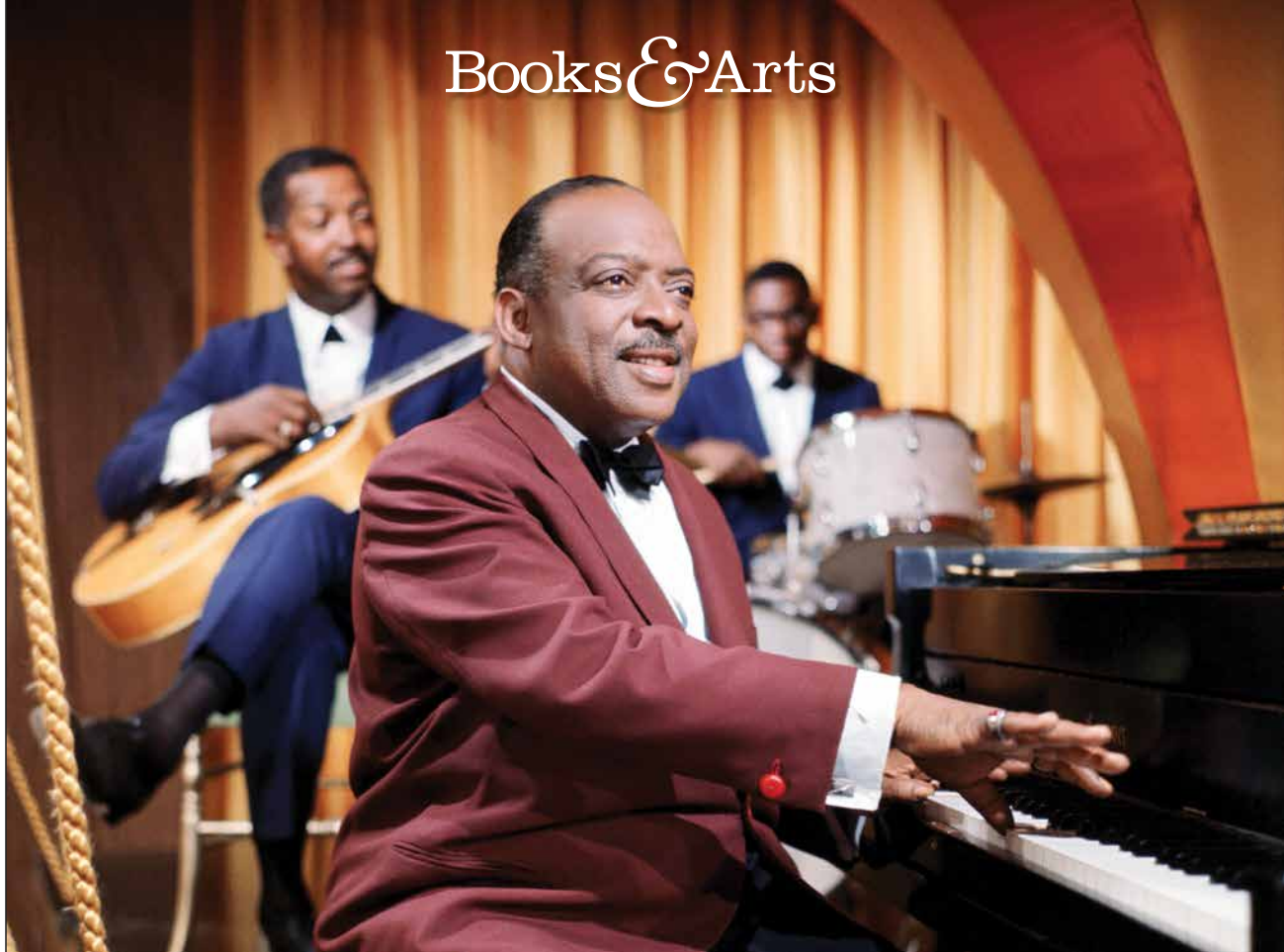
Trump has a similar shortcoming: Instead of asking more of all American citizens—calling upon them to connect once again the privileges with the responsibilities of

being an American—he promises to be the leader on whom they can rely to get better deals. Because Trump seems to be more a “strong man” than a statesman, he doesn’t really include the deliberation and the activity of citizens in his vision of renewed American greatness. He doesn’t follow Kennedy in urging Americans to ask, at least once in a while, what you can do for your country, not to mention what you can do to elevate the lives of your fellow citizens. He seems to promise to do all the elevating himself. And that’s not so democratic or so republican, after all.

Trump’s vision of citizenship is also too much like tribalism. Orestes Brownson, as Richard Reinsch observes, is the American thinker who most forcefully articulated the truth that what separates a republic from a tribe is a genuine devotion to the common good. A republic is more than a form of collective selfishness. This means, for example, that the deals Americans make have to take into account, in the appropriate measure, the rights all human beings share in common. Citizens deliberate about the irreducible tension between one’s own good—and one’s country’s good—and the responsibilities we have to all our fellow creatures. A country that is really a country doesn’t devolve into either a form of apolitical humanitarianism—as in Obama, citizen of the world—or a security-obsessed division of the world into nothing more than friends and enemies. That’s the tension embedded, as Brownson, Lincoln, Chesterton, and many others have reminded us, in our Declaration of Independence.

Trumpism, to become better than Trump himself will ever know, needs to be informed by the best reflections on the nation and on citizenship. Roger Scruton, for example, tells us that the loyal citizen of a particular nation finds the proper mean between xenophobia and what Scruton calls *oikophobia*—or an implacable hostility to attachment to a particular place as home. Our competency and diversity enthusiasts in both parties and in our government bureaucracies, corporations, foundations, and educational institutions are way too *oikophobic*—too much about undermining the dignified conditions of life for most people.

But citizenship properly understood also counters xenophobia. It’s as citizens that we learn to respect and trust strangers, and to resist always preferring those we know to all our fellow citizens. One of the strongest arguments for the persistence of countries or nations, of course, is that it turns out that only countries or nations effectively secure rights. Immigrants, after all, leave their native homes in search for a place that reliably protects the rule of law—the indispensable condition for building a prosperous and dignified life for oneself and one’s own. The rule of law—or constitutionalism broadly understood—is a theme conspicuous by its absence in the populism of Trump and Sanders, but it’s the true foundation of the American romance of the free and equal citizen. ♦



Count Basie on piano, Freddie Green on guitar (1966)

# Can You Hear It?

Even a 'moldy fig' may have something to learn. BY WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

**T**ed Gioia has established himself in the forefront of contemporary writers about jazz. *The Imperfect Art* (1988) is a short collection of essays about the form; *The History of Jazz* (2011) provides a fair-minded survey of the art, from Buddy Bolden to Wynton Marsalis; most recently, *The Jazz Standards* (2012) considered a number of American songs that have been performed and recorded by disparate jazz musicians.

His latest is a how-to book, a packed and useful introduction to the medium with suggestions and aids for the listener who wants to gain

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**How to Listen to Jazz**  
by Ted Gioia  
Basic Books, 272 pp., \$24.99

entrance to a rich and complicated body of work. Gioia aspires to “bare my own process of listening” by, among other things, proposing various strategies for making the music more available. He is convinced that careful listening can “demystify virtually all of the intricacies and marvels of jazz,” and to that end, his seven chapters, crammed with key figures and some of their best recordings, are usefully and engagingly directed. Before getting very far in this little book, you feel you are in good hands—in touch with some-

one who has very good ears indeed.

Accordingly, he presumes that his readers have (or can develop) comparably good ears so that they can get inside the music by first attending to the “mystery of rhythm”—the “pulse” or “swing” that differentiates the good performer or group from the mediocre one. Listening to a jazz solo by a trumpet or tenor saxophone demands that you register how phrasing *across* the bar that separates one four-beat measure from the next results in satisfying musical patterns. “Syncopation,” a word central to the jazz performance, Gioia calls a “deliberate disruption in the flow of the music.” In a blues song, the performer “both plays the note and refuses to play it,” disrupting any too-firm reliance on an unvaried

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pitch. He quotes from the great saxophone player Sidney Bechet, whose way of teaching was to provide the learner with one single note to practice on:

See how many ways you can play that note—growl it, smear it, flat it, sharp it, do anything you want to it. That's how you express your feelings in this music. It's like talking.

Gioia recommends “slow listening” and says that, in his own case, such listening was facilitated by playing a recording at half-speed, a pace at which phrasing, variations in dynamics, and tonal coloring can be more sharply brought out.

As a person who plays piano well enough to show some musical credentials, I was pleased to hear Gioia speak of “the metric structure” of jazz, which for the most part has consisted of units of four-beat bars, a meter persisting since the 1930s, whether in New Orleans, swing, or bebop. Here there is a clear analogy with the way a student should be introduced to poetry; that is, through listening to it rather than struggling to find out what it “really means.” The authority on such listening is Robert Frost, who declared that the ear is “the only true writer and the only true reader” and proposed that “the possibilities for tune from the dramatic tones of meaning struck across the rigidity of a limited meter are endless.”

Gioia would applaud Frost's notion of rhythm in poetry coming out of the tension between the way one intones, or “says,” a verse line and the iambic pentameter (or whatever the meter is) against which it plays. The tunes that capture us in a jazz performance are similarly born out of something like that tension. Gioia's “close listening” brought to mind the teacher who introduced me to poetry, Reuben Brower (with Frost somewhere behind him), who extolled the virtues of “slow reading.”

Another interesting piece of advice is Gioia's suggestion that we sing along with the music. His case in point is Charlie Parker, the alto sax player and, along with Dizzy Gillespie's trumpet, the central figure in 1940s bop. Gioia mentions a number of Parker record-

ings, ranging from not-so-hard-to-hard-to-vocalize, in which the “tune” (with a little practice) can be followed. What might be the upshot of such listening and singing?

You will internalize the chromaticism and cadences even if you have no notion of the technical rules that guide them. This will give you a deep sense of Parker's contributions to the jazz vocabulary.

Himself a teacher, Ted Gioia vows that it works. I thought of it the other morning at breakfast when there turned up in my mind a recording by the great clarinetist Pee Wee Russell of “Rose of Washington Square.” I hadn't heard the recording in years, but managed to do a pretty good job on my own at vocalizing Russell's exquisite performance of the tune, with all its twists, wriggles, tonal whines, and pitch flattings that made him such an inimitable musician. Somehow or other, through repeated listenings and probably singings, I had internalized it so that my morning attempt came off pretty well.

Another of Gioia's useful teaching devices is to break down a small group recording, such as Jelly Roll Morton's “Sidewalk Blues” or an arrangement of Duke Ellington's great 1940s band, “Sepia Panorama.” We're not provided with anything complicated by way of musicological technicalities, simply a chart showing what happens in the first four measures of “Sidewalk Blues” (after some prefatory car horns and whistles): “A theme (12 bars) comprised of 2-bar introductions for each of the main instruments: piano (2 bars), trombone (2 bars), cornet (2 bars), clarinet (2 bars) and finally the entire band (2 bars).”

I have long been delighted by that introduction, but to have it broken down, and be reminded of what instruments are playing and for how long I'm hearing them, was extremely satisfying. Nice to have someone else do for you what you're too lazy to do for yourself.

The longest chapter is 61 pages, “The Evolution of Jazz Styles,” surveying schools from New Orleans to the present. For each school there is a

recommended short list of pieces for listening. I was most interested in the section devoted to Big Band swing, since that's where my jazz listening got its start: Ellington, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw—above all, for me, Woody Herman (though Gioia doesn't mention him). Beginning in the mid-'30s, this meeting place between swinging jazz and popular song was brief and all but dead by the end of World War II. But it proved, in Gioia's words, that “two sensibilities could coincide,” and some of us never got over it.

The term “moldy fig” used to be scornfully directed at those who kept on listening to New Orleans/Dixieland after the swing, bebop, and cool jazz eras succeeded to their short reigns. Moving back from swing bands, I grew to love Louis Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, Jelly Roll Morton, and the marvelous Kid Ory, but have now, myself, turned into a moldy fig when it comes to keeping up with (much less appreciating) what's happened to jazz over the last few decades. Gioia's classificatory terms for latter-day music—“Jazz/Rock Fusion,” “World Music,” “Post-modernism and Neo-Classical Jazz”—may suggest the difficulty. As a listener to classical music, that music, for me, essentially drew to a close early in the last century, with Gustav Mahler, Claude Debussy, Igor Stravinsky. This happened to some brands of literature as well: Where, now, are the epics, the satires in heroic couplets, the poetic dramas that once thrived? When Gioia, maintaining the continuing aliveness of jazz, writes that the jazz world has turned into “a type of musical buffet, in which every taste and curiosity would be satisfied,” I have to answer: not mine—and I suspect the buffet image does not attract listeners whose preference for one type of jazz excludes welcoming all other types.

My only criticism of this enlightened and enlightening condensation of jazz history, and its various peaks, is that Ted Gioia has to be an equal-opportunity critic. If one finds it difficult to enjoy contemporary “free jazz,” whatever that means, it may be

that we're weighted down with too much "conceptual baggage," and to get rid of that baggage, one must "open yourself up to the experiential quality of the music." But jazz, in its great decades, didn't need help from a word like "experiential" to earn its keep. Maybe—and this is your moldy fig talking—if you like one sort of jazz bet-

ter than another, your partisan stance makes that preference even stronger.

If this verges on sentimentality—that, in a line from a Randall Jarrell poem, "In those days everything was better"—still there's some truth in the sentiment. So crack open the jug and let's listen once more to Armstrong's "Potato Head Blues." ♦



# Professor Lonely

*Not as bad as, but in some ways worse than, it seems.*

BY VINCENT J. CANNATO

Many people observed what happened on some college campuses last fall and wondered what the heck is going on in American higher education. Incidents from Yale to the University of Missouri to Dartmouth featured aggrieved students shouting down opponents, administrators unwilling or unable to defend academic freedom, and calls from students to rename buildings honoring those now deemed politically incorrect. These university controversies introduced the American public to new terms such as "microaggressions," "safe spaces," and "white privilege."

As someone who has spent close to a quarter-century—nearly half my life—in academia, as both student and professor, I often tell people who are concerned about what is happening that the situation in higher education is both not as bad as it appears from news reports, but at the same time much worse. How can both of these be true?

Let's deal with the first part of that answer. I don't mean to suggest that the news reports were wrong or that what happened on these college campuses wasn't terrible. However, there are many universities and colleges in

**Passing on the Right**  
*Conservative Professors  
in the Progressive University*  
by Jon A. Shields and Joshua M. Dunn Sr.  
Oxford, 256 pp., \$29.95

America that employ thousands of faculty and staff and educate millions of students. At my own state university there were no protests or disruptions this past fall, and I suspect the same was true at most colleges. In fact, most of the worst campus incidents have taken place at very elite institutions.

A majority of faculty, in my experience, are regular left-liberal Democrats, not wild-eyed radicals. And in fact, academia is also home to hundreds of right-of-center professors: libertarians, traditionalist social conservatives, and mainstream conservative Republicans. This group is the subject of *Passing on the Right*. Its authors—political scientists Jon Shields and Joshua Dunn Sr., who teach at Claremont McKenna College and the University of Colorado—Colorado Springs, respectively—have produced a clear-eyed and rational discussion of modern academia that steers clear of polemics and challenges the dogmas of both the left and the right.

Shields and Dunn—who self-identify as right-leaning professors—looked for conservative professors in six fields: sociology, philosophy, history, political science, economics, and English/

literature. From an initial list of 249 scholars, they eventually interviewed 153 professors at 84 colleges around the country. (Full disclosure: I was contacted by one of the authors and scheduled an interview with him. At the last minute, our interview was canceled so I was never interviewed for the book.)

Previous surveys of academia found that conservatives are a small minority of faculty: somewhere between 5 and 10 percent of social science and humanities faculty. In fact, in many departments, Marxists outnumber conservatives. Yet despite this imbalance, and despite the high-profile cases of radicalism run amok, Shields and Dunn state that most of the conservative academics they spoke with believe that "the academy is far more tolerant than right-wing critics of the progressive university seem to imagine." The authors conclude that "the right-wing critique of the university is overdrawn."

I find myself in agreement with many of Shields and Dunn's conclusions, which ring true from my own experiences and what I have heard from other conservative academics. Yet this book is bound to frustrate many conservatives who have pilloried the academic left for years. Already, *Passing on the Right* has come in for criticism from Peter Wood, president of the National Association of Scholars, who called it "profoundly cynical" and frankly stated: "I don't welcome Shields and Dunn's book."

Wood misses the larger point. The value of this book is that it shows conservatives that there are like-minded people working within liberal academia struggling to provide some semblance of intellectual balance in an increasingly liberal—and dogmatic—university world. Conservative criticisms of academia often veer into the kind of victimology that the right decries when practiced by others. Yes, academia is a difficult road for those conservatives, but complaining about it accomplishes much less than finding a way to succeed. There are actually conservative professors who are not just surviving but also thriving, and who actually enjoy their academic careers.

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This is a book also directed at liberals. It reminds them that the small number of conservatives in their midst are not fringe kooks but rational and intelligent people whose existence is vital if academia is going to thrive and avoid becoming a politicized world full of social-justice activists instead of a place of reasoned dialogue and debate.

Who are these conservative professors? A few commonalities emerge. Half are Christians who attend church regularly, with an overrepresentation of Roman Catholics. A large number are libertarians—especially those in economics—who believe markets do a good job of allocating society’s resources. In addition, the authors write, “the most common value that runs through these personal testimonies is patriotism.” By that, they mean that many conservative professors had slowly “drifted rightward because they found that the left overemphasized America’s moral failings.”

Shields and Dunn summarize the ideology of most of their respondents as “Madisonian,” meaning “a political vision that values the discovery of common ground over ideological purity, learned elites over charismatic leaders, and reasoned appeals over passionate exhortations.” Most (though certainly not all) respondents are critical of the kind of populism that has swept through the ranks of the Republican party and the conservative movement. Published before the dawn of the age of Trump, these observations ring even truer today. Many blanch at the representation of Ann Coulter as a conservative intellectual and cringe when she is invited to speak on campus.

The authors have little use for liberal scholars who argue that conservatives somehow lack the intelligence or psychological makeup to be academics. Ideas like this lead to what Shields and

Dunn refer to as a “spoiled identity” for conservative scholars.

They identify three strategies that conservatives use to cope with this “spoiled identity”: assimilative, evasive, and combative. “Assimilative” professors see themselves as “ambassadors” for conservatives and find it important “to puncture liberal stereotypes about themselves and other

of their subjects “said that they moved right after taking courses with progressive scholars.” My own journey highlights this. The professor who encouraged me to become an academic is a prominent New Left historian and a red-diaper baby. Two of my other favorite professors were both Marxists. One was a labor historian who taught political economy and confessed that



*Duke University (2016)*

conservatives by presenting themselves as thoughtful and temperate university citizens.” Shields and Dunn contrast that with the “evasive” style, where scholars shy away from political conversations with colleagues and avoid large academic conferences where they feel unwelcome. Those conservatives who choose the “combative” style actively and aggressively challenge and provoke their liberal colleagues. The authors, however, find that “few of the professors we interviewed are drawn to the combative style.”

Shields and Dunn write that many

he despised the liberal economists we read but had a grudging respect for Milton Friedman. The other was an old European Marxist who taught a political philosophy course on conservative thought from de Maistre and Burke down to Russell Kirk and Irving Kristol. It was a model course that deepened my understanding of conservatism’s intellectual underpinnings. George Nash could not have come up with a better syllabus.

Some will suggest that Shields and Dunn downplay the struggles that conservatives face in academia. They are not naïve and do not suggest that

everything is great. They retell the pettiness that conservatives commonly encounter from liberal colleagues. They mention stories of contentious tenure cases and the depressing story of Mark Regnerus, a sociologist at the University of Texas who researched children raised by same-sex parents. The opposition to Regnerus's research highlights the threats to academic freedom that unfortunately exist.

They also find that many conservative professors hide their politics at some point in their careers—all but a few remain anonymous in this book. Shields and Dunn find that roughly “one-third of professors in the six disciplines we investigated tended to conceal their politics prior to tenure,” while almost half have practiced some sort of political self-censorship in their careers (i.e., not publishing in conservative journals, not donating or volunteering for conservative causes or political parties). Another depressing finding is that some conservative Catholic professors are made to feel unwelcome in Catholic schools.

The most painful parts of the book are the stories of conservative professors who go beyond just hiding their beliefs and actually try to “pass” as liberals. They share jokes about George W. Bush with their colleagues or publish in liberal journals. One friend of mine, while a graduate student, even went so far as to publish an essay in a radical academic journal to better cover his political tracks. (He is now tenured and has happily come out of the political closet.)

All of this material, well represented here, speaks of a decidedly unhealthy environment on college campuses. To paint any other picture would be foolish. That brings me to the second part of my answer: Things are probably much worse in academia than they appear even from the stories of student protests that dominated the headlines last fall.

It is not that “tenured radicals” have overrun the university; it is that progressivism has become professionalized in the university. By that, I mean that it has been woven deeply into the fabric of everyday academic life.

A dean of liberal arts once told me that she wanted to hire young scholars

doing “cutting-edge” research. It is a phrase much more suited to the sciences, but what she meant was clear: those doing trendy, and often politicized, research. There is little reason to actively discriminate against conservatives (although it does happen); all that is needed is to advertise jobs that specialize in race or gender or “transnationalism.” Conservative scholars are naturally drawn to more traditional fields of studies—studies that the above-mentioned dean and most of her colleagues find anything but “cutting-edge.”

Entire fields are now crafted around research interests and methodologies that presuppose certain ideological viewpoints—and marginalize others. American studies, sociology, women's studies, and other “studies” departments organized around racial and ethnic identities are examples. There is nothing intrinsically “liberal” about the field of sociology, for instance; well-respected center-right scholars such as Robert Nisbet, Nathan Glazer, and Seymour Martin Lipset have been sociologists. Yet the direction of sociology—and many other departments—has moved away from issues that animate conservatives. Right-leaning scholars, as Shields and Dunn argue, are interested in studying the role of social institutions and traditions, family structure, and the costs of social policy. Yet these are mostly outside the bounds of research in many departments. In history, the move away from political history toward social history helped politicize the field and marginalize conservatives.

The result is that academia is gradually becoming an intellectual monoculture. There is a general idea that debates over great ideas are what a university is all about. But modern academia has much less intellectual give-and-take than one would assume. Part of the reason is the growing sensitivity found on campuses and the fear that such debates might run afoul over issues of political correctness.

Another reason is more subtle. Academics are so prone to petty grievances that “collegiality” has become an important concept. Professors

should obviously be able to work together in an atmosphere that values civility. Collegiality, however, has also come to mean that robust debates and intellectual disagreements are often frowned upon. Why hire someone whose political views might upset the social and intellectual appletart and lead to bad feelings?

As for what is to be done, *Passing on the Right* is not terribly helpful. Shields and Dunn make an unconvincing argument on behalf of ideological affirmative action, but also note that they found little support for such a policy among the conservative professors they studied. They hope that young conservatives are encouraged to pursue academic careers, but careful readers of this book will see the problems that await those who choose such a path.

In a recent *Commentary* essay, the historian Warren Treadgold suggests a possible answer: the creation of a new university that would contrast itself with the increasingly politicized current system. Conservatives should avoid creating new ideological ghettos that replace the politicized progressive university with a politicized conservative one. But a college that values the humanities, with an emphasis on the history, art, and literature of Western civilization, would attract students—especially if such an education could be offered for less money than what elite schools are charging these days. The logistics of creating a new school from scratch might be too daunting, but it is an idea worth considering. Conservatives believe in the benefits of competition, and American higher education could certainly use more of it.

I'm pessimistic that things will get better as a spirit of illiberalism grows and more aspects of the university become politicized. I'm afraid that if a book such as *Passing on the Right* is published 25 years from now, it will be much harder to find as many conservative academics as Shields and Dunn have uncovered. Still, the authors make a strong case for the importance of conservative voices in modern academia and for why conservatives should not abandon the field of higher education to the progressive left. ♦

# The Wondrous Critic

*The eye and the pen of Robert Hughes were without peer.* BY JAMES GARDNER

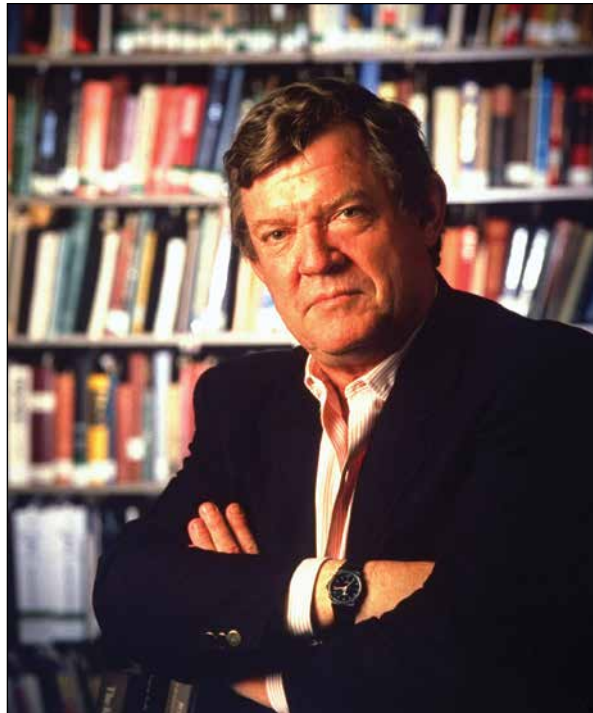
It is an oddity of Robert Hughes's posthumous reputation that, although this art critic received many tributes when he died in 2012, and although they have now been repeated in the context of his latest book, they come more from literary and cultural critics than from those art critics who were, in a sense, his peers.

In part this was because Hughes's excellence could not be contained in the relatively narrow, not to say paltry, confines of his stated profession. Seeking a broader and more ambitious context in which to display his abundant gifts, he became a respected historian of his native Australia, a polemicist against political correctness, a memorialist, and much besides. But the profession with which he began and ended, and by which he most defined himself, was that of a critic of painting and sculpture.

As for his fellow art critics, it is not so much that they held him in low regard as that they ignored him completely, as though he inhabited a different universe from theirs. Furthermore, there was a weird tautology to their indifference. I remember trying to explain his excellence to a fellow critic who was far more keyed into the contemporary art world than Hughes ever wished to be. If he was so good, she asked, why had she never read his articles, and why had she never heard anyone refer to them? Twenty years out, the

*James Gardner's latest book is*  
Buenos Aires: The Biography of a City.

**The Spectacle of Skill**  
*New and Selected Writings*  
of Robert Hughes  
Knopf, 688 pp., \$40



*Robert Hughes (1996)*

towering obtuseness of that query has always reminded me of Pauline Kael's consternation at Richard Nixon's reelection, since she claimed not to know a single person who had voted for him. The consequence of the art world's indifference to Hughes, in any case, is that no one, either inside the art world or outside of it, has satisfactorily explained just what made him a wondrous critic of the visual arts. Let us begin.

*The Spectacle of Skill* is an anthology of previously published works that includes a generous sampling from his

well-received history of modern art, *The Shock of the New*, as well as his books on Rome and Barcelona, *The Fatal Shore* (a history of his native Australia), a biography of Goya, and much else. As welcome as these excerpts are, the most valuable addition of all is the heretofore unpublished second volume of his memoirs, which—to judge from their general level of polish—were nearly fit to print when he died at 74. And yet it is regrettable that nothing was included from his earliest works, *The Art of Australia* and *Heaven and Hell in Western Art*, both published in Australia in the 1960s and now very difficult to come by.

But if Hughes's book-length works have been widely and deservedly praised, his real greatness—and that superannuated word is nothing less than his desserts—is best displayed in those thousand-word essays that he published in *Time* over four decades, beginning in the early 1970s. All the examples here come from his collection *Nothing If Not Critical*, first published in 1990, and they contain elegant assessments of Whistler, Eakins, Pollock, and Warhol, among others.

The most manifest virtue of these essays is their language, marked by an uncommon command of vocabulary and (in our day) a far rarer mastery of syntax, allied to a thoroughly antiquated respect for the rules of grammar. Open this anthology anywhere and you will be hard put to find a sentence that

is not as memorable for its very phrasing as it is for its thought. John Singer Sargent “was the last of what had passed, not the first of what was to come; but he still looks impressive, and one realizes his sense of decorum went deeper than the mere desire to curate the vanity of the rich.” Likewise, when Jackson Pollock “found he could throw lines of paint in the air, the laws of energy and fluid motion made up for the awkwardness of his fist, and from then on, there was no grace that he could not claim.”

In these two opinions, the justness of Hughes's appraisal, and the

breadth of his response, are as admirable as the distinction of his language. In this connection it is worth observing that most art critics never possess, or promptly lose, the power to surprise their readers. If there was ever a time when they really looked at art, it probably happened before they turned 30—and that was it for them. In one of Hughes's reviews, by contrast, anything can happen. One has the sense that he looked at the world with undiminished intensity throughout his life and that he felt compelled, sometimes almost in spite of himself, to vouch for any excellence he saw, wherever he found it. In the case of Pollock, Hughes saw the concealed, almost rococo, refinement that underpinned the artist's frantic protestations of force. And although Hughes cultivated a distinctly macho persona—back in the seventies he was conspicuous in the art world for his biker outfits and his motorcycle—he was too perceptive not to see, and too honest not to acknowledge, even the mannered excellence of society portraitists like Sargent and Whistler.

It is slightly regrettable that the selection of reviews included here is limited to artists from 1880 to 1980. As such, it gives too narrow a sense of Hughes's dazzling range. In an art world overwhelmingly fixated on modern and contemporary art, Hughes was one of the few critics in America who wrote with authority on the Old Masters and, to a lesser but still admirable extent, on medieval and ancient art.

Even though no one (to my knowledge) ever disputed Hughes's literary gifts, it has been fashionable to disparage his response to art itself. Clement Greenberg famously said of him that, although he could write, he had "a bad eye." This is wrong to the point of calumny. Indeed, Robert Hughes had perhaps the best eye of any critic of his age. Rare was the excellence that he could not see. If he erred on occasion, it was in somewhat exaggerating—at least by my lights—the worth of certain Britannic contemporaries like Lucian Freud, Frank Auerbach, and Howard Hodgkin. But every critic has

his lapses, many have nothing else, and most steer clear of them simply by thoughtlessly assenting to the pieties handed down to them from on high.

It has also been said that Hughes, unlike Greenberg and others of that older generation, never discovered important new artists, never publicized important new schools. But the truth is that, by the time Hughes arrived on the scene in the 1970s, there were few new schools to discover—and now there are, effectively, none. More

to the point, the very model of the art critic as promoter of new art had become, as it remains, risibly *beside* the point. Only by providing unpaid publicity to artists can a critic now hope to participate in an art world fueled more by the prestige of dealers and collectors than by the intelligence, or culture, or literary skills of critics. It was only the inspired achievement of Robert Hughes that lent the illusion of vitality to a dying profession that he so spectacularly transcended. ♦

BCA

## Old Fritz

*A scholar's account of Prussia's enlightened despot.*

BY ANDREW NAGORSKI

In 1717, Frederick William, the king of Prussia, gave his 5-year-old son a full company of lead soldiers for Christmas. This was in keeping with the monarch's insistence that the boy's education should be guided by the principle "that there is nothing in the world that bestows on a prince more fame and honor than the sword." But his son, who later would be called Frederick the Great, barely glanced at his father's gift. Instead, as Tim Blanning writes in this fascinating new biography of the Prussian ruler, "the little boy ... turned away to a magnificently bound volume of French melodies and was soon entrancing his female audience with his lute."

Blanning, a former professor of modern European history at Cambridge and prolific author, peppers his latest hefty volume with numerous revealing anecdotes of this ilk. As he points out, he has been studying Prussia's most famous king "for as long as I can remember." The result is a book that is both panoramic in scope and crammed full of often-petty rivalries and personal details, along with the seemingly incessant military cam-

*Andrew Nagorski's latest book, The Nazi Hunters, is published this month.*

### Frederick the Great

*King of Prussia*

by Tim Blanning

Random House, 688 pp., \$35

paigns. That can make for a dense narrative at times, but his subject defies easy characterization—or any categorization. Frederick, after all, has been portrayed as an enlightened ruler who disregarded many of the social conventions of his time, while he was later hailed by Hitler as one of his heroes, a leader who demonstrated the virtues of Prussian militarism and discipline.

Over the ages, monarchs have abused, tortured, imprisoned, and even killed their own children, so it was hardly surprising that the little boy who spurned the gift of lead soldiers was destined to suffer mightily at the hands of his wrathful father. Blanning devotes the early part of his book to "the breaking of Frederick," as he aptly puts it, which makes for grim but utterly mesmerizing reading. While Frederick did not experience anything remarkably extreme by the standards of his times, the modern reader cannot help but be struck by the humiliating nature of his relentless mistreatment—and how it shaped his character.



*Adolph Menzel's depiction (1852) of Frederick the Great playing the flute at Sanssouci*

Frederick's father, who suffered from porphyria, a hereditary affliction that often triggered his violent rages and mood swings, quickly became alarmed by his oldest son's "effeminacy"—his lack of interest in hunting and other "manly" pursuits, his love of literature and music, and as he grew older, his close friendships with other young men. After Frederick tried to run away to England, his father punched him repeatedly in the face and sent him off to prison, treating him as a traitor. His life was spared, but not before he was forced to witness the beheading of Lieutenant Hans Hermann von Katte, who was branded a co-conspirator—but whose fate was probably sealed by the almost certainly well-founded belief that he was one of the crown prince's lovers.

Recognizing that only complete capitulation would satisfy his father, Frederick "submitted and dissembled," as Blanning puts it, to win a par-

don. He pledged obedience and repeatedly threw himself at the ruler's feet. Most important, he agreed to marry Elizabeth Christine, his father's choice, sleeping with her "out of duty rather than inclination," as he explained to a friend. When his father died in 1740, he quickly abandoned the pretense of a normal marriage. He rarely saw the woman who was nominally the queen, and he ostentatiously elevated the queen mother, treating her as the first lady of Prussia.

While cautioning that the boundaries between homosexuality and heterosexuality were "more fluid" in Frederick's era than in more recent times, Blanning maintains that his father's death freed him to transform his court into a "homosocial, homoerotic and probably homosexual" milieu. He was also free (and wealthy enough) to indulge his taste for the arts that his father had always despised. He built Berlin's lavish new opera house, which could seat an

audience of 2,000, and multiple palaces, rapidly acquiring collections of paintings and sculptures to fill them. The city's fame as a cultural capital spread rapidly, attracting the *haut monde* of Europe.

Frederick offered Voltaire, whose subversive writing he had admired in his youth, refuge and then a paid position, with both men displaying, as Blanning points out, "an extraordinary fluency in turning out page after page of short rhyming lines on every kind of subject." With his "busy pen," Blanning adds, Frederick also churned out a volume called *Anti-Machiavelli or An Examination of Machiavelli's Il Principe Together with Historical and Political Notes*.

Viewed selectively, Frederick's pronouncements could be seen as truly revolutionary. In his treatise on Machiavelli, he argued, "Princes who wage unjust wars are more cruel and cold-blooded than any tyrant ever was." On

other occasions, he defended basic freedoms: “I want everyone in my state to be able to pray to God and to make love as they see fit,” he declared. He also pointed out that “if newspapers are to be interesting, they must not be interfered with.” But of course, interfere he did, demanding effective control and imposing his own, often quirky, literary judgments. Shakespeare wrote “abominable plays,” he opined. And after his ardor for Voltaire cooled, he publicly burned one of his pamphlets.

The king’s often-contradictory actions were tied to the many targets of his fierce contempt. He voiced, in the most vulgar terms, his misogynistic views of powerful women like the Holy Roman empress Maria Theresa and Russia’s Catherine the Great. He dismissed German literature as “a farrago of inflated phrases” and even the “semi-barbaric” German language, which accounted for his preference for French. While espousing tolerance, he despised all religions, dubbing Christianity “an old metaphysical fiction.” He also discriminated against the Jews, explaining that they were part of the “most dangerous” sect.

Frederick may have been an enlightened despot, in the sense that he embraced some of the arts and claimed to value poor peasants as much as nobles. This stood in stark contrast to his father, who held the rigidly conventional views of most monarchs on such subjects. But in reality, Frederick could be as autocratic as his predecessor, not allowing “non-noble vermin” in his officer corps, for example, and insisting on the classic notions of honor, duty, and service—which meant subservience to his will.

Father and son were most alike when it came to warfare, despite Frederick’s early lack of interest in martial matters. Disregarding what he had written in his attack on Machiavelli, he admitted that “I love war for the glory.” He was soon embroiled in three wars

for Silesia, along with the Seven Years’ War that pitted Prussia and England against Austria, France, and Russia. “If one does not advance, one retreats,” Frederick declared by way of explanation for his “constantly advancing ... from conquest to conquest.”

*Unlike leaders today,  
Frederick risked as  
much as the men  
he sent into battle.  
During a near-  
disastrous defeat at  
the hands of Russian  
forces in 1759,  
Frederick barely  
escaped with his life.*



*Flowers and potatoes at Frederick’s grave, Potsdam*

In fact, there were also costly defeats, and his attempts to compare himself to Alexander the Great hardly stood up to scrutiny. He was guilty of “bone-headed obstinacy,” Blanning writes, when he refused to listen to his generals in one key battle against the Austrians. The tens of thousands of dead and dying in this and other battles were “victims of his ambition,” Blanning adds. But there was no doubting Frederick’s personal cour-

age. Unlike leaders today, he risked as much as the men he sent into battle. During a near-disastrous defeat at the hands of Russian forces in 1759, Frederick barely escaped with his life: “My coat is riddled with musket balls,” he wrote, “and I have had two horses killed beneath me.” Despondent, he predicted that “I shall not survive this cruel turn of fortune.”

Survive he did, of course—and more. In a region of conflicting, often bewildering, loyalties and intrigues, Frederick became a de facto partner of Austria and Russia in the first partial partition of Poland in 1772. This accelerated the country’s decline that would culminate in its total partition after his death, but Frederick would have had no problem with that. “Poland is in a perpetual state of anarchy,” he wrote. “The Poles are vain, haughty when fortune smiles upon them, and mean in adversity.”

Frederick died in 1786 at the age of 74, having ruled his kingdom for 46 years. Appropriately, neither his wife nor any clergy were at his side when he breathed his last. Although his military record was decidedly mixed, Blanning concludes that “Frederick could congratulate himself on having garnered sufficient resources to take his state from third-rate to first-rate status in Europe,” especially by conquering Silesia and adding the province of West Prussia.

Even for readers who are reasonably familiar with the broad outlines of Europe’s upheavals in the 18th century, *Frederick the*

*Great* can be tough going at times, particularly in the recounting of the incessant fighting and complex royal politics that crisscrossed borders. But as Frederick would say—in French, of course—*chapeau bas* (hats off) to Blanning for navigating this treacherous terrain as skillfully as he does. In the process, he has provided a highly authoritative, rich, multilayered profile of a leader whose record is still debated to this day. ♦

# Dubliners' Joy

*Coming of age to a pop eighties soundtrack.*

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

**S**ing Street is laden with melodramatic elements: a marriage disintegrating against the background of a national economic crisis, a vicious priest who beats up a boy, a wayward teenage girl with an institutionalized mother and a sexually abusive father, even a reckless emigration on a leaky motorboat. But the movie that houses them is playful, offhanded, exuberant, and infectiously optimistic.

*Sing Street* is about teenagers whose circumstances ought to be sucking the life out of them but who are just too full of raw energy, enthusiasm, and talent to be laid low. If you don't like it, you might not have a heart.

Set in Dublin in 1985, *Sing Street* is about the formation of a pop-rock group—which comes into existence for no better reason than a kid needs a reason to keep talking to a beautiful girl. His name is Conor, he's 15, and he's been consigned to a violent inner-city school because his parents are going broke. After a week of hazing by bullies and mistreatment by the school's principal, Conor is leaving school when he sees 16-year-old Raphina standing on a stoop and impulsively asks her to star in the video his band is making on Saturday.

There is no video. There is no band. So Conor hurriedly assembles a bunch of outlier kids, and they name their band after the location of their school, Synge Street. This is writer-

John Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, is THE WEEKLY STANDARD's movie critic.

## Sing Street

Directed by John Carney



Ferdia Walsh-Peelo, Lucy Boynton

director John Carney's homage to John Millington Synge, the great Dublin playwright whose effort to bring naturalism to the portrayal of ordinary life in Ireland in *The Playboy of the Western World* resulted in nationalist riots upon its premiere in 1907. Like Synge, Carney has taken it as his mission to capture the Irish quotidian and elevate it into poetry. His glorious 2007 breakthrough film, *Once*, is about a brokenhearted busker and his Eastern European muse, who come together almost by accident to write and record some beautiful songs as they wander through the streets of Dublin.

*Once* is about adults trying to make something of their lives; *Sing Street* is about teenagers saving theirs. For it turns out that *Sing Street* is really, really

good. The band's songs, which Carney cowrote with Gary Clark, are a mish-mash of 1980s MTV pop—some Duran Duran here, some Cure there, a little Joe Jackson, a dash of New Romantics.

Each new song, influenced by that week's offerings on the hit show *Top of the Pops*, occasions a new band style, as the boys cycle through glam and pop and punk. And of course, there are the videos, filmed with a camcorder by a kid who doesn't know how to use one—but which come out looking no worse than the nonsense that filled MTV's airwaves in its first five years.

The love story that propels the movie

is a trifle wan and suffers from the movie's casting mismatch. Raphina, the girl of Conor's dreams, is not especially interesting—and Lucy Boynton, who plays her, looks 15 years older than Ferdia Walsh-Peelo, who plays Conor. She seems more like his babysitter than his potential girlfriend. That said, Lucy Boynton is such a knockout she bids fair to be the next major movie ingénue (after Margot Robbie and Alicia Vikander).

The other problem is that Walsh-Peelo has a great voice and real poise.

This shouldn't be anything but good for the movie, but he makes Conor seem like such a winner from the moment you first see him that you never really believe he's the bullied and ignored victim of adult neglect and hostility Carney needs him to be for the movie to deliver the emotional wallop he wants.

*Sing Street* never really gets you that way. The social, political, and personal woes it depicts come to seem like the orchestrations—realistic invocations of a place and time but all in the background. The film's pleasures, and they are many, all come from joy: the joy of teenagers romping, performing, loving, and living without a filter.

Maybe that's why the movie's best song is called "Drive It Like You Stole It."

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## Donald Trump Is Asking Republicans To Unite

**To My Fellow Republicans:**

The time has come to pull together and let bygones be bygones. Lyin' Ted Cruz ran an honorable campaign—he certainly achieved more than his father ever did. (Why was the guy hanging around that grassy knoll?) And I respect Lyin' Ted, even though he just quit, which makes him a loser. I, on the other hand, am a winner. Always was and always will be.

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As for Little Marco, I wonder if he's finally stopped sweating? What an embarrassment. But at least he's a real American and not born in Canada. Great job, Little Marco.

And John Kasich—what a waste of space that guy was. Except now he's suspended his campaign. Finally. Maybe now he can do something about that hair. Still, he's a patriot.

But now is the time for unity. We need to stop attacking each other and focus on Hillary Clinton. It's true, she attended my wedding. And I did contribute to her campaign. But that was just business. I'm in the business of making amazing deals. Incredible deals. But that time is now past. When she loses to me, maybe we'll talk.

Like many of you, I am sick and tired of the mudslinging. But I managed to survive. How? Because I can handle things. I'm smart! Not like everybody says. Like dumb! I'm smart, and I want respect! I would never lie us into war. I promise you we will bring the troops home. No boots on the ground. Come home, America! And we will destroy ISIS with all the troops we have. We will attack them where it hurts, bombing their bases and bombing their homes. Congress also needs to stop funding Planned Parenthood, which, by the way, provides a tremendous service to the women of America.

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I promise you I am the same Donald Trump you all know and love—the candidate who stands up for women's rights and the rights of the unborn, who defends the small-business owner and the power of eminent domain. Stand with me for whatever it is you stand for. I am with you! And the rest of you losers, get out of my way, or I will see you in court!



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