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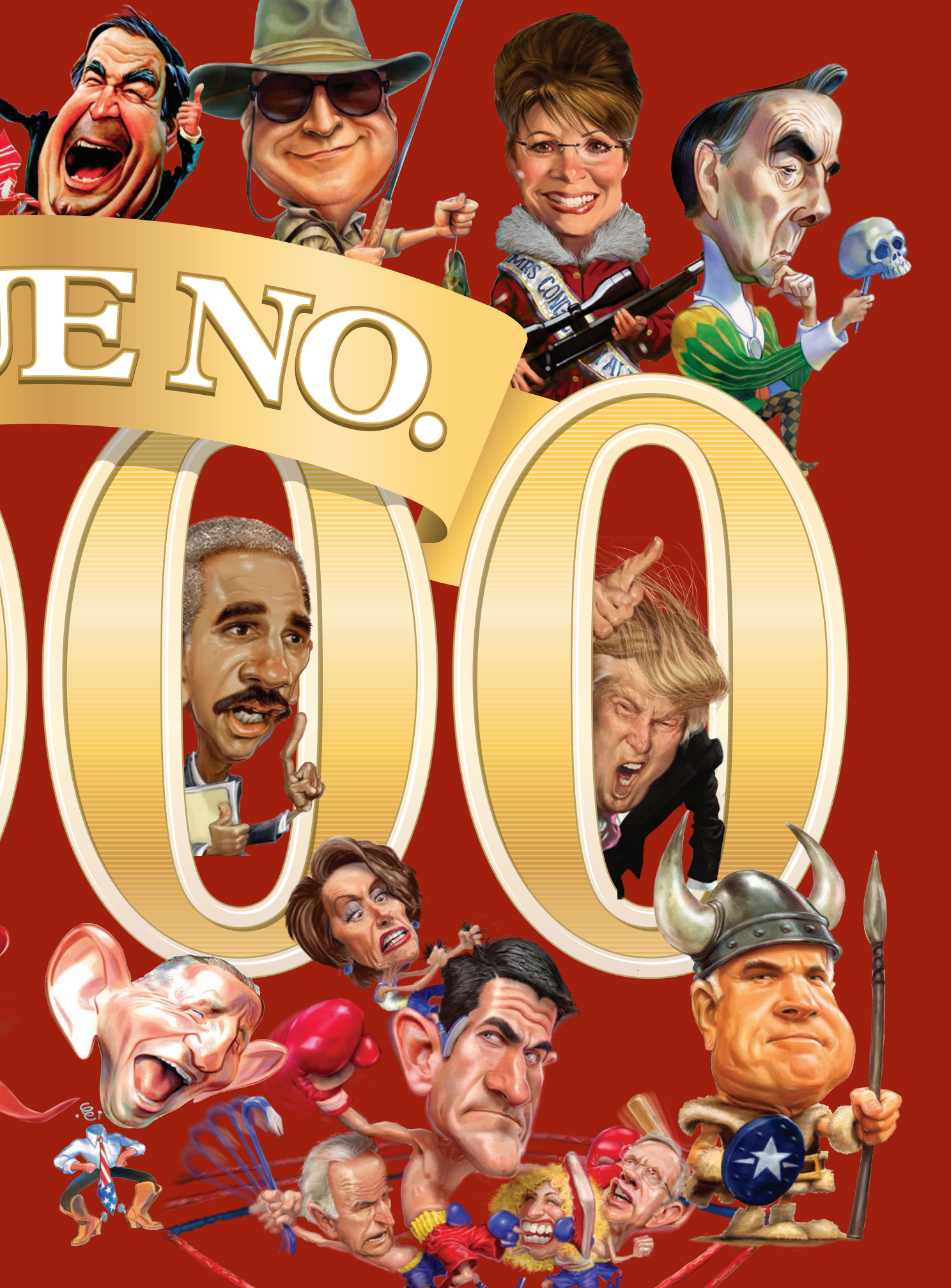
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1,000th ISSUE

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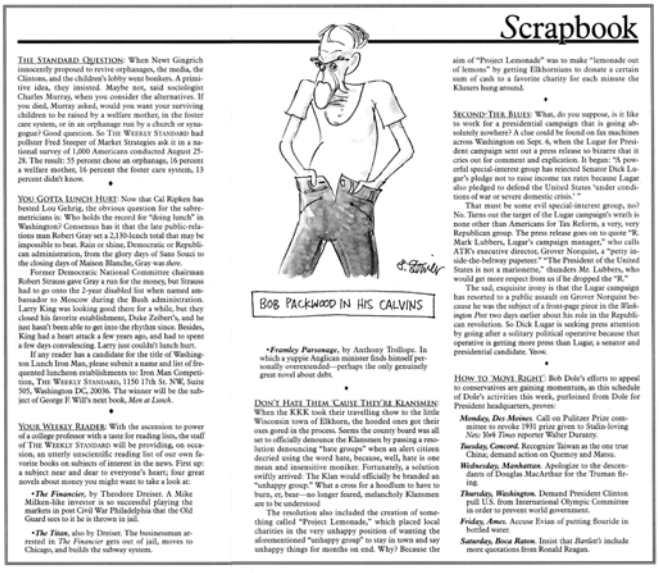
COVER IMAGES BY DANIEL ADEL (GEORGE W. BUSH); THOMAS FLUHARTY (BILL CLINTON, PAT BUCHANAN, SARAH PALIN, & DONALD TRUMP); JOHN KASCHT (BOB DOLE & ROSS PEROT); GARY LOCKE (BARACK OBAMA, AL GORE, LAUGHING MULLAH, MITT ROMNEY, ERIC HOLDER, PAUL RYAN ET AL., DICK CHENEY, & JOHN MCCAIN); AND DAVE MALAN (HILLARY CLINTON)

Looking Back

The Scrapbook fondly remembers the birth of this magazine in the long ago summer of 1995. We had previously worked at four small magazines and considered it something of a vocation. Those who share the vocation, or who know something of the magazine business, will understand our smirk when a colleague at the think tank where we were then marking time said that this was a great opportunity (true) and that by getting in on the ground floor of a new publication, we would be "set for life" (laughably, hilariously optimistic).

And yet here we are, if not quite "set for life," which nobody ever is in the notoriously unsettled world of periodical publishing, nonetheless about to watch the 1,000th issue of The Weekly Standard roll off the presses. A small celebration therefore seemed in order.

So we have reprinted elsewhere in this issue some of our favorite caricatures and parodies from those 999 issues, which we hope our loyal long-time readers will enjoy seeing again, like a good friend from days gone by. And perhaps new readers will be enticed by them into our archives at weeklystandard.com, where treasure awaits . . . treasure amid lots of dross, if we're being honest.


Scrapbook

THE STANDARD QUESTION: When Newt Gingrich innocently proposed to revive orphanages, the media, the Clintons, and the children's lobby went bonkers. A primitive idea, they insisted. Maybe not, said sociologist Charles Murray, when you consider the alternatives. If you died, Murray asked, would you want your surviving children to be raised by a welfare mother, in the foster care system, or in an orphanage run by a church or synagogue? Good question. So THE WEEKLY STANDARD had pollster Fred Steeper of Market Strategies ask it in a national survey of 1,000 Americans conducted August 25-28. The result: 55 percent chose an orphanage, 16 percent a welfare mother, 16 percent the foster care system, 13 percent didn't know.

YOU GOTTA LUNCH HURT: Now that Cal Ripken has bested Lou Gehrig, the obvious question for the subway-metricians is: Who holds the record for "doing lunch" in Washington? Consensus has it that the late public-relations man Robert Gray set a 2,130-lunch total that may be impossible to beat. Rain or shine, Democratic or Republican administration, from the glory days of Sans Souci to the closing days of Maison Blanche, Gray was there.

Former Democratic National Committee chairman Robert Strauss gave Gray a run for the money, but Strauss had to go onto the 2-year disabled list when named ambassador to Moscow during the Bush administration. Larry King was looking good there for a while, but they closed his favorite establishment, Duke Zeibert's, and he just hasn't been able to get into the rhythm since. Besides, King had a heart attack a few years ago, and had to spent a few days convalescing. Larry just couldn't lunch hurt.

If any reader has a candidate for the title of Washington Lunch Iron Man, please submit a name and list of frequented luncheon establishments to: Iron Man Competition, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th St. NW, Suite 505, Washington DC, 20036. The winner will be the subject of George F. Will's next book, *Mow at Lunch*.

YOUR WEEKLY READER: With the ascension to power of a college professor with a taste for reading lists, the staff of THE WEEKLY STANDARD will be providing, on occasion, an utterly unscientific reading list of our own favorite books on subjects of interest in the news. First up: a subject near and dear to everyone's heart; four great novels about money you might want to take a look at:

•***The Financier***, by Theodore Dreiser. A Mike Milken-like investor is so successful altering the markets in post Civil War Philadelphia that the Old Guard sees to it he is thrown in jail.

•***The Titan***, also by Dreiser. The businessman arrested in *The Financier* gets out of jail, moves to Chicago, and builds the subway system.

BOB PACKWOOD IN HIS CALVINS

•***Framley Parsonage***, by Anthony Trollope. In which a yuppie Anglican minister finds himself personally overextended—perhaps the only genuinely great novel about debt.

DON'T HATE THEM 'CAUSE THEY'RE KLANSMEN: When the KKK took their travelling show to the little Wisconsin town of Elkhorn, the hooded ones got their ears gored in the process. Seems the county board was all set to officially denounce the Klansmen by passing a resolution denouncing "hate groups" when an alert citizen decried using the word hate, because, well, hate is one mean and insensitive moniker. Fortunately, a solution swiftly arrived: The Klan would officially be branded an "unhappy group." What a cross for a hoodlum to have to burn, or, bear—no longer feared, melancholy Klansmen are to be understood.

The resolution also included the creation of something called "Project Lemonade," which placed local charities in the very unhappy position of wanting the aforementioned "unhappy group" to stay in town and say unhappy things for months on end. Why? Because the aim of "Project Lemonade" was to make "lemonade out of lemons" by getting Elkhornians to donate a certain sum of cash to a favorite charity for each minute the Klutzers hung around.

SECOND-TIER BLUES: What, do you suppose, is it like to work for a presidential campaign that is going absolutely nowhere? A clue could be found on fax machines across Washington on Sept. 6, when the Lugar for President campaign sent out a press release so bizarre that it cries out for comment and explication. It began: "A powerful special-interest group has rejected Senator Dick Lugar's pledge not to raise income tax rates because Lugar also pledged to defend the United States 'under conditions of war or severe domestic crisis.' "

That must be some evil special-interest group, no? No. Turns out the target of the Lugar campaign's wrath is none other than Americans for Tax Reform, a very, very Republican group. The press release goes on to quote "R. Mark Lubbers, Lugar's campaign manager," who calls ATR's executive director, Grover Norquist, a "perry inside-the-beltway puppeteer." "The President of the United States is not a marionette," thunders Mr. Lubbers, who would get more respect from us if he dropped the "R."

The sad, exquisite irony is that the Lugar campaign has resorted to a public assault on Grover Norquist because he was the subject of a front-page piece in the Washington *Post* two days earlier about his role in the Republican revolution. So Dick Lugar is seeking press attention by going after a solitary political operative because that operative is getting more press than Lugar, a senator and presidential candidate. Yeow.

HOW TO 'MOVE RIGHT': Bob Dole's efforts to appeal to conservatives are gaining momentum, as this schedule of Dole's activities this week, purloined from Dole for President headquarters, proves:

Monday, Des Moines. Call on Pulitzer Prize committee to revoke 1931 prize given to Stalin-loving *New York Times* reporter Walter Duranty.

Tuesday, Concord. Recognize Taiwan as the one true China; demand action on Quemoy and Matsu.

Wednesday, Manhattan. Apologize to the descendants of Douglas MacArthur for the Truman firing.

Thursday, Washington. Demand President Clinton pull U.S. from International Olympic Committee in order to prevent world government.

Friday, Ames. Accuse Evian of putting flouride in bottled water.

Saturday, Boca Raton. Insist that *Bartlett's* include more quotations from Ronald Reagan.

The first Scrapbook, *September 18, 1995*

Journalism is notoriously perishable—the "first rough draft of history" is how figures in the trade put it in their self-important moments (i.e., all the time). And we all know where rough drafts belong: in the recycling bin. Or, these days, effaced immediately by the delete key. At roughly 25,000 words per issue, a lot of what we published is now dated and sometimes spectacularly wrong. People (you know who you are) occasionally like to point this out to us, to which The Scrapbook always replies, "Yes, but it was true when published!"

The work of our artists and parodists, on the other hand, seems to retain all its charm and vibrancy. We're not sure why, but we hope you agree. A suitable topic to revisit, perhaps on the occasion of our 2,000th issue. ♦

Chikin-Hearted Mayors

The Scrapbook is well aware that politics sometimes informs consumer choices. Good progressives used to avoid Welch's candies because its owner was the founder of the John Birch Society. And The Scrapbook admits to resisting the temptation of Ben & Jerry's ice cream when it thinks of Ben and Jerry and their brand of granola socialism.

So a recent trend among progressive mayors is not exactly news, but startling nonetheless: The mayors of Chicago, Boston, New York, and other metropolises have urged their constituents to boycott Chick-fil-A, the cheery fast-food outlet whose president once expressed his opposition to gay marriage. Boston, said its current mayor, one Marty Walsh, doesn't "need a company . . . that discriminates against anyone."

As it happens, Chick-fil-A doesn't do business in Boston, and may not even intend to do so. But Mayor Walsh has hinted that, if Chick-fil-A does seek a permit to open a franchise in Boston, he may raise procedural roadblocks. He has the power to do so, of course, and may even succeed, but His Honor would do well to consider the predicament of his fellow left-wing mayor, Bill de Blasio, in New York. De Blasio is equally contemptuous of Chick-fil-A—"I'm certainly not going to patronize them, and I wouldn't urge any other New Yorker to patronize them"—but those "other" New Yorkers have put him in a quandary: Chick-fil-A already has several outlets in New York, and their immense popularity seems to increase with every de Blasio blast.

The Scrapbook makes no particular claim for Chick-fil-A. As with anything of its kind, Chick-fil-A is a matter of taste, and if your taste runs to savory fast-food chicken delivered with ostentatious politeness, then Chick-fil-A might be to your taste. What is not a matter of taste, however, is the fact that Chick-fil-A is very

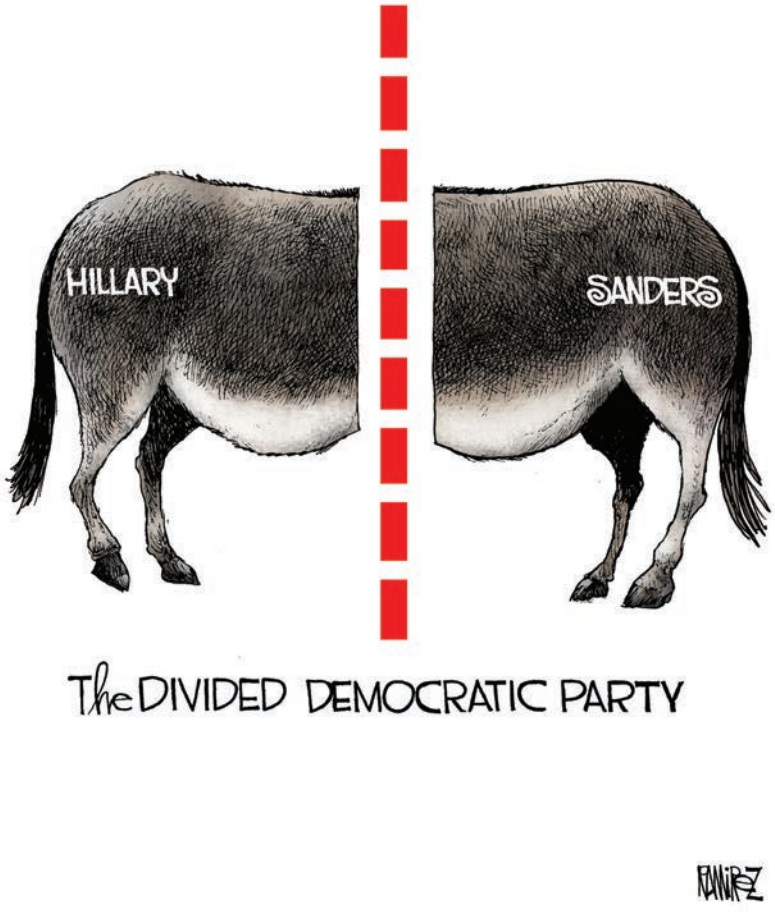
popular with consumers, including consumers in New York, and its outlets employ a number of New Yorkers as well.

No matter what you may think of its president's views on marriage equality—views expressed, incidentally, at a time when Barack Obama opposed gay marriage as well—Chick-fil-A has a reputation as a generous employer, serves loyal customers of all sexual orientations, and, most important, fills an evident need for Bill de Blasio's constituents. Is it really appropriate for elected officials—armed with the power to harass and destroy—to take sides among products, to attack law-abiding businesses, and to threaten the employment of industrious constituents? Unlike Mayor de Blasio, after all, Chick-fil-A has a proven knack for pleasing New Yorkers. ♦

Souring on Sanders

Since the GOP primary has already produced a harrowing result, The Scrapbook has turned its attention to the ongoing Democratic primary and begun rooting for chaos. Despite the fact that Bernie Sanders has approximately zero chance of winning, he persists in staying in the race both to call attention to the fact that the Democratic primary process is more or less rigged and to build more support for his socialist agenda.

This persistence has started to cause unrest: Senator Barbara Boxer rather amusingly scolded a hall full of Democrats at the recent Nevada Democratic convention for booing her, and actor Wendell Pierce—who played Bunk on *The Wire* and has lately been signing his name to DNC fundraising appeals—was recently arrested for battery after he allegedly tried to force his way into the hotel room of a Sanders supporter following a political argument. Both the Hillary and Bernie camps are claiming they have been the target of a barrage of intra-Democratic harassment and threats. This includes many charges of sexism and racism, which



we were previously led to believe was an ontological impossibility for members of the Enlightened Party.

However, since Sanders isn't going to win, most of the Democratic establishment, along with liberal media institutions such as the *Washington Post*, has started berating Sanders for staying in the race and destroying party cohesion. And herein, we detect a silver lining. Sanders may have succeeded in pushing Clinton to the left on a number of issues, but increasingly it seems many of her supporters are souring on Sanders's socialist policies as they sour on his campaign.

The *Washington Post*, for instance, ran a heavily promoted piece of policy analysis—"Why Bernie Sanders may have picked the wrong year for a revolution"—arguing that Sanders is too radical in his demands for socialized medicine to be elected. And news broke last week that Burlington College is closing, because the college's former president—Bernie's wife Jane Sanders—burdened the institution with millions in loans it couldn't pay off. More than a few people noted the high degree of irony, given Sanders's enthusiastic support from college students and his radical rhetoric on student loans.

Sanders has made it a standard line in his stump speech that it is unfair that student loans require higher interest rates than auto loans and mortgages, and he promises to

fix this disparity. Of course, default rates on student debt are much higher than on mortgages or car loans because of the difference between secured and unsecured loans. Banks can't repossess college degrees—but they can, to pick an apropos example, repossess a bunch of ivy-covered classrooms in Vermont used to secure millions in ill-advised loans. The closure of liberal arts colleges run by avowed socialists—is there any other kind?—is illustrative of exactly the sort of economic lessons colleges no longer teach. ♦

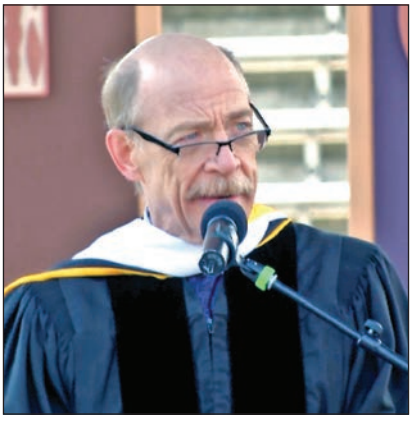
Class Dismissed!

'There are no two words in the English language more harmful than 'good job.'" So said Terence Fletcher, the terrifying jazz conductor played by J.K. Simmons in *Whiplash*. Sure, Fletcher mentally and physically abused his students—and the drummer protagonist in particular—but what he said is undeniably true. Participant trophies, anyone?

So when Simmons, who won an Academy Award for his role in *Whiplash*, was asked to deliver the commencement address at his alma mater, the University of Montana, The Scrapbook was curious: What other nuggets of wisdom might Simmons throw out? Or would he throw a cymbal at a student's head?

Although Simmons is not anything like the sadistic Fletcher (or, for that matter, the neo-Nazi Vern Schillinger he played in *Oz*), he does come off as a charming curmudgeon. "The world is full of bastards," he started off by saying (quoting from *A River Runs Through It*). "The number increasing rapidly the further one gets from Missoula, Montana."

Simmons urged the class of 2016 to "appreciate the moment, to live life as it is happening, not dwell on the past, not be too anxious about the future, but to do one's best to be here now . . . to also be mentally, emotionally, spiritually present. And by 'present' I mean fully engaged and not staring at your damn smartphone all the time." Simmons then suggested throwing the phone away in nearby Flathead Lake while enjoying a sunset in pure solitude. "I'm having an aural fantasy now of the 'sploosh' that that phone would make when it hits the lake." In addition, he advised the class to pay "attention to the moment, connecting with other humans, and I urge



J.K. Simmons in Missoula

you not to spend—or more correctly waste—too much of your time playing videos on your iPhone."

Simmons then went on a tear about a pet peeve shared by The Scrapbook:

> Dear God, please only use that word "literally" when it actually makes sense. Seriously, if you take nothing else away from my remarks today, only use that word correctly. I'm guessing that many of you in the graduating class of 2016, if you examine your own speech patterns, you will find that you at least occasionally are guilty of using that word incorrectly or at least unnecessarily. So please, allow me to dissuade you from the misuse or overuse of the word "literally." The decline and fall of the English language is proceeding along just fine without so many of us contributing in that one small way. The vast majority of the time that word is used these days by, yes, I will say it, by your generation . . . it's at best unnecessary and at worst completely wrong.

As an example, he related his own experience in line at a café in Los Angeles. "Standing right in front of me were two people, who happened to be college age. They happened to be female. They happened to be blonde. And they sounded exactly like Moon Unit Zappa in that song 'Valley Girl.' . . . And one of them was saying to the other . . . and I quote, 'And I couldn't believe it. I, literally, I died.'"

Simmons also repeated part of his Oscar acceptance speech: "Call your mom. Call your dad. . . . If you're lucky enough to have one or more parents alive on this planet, call them. Don't text. Don't email. Call them on the phone. Tell them you love them and listen to them for as long as they want to talk to you. . . . Do you know how much it means to them to hear from you? . . . We all come into this life 100 percent dependent on our parents. . . . We would literally have died without our parents' nurturing."

There was one other pearl of wisdom Simmons dispensed: "If you only do what you can, you will never be more than you are." Simmons then confessed this line comes from the movie *Kung Fu Panda 3*—he was the voice of Kai, a lumbering yak. (For all the fearsome characters Simmons has portrayed, it's worth remembering he's also the tweed-wearing professor in those Farmers Insurance commercials and is the voice of the yellow M&M.)

The commencement speech in its entirety can be seen on YouTube, posted by the University of Montana under the title "J.K. Simmons' University of Montana Commencement Address." ♦

Blond on Blonde

Although Thomas Jefferson was famous for his bright red hair, most presidents have been brunets, who rapidly begin to gray at the temples as the stresses of the job take their toll. That seems poised to change. Despite their policy differences, even a cursory look at this year's presumptive candidates shows that they have at least one thing in common: their hair color. From a wide field of stolid dark-haired, slightly graying, and fully white-haired candidates, American voters went for the gold (locks).

So barring a truly unforeseen

event, the 45th president of the United States of America will be blond (or blonde). Leaving aside the identity of the candidates, this was statistically unlikely. To put it in perspective, less than 5 percent of the population is genetically fair-haired. It's harder to put a specific percentage on it, since most of those who enhance their hair color are loath to admit it.

How long has it been since America had a blond president? The Scrapbook conducted its own investigation on the subject. It's a question made more difficult by the range of colors considered "blond," by black and white photography, and by the number of presidents who had gone gray or bald by the time they were elected.

Still, the general consensus is that America has had five blonds in chief. Martin Van Buren was noted for his reddish-blond hair, though it had turned white and largely receded by the time he was elected our eighth president. It would be another 36 years before another blond took the oath of office: Rutherford B. Hayes in 1877. Following him would come Benjamin Harrison, of golden hair and beard, elected a mere 12 years later. (This really was America's gilded age.)

After that, things returned to their brown- and white-haired norm until after the Second World War, when Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected. Very little of Eisenhower's hair remained at the time of his election, and prior to that he is generally depicted with a short military haircut. However, when he still had hair, it was blond.

The most recent blond president was Gerald Ford, whose football pictures from the University of Michigan verify his status. Which means that it has been 39 years since America's head of state has been a golden one. ♦

Sentences We Didn't Finish

"When he had his period, he wondered if he should revert to the girls' bathroom, because there was no place to throw away his used tampons. But he had started feeling like an intruder . . ." ("Transgender Bathroom Debate Turns Personal at a Vermont High School," *New York Times*, May 17, 2016). ♦

More Sentences We Didn't Finish

"Yes, the thought of male genitalia in girls' locker rooms—and vice versa—might be distressing to some. But the battle for equality has always been in part about overcoming discomfort . . ." ("Taking the fear out of bathrooms," an editorial in the *Charlotte Observer*, May 13, 2016). ♦

In Memory of

Denise Ferguson

Beloved wife of our colleague Andrew Ferguson,
mother of Gillum and Emily,
and devoted friend to all of us
at The Weekly Standard

the weekly Standard

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Generation Gap

Henry Clay Bottum was born in January 1826, in the town of Orwell, Vermont. As a young man, he moved west, first to upstate New York and then to Wisconsin, farming in Fond du Lac County. An abolitionist, he abandoned the Whig party of his namesake and became a Radical Republican, serving in the state legislature after the Civil War. He died in 1913, his remains buried in Rosendale Cemetery, 10 miles outside the small Wisconsin city of Ripon. And since February 2016, he has had a Wikipedia page.

There's something both very charming and very odd in the fact that Wikipedia has now reached down to people whose fame rests on nothing more than a few terms as state legislators in the 19th century. But there he is, my great-great-grandfather, along with many other politicians from the long years of Wisconsin state elections. They've apparently all been added by a prolific Wikipedia editor who posts under the online name "Packerfansam" (a Wisconsinite, one presumes Sam is, given that he's a fan of the Green Bay Packers and writes up items from Wisconsin history).

I might have beaten Packerfansam to the punch, posting the entry on Great-great-grandfather Henry myself. But Wikipedia says it frowns on contributions from family members, and, the truth is, I don't actually know much about my great-great-grandfather.

His son, now—Joseph Bottum, my great-grandfather—I do have a sense of. Joe attended Ripon College before moving to the Dakota Territory in 1880 to homestead and practice law. He would end up serving as circuit judge in the town of Faulkton from 1911 to 1942—but, more to Wikipedia's interest, he also served two terms in the South Dakota state senate. And so, thanks to the indefatigable compilers of small Wikipedia entries about forgotten state legislators, Great-grandfather Joe now rates a brief page in the online encyclopedia, as well. "He was a Republican," the entry laconically ends.

For Joe, I have photographs of family gatherings at the old house in Faulkton, a portrait of him in his judge's robes, and a business card from his law practice ("Wills a specialty," it notes in a copperplate script). Stories handed down to my generation include tales of his fierce determination in court, his sentimentality about his grandchildren, and his love for the new state of South Dakota.

But I have no pictures of Henry and his wife Helen. No keepsakes, old letters, or even family lore. Perhaps that's because the family's migration westward after the Revolutionary War more or less ended in South Dakota, at which point mementos could be handed on. But, in fact, this sort of knowledge gap may be fairly common: We tend to know at least something about our great-grandparents. And often nothing about our great-great-grandparents.

It makes sense, I suppose, simply as a matter of generations. Our parents would be likely to have living knowledge, childhood memories, of their grandparents but not of the generation before that. And while I remember my grandfather telling stories of his father—because his son, my father, had known the man—I can't recall his having any stories about his own grandfather.

How long do the dead remain with us? How long do the ghosts of memory last before they fade entirely away? I know innumerable stories about my own generation. As far as that goes, I know a lot about my parents' generation and plenty about their parents' generation. But the memory chain clearly starts to rust after 80 or 90 years. And the attempt to reach back as far as my great-great-grandfather Henry—born 190 years ago—falters and dwindles to nothing.

Some of my genealogically inclined cousins have explored the available records: old birth and death certificates in the county seats, old church registries, the markings on crumbling gravestones. And they surely know more about Henry than I do. They surely know more about his parents and grandparents, for that matter. But I've never been bitten by the family-tree bug (at least, not till prompted recently by Wikipedia). Besides, however detailed it becomes, the hobby of genealogy can never quite make a living connection.

Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe there's great satisfaction in the careful compilation of family trees. So many Americans pursue the hobby that there must surely be a joy in it that I don't grasp. Still, genealogical research has always seemed to me the opposite of family: It's what we need to do when we lack actual memories. Actual stories.

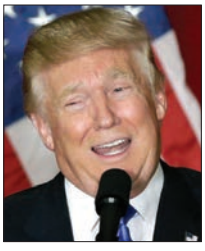
Those are the memories and stories I have for Joe and don't have for Henry. My connection to my South Dakota great-grandfather is familial, in other words, even though he died before I was born. My connection to his Wisconsin father is only genealogical. Only Wikipedian.

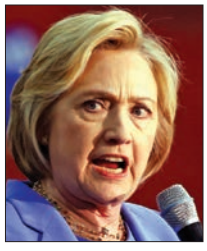
Joseph Bottum

JORI BOLTON

the weekly Standard

A Choice Not an Echo





IMAGES: NEWSCOM

In an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* last week, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan argued that young Americans in particular should appreciate the power of choice:

> Think of all the things you get to do in your life, whether it's buying something, whether it's ordering movie tickets, signing up for classes. You name what you can do on this thing, and you want to subscribe to a political philosophy that denies you choices, that denies you the ability to customize your life in things like health care, education, and retirement? So why on earth would a young person, who enjoys the liberty and freedom of today's society and technology, subscribe to a political philosophy that says: "There are smarter people than you who can lord over us in bureaucracies in Washington and make decisions for us on how our economy is run and how our communities are organized"?

Well said. Why would anyone, young or middle-aged or old, yield to those who seek to circumscribe rightful choices that would improve Americans' lives?

So why is Paul Ryan unwilling to step up to provide us a third choice to the unpalatable alternatives of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton? He ran for vice president in 2012. He could quickly assemble the resources and organization to compete as an independent in 2016, on behalf of the principles and standards he fought for only four years ago.

And if Paul Ryan finds it too burdensome to run, why has he, in concert with so many other "leaders," gone out of his way to discourage others from offering the American people another choice? Because it's admirable to challenge taxi oligopolies but not the oligopoly of the ossified political parties and their eccentric nominating processes? Because it's important to take on the teachers' unions but not the party structures? Because it's praiseworthy to fight against the duopoly of Fannie and Freddie but not against that of Hillary and Donald?

Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump are manifestly among the worst presidential candidates ever to be presented to the American people by their respective parties. Yet our politicians are paralyzed, the donors are uncertain, and the smart set in general looks on with world-weary gaze and looks down with disdainful aspect at those who would like to provide the American people with a better alternative.

The American people know better. A high-quality national poll conducted recently by Data Targeting finds an astonishing 58 percent of the public very dissatisfied (34 percent) or somewhat dissatisfied (24 percent) with the current Republican and Democratic presidential candidates. By contrast, only 9 percent of respondents say they're very satisfied and 21 percent are somewhat satisfied. If you add the 11 percent who are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied or who are unsure to the 58 percent who are dissatisfied, you get 69 percent of the public as a pool from which an independent candidate can prospect. And indeed that's why 65 percent of respondents say in answering another question they are very willing (22 percent), pretty willing (10 percent), or somewhat willing (33 percent) to support someone who's neither the Republican nor the Democratic party's nominee. Furthermore, in a ballot test, when given a choice between Trump, Clinton, and an independent candidate, the independent gets 21 percent support, within hailing range of Trump's 34 percent and Clinton's 31 percent—which makes it very likely the independent candidate could get into the fall debates with the two major-party nominees. And possible that he or she could go on to win the presidency.

It's unclear whether a credible independent candidate will choose to step forward. But there are many more such candidates than are dreamt of by conventional commentators and operatives. Recent attempts to write obituaries for the Never Trump/Never Clinton effort are wildly premature. Something new and different can be difficult to imagine for the old and tired. And our political class and pundit elites are nothing if not old and tired.

So we who refuse to acquiesce in this horrible choice, we renegade citizens who put country and not party first . . . in this respect, and only in this respect, we echo an earlier renegade: We disdain to conceal our views and aims. Let the ruling parties tremble at a popular revolution. We have nothing to lose but our partisan chains. We have a nation to win.

—William Kristol

Runaway Train

Yes, it's a con. In the three weeks since Donald Trump became the presumptive Republican nominee the remains of modern American conservatism have decayed at an alarming rate.

Three months ago, most GOP officeholders and conservative opinion leaders understood Trump to be an ignoramus and a boor, a vain reality-television star and a longtime donor to Democrats who had built his candidacy on the kind of progressive populism most of them had spent their careers fighting. Today, many of those same Republican elected officials and prominent conservatives are hailing Trump as the future of their party and the ideological movement it houses and excoriating anti-Trump conservatives who hold to the same position they took just a few weeks ago.

What's changed? Not Trump.

In the time since he effectively captured the GOP nomination, Trump has doubled down on his slanderous claim, borrowed from the *National Enquirer*, that Ted Cruz's father helped Lee Harvey Oswald months before the JFK assassination; refused to apologize for attacking Heidi Cruz's looks, once again calling her "fair game"; picked a fight with David Cameron, leader of America's longest-standing ally; distanced himself from his own tax plan; recommitted himself to releasing his tax returns and then declared defiantly that those returns are his private business and would not be released; backed off his proposal to ban temporarily entry to the United States for Muslims and then reiterated his support for such a ban; and, finally, lied on national television about a 1991 audio recording in which he created a fake persona—"John Miller," a made-up spokesman played by Trump himself—for an interview with a gossip magazine, in order to boast about his virility and his virtue.

Most striking, perhaps, was Trump's decision last week to abandon the promise at the heart of his unorthodox candidacy: that he would forgo political contributions in order to remain immune to the influence of political money. "I will tell you this," Trump said last fall. "Nobody's putting up millions of dollars for me. I'm putting up my own money." When donors contribute to a political campaign, Trump argued, they buy the candidates who accept their money. "Remember this: They have total control over Jeb and Hillary and everybody else that takes that money."

Trump maintained that he alone among the candidates was incorruptible because he was "self-funding." It simply wasn't possible to put national interests above special interests when you're accepting major contributions from the representatives of those same interests. Trump claimed that his many years as a donor to Republicans and Democrats gave him unique insight into the problem and that he alone, an outsider who swore off political money, could solve it.

This wasn't a small issue. Trump gave it prominence in virtually all of his speeches and mentioned it frequently in primary-season debates. In an interview last fall, Trump's campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, cited it as the most important distinction between Trump and other candidates in the race.

> The first thing is obviously the inside-the-Beltway guys have no control over Donald Trump, and I mean that in a good way. Most of those people are bought and paid for by special interests, by lobbyists, by major donors. Since Mr. Trump is funding his campaign on his own, and he's not taking donor money, he isn't beholden to those people and can't be accountable to those people who want special interests out of the government. He's going to do what's right for the country.

That was then. Last week, Trump announced two joint fundraising accounts with the Republican National Committee—the Trump Victory fund and the Trump Make America Great Again Committee—that allow him to raise millions of dollars for his campaign and the party. The maximum contribution of nearly $450,000 will be the highest amount ever solicited by such joint committees.

In addition to the main super-PAC already spending on Trump's behalf—Great America PAC, run by Ed Rollins—Trump allies have created others. *Politico*'s Ken Vogel and Ben Schreckinger report that senior Trump campaign adviser and longtime D.C. lobbyist Paul Manafort has given his blessing to a yet-to-be-named super-PAC to be established by Thomas Barrack, a Manafort client and California billionaire. Doug Watts, a former aide to Trump backer Ben Carson and a recent donor to top California Democrats (including Barbara Boxer and Jerry Brown), is up and running with the Committee for American Sovereignty PAC. And *Politico* reports that Ann Stone, ex-wife of Trump confidant Roger Stone, is in talks to create yet another super-PAC that will target women voters.

Last fall, Trump mocked GOP mega-donor Sheldon Adelson on Twitter. "Sheldon Adelson is looking to give big dollars to Rubio because he feels he can mold him into

TOM WILLIAMS / CQ ROLL CALL

his perfect little puppet. I agree!" Last week, Trump celebrated Adelson's commitment to support his candidacy with up to $100 million.

So the candidate who won the Republican nomination as an "outsider" and who claimed to be self-funding to avoid the taint of political money is setting up a sophisticated finance operation that will allow him to raise hundreds of millions of dollars from the very special interests, lobbyists, and major donors he used as foils in the primary.

Yes, of course it's a con.

It's possible, likely even, that this aggressive hypocrisy will have a negligible short-term effect on Trump. As he's said about his own supporters, they'll back him regardless of what he says or does. But what about the long term? And what about elected Republicans and prominent conservatives, many of them previously skeptical of Trump, who are willing to set aside their concerns and climb aboard the Trump train in the interest of winning?

Texas governor Greg Abbott, who as that state's attorney general in 2010 opened an investigation of Trump University for fraud and criticized Trump's proposed ban on Muslims, is not only supporting Trump but criticizing conservatives who don't. Republicans who won't back Trump, he said, "are aligning their principles with Hillary Clinton."

Peggy Noonan, the *Wall Street Journal* columnist, has twice used her column in recent days to scold conservatives who won't support Trump, despite having written, just a month ago, that Trump, preoccupied with subjects "small, petty, [and] unworthy," was "nutty." She begins her most recent column with a plea for Republicans to exhibit "a kind of heroic fairness" in times like these and, rejecting her own advice, concludes by sharing her suspicion that some conservatives who continue to oppose Trump for reasons of conscience don't really mean it. (Noonan might have noted that she's held some of the policy positions that she imagines her anti-Trump villains all share.)

Senator Bob Corker, who praised Trump's incoherent foreign policy speech and is now reportedly under strong consideration to be his running mate, wants Trump skeptics "to chill."

With respect, Corker and Noonan and Abbott are confused. There's no reason to chill when a con man turns his marks, particularly people who know better, into accomplices. There's no obligation in the name of fairness, heroic or otherwise, to normalize a crazy man because he's won the support of 5 percent of the voting-eligible public. And, finally, while Abbott is right that the 2016 race has caused many conservatives to abandon their principles in support of a favored candidate, he's wrong about which conservatives have been willing to do so and wrong about which candidate they're supporting.

—Stephen F. Hayes

Unheralded Triumph

Mitch McConnell wins one.

BY FRED BARNES

On February 13, Justice Antonin Scalia died at a hunting lodge in Texas. That same day, Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell made this announcement: "The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice. Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president."

McConnell's statement was not quite off the cuff but close. The Senate had just begun a weeklong recess, making it impossible to get in touch with the other Republican senators and to listen, in McConnell's words, to their "53 different opinions." He acted.

His decision was lambasted by Democrats and the mainstream media as rash and a political mistake. He was accused of disobeying his constitutional duty to hold Senate hearings and then a vote on whomever President Obama nominated to fill the vacancy. By refusing, McConnell was told he would hurt Republican prospects in the 2016 election. There would be a public backlash. And so on.

The next week, McConnell took his case to his Senate GOP colleagues at their weekly lunch. By then, he and his staff had boned up on the history of nominees in the final year of a president's term. "The precedents were on our side," McConnell says. Even Democrats—Joe Biden, Harry Reid, Chuck Schumer—had dismissed lame-duck nominations as unacceptable.

"I'm not a dictator," McConnell says. "I had to convince my colleagues." At the lunch, only two Republican senators said they favor hearings. Today, those two are still the only dissenters.

Three months after his announcement, McConnell is vindicated. He not only thwarted the president and Democrats, he averted a potential catastrophe for Republicans if a popular Obama nomination had gone forward, splitting the party in an already divisive election year. Instead, "it's been a completely unifying process," McConnell told me.

GARY LOCKE

The success of McConnell's strategy hasn't been widely acknowledged. Senate Democrats are reeling from a series of tactical blunders. Senate minority leader Harry Reid attacked Charles Grassley, the chairman of the judiciary committee, more than a dozen times for not scheduling hearings for Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland. The speeches were rants, typical for Reid.

Democrats tried to embarrass vulnerable Republican senators with what they called a "9-9-9" plan: nine senators in nine states to confirm a ninth Supreme Court justice. It bombed. Now Obama is insisting the Senate has a mandate to vote on his nominee. Actually, there is no such mandate.

Oddly enough, two scholars at the center-left Brookings Institution, John Hudak and Molly E. Reynolds, have studied McConnell's options and given him high marks. "Mitch McConnell didn't make a mistake," they wrote.

> "The charges that he blundered . . . are foolish. In fact, McConnell's strategy, and the speed with which he worked through the possibilities to come to the 'right' conclusion, was not a political misstep. Instead, it is the mark of a political master."

That's not all. "With an opportunity to maintain or even enhance conservative enthusiasm—particularly in a year in which the Republican Party appears to be on a confusing soul-searching mission—McConnell jumped at it," Hudak and Reynolds said. Republicans of all ideological stripes are on board.

His blockade of Obama's nominee "will keep safe [Republican] seats safe . . . ensure that At-Risk Senators remain safe . . . [and] provide McConnell a chance to stem some of the almost certain losses among Vulnerable Senators," the scholars wrote.

McConnell has long been regarded as a clever politician who skillfully keeps Senate Republicans in agreement. This time, he also showed remarkable foresight. He saved Republicans from having to deal with an attractive nominee, possibly a gay or an African-American or a Hispanic. McConnell's decision was based on the principle that a president on the way out the door shouldn't put

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a new justice on the Supreme Court. "It doesn't make any difference how qualified the nominee is," McConnell says. His motto is "it's about the principle, not the person."

Once the confirmation process began, it would be difficult to control. And Obama and Democrats would attack opposition by Republicans as meanspirited, cynical, mindlessly partisan, and bigoted. That's the normal pitch of Democrats. McConnell spared Republicans these attacks.

Democrats cite polls in their demand that the Senate take up Garland. But polls don't help their case much. They show three things: A majority favor hearings and a vote, the nominee issue ranks low in the minds of most voters, and only a distinct minority thinks of it as an issue on which to base their vote.

McConnell's reputation as a firm leader played a part in the success of his strategy. He may have scared off stronger nominees who figured McConnell wouldn't flinch. They didn't want to jeopardize their chance of being nominated by Hillary Clinton if she's elected president. True, Garland was backed by liberal interest groups, but he didn't stir mass enthusiasm on the left—far from it. Any hope of his being confirmed is gone.

Democrats bet that Grassley would be the GOP's weak link. They were wrong. Last week, they brought five Iowans and supposed Grassley backers to Washington to express their dismay with him. But two were Democratic donors and only one said Grassley's refusal to hold hearings might prompt a vote against him. The stunt flopped. Though he's running for his seventh term, Grassley was unfazed by a harsh (but silly) editorial in the *Des Moines Register*.

In March, McConnell and Grassley met at the White House with Obama, Biden, and Reid. McConnell needled them about their hypocrisy in insisting on a vote on Garland. "Only two of us here never filibustered a Supreme Court nomination," McConnell noted. Obama, Biden, and Reid filibustered the nomination of Sam Alito in 2006. They lost then too. ♦

The Truth About Trump

It's the personality, not the ideas.

BY DAVID GELERNTER

Signs of the times in Indiana

Many intellectuals misunderstand Donald Trump. Intellectuals often forget that Americans vote for a man, not a white paper, and that Trump passed the very first test for Republican candidates in 2016 while the rest of the field flunked. He was angry *and* seemed capable of acting on his anger. Trump voters' anger has nothing to do with vague white-male resentments. It is anger against Obama and the free pass he gets even from many Republicans who are scared to rip into this smug, arrogant incompetent lest they be called racist.

It's not just that Obama has smothered the economic recovery and left it gasping in a ditch, and brought America lower in power and prestige than at any point since Jimmy Carter and Cyrus Vance paced the D.C. streets preaching penitence in sackcloth and ashes. It's Obama's arrogance, not his mere ineptitude, that drives people crazy. It's his venomous contempt for his opposition and the very *idea* of opposition—and the growing sense that he dislikes America. Americans treat their president with great respect and expect to be treated respectfully in turn. That is the first law of democracy. A president who breaks it is dangerous.

Many primary voters clearly believed that if Obama doesn't make you angry, you are too far removed from normal human emotion to make a decent president. Cruz finished second not because he was second in the antiestablishment sweepstakes (he was not), but because he came second closest to displaying actual human outrage at the worst president in modern history.

I'll admit that Trump-the-man lost me when he lost so many others, when he attacked Senator John McCain's war record and refused to apologize. In many ways Trump is a perfect picture of the vanity culture (aka the

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LUKE SHARRETT / BLOOMBERG / GETTY

kindergarten culture, the Internet culture) that has replaced the old Cold War society—in which, at least, adulthood was a virtue. It's as hard to respect Trump as it was to respect Bill Clinton. But there was more to Clintonism than the sex-predator, and there is far more to Trumponianism than a vain, loudmouthed vulgarian who talks like a 6-year-old. Trump is a vessel in which some part of a nation's outrage has collected—and it's the outrage, not the vessel, that deserves respect. Respect the wine, not the glass.

Furthermore, Trump is right and the intellectuals wrong about the Republican party, and American politics in general. It is indeed the Republican and not the conservative party, for a reason. The striking thing about American parties is that, traditionally, they are *not* ideological. They are groups of broadly like-minded people who share an (admittedly) unfocused, shifting worldview—in which politics is just one element and rarely the most important. In return for our ideological laxness, for the tendency of our two major parties to equilibrate—like tanks of two different liquids separated by a thin wall, reaching the same temperature eventually—we have a remarkably stable political culture.

We have avoided the bitterness and the constant itch to invent new parties that afflicts such ideologically charged democracies as France, Italy, or Israel. You can see our traditional refusal to ideologize our politics in the very names "Democrat" and "Republican," which are impossible for children and foreigners to understand—and make no sense anyway.

Look at history: Truman was no ideologue, just a hardworking pol. Ike was so nonideological Democrats and Republicans both wanted to nominate him. Nixon and JFK were famously close on the issues. (In the '50s, JFK made a donation to Nixon's campaign fund.) When Republicans tried to turn the GOP ideological by nominating Goldwater in '64, they lost in a landslide. When Democrats tried the same maneuver in '72, McGovern lost big.

Reagan was a huge event in many ways; he was the first ideological president of modern times. But look at the GOP's presidential candidates since Reagan: Of George H.W. Bush, Bob Dole, George W. Bush, John McCain, and Mitt Romney, only W was a serious conservative. Granted, W won twice. But he's the only one, also, whose personality approximated the sunniness of Reagan's and (in a lesser way) Bill Clinton's. Americans are optimists and like voting for optimists. But this year, they wanted an angry optimist. (And didn't get one.)

For all the GOP's anguish, Trump could turn things around tomorrow if he chose. A Trump presidency will come down to the people around him. Trump ought to tell us, now, who will be his close advisers and inner cabinet. Unless he does that, there is no telling how he will govern. But if he made the announcement and did it right (having convinced his chosen advisers to work with him for the good of the country), he could win over nearly all Republicans by the next day.

Suppose he were to announce that John McCain would be his secretary of state or defense, that other top people would be drawn from (say) John Bolton, Lindsey Graham, and Elliott Abrams, *and* Rubio, Cruz, Jindal, Walker, Fiorina—with Giuliani or Mukasey for attorney general and Bill Bennett (history's only useful secretary of education) returning there, or taking over HHS or Homeland Security—he'd go far towards unifying the party at a stroke. You might say that these politicians don't think like Trump. But Trump is guided by personality, not doctrines. He has no doctrines. He will bring his personality to bear on any thoughts that catch his eye.

Will Trump do anything like this? Name his advisers and run as a grown up? Everything about him says no, except this: He wants desperately to win. And this announcement would be the sort of dramatic, unexpected gesture he loves. So don't put it past him. It could happen, and this season could have a happy ending (happyish, anyway) after all.

There's just one other possibility: Mitt Romney is the only third-party candidate who makes sense, because of unique circumstances. The country is full of people who regret not voting for Romney last time, and remorse is one of the most pressing of human emotions. More important, Romney's strongest attribute is gentlemanly decency—usually a lukewarm attraction; but this year he'd be running against two of the most obnoxious, unlovable politicians in modern history. No backdrop could bring out Romney's virtues better than Hillary and Trump. He would shine in a way he never has before.

Although it won't happen, credible rumors to the contrary would be good for the country. They'd force Trump to become less irritating. Assuming he's not going to run, Romney could still do an important patriotic deed just by telling people he's reconsidering. Although I have no inside line to the third-party advocates, my guess is that this is just where they are going. They can't win and would never conspire to elect Hillary. But if they work hard and get Trump worried, they could make him a far stronger candidate and better president.

There is a last point that transcends this election. Intellectuals have underestimated the importance of emotion versus reason for a long, long time. After all, they are reason specialists, supposedly; and often they have the wrong idea that reason is a better, steadier guide than emotion to the average human life. But emotion and reason are parallel routes through the mind to the same destination. Reason does no better than emotion on average; and emotion, not reason, runs the mind. Reasoning is transparent and usually easy to explain. Emotion is faster, unmethodical, and usually opaque; we are often unable to explain our emotions. But that doesn't make them wrong.

Understanding emotion better is a good way to know the mind better, society better, and politics better. Trump is no populist, nationalist, or anything else-ist; his personality is fixed but his ideas (obviously) wander. The sooner conservatives accept the fact, the sooner they can see its good points and use them. ♦

The Insider

Trump's success is less populist than you think.

BY JAY COST

Now that Donald Trump is the Republican party's presumptive nominee, there is pressure on conservatives to support him. The people have rendered their verdict, and elitist Republicans should respect the will of the voters, or so goes the much-repeated refrain. But have the people really spoken? Trump is hardly the consensus candidate of the Republican everyman. In fact, his victory is as much a product of elitism as anything: Cable and broadcast news showered unprecedented coverage on him, and the insider-friendly rules of the GOP nomination process turned a mere plurality of votes into an overwhelming share of the delegates.

Watching Trump rallies on cable television, with thousands of diehard fans cheering lustily at the rantings of their hero, it's easy to conclude he is a tribune for the average American's grievances. His legion of aggressive Twitter minions reinforces the impression that his campaign truly is a populist revolt. However, this mistakes intensity of devotion for breadth of support: Trump voters may be loyal, but they are not particularly numerous.

In fact, Trump has won 41 percent of the primary votes cast to date. His share of the total primary vote will increase now that he is unopposed, but most—if not all—previous GOP nominees won a larger share than Trump is likely to achieve. In 2008 John McCain won 47 percent of the Republican primary vote; in 2012 Mitt Romney won 52 percent. Gerald Ford won 53 percent in 1976, Ronald Reagan 61 percent in 1980, George H.W. Bush 68 percent in 1988, and George W. Bush 63 percent in 2000.

Actual Republicans, not so much

Trump could still eke out a slightly larger share of primary votes than McCain did, but only if there is large turnout in the handful of remaining contests. In all likelihood, he will be the least-popular nominee in the modern era.

But, it may be asked, what about the large field of candidates? There were 17 major Republican hopefuls in the race, which made it nearly impossible for Trump to do any better. Not true—the majority of the candidates dropped out early, so by the time most Republicans cast their votes, the field of active contenders was about the same size as it had been in prior cycles. In fact, just four candidates this year—Trump, Ted Cruz, John Kasich, and Marco Rubio—will have scored more than 5 percent of the vote when the last ballots are cast. That is the same number of major contenders as in 2012 and 2008. Three candidates scored at least 5 percent in 1980, 1988, 1996, and 2000—which did not stop Reagan, Bush 41, Dole, or Bush 43 from winning overwhelming majorities in those cycles.

While Trump's support from average Republicans is unimpressive by historical margins, his champions at the apex of American society have been decisive. As political scientist E.E. Schattschneider once argued, "the definition of the alternatives is the supreme instrument of power." Before a plurality of Republicans could vote for Trump, he first had to be defined as a viable alternative—a decision made not by the grassroots of the party, but by media executives. According to an analysis by the *New York Times* from mid-March, Trump had already received about $2 billion worth of coverage from the broadcast and cable networks. As a former numbers-cruncher for Right to Rise, Luke Thompson, has shown, the networks began bestowing this largess on Trump *before* his rise in the polls—and his share of television coverage consistently outstripped his share of support in the national polls.

What drove this partiality? Money, of course. Garrulous and quick-witted, Trump has always been good for ratings, making him a godsend in this era of stagnating or declining viewership. As Les Moonves, president of CBS, told the *Hollywood Reporter*, "The money's rolling in and this is fun … I've never seen anything like this, and this [is] going to be a very good year for us. Sorry. It's a terrible thing to say. But, bring it on, Donald. Keep going."

What a boon it has been for Trump. Sure, his critics were usually included in the cable news roundtables, and a handful of television journalists like

DAVID MCNEW / AFP / GETTY

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Bret Baier and Jake Tapper dug into his questionable business practices and dubious public pronouncements. But this was a drop in the bucket compared with the hours spent covering his rallies, the puffball interviews, and the obsequious jibber-jabber from a brigade of pro-Trump hosts. If one were ever looking for an example of media bias, here it is.

To borrow a phrase from Schattschneider, the flaw in Trump's populist heaven is that "the heavenly choir sings with a strong upper-class accent." Before average voters latched on to Trump to express their frustration with the political elite in Washington, D.C., the media elite in New York City designated him a legitimate vehicle for those grievances. His march to victory began in the executive suites at News Corp., Time Warner, NBCUniversal, Disney, and CBS, all of which boosted him, not because he is good for the country but because he is good for the bottom line.

Trump was also helped by the rules of the Republican nominating process. To date, he has received a slightly smaller share of GOP votes than Bernie Sanders has won of Democratic votes. However, the Democrats allocate their delegates through a proportional system, while the Republicans give bonuses to candidates who finish in first place—even if they win less than half the vote. If the GOP rules resembled what the Democrats employ, Cruz and Kasich—and for that matter Rubio—would all still be in the race, and the party would be headed toward a contested convention in Cleveland.

Far from being a bug in the Republican process, this is its key feature. The product of insider calculations, the party rules are intended to dispatch insurgents quickly and hand the nomination to the frontrunner. Of course, the party elite intended a candidate such as Jeb Bush or Mitt Romney to take advantage of the system. As the ones who can raise the most money and hire the best consultants, Bush or Romney was supposed to get the most attention, jump out to first place in the polls, win the early primaries by narrow margins, winnow the field, and eventually build an insurmountable delegate lead.

The plan backfired: Yes, the big donors swung to Bush, but his public appeal was limited. Trump barely spent a dime, but used his media advantage to become the frontrunner. Still, in its own peculiar way, the nomination process actually functioned properly. Its purpose is to elevate the establishment's candidate—the difference this time is that it boosted the media establishment's choice, not that of the Republican political establishment.

Trump has effectively won the nomination despite nearly three-fifths of Republicans preferring somebody else. This victory is hardly the stuff of a populist movement seizing authority from the establishment. Instead, it represents the power of the elites to dominate our political process for their own purposes. ♦

The Gig Is Up

A salutary development for the U.S. economy.

BY IKE BRANNON

California and Massachusetts regulators have decided to allow Uber drivers to be considered independent contractors rather than employees, a distinction crucial to the success of the ride-sharing app. But it's hardly the last word on the matter. The left has been vilifying Uber as the villain of the new "gig economy," in which more and more workers—especially younger ones—support themselves as self-employed contractors, stitching together a variety of app-enabled tasks. Liberals consider such arrangements largely exploitative—with companies such as Uber getting fabulously rich while the contractors doing the work hustle, scrape, and scuffle for crumbs. Uber corporate employees, after all, enjoy fringe benefits, unemployment insurance, and job security; the drivers do not.

Protesting Uber in New York

"Uber Is Not the Future of Work," proclaimed Lawrence Mishel of the left-wing Economic Policy Institute in the pages of the *Atlantic*. Bernie Sanders posted Mishel's article on his campaign website and has declared he has "serious problems" with "unregulated" businesses like Uber. Last year Hillary Clinton got in the mix, saying the gig economy raises "hard questions about workplace protection and what a good job will look like in the future."

These arguments distract from some of the key benefits of a gig economy. An economy with a greater proportion of independent contractors is one that is less susceptible to the vagaries of the business cycle. Recessions should be shorter and cause less unemployment if the economy has more independent contractors.

In a recession triggered by a decline in demand—which is the ultimate cause of most recessions—the initial decline in sales that most companies experience forces them to make a determination: Is the decline a short-term phenomenon or something more significant? It's an impossible task, at least at first, so companies typically hedge their bets by keeping idle or underemployed workers on the payroll, since it can be costly to reacquire and train new workers when they need them back. When companies do lay off workers, they would rather not rehire them until they are nearly 100 percent sure they will need them for an extended period of time. This is because so much of the cost of a worker—especially expensive, skilled workers—is in the form of fixed fringe benefits that can't be scaled back. That is why many companies respond to a nascent economic expansion by having existing workers work months or more of overtime before they finally hire reinforcements.

When workers are independent contractors, as they are with Uber, a recession doesn't necessitate that the costs be fully borne by the relatively few people who lose their jobs. In an economy with more independent contractors, a reduction in demand gets spread out. While incomes do fall, there are fewer people without jobs than in a non-gig economy. Gig economies dampen the employment swings within a business cycle—a good thing. Given that it's the young and unskilled whose careers bear the brunt of the long-term costs of any recession, this should be hailed as a welcome evolution in the economy rather than something that needs to be fixed.

Foes of the gig economy would argue their unsteady income in a recession is precisely what is wrong with the gig economy, but I would argue that it's much better for the pain of a recession to be spread out among millions of workers whose livelihoods are modestly dented than for it to be concentrated on a few who lose their jobs altogether. As long as there's a business cycle, hours, employment, or compensation will have to fluctuate to match demand. We should want employment to be last on that list, but so much in our labor market causes employment to fall first. For instance, union contracts can make it very difficult for companies to save money by reducing the hours each employee works.

Corporate profits already fluctuate more than labor market variables over a business cycle, so Bernie-sian suggestions that corporations should somehow bear the brunt of the business-cycle downturns neglect the fact that this already occurs.

When health care costs are some 30 to 40 percent of a worker's compensation, labor markets aren't flexible. For all its faults, the Affordable Care Act did make it less expensive for most people to acquire health insurance on their own, freeing millions of Americans to work for themselves without worrying about access to health insurance.

Nancy Pelosi crowed in 2010 that the Affordable Care Act would help people escape their jobs and do more fulfilling things. That these new, self-directed gigs don't look precisely like Democrats thought they would—apparently the left wanted more buskers and community activists, not cabbies—should be irrelevant.

The gig economy is no disaster. It not only empowers more people to be their own bosses, it has benefits for the rest of the economy too. Before the Democratic party makes the end of gig-ging a party-platform plank, it might want to look at those benefits and recalibrate its rhetoric. ◆

SPENCER PLATT / GETTY

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Guilty Mind

Did Hillary know the rules?

BY C. J. CIARAMELLA

News outlets reported earlier this month that federal investigators have uncovered scant evidence that Hillary Clinton willfully violated federal record law when her subordinates set up a private email server at her Chappaqua manse to handle State Department business.

As the *Washington Post* reported, "One official said prosecutors are wrestling with the question of whether Clinton intended to violate the rules, and so far, the evidence seemed to indicate she did not."

Wrestling with intent, especially when it concerns anything a Clinton may or may not have known, is a herculean labor. Oddly enough, though, the very thing that may save Clinton from an indictment is a criminal justice principle that conservatives want to strengthen and liberal groups oppose expanding.

For the past several years, a bipartisan constellation of conservative and progressive groups has come to a rare consensus on a series of criminal justice reforms. The sole exception, which threatens to blow up their fragile alliance, has been *mens rea* reform. Latin for "guilty mind," *mens rea* is a common-law principle that requires prosecutors to prove a defendant intended to break the law.

If one were in an extremely charitable mood, the Clinton email fiasco could be spun as a well-meaning and very busy public servant running afoul of the mountain of federal regulations on the books.

And it is not as if there is any lack of federal laws to break, wittingly or unwittingly. A 2008 analysis by law scholar John S. Baker for the Heritage Foundation identified at least 4,450 federal crimes. As I reported in 2014 for the *Washington Free Beacon*, that number has only increased, as has the rate at which the federal government is creating new crimes.

For example, it is now a federal crime to conduct "high seas navigation of an unflagged submersible or semi-submersible vessel." (Sorry, amateur submarine pirates.) It is a federal crime to make an obscene gesture at the Pentagon in order to alarm people. It is a federal crime to use the 4-H Club emblem without approval.

And many of those crimes do not have *mens rea* protections. In other words, not knowing that it's illegal to write a letter to a pirate won't keep the feds off your back. (Sorry, pirate pen pals.)

The Heritage Foundation and several other conservative think-tanks support strengthening *mens rea* protections. The GOP-led House Judiciary Committee approved legislation earlier this year that would require prosecutors to prove defendants "knew, or had reason to believe, the conduct was unlawful" when federal criminal law fails to provide a standard of intent.

"The idea that the hard left of the Democratic Party likes to threaten businesspeople with jail for not complying with regulations that they've written in some cubbyhole somewhere is ridiculous," Americans for Tax Reform president and reliable quote-machine Grover Norquist told the *Washington Post.*

The poster child for overcriminalization and *mens rea* reform is John Yates, a Florida fisherman who was convicted of violating "anti-shredding" provisions in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, a hefty tome of finance regulation passed in the wake of the Enron scandal. Yates's crime? Destroying evidence and impeding a federal investigation for throwing three undersized fish from his boat. Under laws originally created to criminalize the destruction of financial records, he served 30 days in jail and lost his livelihood.

Yates appealed his case all the way to the Supreme Court. The Court threw out his conviction and ruled, in its august wisdom, that red grouper are not the same as financial documents.

However, liberal groups like the Center for American Progress argue that expanding *mens rea* protections will shield deep-pocketed, white-collar criminals from prosecution. A corporate executive, say, whose company wantonly pollutes. Or for that matter, a powerful politician and her fiefdom of bootlickers who set up a secret, unsecured email server to send sensitive government information.

The American Civil Liberties Union came out against the *mens rea* proposal in a letter to the *New York Times* earlier this year: "Republican lawmakers who insist on making this issue a quid pro quo are likely doing so not out of concern for the lives, families and communities torn apart by our broken system, but rather to please white-collar and corporate polluter interests who stand to gain the most."

If Clinton avoids charges—as she probably will, guilty mind or not—and goes on to gain the most powerful political office in the world, she will likely be quite pleased indeed. Something tells me, though, that the ACLU and CAP will not hold up Clinton as an example of two-tiered justice for white-collar scofflaws, and conservatives will not applaud the prosecutorial restraint displayed by the Justice Department.

In the meantime, the rest of us mere mortals will just have to watch our step, sure in the knowledge that somehow, someway, somewhere, we're probably breaking the law. ◆

GARY LOCKE

C.J. Ciaramella is a writer in Washington, D.C.

The First Thousand Issues

. . . and beyond

By Matthew Continetti

I've spent the last few weeks rummaging through The Weekly Standard's archive. It's a musty cobwebbed place where back issues are strewn among copies of the Starr report, hanging chads from the Florida recount, and Saddam's brain. And as I looked through the dusty magazines, I made some observations.

What struck me first is the magazine's consistency. Many of the same writers and editors who were there in 1995 continue to put out the magazine today. The format of each issue—Scrapbook, Casual, short articles, feature articles, book reviews, Parody—hasn't changed in 20 years. Nor have the quality of the writing, the witty caricatures, and the general point of view.

If I had to sum up that editorial philosophy, I would say it's a belief in the difference between right and wrong, truth and lies, nobility and baseness, and in the corollary idea that domestic and foreign policy are not exempt from these moral categories. "Politics—real politics, not Bill Clinton's politics—is about pursuing justice and deterring and punishing injustice," wrote William Kristol in a February 1997 article. That's enough to keep you busy for decades.

It is striking how often the so-called social issues—abortion, affirmative action, drug use, gambling, public corruption, euthanasia, predation of minors, cloning, sexual norms—grab the attention of The Weekly Standard's editors. A large constitutional democracy cannot function, the argument runs, if its elected officials do not adhere to common standards of decency and honesty and ethical conduct. As David Tell put it in an October 1996 editorial: "It's the veracity, stupid."

The presidency of Bill Clinton brought morality to the fore both domestically and internationally. There is a line that connects the magazine's support for Clinton's impeachment with its opposition to a fawning engagement with China. Some practices—perjury and obstruction of justice on the one hand and political oppression and authoritarianism on the other—cannot be countenanced. America and her people, this thinking goes, have a responsibility to support, stand up, and fight for what is right. Failure to do so not only endangers the U.S.-led international system that has brought freedom and prosperity to billions of people. It also dishonors our heritage as a democratic republic.

Conserving America's global position requires intervention overseas. "Americans could save themselves and the world a great deal of trouble if they developed a bit more confidence in the prudent and timely use of force, a confidence commensurate with their nation's capabilities," Robert Kagan wrote in the first issue. "Military missions will always be fraught with risks, but the leadership role that politicians in both parties claim for the United States cannot be won without some risk." This unflinching attitude toward foreign intervention is probably the magazine's most famous characteristic.

When the United States commits soldiers to battle, the integrity of the office of the president is also at stake. "Any major rejection of the man also, unavoidably, impeaches his office—the institution against which foreign governments judge American resolve," wrote David Tell in

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December 1995. "If the president must make his way overseas against furious opposition, or fails to make his way at all, then U.S. international credibility and influence are damaged, at least in the short run." And because the defense against threats to the liberal democratic order is a bipartisan responsibility, The Standard has supported presidents of both parties when they have intervened in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

The interesting thing about viewing history through the lens of The Weekly Standard is how you can see the dominant concerns of one presidential administration emerge in the closing years of another. The Balkans, Haiti, Somalia, China, and the larger question of America's post-Cold War foreign policy were all waiting for Bill Clinton when he moved into the White House in 1993, and for The Weekly Standard when it was founded in 1995. Similarly, Clinton spent the final months of his second term failing to confront the overriding challenges of George W. Bush's presidency: Islamic terrorism and the despotism of Saddam Hussein.

The bombing of the USS *Cole* in October 2000 was a premonition. "As long as the unipolar moment lasts, then, unconventional attacks like that on the *Cole* or on the Khobar Towers or the ambush of the Rangers in Mogadishu will continue to punctuate the headlines," Tom Donnelly wrote at the time. "The American response to these acts of war should be to use the instruments of war—intelligence gathering and military force—not only to avenge them and deter similar acts, but also to frustrate the political aims of our enemies."

As for Saddam, a 1998 editorial by William Kristol and Robert Kagan stated the matter succinctly:

> Failure to act decisively on Iraq would stand as a dramatic abdication of American responsibility to prevent aggressive dictators from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. Either Saddam is allowed to acquire weapons of mass destruction or he isn't.

As we wrote a month ago, "there is no middle ground between a decline in U.S. power, a rise in world chaos, and a dangerous twenty-first century, on the one hand, and a Reaganite reassertion of American power and moral leadership, on the other." Iraq is *the* test of whether we can reverse our current failed foreign policy and establish a policy of American leadership and, yes, mastery.

During Bill Clinton's presidency, the cover stories and editorials of The Weekly Standard were about evenly divided between domestic and foreign policy. After 9/11, however, the magazine was focused on the global war on terror and its fronts in Afghanistan and Iraq. "If we are going to defeat bin Laden, his allied holy warriors, and others who have supported them," Reuel Marc Gerecht wrote after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, "we are going to have to understand that friendship for and partnership with the United States in the Middle East primarily hinges on American power."

The Weekly Standard campaigned for the widespread application of this power—in pursuit of terrorists inside the United States and without, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Iran, and in all the other branches of what Bibi Netanyahu has described as the "poisonous tree" of Islamic radicalism, resentment, and violence.

It would be an evasion to deny or ignore the ambiguous outcomes of some of these policies. Needless to say, the present attitude of the public toward George W. Bush and the wars he commenced in Afghanistan and Iraq is hostile. But a careful reader of The Weekly Standard would acknowledge that its editors called for additional troops to be sent to Iraq as early as the summer of 2003. It was also in these pages that Frederick W. Kagan and Kimberly Kagan outlined, explained, and advocated the

"surge" strategy of reinforcements and counterinsurgency that succeeded against all odds in quelling the violence in Iraq.

Nor has the opposite approach increased U.S. power or made the world any safer. Barack Obama campaigned on a platform of retrenchment. He pledged to restart U.S.-Russian relations, withdraw troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, and negotiate with Iran over its nuclear program. The Standard has catalogued the perverse consequences of these policies since Obama assumed office in 2009. American withdrawal from Iraq was followed by renewed sectarian war. The lack of American follow-through in Libya fractured its society and opened a safe haven for terrorist cells.

American ambivalence in Syria led to the formation of a terrorist state ruled by ISIS and a humanitarian disaster of biblical proportions. Iran has been empowered and enriched by the nuclear deal. President Obama's desire not to behave like George W. Bush contributed to this metastasizing violence and also weakened America's position in Europe and the Pacific vis-à-vis Russia and China.

Just as the waning days of Bill Clinton's presidency offered a vision of George W. Bush's time in the Oval Office, Bush's final months presaged the Obama years. Russia invaded Georgia in the summer of 2008, a sort of preview of coming attractions for the annexation of Crimea six years later. The debut of Sarah Palin on the national stage was, in retrospect, the first tremor of the populist earthquake that would only gather force. And the financial crisis that ended Bush's presidency was the beginning of a renegotiation of the American social contract, in which the federal government played a larger role in the life of the nation.

This liberal Democratic resurgence is one of the most important stories of recent years. The Weekly Standard has spent much of the Obama administration on the defensive, opposing the president's stimulus, health care, and immigration bills, and the bulk of his foreign policy. And though the magazine took a positive view of Palin and the Tea Party, its editors somewhat differ on the latest iteration of conservative populism in the person of Donald Trump.

Meanwhile, The Weekly Standard has become a home for so-called reform conservatism. In 2005 the magazine published Ross Douthat and Reihan Salam on the party of Sam's Club. Yuval Levin's "Putting Families First" ran the following year. Salam, Levin, Adam White, and other scholars and journalists associated with this movement continue to publish here. The Standard also identified a rising generation of Republican leaders, from its "Young Guns" cover of Paul Ryan, Kevin McCarthy, and Eric Cantor in 2007 (well, two out of three ain't bad), to its trendsetting profiles of Palin, Marco Rubio, Tom Cotton, and Joni Ernst.

These new faces underscore the fact that in recent years the magazine witnessed a generational change. Starting around 2008, major figures in the history of American conservatism and neoconservatism began to leave the scene. More contemporary intellectuals and writers, such as Christopher Hitchens, Dean Barnett, Andrew Breitbart, and other dear friends, departed ahead of their time. The last decade has been a period of transition, not only politically but also demographically.

What comes next? As Fred Barnes has written many times, the future is never a straight-line projection of the present. But it is clear nevertheless that President Obama's successor will have to respond to the wars in Syria and Iraq as well as to Iranian, Russian, Chinese, and North Korean belligerence. Those problems are not going to disappear. Nor will the rising murder rate in some of our major cities, nor the opioid and heroin addiction spread throughout the country, nor the shambolic welfare state.

No doubt The Weekly Standard will spend its next 1,000 issues applying its rigorous moral code to all of these dilemmas. No doubt, too, those issues will include the same political and cultural reportage, commentary, and humor that readers have come to expect—along with an anagram of Leo Strauss hidden in every article. ♦

The Deal with the Art

Kudos, complaints, and threats

By Philip Chalk

Beginning with its debut issue in September 1995, The Weekly Standard has featured on its pages the work of a small army of top-notch artists, among them John Kascht, who produced many early covers—including that original cover likeness of Newt Gingrich—and who now has some 19 pieces of art in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. These two decades of artwork have given the magazine a reputation for lively illustration and inspired a steady response from readers—a mix of curiosity, praise, disgust, delight, and outrage.

Practically inclined readers sometimes ask about the nuts and bolts of pulling imagery together every week, a process that has changed utterly since 1995. When the magazine was young, all its artists worked in real ink or paint, rendering on board or canvas and usually shipping the final product to us in the mail, where it would be photographed and scanned. Today, almost all of our illustrators leave their pencils and brushes gathering cobwebs in the corner, instead using a stylus on one or another variety of touch-responsive computer screen. When done, they zip the digital file to us online within minutes.

As readers now and then discern, we do sometimes indulge an inside joke, as when we echoed Thomas Fluharty's grim GOP-disaster cover from November 2008 ("Wipeout") with a celebratory variation following the GOP triumph in the 2014 midterms ("Cowabunga!"). While there is no "Greatest Hits" list, some covers are hard to forget, given the response they inspired.

Gary Locke's March 2010 cover showing an unclothed and freezing Al Gore ("The

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global warming campaign enters its emperor's-new-clothes phase") was enlarged to several feet tall and displayed on the floor of the Senate. It also generated considerable revulsion and glee among readers, a typical case of the former coming from a reader in Kentucky: "I love The Weekly Standard. However, I am bothered by the March 15 cover. It is simply childish. I have no fondness of Al Gore. Yet, there is a level of dignity and respect that should be maintained by this great publication." The very next email message announced, "I love the Al Gore . . . cover & would love to have it on a T-shirt!"

With great regularity, we are convicted of impugning the high and mighty. A Virginia reader in 2009 objected, "Your cover picture of Caroline Kennedy is outrageously offensive—as cruel and bigoted as the liberal press' treatment of Sarah Palin. You guys don't like uppity women, do you? For shame!" Similarly, Jason Seiler's Donald Trump cover last September, showing the candidate in profile (opposite page), split the audience, with some readers writing in to vent their dismay at his ascent and others threatening to cancel their subscriptions if we continued our visual assaults.

The most requested print (behind the "Cowabunga" number) is quite possibly Fluharty's Rembrandt parody, "Obama Contemplating a Bust of Jimmy Carter," which illustrated Charles Krauthammer's October 2009 essay, "Decline Is a Choice."

Does politics rear its head in the world of illustration? How could it not? A couple of artists have refused to work for us on principle. Illustrators sometimes end up in the bull's-eye, as Seiler discovered from a flurry of online criticism after putting Bruce/Caitlyn Jenner on a box of Wheaties. When it came time to represent the crushing political correctness of the LGBT blacklisters, the artist who finally agreed to render our symbolic steamroller insisted that a pseudonym be used as a credit, for fear of professional reprisal.

Of all Weekly Standard art, the most anticipated may be the cover work of our biannual "reading" issues (at right). Since 2003, virtually all of these have been created by Mark Summers, featuring literary figures in seasonal poses, usually with some groan-inducing pun implied. Even now, this year's "Summer Reading" cover is underway, and if history is any guide, a handful of readers will likely email to ask just what it is that Rudyard Kipling is doing and why it's supposed to be funny. ♦

The Art of Aging Gracefully

Advice on the occasion of The Weekly Standard*'s 1,000th issue*

By P.J. O'Rourke

Die young! The counsel is harsh, but the reasons are clear. Imagine portly, blustering, red-faced Romeo, burgher of a provincial Italian town, and frumpy, shrewish Juliet. "A dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death!" versus "a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic!" The two of them perpetuating the Montague-Capulet feud, which is now about who left his dirty doublet, hose, and codpiece on the bathroom floor.

King Philip of Macedon's boy would be known as Alexander the Not-So-Hotso if he'd lived past age 32 and actually tried to rule a geographical region so much in the news today.

The poor, dumb kid conquered the worst empire ever—Greece well past its Periclean 5th century B.C. sell-by date, stupid Turkey, snakepit Levant, horrid Egypt, awful Libya, vile Syria, fiendish Iran, the horror show that is Afghanistan, and some troublemaking denizens of the Punjab.

Or jump ahead 2,100 years to the same neck of the woods in 1824, and consider a Lord Byron who failed to expire of diarrhea and lived to see "The Glory That Was Greece, Part II"—a goat rodeo featuring corruption, revolt, assassination, and getting bitch-slapped by the Turks.

Greece ended up—when Byron would have been 45—with a sovereign bearing the singularly un-Hellenic name "Otto of Bavaria."

Meanwhile there's George Gordon, 6th Baron Byron and 1st "No-Account Count" of Missolonghi, getting fat and using his fading reputation as buttinski part-time national liberator to sponge off the locals. He's the Mikhail Gorbachev of Athens, except with more hair and a personal life too scandalous for a Nobel Peace Prize.

Do we really wish there were *more* Byron poems? "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," "The Bride of Abydos," and "The Corsair" aren't enough for you? "Don Juan" was still unfinished after 17 big, honking cantos. Are you on pins and needles about how it ends?

In Byron's last bit of doggerel, "On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year," he's already complaining about the need for fiber in his diet.

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone

And he's whining, in typical solipsistic retirement-home fashion, about his other aches and pains.

The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

Byron, like fellow Romantic Movement twerps Shelley and Keats, was a political crackpot. Bad ideological vintages can't be improved by aging, *pace* Bernie Sanders. Strident senility begins to spoil the humor of "Don Juan" in Canto VIII:

If I had not perceived that revolution
Alone can save the earth from hell's pollution.

Percy Bysshe Shelley also checked out on time, at 29. "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world," indeed. Passing bills against prosaic things like private property.

Shelley might have lived to be an all-too-well-known member of Parliament, filibustering for Lake District Home Rule by reciting his poetry until Queen Victoria's head exploded midst his "England in 1819" description of her grandpa, dad, and uncles, *An old, mad, blind, despis'd, and dying king, / Princes, the dregs of their dull race . . .*

A divider, not a uniter was our Percy Bysshe.

John Keats would have been an old pest too. As it was, he did enough damage. Myriads of young dolts in school are dosed with—

The point that Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Johnny Rotten, and I are making is: If you must age, do not do it gracefully. Don't just get old, get old and scary.

P.J. O'Rourke is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard. *His most recent book is* Thrown Under the Omnibus: A Reader.

Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

What if you get a flat? Try changing a tire with truth. Try changing a tire with beauty. What *ye need to know* is where the spare is.

But it's not just budding lovers, world conquerors, poetic prodigies, and people who Feel the Bern who need to die young. Callow geniuses of every type owe it to the world to kick the bucket promptly. I'm talking to you, Mark Zuckerberg. Which dreadful thing comes after Facebook?

Even we of middling talents probably shouldn't hang around too long. Yes, we have insights and understandings to impart to our juniors and can show them how to change a tire. But we'll make our points with obscure, antique examples and references to dead white males.

What if Jack and Bobby hadn't been cut down in their prime? What if they had lived to fulfill their potential as career politicians the way their brother Ted did? We would have had Larry, Moe, and Curly Kennedy.

What if James Dean hadn't driven his Porsche 550 Spyder with such youthful abandon? Did you see Marlon Brando as Jor-El in *Superman*?

What if the Rolling Stones were still alive and touring—Mick Jagger looking like somebody's crazy great aunt and Keith Richards resembling Ovid's Cumaean Sibyl who asked Apollo for eternal life but forgot to ask him for eternal youth, except dressed like Johnny Depp playing a pirate?

They *are*? They *do*?

"It's better to burn out than to fade away," as the Neil Young lyric has it. Although the same song—"My My, Hey Hey (Out of the Blue)"—also contains the lyric "This is the story of a Johnny Rotten."

To which *the* Johnny Rotten (real name John Lydon, age 60) responded, "Oh, hilarious." Because, as it happens, Johnny Rotten is *not* the dead Sex Pistol, that's Sid Vicious.

DAVE CLEGG

Obviously, it's too late for me and what's left of my generation to take my first and best advice about aging. But the point that Mick, Keith, Johnny Rotten (who still looks a fright and has been voted one of the "100 Greatest Britons"), and I are making is: If you must age, do not do it gracefully. Don't just get old, *get old and scary*.

"It's better to be feared than loved if you cannot be both," said the Roger Stone of his day. And at our age nobody's going to love Roger *or* me.

Lloyd Bentsen pulled the scary old man trick on Dan Quayle in the 1988 vice presidential debate. Dan defended himself against accusations of immaturity by noting that John F. Kennedy was his age in 1960. And Bentsen said, "I *knew* Jack Kennedy. . . . Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy."

Never mind that Bentsen was a hack and Quayle was full of principle and promise. Lloyd was old enough to get away with it. And Dan was too young to reply, "You bet I'm not! I don't cheat on my wife, lie about my health, or buy elections with my father's money."

I pull the same stunt on greenhorns claiming I'm to the right of Attila the Hun. I say, "I *interviewed* Attila the Hun. He was a social democrat who instituted large-scale looting, pillage, and rape entitlement programs."

Physiognomy helps make the brats tremble. Time supplies the human visage with a panoply of terrifying wrinkles, creases, furrows, wens, warts, and moles with a hair growing out of them. Provide your own gin blossoms. And maintain a stern facial expression. "Patience on a monument looking down on folly." If tempted to smile, mentally review the 2016 presidential primaries.

Speaking of which, making faces has worked wonders for Hillary Clinton, once a young lady of anodyne appearance and now doing such a good job of looking like the sum of all fears about Republicans that she'll probably be elected president.

I myself—with no small thanks to the prospect of a Clinton administration *redux*—have a grimace to make Medusa seem as if she just emerged from the beauty parlor with her snakes in a French twist. Stick me in one of Hillary's Susanna Beverly Hills pantsuit numbers and we'll put an end to this transgender fad.

Not that that is my particular sartorial strategy for scary. I favor pinstripes.

There's something about a man in a suit and tie that triggers visceral terror. Perhaps because the American people are now dressed as if they're 9-years-old-for-life. Adults go to work in playground shoes,

you'll-grow-into-them shorts, and shirts in the clashing plaid tartan of Clan MacColorblind.

When confronted with a man in a suit, instinct tells them they're in trouble. Plainclothes detective? Banker come to repossess the house? John Kasich still going door-to-door? Did the NSA intercept the email joke they forwarded? ("*Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump are running for president and you've only got one bullet . . .*") Secret Service? ("*Use it on yourself.*")

Bernie Sanders proves my point. He scares even me. He isn't dressed like a left-wing crank. He's dressed like a mortician. Maybe capitalism *is* dead.

A man in a suit wears the authority of adulthood. Adults are mythical creatures in modern life. We don't exist anymore. But like bedtime story hobgoblins we retain the power to cause nightmares.

I enhance the effect with tortoiseshell half-glasses. Stare coldly over the top of these and the surliest baristas, the most otiose DMV bureaucrats, the airline ticket counter representatives least inclined to upgrade me to business class suddenly feel . . . "Oh, no, Dad is home! God only knows how long he'll ground me for!" (And it doesn't hurt that God is always depicted as a guy who's at least my age.)

Looking old is effective. Acting old is more so. But it takes practice. I'm practicing being deaf. "What?" My goal is to take people who are saying dumb things and make them louder and dumber.

"I'm with Her!"

"What?"

"*I'm with Her!*"

"What?"

"I'M WITH HER!"

"Then what are you doing here?"

Besides, it's been 28 years since anyone told me anything I wanted to hear. And even then presidential candidate George H.W. Bush was telling me to read his lips.

What? is the fit response to all that's said by my doctor, lawyer, accountant, stockbroker, friends who have resigned themselves to voting for Donald Trump, importunate children, and spouse suggesting I consume more of Lord Byron's yellow leaves and fewer steaks and martinis.

Yet it is a subtle art to hear nothing that's said to me but still discern, from the country club bar, my college freshman daughter on the tennis courts 200 yards away whispering to her friend about where tonight's kegger will be held.

I practice being forgetful too. It has to be done exactly right. Forget where you parked your car or your own phone number (why the hell would I want to call myself?) or which day of the week it is, and your heirs and assigns will have you committed to the memory care facility. But call the 2016 presidential hopefuls "Whatsherface," "Whosit," "Whachamacallit," and "that contract bridge dummy No Trumps or whatever his name is," and you'll be regarded as possessing the sagacious wisdom of a seasoned observer of the human comedy.

The sagacious wisdom of a seasoned observer (along with an inability to hear anyone who argues to the contrary) allows me to say what I damn well please.

I suppose this is what Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders think they're doing. Also the people who bog or slog or chirp or squeak or whatever it is they do on something they call "social media" and I call "What?"

My grandmother knew how to say what she damn well pleased, not that she ever would have said "damn." As a boy I asked her what the difference was between Democrats and Republicans. She said, "Democrats rent."

Once, when I remarked on slum conditions as we drove through a bad part of town, my grandmother said, "No one's ever so poor he can't pick up his yard."

And when I came home from college declaring that Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon were both fascist pigs and I was a Communist, she said—take heed, Bernie—"at least you're not a Democrat."

Going through family photographs I realize that my grandmother *cultivated* old age. By the time she was 40 her affect was Margaret Dumont opposite Groucho Marx in *A Night at the Opera*—if Groucho had been the straight man.

In 1966, when the Post Office issued its 6-cent FDR commemorative, my grandmother said, "My friends and I are having trouble using that new Roosevelt stamp."

"Why?" I asked.

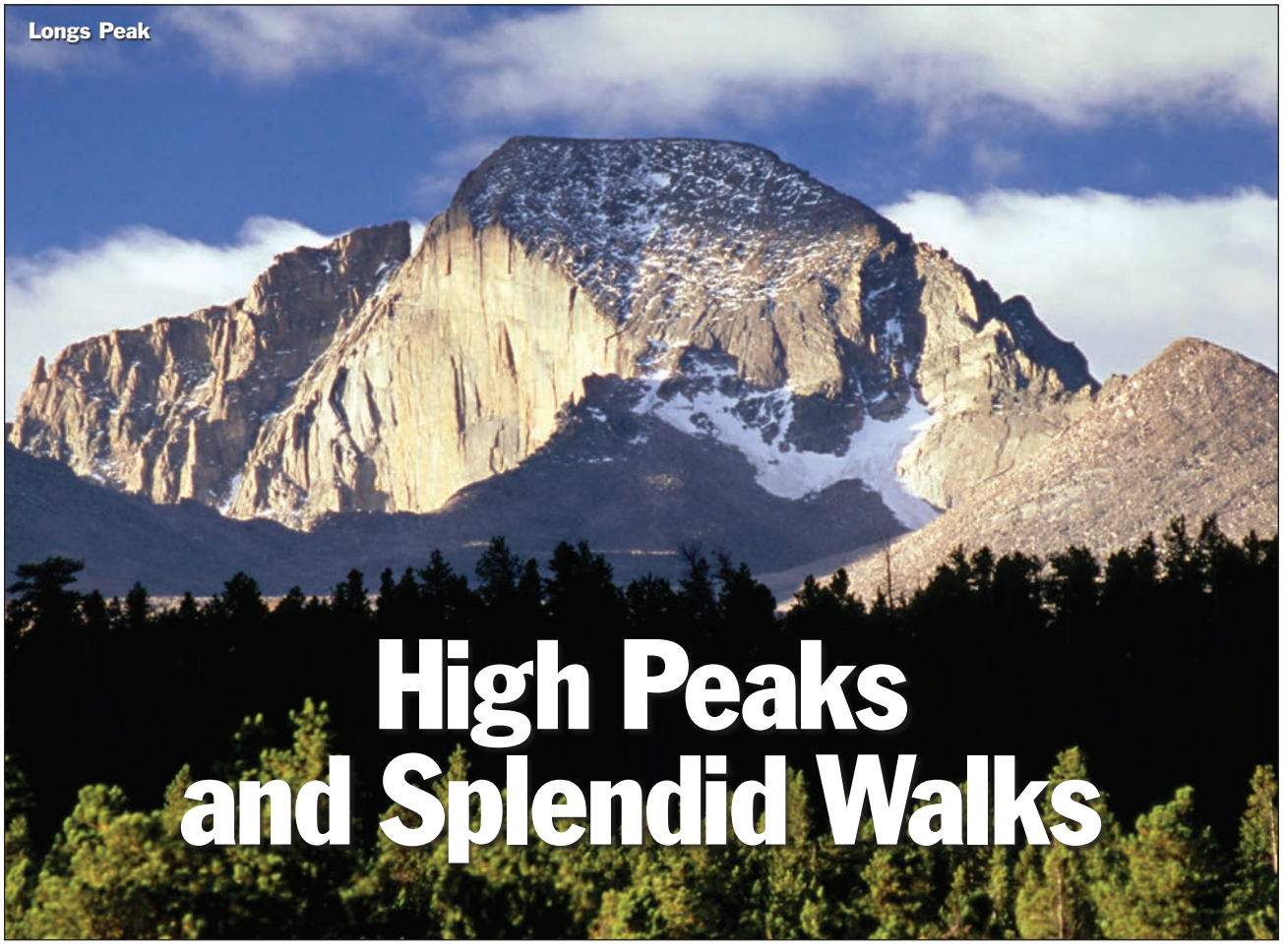
"We keep spitting on the wrong side."

I'm following Grandmother's example, cultivating old age. Although—after trying on that pantsuit—I'm doing so in more of a Groucho way. I smoke cigars.

You'd be amazed how cigars drive away annoyances such as men in sandals, women who make their own jewelry, NPR tote-bag carriers, people who use the word "mindfulness," Prius drivers promoting social justice through bumper stickers, givers of TED Talks, listeners to TED Talks, and vegans who know whether produce is locally grown, organic, GMO-free, and fair-traded but who can't tell hay from straw.

I favor Havanas. But I'm told that a good cigar produces merely the odor of a smoldering compost heap. So I smoke cheap El Rope-O Grandes. They smell like I've set a wet dog on fire. A single deep exhalation works better than a trigger warning in a Berkeley gender studies class. The young and silly head for the hills (or the Hillary).

In the matter of aging gracefully, maybe I should have the grace to leave the world. But, failing that, I can make the world leave me. ♦


Longs Peak

High Peaks and Splendid Walks

The pleasures of Rocky Mountain National Park

By Geoffrey Norman

The ranger had organized a little briefing after a woman asked him, nervously, about the chances that she and her companion, while on the hike they had planned, might, you know, run into . . . a *bear*.

So seven or eight of us stood outside the Beaver Meadows visitor center while he conducted a helpful little course on bears in general and, specifically, the black bears of Rocky Mountain National Park. "The black bear is a territorial animal and each one needs a fairly large territory. There is enough territory in this park—about 400 square miles—to support about 30 bears."

"That's all?" the woman said. She meant the number of bears, not the size of the territory.

"Yes," the ranger said.

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

The woman found that reassuring. The odds of her coming around a bend in the trail, face to face with a bear, suddenly seemed pretty small.

The ranger went on with his briefing, which was thorough and informative. But my mind was stuck on that figure: 400 square miles. Hard to believe that such a small package could contain so much country. And such singularly magnificent country at that. Seemed like it should have been 4,000, at least.

But, then, a lot of that country runs up and down. This is a mountain park. There are 78 of them that exceed 12,000 feet. Longs Peak, the tallest, reaches 14,259 feet, and that is a big mountain anywhere in the world outside of the Himalayas. The tallest mountain in Europe, Russia's Mount Elbrus, is 18,510 feet. The Matterhorn is 14,692 feet.

Any reasonably fit and energetic visitor to Rocky Mountain National Park can take a day during the short climbing season and reach the summit of Longs Peak. He will, thus, have climbed a mountain that is almost as tall as the Matterhorn. It isn't what is called a "technical" climb,

STAN OSOLINSKI / GETTY

Hikers pause in the 'Keyhole' on Longs Peak, en route to the top.

EHTAN WELTY / GETTY

but it is a strenuous and demanding walk-up, a challenge and an accomplishment. In the summer, the parking lot at the trailhead where the climb begins will start filling up at one or two in the morning. It is a long climb and you want to have made the summit, turned around, and gotten yourself back down below the treeline before the afternoon thunderstorms begin ominously accumulating and discharging electricity all over the high country.

That climb wasn't possible in early May when I visited the park. There was still snow, and lots of it, in the high country. But the hard, angular shape of the mountain drew my eyes and made me want to return in the height of summer and give it a shot.

You don't have to climb, technically or otherwise, to get up into the alpine zone. As formidable as this park is, its wonders can be experienced by car on the Trail Ridge Road, which connects the eastern and western sides of the park and traverses the Continental Divide at a place called Milner Pass. The road works its sinuous way, higher and higher, and eventually reaches an altitude of 12,183 feet. You can—and should—stop at the Alpine Visitors' Center near the top and take in the views, which are . . . well, they are stunning. No other word for it. When I was there, almost a month into spring, the ground below for the first thousand feet or so was still covered with snow. A band of scraggly conifers—Engelmann spruce, I believe—began after that. Down lower came lodgepole and then ponderosa pine. In a few weeks, the snow would be gone and wildflowers—fireweed, lupine, alpine sunflowers, and more than 1,000 other species—would begin blooming and turn the meadows gaudy with color.

Spectacular and unique country tends to stimulate a kind of brooding awe. On the eastern side of the Continental Divide where I stood, the water from the snow melt would soon run off to the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. On the western side, the snow melt would find its way to the beginnings of the Colorado River and, ultimately, the Gulf of California. There is something fascinating, in an imponderable way, about this.

Back down at more familiar altitudes, you will find your eyes drawn away from the road ahead. Not, perhaps, dangerously so. Not as if you were texting. But the vistas are irresistible and, then, there are the animals.

There is no hunting in the park; there are signs and notices that make the point emphatically. Elk are so abundant in the park that you wonder whether they might have learned how to read. You see them out in the meadows, looking very scruffy at this time of year. They forage so ravenously that in some areas of the park, aspen stands have been fenced off to keep the elk from destroying them.

The preservation of wildlife was one of the motivations behind the establishment of the park. Most of the iconic species—elk, bear, wolves, moose, etc.—were gone, or reduced to very small numbers, by the time Woodrow Wilson officially established the park in 1915. Now, the elk are everywhere. At one point in my visit, I stopped to take some pictures and wandered down off the road, looking for the best angle. On the way back to my vehicle, I found myself face-to-face with a bull elk, his antlers draped with velvet, and his hide looking like an unmade bed. He looked at me complacently for a few seconds and then wandered off.

In the fall, his antlers would be clean and polished and gleaming like the barrel of a rifle, his hide would be smooth and oily, and he would be on the move through country of flaming aspen, bugling to let the world know he was there.

You can also expect to see bighorn sheep in the park. I didn't and that was a disappointment and another reason to return. That, and climbing Longs Peak.

There were, however, other opportunities. I took the most popular of them, which was to drive to the Bear Lake trailhead and hike a little ways up into the back country. The parking lot was nearly full, and there were all manner of people coming in or going out. Some with infants that they carried on their backs. Many who looked to have gotten a head start of at least seven decades on those babies.

It was midweek in May. I don't suppose there could be a more graphic testament to the value and success of the park system than this scene. The parks are meant to protect the grandest of the country's landscapes. But also to make them accessible to the citizenry. They speak to the wonders of the American land and also the democratic conviction that it is "our land."

With that little civics lesson out of the way, I slipped some steel cleats over my boots and started down the trail. The lake was still frozen except for one small segment near the trailhead. There was snow on the ground around the lake and a lot of it on the slopes above that, all the way to the pinnacle of Longs Peak, which towered over things in a brooding sort of way.

The trail was not crowded. But I didn't have it to myself, either. I would stop, occasionally, to let hikers coming out go by.

Traffic thinned out after a while, and that is another quality of this park. It is small in that previously mentioned sense of encompassing "only" 400 square miles. And, with its eastern perimeter only a couple of miles outside of Denver, it is heavily visited. You could build in an extra day at the end of your business conference in Denver or Boulder and spend it here. And, probably, many do.

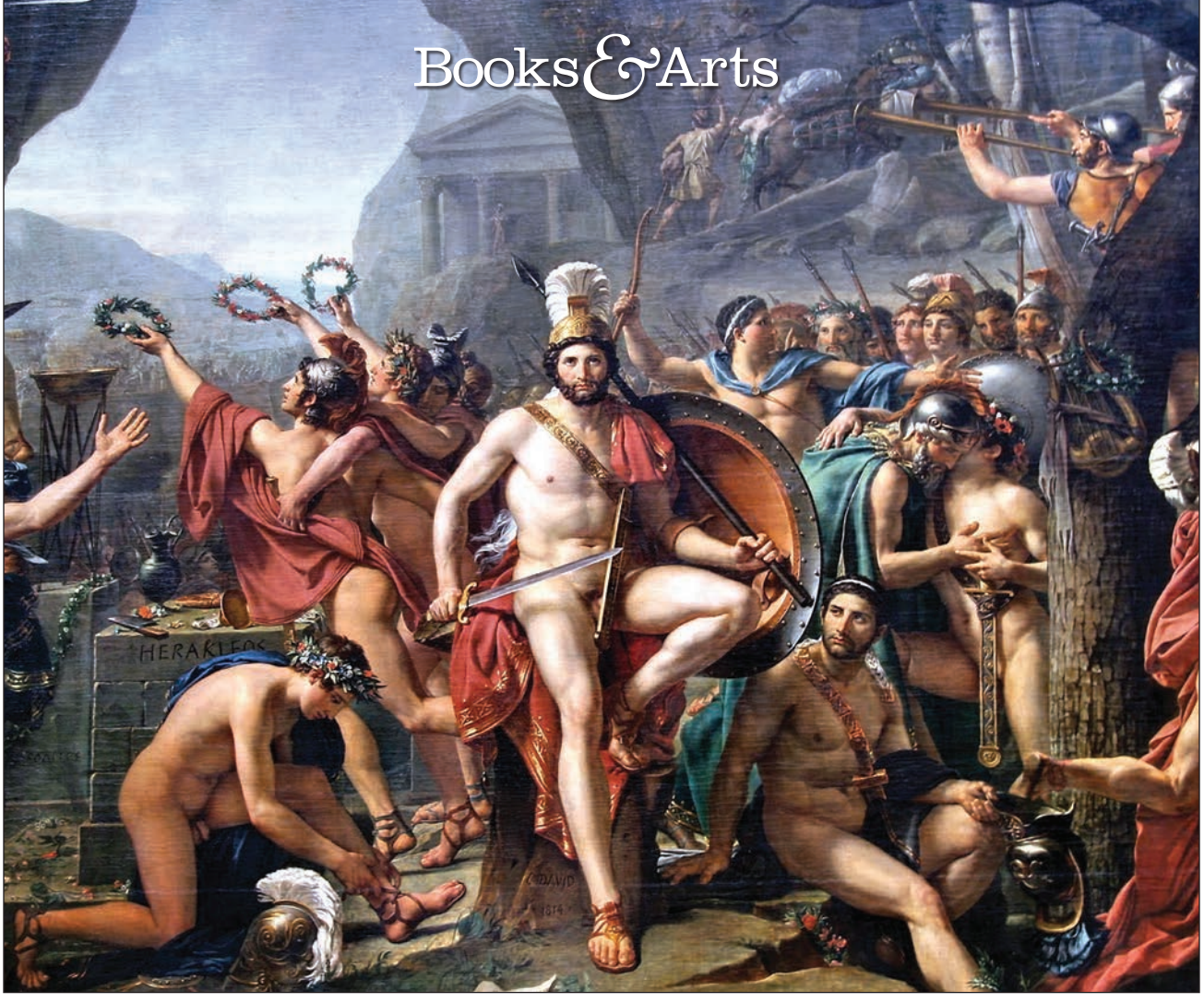
But crowds tend to be in the crowded places, and if you hit the trail you can find all the solitude you need or crave. The back country is wild and splendid, and with a park permit you can push back in deep and camp. If you want to build a fire, you'll need to use a designated site but otherwise, you are on your own.

I had flashes of that kind of solitude on my two-mile walk to Bierstadt Lake, named for the great landscape painter of the American West. Albert Bierstadt visited the area in 1876, painting large prospects of Estes Park and Longs Peak. Like his contemporaries in the romantic Hudson River School, Bierstadt conveyed the sublime in nature—powerful, brooding explorations of the vastness and awe-inspiring qualities of wilderness. If Bierstadt had been a poet, he would have been Byron, probably.

I like his paintings—I have a couple of prints on my office walls—and he could have painted the view of Longs Peak, towering and austere and epic, that I saw on my way back out of the park.

I exchanged cheerful greetings with people in the parking lot and headed out. Two hours to Denver? It seemed infinitely farther than that. Just as the park seems infinitely larger than 400 square miles. ♦

At top, a Continental Divide marker; below, one of innumerable elk



'Leonidas at Thermopylae' (1814) by Jacques-Louis David

The Spartan Example

As always, Greece has something to teach us. BY J. E. LENDON

The Ancient Greeks won the Cold War.

Parallels were irresistible: the parallels between the rivalry of the United States and the Soviet Union and classical Greece's three great struggles—the triumph over the Persians, the long Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens, and the Greeks' defeat by the drab, muddy Macedonia of Philip II, father of Alexander the Great. These were contests of freedom against tyranny, of naval against land power, and of the cheerful confusion of democracy against glum authoritarianism. Some found resonance even in the irony that imperial Athens was governed democratically within its borders but ruled its far-flung subjects with a mix of indifference and panic-driven cruelty. Nor did it hurt that the historian Thucydides could justly be claimed as the progenitor of realism, the leading Cold War theory of international relations.

The Grand Strategy of Classical Sparta
The Persian Challenge
by Paul A. Rahe
Yale, 424 pp., $38

The quarter-century since the end of the Cold War has found less use for the Greek paradigm. If anyone, it is to the Romans we should now look for clues to America's international perplexities; but we can't, for that would be to admit responsibility for the order of the world and to hear in the wind the whisper of the forbidden word "empire." At the same time the fad for "cultural history"—the mass intellectual history of those too

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humble or stupid to possess, or act on, actual ideas—sloshed into Classics from history departments.

Until 1990, most Greek historians studied the fifth century B.C., the era of Herodotus and Thucydides, the Persian wars and the Peloponnesian War. Now they visit, instead, the freak show of the sixth century B.C. (weird practices dimly seen woven together with fragments from mad poets: perfect fodder for cultural history); or they settle themselves plumply in the fourth century B.C. From that era, a sheaf of boring Athenian speeches survives, written for law court or popular assembly, which can all too easily entice a scholar discontented with today's America to formulate his own private theory of democracy. And private his theory is apt to remain.

So to announce a trilogy of books recounting the rise and fall of classical Sparta (this is the first of them, about the Persian wars)—a trilogy to be accompanied by a fourth volume on Spartan ways and institutions—seems the act of a scholar who has been suspended for 35 years in aspic. And such indeed, or close to it, has been the fate of the conservative thinker Paul Rahe. He earned his Ph.D. in ancient history at Yale in the school of the great Donald Kagan, but political philosophy long trapped him, like Odysseus on Calypso's isle: He toiled over Machiavelli and Montesquieu, as well as his *Republics Ancient and Modern*—which, at more than 1,200 pages of astonishing erudition, might easily be mistaken for the *summa contra mundum* with which a scholar closed his career, rather than the book that began it. Paul Rahe, finally returning to Greek history after so many years, has been far too busy to notice that the interests and methods of 1977, when he finished his dissertation, are no longer those of the cool kids at Cambridge and Stanford.

And that is no bad thing. For lo! it turns out that, in Rahe's hands, the grand narrative of Greek history is a key that still fits the puzzle-box of today's much-changed world. In recent years, when no historian of Greece was looking, students of the Near East have come to understand the Zoroastrianism of the Achaemenid Persians as a militant and aggressive creed. With justice does Rahe liken Persia's moves west to a *jihad*. And Rahe's Sparta is far more aware of the Persian threat—and aware earlier, and systematic in opposition—than earlier scholars had grasped. In Rahe's book, for the first time, the badly reported treaties and wars between 520 and 480 B.C. in Greece and the Greek cities across the Aegean actually make sense. Only now, in Rahe, do these events have an explicable pattern: As the Persians strive to increase their power and influence, the Spartans contrive to thwart them.

Statue of Leonidas, Thermopylae

ASSOCIATED PRESS

We think of Sparta as exercising an easy mastery over southern Greece, but the power of a nation—however consistently successful in battle close to home—cannot easily be exerted across even a narrow and island-speckled sea if it refuses to commit its own troops. So the story of Spartan strategy on the eastern coast of the Aegean is one of unsatisfactory alliances, weak coalitions, divided leadership, and repeated betrayal, as cities saw their wisest policy as being the first to defect to the enemy.

There is much here for today's statesmen to ponder, and *The Grand Strategy of Classical Sparta* is written in a style accessible even to statesmen, to say nothing of the wider public.

As the book marches towards the climactic war between Xerxes and the Greeks (480–479 B.C.), it necessarily becomes a more conventional narrative, a historical story, and can properly be judged on the quality of the storytelling. Rahe is a clear writer, not incapable of the occasional elegant epigram, and he builds up a fine head of suspense. But he faces stern competition: not only from Herodotus, the first teller of these events and a master of prose, but more recently from Peter Green, one of the best pens in Classics today, who took on this tale in a book where hardly a paragraph fails to give pleasure (*Xerxes at Salamis*, 1970, lightly updated as *The Greco-Persian Wars*, 1996). And alas, despite his sound prose, Paul Rahe has no ear for poetry, and what with oracles in verse and Aeschylus' tragedy *The Persians* as evidence, there is necessarily quite a lot of poetry in any study of the Persian wars.

With elegant concision, Peter Green, himself a poet, borrows an old, handsome translation of the famous epigram of Simonides about the 300 Spartans who fell at Thermopylae:

Tell them in Lacedaemon, passer-by
That here obedient to their word we lie

Rahe, by contrast, makes Simonides sound as if he were paid by the word and desperate to cram in as many as possible:

Stranger! Convey to the men of Lacedaemon this message:
That in this place we lie—obedient to their commands

Peter Green's book is sadly out of date, so the reader seeking the best historical account of the Persian wars in English should now read Paul Rahe. But that reader will do so with much greater pleasure if he spends five minutes beforehand taping the translations of poetry from Green's *Greco-Persian Wars* over those in Rahe's *Grand Strategy of Classical Sparta*. With historical acumen and poetic sensibility thus combined, the story becomes a modern masterwork. ♦

B&A

Homage to Poe

The works and life of the Great American Man of Letters.

BY MICHAEL DIRDA

Outside the afternoon had already grown sunless and gray as we settled into our seats in eighth-grade English class. Our teacher, without preamble, carefully lowered the tone arm on a rackety portable record player. There was a scratchy pause, and then, unforgettably, we heard a low and sonorous, but slightly manic, voice whispering: "True!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why *will* you say that I am mad?"

It was Basil Rathbone, reading "The Tell-Tale Heart" and other stories by Edgar Allan Poe. We sat mesmerized, until the actor produced his final, blood-curdling shriek: "Here, here—it is the beating of his hideous heart!"

At the time, I failed to recognize that the voice on the record was the same as that of Sherlock Holmes, but I already knew a little about Poe. My steelworker father used to recite: *It was many and many a year ago / In a kingdom by the sea / That a maiden there lived whom you may know / By the name of Annabel Lee*. That was about all he could remember. As a child, I loved the wistful sound of the words, just as I would later be taken by the tintinnabulation of "The Bells" and the mournful repetition of "nevermore" in "The Raven." But when, in sixth grade, I had finally borrowed a friend's copy of the Signet Classics paperback of *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Tales*, I found Poe disconcerting, even disappointing.

Mostly, this was because I could barely understand his complicated sentences and sometimes couldn't figure out what was happening. "A Descent into the Maelstrom" dragged at the beginning, and its account of being caught in the vortex of a whirlpool went tediously on and on. "The Masque of the Red Death" was hardly a story at all, just a series of symbolic tableaux. Even "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" opened with pages of dry theorizing: "The mental features discoursed of as the analytical, are, in themselves, but little susceptible of analysis." Though I was suitably delighted when C. Auguste Dupin deduced that the savage murders could only have been committed by an orangutan, I nonetheless regarded this solution as farfetched, despite the usual caveat (frequently enunciated by my hero, the sleuth of Baker Street) that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.

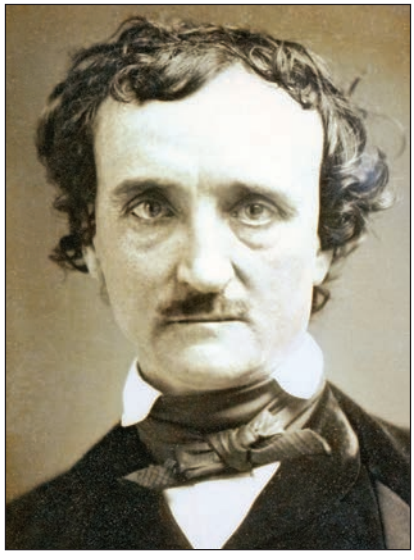
"The Purloined Letter" also charmed me with its central conceit that people will invariably overlook the obvious, even if the maxim's application in this instance seemed distinctly unrealistic: The police would surely have examined every scrap of paper in the minister's apartment, no matter where its hiding place.

My initial puzzlement about Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) was hardly surprising. His fiction can seem too rhetorical, too thickly textured, too literary for most young people. Still, Basil Rathbone's recording did persuade me to give the writer another try—sometime. The opportunity finally arose in high school when I opened my new English textbook and discovered the revenge story "The Cask of Amontillado." In class, our teacher emphasized Poe's use of irony and guessed, like many other readers and critics, that the narrator Montresor was speaking to a priest. The phrase "You, who so well know the nature of my soul" could obviously be addressed to one's confessor. But I wasn't quite convinced of this.

What were the "injuries" and the "insult" that Montresor had suffered from the doomed Fortunato? I soon had my own ideas. When the two men repair to the damp underground vaults to sample the much-anticipated Amontillado, Montresor says to his tipsy companion: "You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was." I had read enough fiction by then to know that lost happiness usually meant lost love. Obviously, this rich, rather stupid aristocrat had somehow stolen Montresor's girl, married her, and then, through neglect and drunkenness, made her life miserable. Just look at the sodden fool: He is out carousing by himself on the street, decked out in jingle bells and clown regalia, while Lady Fortunato, we later learn, sits at home waiting for him.

So I boldly contended that Montresor could no longer bear the repeated disrespect, probably coupled with physical abuse, endured by the woman he adored. He walls up Fortunato and, after a suitable period of

The Annotated Poe
edited by Kevin J. Hayes
Harvard, 440 pp., $39.95



Edgar Allan Poe (1849)

Michael Dirda is a weekly book columnist for the Washington Post *and the author, most recently, of* Browsings: A Year of Reading, Collecting, and Living with Books.

mourning, weds his widow. As he lays dying, Montresor finally tells the whole story to the person who really knows his soul—his wife, the former Mrs. Fortunato. My teacher was somewhat nonplussed by my argument—especially when I extrapolated the future wedding—but I cling to it even now.

From that time on, I grasped that textual ambiguity could contribute to a poem or story's power and appeal. Like Shakespeare's plays, Poe's tales of the grotesque and arabesque are tantalizing, open-ended, susceptible to multiple interpretations. When you finish "Ligeia"—in which a dark-haired beauty of indomitable will-power returns from the dead and takes over the body of the fair Rowena—you are left with some interesting questions: Is Ligeia truly alive again? Will she and her husband take up their marriage from where it left off? What will Lady Rowena's relatives say about her disappearance? Could everything be just a hallucination of the opium-addled narrator?

Though Poe himself thought "Ligeia" his best story, many of today's readers would probably award that honor to the somber "Fall of the House of Usher." Everyone recalls its opening:

> During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher.

How had I failed, even at age 12, to appreciate the splendor of such diction or the careful syntax of this beautifully balanced sentence? As I slowly began to reread stories I had originally disliked, I soon discovered more and more to admire in Poe, especially his use of language. The last paragraph of "The Masque of the Red Death," for example, resounds with biblical grandeur and finality:

> And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

The alliterative Ds and the repeated use of "and" generated a suitably ominous cadence, but the real triumph lay in that phrase "illimitable dominion."

Poe's admirers were legion. Many scholars speculate that Pym *influenced* Moby-Dick. *Abraham Lincoln, it was once reported, 'suffers no year to pass without a perusal of this author.' Dostoyevsky himself introduced Russian translations of Poe, and to the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Poe was 'the supreme original short story writer of all time.'*

There was majesty as well as doom in those syllables. Halfway through college, I even decided that Poe's verse occasionally surpassed Swinburne's and Verlaine's in its intricate interlacings of sound. Consider the lugubrious melody and tocsin-like repetitions of "Ulalume":

> *The skies they were ashen and sober;*
> *The leaves they were crispèd and sere—*
> *The leaves they were withering and sere;*
> *It was night, in the lonesome October*
> *Of my most immemorial year:*
> *It was hard by the dim lake of Auber*
> *In the misty mid region of Weir—*
> *It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,*
> *In the ghoul-haunted woodland*
> *of Weir.*

In a French class I learned that Poe wasn't only a genius himself, he was also the cause of genius in others. France's three greatest poets of the 19th and early-20th centuries revered him: Baudelaire translated his stories; Mallarmé composed one of his best poems, "Le Tombeau d'Edgar Poe," for the dedication of the writer's memorial in Baltimore; and Valéry insisted that the American was "the only impeccable writer." Poe's *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*—a combination of nautical adventure story, racial allegory, and fictionalized speculations about the Antarctic, as well as his only novel—so impressed Jules Verne that he produced a sequel to it: *The Sphinx of the Ice Fields*.

In fact, Poe's admirers were legion. Many scholars speculate that *Pym* influenced *Moby-Dick*. Abraham Lincoln, it was once reported, "suffers no year to pass without a perusal of this author." Dostoyevsky himself introduced Russian translations of "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Black Cat," and "The Devil in the Belfry"—and surely, his Underground Man is a cousin to Poe's soul-baring monomaniacs. To the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Poe was nothing less than "the supreme original short story writer of all time." The usually prickly Bernard Shaw agreed with Conan Doyle, adding, "The story of the Lady Ligeia is not merely one of the wonders of literature; it is unparalleled and unapproached. There is really nothing to be said about it: we others simply take off our hats and let Mr. Poe go first." Tennyson, Hardy, and Yeats regarded that same Mr. Poe as the finest of American poets.

By the same token, H.P. Lovecraft deemed Poe the premier exponent of the modern weird tale, the first writer to understand perfectly "the very mechanics and physiology of fear and strangeness." Reconfiguring the trappings of the Gothic romance—the crumbling Bavarian castle, the insidious villain, the frightened heroine—

Poe asserted that "terror is not of Germany but of the soul." In their turn, his five "tales of ratiocination"—the three investigations featuring Dupin but also, to some extent, the cryptographic treasure story "The Gold Bug" and the ballistics-oriented "Thou Art the Man"—established virtually all the elements of the classic detective story.

As Howard Haycraft observed in *Murder for Pleasure*, Poe more or less invented "the transcendent and eccentric detective; the admiring and slightly stupid foil; the well-intentioned blundering and unimaginativeness of the official guardians of the law; the locked-room convention; the pointing finger of unjust suspicion; the solution by surprise"—and much else. In effect, he turned reasoning into a source of narrative excitement.

If, in the weird tale and the detective story, Poe is both pioneering and exemplary, he is only slightly less so in science fiction. His sense of wonder led him to extrapolate (some would say fool the public) with "The Balloon-Hoax," a proto-Verne *voyage extraordinaire* about the supposed crossing of the Atlantic, and "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall," a significant contribution to the long literature of journeys to the moon. In "The Man That Was Used Up," Poe describes a steampunk version of a cyborg, half-human, half-machine, while "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" focuses on a corpse preserved and kept sentient through the power of mesmerism. Even the innocuous-sounding "Conversation of Eiros and Charmion" relates Earth's collision with a comet, leading to fiery global apocalypse: "For a moment there was a wild lurid light alone, visiting and penetrating all things. Then … the whole incumbent mass of ether in which we existed, burst at once into a species of intense flame. . . . Thus ended all."

Though "The Raven" *did* make him famous—the poem was quickly reprinted in 11 different periodicals—Poe was best known in his lifetime as a literary journalist. He began his career by submitting "Metzengerstein"—a gothicky revenge tale, featuring a spectral horse—for a prize awarded by the *Saturday Courier* of Philadelphia. (He came in second: The award went to Delia Bacon, now faintly remembered because she championed Francis Bacon as the author of Shakespeare's plays.) In another competition, underwritten by Baltimore's *Saturday Visiter*, Poe's account of a castaway, "Manuscript Found in a Bottle," earned him $50. Soon thereafter, he adopted journalism as his career, taking up a position as assistant editor of Richmond's *Southern Literary Messenger*, where he remained for two years.

Poe could turn his hand to any topic, once producing an article on the proper use of the dash (which may sound trivial until you remember how much the breathless pace of his stories relies on the dash). The scholar Burton Pollin even estimated that Poe coined, or first used in print, nearly a thousand words.

He would eventually quit that job over a salary dispute, but Poe—despite the occasional drinking binge—was too exceptional a writer and editor not to land another job right away. Over the years, he would grind out scores of book reviews, humorous squibs, essays, poems, and stories. As time went on, Poe even preferred to write his attractively legible script on narrow strips of paper that had been pasted into long rolls—almost certainly to emulate newspaper columns. He could turn his hand to any topic, once producing an article on the proper use of the dash (which may sound trivial until you remember how much the breathless pace of his stories relies on the dash). The scholar Burton Pollin even estimated that Poe coined, or first used in print, nearly a thousand words.

Poe was also given to puns and humorous coinages, though these are now likely to elicit groans: Aries Tottle, a German named "Kroutaplenttey," the Snook Farm Phalanx (for the Transcendentalists' Brook Farm). Poe may also be viewed as the Martin Gardner of his age, fascinated by contemporary science and pseudoscience (such as phrenology), fond of deciphering codes, and adept at exposing frauds.

With uncharacteristic modesty, Edmund Wilson contended that Poe's was "the most remarkable body of criticism ever produced in the United States." Wilson added that, with his knowledge of Latin, Greek, Spanish, Italian, French, and German, and possibly a smattering of Hebrew, Poe stood intellectually "on higher ground than any other American writer of his time." Nonetheless, his notoriously snarky, sometimes ad hominem reviews earned him the nickname "the Tomahawk Man."

Poe did write appreciatively, however, about the young Dickens, dedicate *The Raven and Other Poems* to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, publish an essay entitled "Art-Singing and Heart-Singing" by the then-little-known "Walter" Whitman, and praise Hazlitt as "brilliant, epigrammatic, startling, paradoxical, and suggestive." Most important, in celebrating *Twice-Told Tales* by his near-contemporary Nathaniel Hawthorne, Poe used his review to lay out the modern theory of the short story:

> A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents, but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should

> be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction.

Poe consistently emphasized art's need for unity or totality of effect. Through careful verbal engineering alone, one produces fiction's "intoxication of the heart" or the "excitement" that is poetry's "province, its essentiality." To believe "The Philosophy of Composition"—which is a bit tongue-in-cheek—no "fine frenzy" or "ecstatic intuition" was required to generate "The Raven." It was a matter of method and doggedness. In that essay, Poe sounds as coolly calculating as Nabokov, which may explain the air of factitiousness and theatricality common to both writers.

And like the creator of *Lolita* (initially called *The Kingdom by the Sea*), the author of the Nabokovian "William Wilson" and "Annabel Lee" was a perfectionist. Poe speaks of an initial draft's "vacillating crudities of thought," of "true purposes seized only at the last moment," and "fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable," and of all "the painful erasures and interpolations." Even after a piece was published, Poe would keep tinkering with it, completely revising certain early poems for later book appearances. In truth, Poe was astonishingly hardworking: "I have not suffered a day to pass without writing from a page to three pages." In spite of poverty, drink, and multiple sorrows, this industrious writer managed to publish 10 volumes in his short lifetime—the last being *Eureka*, a dense philosophical essay on cosmology, with speculations about an expanding universe. Most impressive of all, with the partial exception of the Dupin mysteries, he almost never repeated himself.

Some of the legends about Poe—as the saddest, loneliest figure in American literature—almost certainly arose because he avoided the overtly autobiographical and once famously emphasized the impossibility of being wholly truthful about one's inner life:

> If any ambitious man have a fancy to revolutionize, at one effort, the universal world of human thought, human opinion, and human sentiment, the opportunity is his own—the road to immortal renown lies straight, open, and unencumbered before him. All that he has to do is to write and publish a very little book. Its title should be simple—a few plain words—"My Heart Laid Bare." . . . But to write it—*there* is the rub. No man dare write it. No man ever will dare write it. No man *could* write it, even if he dared. The paper would shrivel and blaze at every touch of the fiery pen.

Vincent Price in 'The Raven' (1963)

In his life, as in his writing, Poe was clearly obsessed with death, and according to the Freudian critic Marie Bonaparte, the symbolic presence of his dying mother, the talented young actress Elizabeth Arnold Poe, suffuses his whole oeuvre. Adopted by the well-off John and Frances Allan of Richmond, the infant Edgar was subsequently doted-on by his stepmother but eventually disowned by his stepfather because of gambling debts incurred while a student at the University of Virginia. Poe was thus forced to make his own way in the world. For a while, it seemed he might pursue a military career: He enlisted and proved a model soldier, rising to the rank of sergeant-major. Later, he enrolled as a cadet at West Point, but eventually dropped out to pursue his literary ambitions.

Poe exhibited the usual prejudices of white Southern gentility, as can be seen in his characterization (or, perhaps, caricaturization) of the devoted black retainer Jupiter in "The Gold-Bug." (Still, Poe did describe his African-American friend Armistead Gordon as the most interesting man he had ever talked to.) Even more notoriously, Poe married his cousin Virginia Clemm in 1836 when she was not yet 14. He cared tenderly for his child-bride and her mother, who, together, provided a measure of stability to his sometimes-disordered life. Alas, in a repetition of Elizabeth Poe's premature death, Virginia succumbed to tuberculosis in 1847 while still in her early twenties. Poe never recovered from the loss.

His own final days in Baltimore have elicited the kind of speculation we associate with the disappearance of

Ambrose Bierce or the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Odds are that the 40-year-old Poe was plied with drink by local politicos and moved around the city to multiple polling stations to stuff ballot boxes. Eventually found weak and delusional in a bar, he was taken to a hospital, where he died a few days later. Some have speculated that Poe might have been murdered because he was going to marry a certain Mrs. Shelton, which could have cost members of her family a substantial legacy.

There is even a flourishing subgenre of fiction in which Poe didn't die in Baltimore. In one early example, "My Adventure with Edgar Allan Poe," Julian Hawthorne (son of Nathaniel) encounters Poe in 1891 at an out-of-the-way Philadelphia restaurant. It turns out that Poe had suffered a premature burial, and when he finally awoke from his suspended animation—unchanged in appearance despite the passage of many years—he decided to put his literary life behind him. Initially mistaking Julian for his father, Poe explains that he now goes by the name of Arnold and is employed as secretary to a local banker.

Melancholy, prone to drink, slightly morbid, always dressed in black—to later generations, Poe became an archetypal voyager into the dark places of the heart and even darker places of the soul. In famous late photographs, the slightly down-at-the-heels gentleman of letters bears the tragic features of his own Roderick Usher: "To be *thoroughly* conversant with Man's heart," Poe once said, "is to take our final lesson in the iron-clasped volume of Despair."

Today you can buy Poe T-shirts, action figures, and refrigerator magnets, as well as Raven Special Lager Beer and a children's book, *Edgar and the Tattle-Tale Heart*. "Nevermore" must be the most famous single word in all American poetry. Poe's stories—or sometimes just their titles—survive in numerous B-movie adaptations. More happily, some of our finest artists and illustrators have evoked the horrors of "The Pit and the Pendulum" and "Hop-Frog," pictured William Wilson and his doppelgänger, or depicted that singular urban vampire, "The Man of the Crowd." My own small Poe collection includes volumes illustrated by Harry Clarke, Arthur Rackham, William Sharp, and Gahan Wilson; but many other artists—Gustave Doré, John Tenniel, Edward Hopper, D.G. Rossetti, Manet, and Whistler—have been inspired by Poe's stories and poems, as well as his own haunted face.

Melancholy, prone to drink, slightly morbid, always dressed in black—to later generations, Poe became an archetypal voyager into the dark places of the heart and even darker places of the soul.

Poe's tomb, Baltimore

Which brings us to *The Annotated Poe*. Editor Kevin J. Hayes is certainly a respected Poe scholar, just as William Giraldi is a respected novelist. Nonetheless, the latter's otherwise smart and insightful introduction is slightly marred by overwriting. (On one page we read about "the rips and rasps of a psyche" and "the strafings and strainings of the soul.") Unfortunately, Harvard University Press has fumbled design and layout: The footnote numbers in the text are hard to see; the marginal annotations are printed in faint red ink, in flyspeck-sized type. Only fighter pilots and eagles could possibly read the commentary with ease.

Hayes's annotations follow the usual guidelines for such volumes: As he writes, "I supply in addition to literary contexts a range of other helpful contexts (biographical, historical, political, philosophical), and gloss allusions and sources, topical references, obscure words and phrases, and words whose connotations may not be clear to modern readers." To my mind, however, the notes don't always give enough critical or bibliographical information. Discussing "The Masque of the Red Death," for example, Hayes produces this tantalizingly inadequate comment: "In any case, the motley-colored suite of rooms offers numerous possible interpretations and critics have been happy to supply them." An example or two would have been helpful.

While reprinting virtually all the major stories and poems, Hayes does leave out some key texts, notably "The Imp of the Perverse," the prose-poem "Silence," and Poe's romantic tale of a Venetian *Liebestod*, "The Assignation." None of the essays or marginalia is included. So while *The Annotated Poe*—because of the marginal commentary and many illustrations—is worth owning, it isn't a clear standout in the crowded field of Poe collections. Online, moreover, one can rewardingly visit the superb website maintained by the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore. It makes available digital texts of the standard Arthur Hobson Quinn biography, a great deal of important scholarship, and the two best editions of Poe's complete works, those by James A. Harrison and Thomas Ollive Mabbott. ♦

B&A

Conservative Minder

Russell Kirk's political and cultural legacy.

BY JAMES SEATON

Russell Kirk (1984)

In this impressive intellectual biography of one of the founders of modern conservatism, Bradley Birzer makes the case for the importance of Russell Kirk (1918-94) today, in large part by making clear the extent to which Kirk's philosophical but nonideological kind of conservatism differs from what is most often presented as conservatism on television, radio, and other media.

> As of the writing of this book, loud, obnoxious, and plastic radio and television personalities dominate the voice of conservatism as understood by the American public. . . . Kirk's conservatism in 1959 has almost nothing in common with the populist, popular conservatism of today's modern media.

Russell Kirk
American Conservative
by Bradley J. Birzer
Kentucky, 608 pp., $34.95

Birzer could easily have omitted the date, and his point would have been just as valid. The Kirk of the 1980s and '90s was just as much out of tune as the Kirk of the 1950s with the populist or pseudo-populist political conservatism of 2016.

Kirk's influence, from the start, has always been more cultural than political, as Birzer recognizes. In any case, Kirk's own political views never conformed to those of any party or movement, despite his friendships with politicians like Michigan governor John Engler and President Ronald Reagan. Birzer points out that Kirk, though not a pacifist, found himself unable to support any war in which the United States had been involved, from the American Revolution up to the Gulf war, including the Civil War and the war in which Kirk himself served, World War II.

Kirk made what Birzer calls "a nearly fatal error" when, criticizing what he saw as the bellicosity of neoconservative foreign policy, he commented: "And not seldom it has seemed as if some eminent Neoconservatives mistook Tel Aviv for the capital of the United States." Midge Decter and Norman Podhoretz, among others, understandably took offense at the remark, regarding it as evidence of antisemitism. Birzer offers no brief for the comment but defends Kirk himself against the charge of antisemitism, noting that "not a single person has left an account of any negative comments Kirk ever made in conversation, casual or otherwise, about Judaism or Jews," adding that the same is true of his letters. Kirk, Birzer documents, "founded *Modern Age* to defend the views of famed scholar Leo Strauss, and he departed the journal because of the rampant anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism there." Birzer concludes that, although Kirk "might very well have chosen poor words when fearing that American national interests were succumbing to Israeli interests, that this one comment—very much taken out of context by his opponents—should or even could brand Kirk an anti-Semite is simply untenable."

Birzer contends that Kirk's importance lies not in his political interventions but in his success in articulating an American conservatism that might serve "as a means, a mood, and an attitude to conserve, to preserve, and to pass on to future generations the best of the humane tradition rather than to advocate a particular political philosophy, party, or agenda." Kirk's first, and probably most influential, book was

JAY MCNALLY / AP

James Seaton, professor of English at Michigan State, is the author, most recently, of Literary Criticism from Plato to Postmodernism: The Humanistic Alternative.

The Conservative Mind (1953), which Birzer calls his magnum opus. The importance of *The Conservative Mind* can be measured by the comment of so thoughtful a critic as Lionel Trilling in *The Liberal Imagination* (1950) that, in the United States, there were no conservative ideas in circulation, only "irritable mental gestures which seek to resemble ideas."

The Conservative Mind refuted the notion—conventional wisdom in the 1950s—that liberalism stood alone as the sole intellectual tradition alive in the United States by pointing to figures such as John Adams, whom Kirk considered "the founder of true conservatism in America." Adams's influence remained alive, Kirk contended, "in the middle of the twentieth century" when, despite the inroads of progressives and liberals, the United States was still "the most conservative power remaining in the world, still standing for Adams' principle of political balance, liberty under law," and still maintaining the federal form of government Adams saw as a bulwark against radicalism.

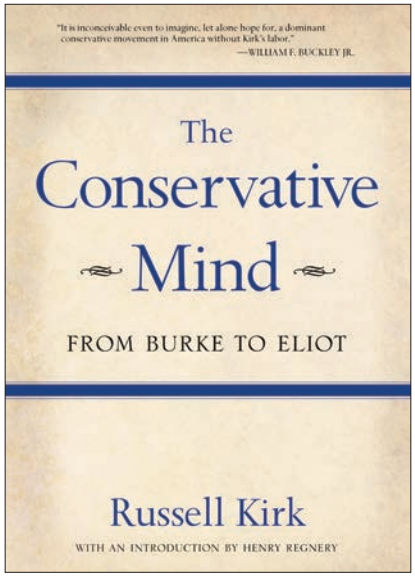
Kirk ended the first edition of *The Conservative Mind* with tributes to three thinkers who had been especially important to him: Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, and George Santayana. None engaged in partisan politics, though all three reflected on the danger of taking democratic political ideas about the equality of all individuals to an extreme that ends, paradoxically, by empowering not the individual but the state.

Babbitt, Kirk wrote, saw "the Federal Constitution and the Supreme Court and other checks upon immediate popular impulse are to the nation what the higher will is to the individual." Unlike the agnostic Babbitt, More believed that religion, specifically Christianity, was not only true but necessary for human life. Kirk quotes More affirming that religious belief "is a necessary counterpoise to the mutual aid and materialistic greed of the natural man, and the conservatism it inculcates is not the ally of sullen and predatory privilege but of orderly amelioration." Santayana was a philosophical materialist, but he shared the critique of popular liberalism articulated by Babbitt and More. Kirk accurately paraphrased Santayana's prescient verdict:

> Liberalism, once professing to advocate liberty, now is a movement for control over property, trade, work, amusements, education, and religion; only the marriage bond is relaxed by modern liberals.

The Conservative Mind was vulnerable to criticism because of its inclusion of John C. Calhoun among its roster of American conservatives and its omission of Abraham Lincoln. Birzer poses the question: "What could the slave-autocrat Calhoun have in common with the plain Abraham Lincoln, promoter and defender of the abolitionist Thirteenth Amendment?" He fails, however, to provide any answer beyond the enigmatic assertion that "Kirk found much to like in each man, for each, from his perspective, embodied some timeless truth made sacramentally incarnate."

For the later Kirk, the example of Abraham Lincoln 'proved that a democracy of elevation can uphold resolutely the public order and the moral order.'



If the answer is vague, his question is also misleading: Calhoun is treated as a real, though flawed, conservative in *The Conservative Mind*, while Lincoln is mentioned only incidentally.

Better to defend Kirk by noting that *The Conservative Mind*, despite its historic importance, was written while he was still a young man and recognizing that Kirk's thought evolved and deepened through the decades. In *The Roots of American Order* (1974), which, *pace* Birzer, may be considered Kirk's true magnum opus, Kirk offered a learned and thoughtful assessment of Western civilization from its beginnings in Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome to the American present. In *Roots* he barely mentions Calhoun but pays his respects to Lincoln: "In Abraham Lincoln, the American democracy would find, at its sternest crisis of disorder, its most capable and self-sacrificing man of order." For the later Kirk, the example of Lincoln "proved that a democracy of elevation can uphold resolutely the public order and the moral order."

Bradley Birzer makes a strong case for the continuing importance of Russell Kirk as thinker, writer, and all-round "man of letters." Kirk wrote novels such as *Old House of Fear* (a bestseller in the early '60s) and short stories, his works in both genres usually involving ghostly or supernatural events and all illustrating the power of what Kirk, following Edmund Burke, called "the moral imagination." The title of his autobiography, *The Sword of Imagination: Memoirs of a Half-Century of Literary Conflict*, emphasizes his identity as a man of letters rather than the leader of a political movement. Kirk's *Eliot and His Age: T.S. Eliot's Moral Imagination in the Twentieth Century* is recognized as a masterwork of literary criticism, even by those who do not share Kirk's (and Eliot's) conservatism.

The short-run future of political conservatism in the United States seems dire; but in the long run, the work of Russell Kirk, with its always-relevant reminders of what he called the "permanent things," seems likely to endure. ♦

Manners Makyth Stillman

Movies at the intersection of morality and hilarity.

By John Podhoretz

Whit Stillman's peerless comedies of the 1990s—*Metropolitan*, *Barcelona*, *The Last Days of Disco*—feature Americans who are living in their time but are not really of their time. They are all young people, but they are not interested in the things young people were interested in when the movies were made (or, in the case of *Disco*, in the early 1980s, the time in which it is set). Their lives revolve around good breeding, propriety, and how to behave morally at a time when there are no agreed-upon moral strictures. Their conversations are variations on these themes. Stillman's heroes want to do what's right, and in each film they find themselves outmatched by others who are nakedly and unashamedly pursuing their own self-interests.

Stillman's movies are so original because the comedy in them derives from the dynamic he establishes between these two: the earnest and self-conscious moralists who are tied up in knots by their concern for others and the trickier and more dynamic solipsists who simply apply themselves to getting what they want. These are such universal concerns that Stillman's movies have not dated at all. They are the only genuine comedies of manners of our age, and that is why they are so beloved.

In his latest film, *Love and Friendship*, Stillman reaches back two centuries and finds in Jane Austen's little-known and unfinished novella *Lady Susan* an eerily perfect piece of source material. Austen's titular character is a Regency version of Charlotte, the gorgeous underminer who sits at the center of *The Last Days of Disco* making other people feel bad while making herself feel very good indeed. (After getting caught out in some misbehavior, Charlotte responds angrily, "Anything I did that was wrong, I apologize for. But anything I did that was not wrong, I don't apologize for!") Indeed, the same actress—Kate Beckinsale—plays both parts, and she is as casually magnificent in this picture as she was in the earlier one.

Love and Friendship
Directed by Whit Stillman

Lady Susan, a newly minted widow whose husband has left her penniless, wreaks havoc on three households as she wanders about England imposing on other people while she tries to find a new financial path for herself. Her great joy is in seducing men for sport, through both her great beauty and her extreme cleverness. She disturbs the marriage of the Manwarings at Langford. She moves on to her brother-in-law's house at Churchill and sets her cap on his brother-in-law, 12 years her junior. And in London, Lady Susan's association with a fellow conniver named Mrs. Johnson threatens the latter's marriage of convenience to a gouty, elderly gentleman who refuses to die conveniently, as both Lady Susan and Mrs. Johnson most heartily desire.

Aside from Mrs. Johnson (and the adulterous Mr. Manwaring), everyone in the proceedings is meticulous about behaving properly and with scrupulous fidelity to the well-established code of conduct of the day. It is the particular genius of Lady Susan herself that she walks the walk and talks the talk while bending both to her own ends. That she is a devil, there is no doubt; but no one can quite catch her out in her deviltry because she is such a master of hewing to the forms.

Lady Susan sounds very dark, in the manner of the Marquise de Merteuil, the antiheroine of Choderlos de Laclos's great 1782 novel *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. Like *Lady Susan*, Laclos's book is an epistolary novel and, indeed, might have served as an inspiration for Austen's jape. But where Laclos sees tragedy in the way his aristocrats knowingly subvert the established social order by using its rules as a weapon against the innocent, Austen finds high, rich, and unsentimental comedy.

So does Stillman. *Love and Friendship* is the funniest movie he has ever made and the most breezily confident. Clocking in at a mere 92 minutes, *Love and Friendship* does not dwell on the magnificence of its surroundings and its costuming, like other period pieces. It gets a move on.

Stillman's brilliance with dialogue is demonstrated by the way he fleshes out the character of Sir James Martin, a rich man whom Lady Susan wishes to pair off with her horrified teenage daughter Frederica. In the book, all we learn of him is that he is "silly" and says the same thing many times. Stillman has written two monologues for a transcendently funny actor named Tom Bennett laden with ignorance, solecisms, and boneheaded infelicities that constitute a high-water mark in the comic portrayal of stupidity on screen. I haven't laughed this hard during a movie in years.

Stillman also takes a few minutes to include a peroration by a local curate on the meaning of the commandment to honor thy father and thy mother—a key moment in the film because it is the only time in which Lady Susan's usually successful efforts to twist the meaning of things to her own advantage is countered by true and heartfelt words of wisdom. Like all his films, *Love and Friendship* is, in the end, the work of a genuine moralist—but a moralist unsullied by didacticism or preachiness and genuinely amused rather than horrified by how difficult people find it simply to be good. ♦

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

"Everybody wants me to run for president."
–Donald Trump, September 14, 1999

Parody

1,000th ISSUE

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Donald Trump Inaugurated

Unveils Plans for New Presidential Mansion

ATLANTIC CITY, Jan. 20—Donald Trump was sworn in as president today and immediately unveiled plans to tear down the White House and replace it with something "classier." Mr. Trump, who had campaigned for the presidency under the misapprehension that the chief executive lives in the U.S. Capitol building, was visibly shaken after his tour of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue last week. "He's going through leopard-skin wallpaper withdrawal," a worried Trump aide revealed at the time.

The new presidential home, which will be known as the Trump Presidential Palace & Casino, will be 89 stories high, but in the shape of the Roman Coliseum and covered all the way around with gold and silver mirrors. The crown of the building will feature what President Trump has called the Arcade of the Fabulous, a series of 40-foot statues celebrating individuals who have contributed to American life, including Siegfried and Roy, Evander Holyfield, and Charo, the spunky Latin nightclub singer.

"No offense, but who ever heard of running a hotel where you have only one bedroom to rent out a night?" Mr. Trump declared in his inaugural address, referring to the Clintons' Lincoln Bedroom Bed & Breakfast operation. "There wasn't even a phone in the bathroom!" His Donaldness continued.

As part of his effort to create a "kinder, more hospitable nation, with frequent guest bonus packages," the Trump Presidential Palace will have 897 donor suites, each with a 16- foot bathtub placed strategically under a proscenium arch and flattering track lighting. The king-size beds—round, heart-shaped, or in the form of a dollar sign—will rotate, so that no matter which way the guest sleeps, he will never be out of easy visual contact with a LeRoy Neiman painting.

Mr. Clinton will stay on in the new facility as greeter and floorshow manager. As a sign of respect for the former chief executive, President Trump will not force his predecessor to wear the new presidential mansion uniforms, which were inspired by President Nixon's designs for his White House Guards, except with a rhinestone-studded bustier in place of the tunic.

President Trump did interrupt his speech to threaten a nuclear strike on anyone who opposed his scheme, but he quickly shifted to a more conciliatory mode, offering all Americans free vanity license

See **DONALDMOBILE**, A6, Col. 1

the weekly Standard
SEPTEMBER 27, 1999

"During a question and answer session [at Columbia University], Ahmadinejad appeared tense and unsmiling, in contrast to more relaxed interviews and appearances earlier in the day."
—Associated Press, September 24, 2007

Parody

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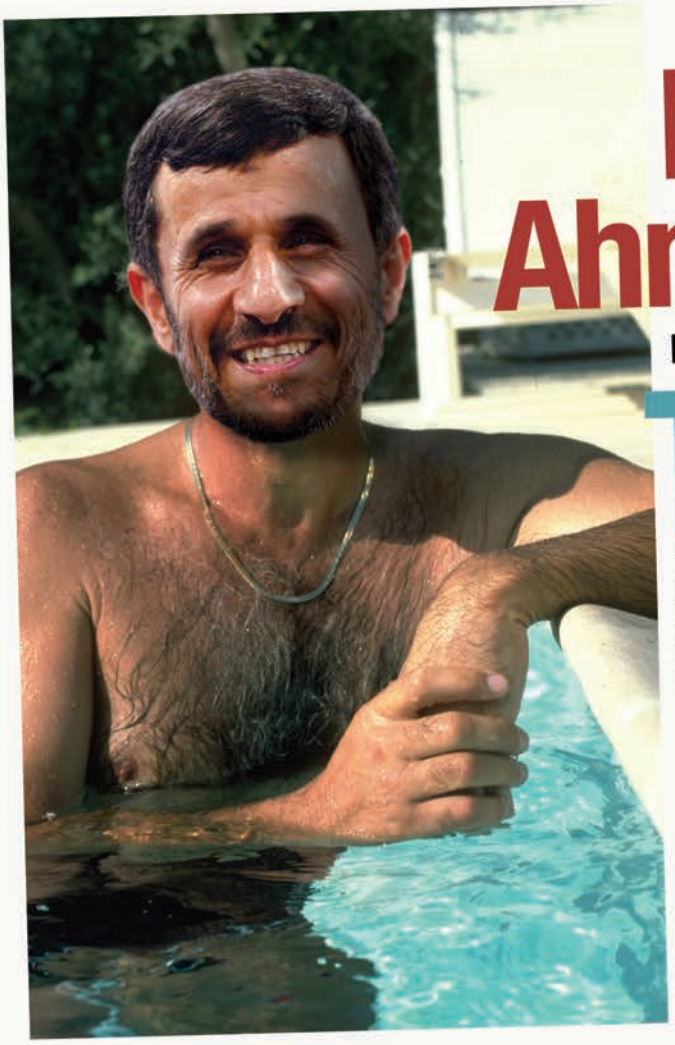

InStepWith® Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

By James Brady

THANKS TO A traffic snarl near the United Nations, I was running late for my interview with Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. We were to meet at Michael's, and when I showed up a little after noon, the place was bustling. Yet I found His Excellency sitting quietly at a corner table alone, dressed rather casually in khakis and a short-sleeved shirt, and sipping an herbal tea. I apologized profusely to the president but he would have none of it. "Normally you would have been stoned for tardiness," he said, "but I enjoy your column, especially your recent profile of Rosie O'Donnell. Although she would not be welcome in Iran, a country with no homosexuals, I do welcome her comments about Bush. Times have been so difficult for her."

The Iranian president himself has had a difficult and busy summer, sponsoring terrorists throughout the Middle East, shuttling weapons to Iraqi insurgents and Hezbollah, and, of course, transforming his country into a nuclear superpower. "A regional superpower," he pointed out, and one with a capability to reprocess and enrich uranium. Or something like that. "We only want what is justly ours. And please, call me Mahmoud."

Denied access to Ground Zero, Iran's president wanted instead to hit Broadway and see a show. "Something to cheer me up," said Mahmoud. "But now they tell me 'Jersey Boys' is sold out. What did I do to deserve this?"

With so much on his plate, how does Mahmoud make time for his family? "This is very tricky but I find ways," including bringing his wife and children along to various nuclear facilities, weapons factories, and public executions. "Learning to cope with such a rigorous schedule is one of the great challenges of this job. I can see why so many marriages end in divorce. Or death."

Brady's Bits

Mahmoud came from humble origins and didn't have as much money as other Iranians. "I grew up in a poor family and resented those who had more wealth than I. For years, I used to look enviously at them and I harbored such anger and outrage." And now? "I've learned to open my heart and accept others. Plus, those I hated I have put to death. Too bad for them and their families!"

So what is next for Iran's most dynamic (some say controversial) president? Perhaps some vacation time along the Caspian coast? "That would be nice and maybe I will get a little time for windsurfing and jet-skiing. But there is so much to do, Jim. We need nukes and we need to destroy the Zionist entity and wipe away its filth by pushing the infidels into the sea."

Our check comes and he insists on treating, showing that he not only opens his heart but his wallet too. Said Mahmoud: "That is how we roll."

the weekly Standard
OCTOBER 8, 2007

They proclaimed George W. Bush Day in Benin, thronged streets by the tens of thousands in Tanzania and christened the George Bush Motorway in Ghana. As he wrapped up his Africa trip in Liberia on Thursday, they sang about him on the radio, crooning his name and warbling, "Thank you for the peace process."
—Washington Post, February 22, 2008

Parody

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March 10, 2008

Bush to Remain in Africa Until 2009; Approval Rating Rockets to 96 Percent

By Peter Baker
Washington Post Staff Writer

DUBYAVILLE, Liberia, March 4 — Rather than deal with antiwar protesters at home, conduct interviews with an irritable press, and meet with the Democratic leadership in Congress, President George W. Bush announced today he will spend the remaining months of his term in Africa, specifically residing in Dubyaville, the capital of Liberia once known as Monrovia.

"How else to honor a nation and a people than to remain here as long as I can and share some of that love?" asked the president. "I mean, they renamed a city after me and it was already named after an American, Marilyn Monroe." Aside from being called president, Mr. Bush has added the titles of His Excellency, Commander in Chieftain, King of Scotland, Prince of Zamunda, and Mufasa. "I will not tire, I will not falter, and I will not fail to enjoy these last few months being the most popular person on the continent, though I have been told I will sweat. It's a jungle out there."

News of Mufasa's extended stay in Africa was greeted by massive street celebrations in Dubyaville as well as in Lauratown (formerly Lagos), Jennabarbara (formerly Dar es Salaam), and New Barney (formerly Nairobi). In Liberia, the entire month has been declared a national holiday—Crawfordfest.

JIM WATSON / AFP / GETTY IMAGES

Members of the crowd dressed in clothing picturing President George W. Bush await his arrival at the State House in the Tanzanian capital of Jennabarbara—formerly Dar es Salaam—on February 17, 2008.

According to White House sources, the decision was not difficult. Said one official: "Mufasa would much rather fight malaria and dengue fever than Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid." But moving to Africa for the next 11 months proved a greater ordeal for the rest of the White House staff and some have chosen to remain in Washington. Others have agreed to serve at the behest of His Excellency provided a few demands be met. One such adviser, the newly elected mayor of Gergenville,

See BUSHMAN, *A5, Col.1*

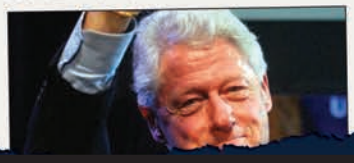
Two Clintons, Two Laredos

By Dan Balz
Washington Post Staff Writer

LAREDO, Tex., March 4 — While Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton campaigned tirelessly in the Lone Star State, spending a few days here in Laredo, her husband was campaigning on his wife's behalf in nearby Nuevo Laredo. But when reporters met up with Mr. Clinton and noted the bordertown is in Mexico, he appeared flummoxed.

Asked where he had spent the last seven hours, "I had no idea," said the red-faced president. "The people were so friendly. I felt right at home." Mr. Clinton said he had a plate of nachos and a few beers in a section known as Boy's Town and later saw a donkey

See SHOW, *A5, Col.1*



the weekly Standard
March 10, 2008

"The global financial crisis has laid waste to some major banks and other financial institutions in the United States and Europe, but Iceland may be the first country to face the prospect of going bust along with them."
—New York Times, *October 8, 2008*

Parody

1,000th ISSUE

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October 20, 2008

deniers. It's WA

DAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008 — ONE DOLLAR CHEAP

TRUMP BUYS ICELAND

Plans 'Ice Castle' Casino, World's Largest Seafood Buffet

By ERIC PFANNER

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — In his first address before parliament, real estate and gambling tycoon Donald Trump announced a deal allowing him to purchase the Republic of Iceland for $5.5 billion as well as exchange all Icelanders' now-worthless kronas for U.S. currency at a stunningly generous 1:1 ratio. "Well, not exactly U.S. dollars," clarified the billionaire. "But you can exchange your kronas for gaming chips valid in Iceland and at any of my Atlantic City properties. They're handsome coins and color-coded—the ones with the image of Shecky Greene are collector's items."

Bewildered Icelanders wondered how their government could agree to this arrangement, which was finalized after Finance Minister Arni Mathiesen met with Mr. Trump at his Taj Mahal casino. "Arni enjoyed a show and stayed in a comped suite," explained Trump. "The next morning he signed a contract." Mr. Mathiesen will remain in charge of his nation's finances, but with a new title: Director of Gaming Operations-Reykjavik. As for Prime Minister Geir Haarde? Said Iceland's new landlord, "You're fired!" (Mr. Haarde has since taken a job as food and beverage chairman at Trump Plaza in Atlantic City.)

The Reykjavik government first turned to the International Monetary Fund, then to Russia, for economic aid; no offers materialized. "I'm not surprised in the least," said Mr. Trump. "[The IMF] are a bunch of jerks. I wouldn't trust them with my dry-cleaning." As for the Russians? "I'd rather deal with 'Fat Tony' Salerno than deal with Vladimir Putin. The guy's got no honor, no respect, and most of all, no class."

AFP PHOTO / Amanda Rivkin / Aconcagua Image

Donald Trump visits the Gullfoss waterfall in southwest Iceland where he plans to build his Trump Towers Condominium Complex and Waterfall.

As part of the bailout, Mr. Trump plans on building his Ice Castle Hotel and Casino near the Eyjafjallajökull glacier, a popular tourist attraction. "That way you can come in from the cold and play the hottest progressive slots east of the boardwalk," said the tycoon, who noted the casino will also feature the world's largest seafood buffet. "You'll be clawing your way out of it!"

In the midst of this transition, Mr. Trump is also conducting auditions for the Miss Iceland Beauty Pageant: "The winner will not only compete in Miss Universe but become the official queen of Iceland and live with the new king, who just happens to be

Continued on Page A28

NASA's 'Lame' Mercury Probe

Big Surprise: Too Hot for Life

BY KENNETH CHANG

the weekly Standard
OCTOBER 20, 2008

"Google Inc. said Chinese hackers targeted the email accounts of senior U.S. officials and hundreds of other prominent people in a fresh computer attack certain to intensify growing concern about the security of the Internet."

—**Wall Street Journal**, *June 2, 2011*

PARODY

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Congressman 'Hopeful' That Chinese Hackers Targeted Him

'Please, dear God, let me be a cybervictim'

By **Devlin Barrett**

Rep. Anthony Weiner held a press conference yesterday, hoping to bring an end to a scandal that has engulfed him over the past week. Standing on the steps outside the House, the Democratic congressman from New York said he had "major news" regarding a photo supposedly of his midsection clad in underwear that briefly appeared on his Twitter account.

"As all of us have recently learned," said Weiner, "computer hackers from China were able to penetrate the email accounts of many prominent U.S. leaders and celebrities. And since I qualify as both, I am here to tell you that this distracting little hoax was in all likelihood perpetrated by these Chinese cybercriminals. So now we can move on, and I can get back to the business of the American people, making sure the Republicans don't succeed in their plan to end Medicare, literally removing the wheels from wheelchairs and filling oxygen tanks with mustard gas."

But reporters continued to pepper Rep. Weiner with questions. When the congressman was asked if he can now say conclusively it was not his groin in the photo, Weiner grew testy. "What I'm saying is, these hackers could have easily doctored that photo. They have pirated copies of Photoshop software in China. Those cotton briefs are light-slate gray. The ones I often wear are more of a taupe gray."

Newscom

Rep. Weiner can say with "almost fairly certain certitude" that he was hacked.

According to Google, victims of this latest attack were targeted through their Gmail accounts. When asked if he used Gmail, Weiner replied, "That will definitely be something my investigators will look into." Another member of the press then wondered how it was possible that the congressman simply didn't know whether or not he was on Gmail, to which Weiner shot back, "I told you already this is a matter for the cyberexperts. And I am a cybervictim. At least I hope I am," adding, "I can't keep track of all my social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, JDate, OkCupid, Lavalife, Craigslist. I am trying to do the work of the American people. So stop being a jack-

Please turn to the next page

"Suddenly, you find yourself confronting yourself: Gee, I've run out of money. I can't take the money out of my 401(k) that I had before. What am I gonna do? Am I gonna eat cat food? Am I gonna move in with my kids? Am I gonna commit suicide?"

—Donald G. McNeil Jr.,* New York Times *reporter, on the proposed* Times *pension freeze

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Christian Reporters Fund

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The New York Times Company is planning to freeze its pension plan, which will put hundreds of reporters at risk of one day falling into the middle/upper-middle class. What does that mean? Being forced to move to an outer borough, to send their kids to a state college, or to shop at D'Agostino instead of Zabar's—the list of catastrophes these helpless reporters will face each day is literally infinite. **But you can help...**

This is Mortimer, at right.

Mortimer has been a reporter at the *New York Times* for more than 36 years. He rides the subway to work for over 30 grueling minutes every day. He has a family—a lovely wife and two grown daughters. He has spent his life covering science, theater, and infectious diseases for the *Times*.

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But Mortimer needs your help. Being a journalist, he lacks many of the basic life skills you and I take for granted. If his pension is cut, he might have to move out of his fashionable Brooklyn home, to somewhere like Queens—or even New Jersey. Mortimer went to UC-Berkeley; he deserves better.

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"Pope Benedict XVI's resignation opens the door to an array of possible successors, from the conservative cardinal of Milan to a contender from Ghana and several Latin Americans."
—Associated Press, February 11, 2013

PARODY

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washingtonpost.com • 75¢

Vice president angling to succeed Benedict XVI

HABEMUS BIDEN

'I've known two popes—one of them intimately'

BY ANTHONY FAIOLA

ROME — "This reminds me of my old commute," Vice President Biden said as he rode the 64 bus en route to Vatican City. "Except for the pickpocketing gypsies and the weird smells, I might as well be on the Acela to Wilmington. Now what happened to my wristwatch?" Biden has been making the daily trip from his hotel to the Holy See ever since Pope Benedict XVI announced he will be stepping down at the end of the month.

"I thought about a possible run for the White House," the vice president mused. "But the president said I have a better chance of getting elected pope. So that's why I'm here, meeting with honest-to-goodness Italians." Biden had earlier written a letter to Pope Benedict announcing his candidacy. "I told him, 'Your Holiness, I don't agree with everything you say, but bless your heart, I do hope you and the College of Cardinals will not just consider the ordained but also real, hardworking Catholics like myself. P.S. What the hell's wrong with your pizza?' "

Joe Biden laughs after securing the support of former Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi

Addressing a townhall meeting inside the Castel Sant'Angelo, Biden praised the Italian people's "zest for life." He also noted, "I've been fortunate to meet so many of you these past few days—and you're not all 'Goodfellas,' if you know what I mean. So many of you are articulate and bright and clean and nice-looking." The vice president pointed out that if elected, he would be the first pope from Scranton, Pa. He then warned against electing hardliners who "are going to put you all in chains, capisce?"

"He's joking, right?" asked papal nuncio Carlo Maria Viganò. But when told Biden was in earnest, the archbishop chuckled and said, "Signor Biden won't be in the running, trust me. It's a funny joke, but if he keeps it up, we're going to make him an offer

FREDO CONTINUED ON A12

Rubio's water problem

Unclear if senator recycled bottle

BY DANA MILBANK

that he listens to hip-hop tunes aimed primarily at female

"Obama Finds He Can't Put Iraq War Behind Him"
—New York Times *headline, June 13, 2014*

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ONE DOLLAR CHEAP

NEWS ANALYSIS

Iraqis Concerned: How Is Violence Affecting Obama?

By KAREEM FAHIM

BAGHDAD — It has been a tumultuous week in Iraq: major military clashes between government forces and the Sunni extremist group the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS); hundreds of thousands of innocents driven from their homes; thousands more brutally executed in what the United Nations is already calling war crimes. Are we in fact seeing, as some observers believe, the beginning of what could be a bloody and intractable civil war?

One would think this question weighs most heavily on the minds of the Iraqis. But after last week's renewed outbreak of violence, with a major offensive by ISIS buckling the American-trained Iraqi forces, Iraqis seem to be preoccupied by another question entirely: How is President Obama doing?

"Is he okay?" asks Yusuf Awad, a shopkeeper in Mosul, through the help of a translator. "He was so proud of ending the war, I mean, this is probably a real blow for him personally." Indeed, many Iraqis echo Mr. Awad, voicing concern that Obama's landmark foreign policy achievement is in danger of being undone. "My uncle was kidnapped by the rebels yesterday, and all I could think was: just when Obamacare starts working out, now this!" says mechanic Hakim Azizi. "This guy [Obama] has the worst luck," he concludes, before adding forlornly, "The Republicans are going to have a field day with this."

Indeed, after a year full of public struggles, from the failed rollout of the Obamacare website to the crisis in Ukraine to likely electoral troubles for Democrats

In a street in front of the U.S. embassy, Baghdad women bewail the discomfort that the ISIS insurgency has caused U.S. President Barack Obama.

in the midterm elections, Iraqis are well aware that their fate could go a long way toward determining Obama's legacy. "I just hope he can put this war behind him," says Malik Hamadi, a member of the ISIS death squads. "I would hate to do anything that might harm his legacy, since his election was so historic and all."

Already, the implications have begun rippling out to Afghanistan, where Obama has scheduled the final withdrawal of American troops for 2016. "What if the same thing happens here as in Iraq? It is troubling question," says Zalmay Wardak, a political scientist in Kabul. "How, for example, might the prestige of a hypothetical, post-presidency Obama Foundation for World Peace be affected if my entire family and I were to be murdered by the Tali-

Continued on Page A3

"Donald Trump is scheduled to meet here Wednesday with former secretary of state Henry Kissinger. . . . The face-to-face session comes after weeks of phone conversations between Trump and Kissinger, who was a top adviser to presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford." **—Washington Post, *May 16, 2016***

TRUMP
DONALD J. TRUMP FOR PRESIDENT

TRANSCRIPT, cont'd:

under six feet of concrete.

MR. KISSINGER: I'm sorry to interrupt again, Donald, but do you have any questions?

MR. TRUMP: Actually, I do. As you know, I am already pondering my future administration, and I wondered if you'd like to be a part of it.

MR. KISSINGER: Donald, I am most honored. But at my age, being secretary of state—

MR. TRUMP: Actually, I was thinking you'd make a great judge at the Miss Universe pageant. You're international, you love women, you'll make the pageant great again. You see, I'm buying the show back, and instead of swimsuits, I was thinking body paint—

MR. KISSINGER: Excuse me, Donald, but we have spoken now a handful of times. And you have yet to ask me a substantive question about, say, China or the Middle East or Russia.

MR. TRUMP: No, I'm good.

MR. KISSINGER: Well, I am not good. Frankly, I am concerned that your policies will lead to regional nuclear proliferation. You show little regard for NATO. If Russia attacks the Baltics—

MR. TRUMP: Speaking of the Baltics, did you know I used to own it? Baltic Avenue, I mean, the one in Atlantic City. Anyway, if the Baltics are anything like that place, Putin can keep them!

MR. KISSINGER: I am equally concerned about your relationships with world leaders. How well do you know any of them?

MR. TRUMP: Actually, Henry, I know some of them extremely well. Like the Queen of England, if you catch my drift.

MR. KISSINGER: I am sorry, Donald. But I cannot believe that happened with Her Majesty.

MR. TRUMP: Believe it, Henry. It was amazing. It was incredible. It was—

MR. KISSINGER: Please don't say huge.

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