the weekly Standard

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Les Déplorables

The French right is discovering that there are more and more things you can't say

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

WEEKLYSTANDARD.COM

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To Live and Die in Colorado

This summer, The Scrapbook was visiting family at a Fourth of July celebration in downtown Denver. We were settling in and getting ready to watch the fireworks when we were accosted by petitioners. The fact that there is seemingly no time or place in this country where politics is considered an intrusion anymore is surely a sign of civic decline, and we were even more appalled when we found out what it was we were being asked to support. This November, Centennial State voters will be asked to approve a measure legalizing "physician-assisted suicide."

Euthanasia is a grievous practice that steadily chips away at the basic compassion and humanity of the societies that tolerate it. But even when reasonable people argue there are narrow circumstances where euthanasia might seem humane, rarely do they consider the political ramifications. As Richard John Neuhaus once observed regarding legislative attempts to enforce particular notions of morality, "What is permitted will eventually become obligatory." We suspect a few decades on, those now mocking Sarah Palin for invoking the specter of Obamacare "death panels" will be the same ones arguing that the actuarial imperatives of America's newly nationalized health care system mean bureaucrats have a duty to pull the plug on grandpa.

Already in Europe we've seen horrible abuse of such laws. Last year in the Netherlands, 56 people were approved for state-funded suicide due to mental health problems, including one controversial case where a young woman in her twenties was allowed to kill herself because she suffered from trauma as a result of being sexually abused. Between 2011 and 2015, the total number of assisted suicides in the Netherlands rose from 3,695 to 5,516. We have more than enough data to conclude that sanctioning suicide for terminal suffering leads to ever larger numbers of people killing themselves for ever less grave reasons.

While euthanasia laws are obviously harmful, writing in *National Review*, George Weigel notes that the proposed law in Colorado is horrifying in ways that go beyond the obvious:

> An "adult," according to the proposition, is anyone over 18 (vote, kill yourself, but don't drink). The diagnosis of terminal illness must be attested by two physicians; but the language of the proposition is so loosely drawn that, in the case of a pancreatic-cancer patient, the certifying physicians could be a proctologist and an ear-nose-throat specialist of easy conscience. Similarly, the patient's mental capacity to make the decision to kill himself must be attested by the attending and consulting physicians and not, as one might reasonably assume, by a trained mental-health professional such as a psychiatrist or psychologist. The latter are brought in to consult only when the proctologist and the ENT specialist deem it necessary, even though the latter have no recognized competence in identifying signs of depression or other forms of mental illness.

And while it may not be the most immediately consequential aspect, we were most taken aback by this part of the proposed law: "The death certificate would be required to list the underlying illness, not the auto-euthanization, as the cause of death."

There's something of a precedent for this, as increasingly countries and states have been allowing transgendered people to change their sex on their birth certificates. We humbly

Is Your Newspaper's Circulation Declining?

The Washington Post

Business

Is your dog's Halloween costume sexist?

By Abha Bhattarai September 29 at 12:22 PM

Sixteen percent of Americans plan to dress their pets in Halloween costumes this year. (Rebecca Blackwell/AP)

Young girls may be discarding their princess wands for superhero capes this Halloween, but not so in the canine world.

Actual Washington Post *article, September 29*

suggest that there is no better sign that a law is morally suspect than if it dictates that lies be recorded in official documents. ♦

Go Bigly or Go Home

An old friend of The Scrapbook's posted on Facebook the other day an oblique commentary on this year's campaign: "I used to like the word 'tremendous' and not know the word 'bigly.' Those were happy days."

If you listened closely to the presidential debate last week, you will catch the reference. As he has done before, Donald Trump seemed to be deploying an unusual word. "I'm going to cut taxes bigly, and you're going to raise taxes bigly," he told his opponent. Or did he? Number two son, Eric Trump, weighed in afterwards, insisting Dad had said "big league"—not "bigly."

The Scrapbook was sorry to read this bit of spin because, as we told our friend, *bigly* is in fact a hugely entertaining word, one we anticipate dropping into conversations to amusing effect for years to come.

The biased mainstream media, by the way, sometimes call *bigly* a neologism, but as usual they're misleading and wrong! According to our Oxford English Dictionary, the word is a venerable one if (at least until this summer) obsolete. The OED definition is to the point: "Loudly, boastfully, haughtily, pompously." And the lexicographers trace its earliest written use all the way back to the "Pearl Poet" in 14th-century Middle English—"the barrez of vche a bonk ful bigly me haldes"—which we crudely translate as "the bars of such a bank held me full bigly." Later citations are more memorable: "Goliath thought bigly of himself." "Oftentimes Authoritie lookes biglier than a Bull." "Talking bigly, indeed, of vindicating foreign rights." And, finally (in 1846), "He spoke as bigly and fiercely as a soaken yeoman at an election feast."

There will no doubt be many reasons to get soaken at this year's election feast, but the revival of *bigly* will stand out, for The Scrapbook anyway, as one of the rare, redeeming features of this year's campaign. ♦

Jose Fernandez, 1992-2016

Last week in Miami baseball laid one of its youngest stars to rest. Jose Fernandez was a 24-year-old righthanded starter for the Miami Marlins with less than four complete major league seasons to his record. From 2013-2016, he compiled 38 wins and an earned run average of 2.58, while striking out 589 batters. He was an All-Star in his debut season, when he was named National League rookie of the year, and was named to the All-Star team again this year. A power pitcher whose fastball averaged between 94 and 97 mph and at times touched 101, Fernandez was enjoying a breakout year, with 16 wins. On September 20, he pitched eight innings of shutout baseball against the Washington Nationals, which many, including Marlins batting coach and all-time home run leader Barry Bonds, thought was the finest outing of his career. Three nights later the man who as a 15-year-old boy saved his mother from drowning when they made their escape from their native Cuba a decade ago died in a boating accident along with two friends.

To see athletes mourn one of their own is to be reminded that they are young men, in some cases still boys, unaccustomed to tragedy. There is no grace in death, the humiliation of the physical excellence of the body and of its beauty. And it is against the natural order of things for young athletes to wear death so heavily, as major league baseball players did last week.

Jose Fernandez

On Monday, in the Marlins' first game after Hernandez's death, second baseman Dee Gordon stepped to the plate against the Mets in the bottom of the first and paid tribute to his friend and teammate by mimicking Fernandez's batting stance in the righthanded batter's box. He took a ball, switched to the left side, passed on another ball, then drilled a 2-0 pitch into the upper deck. It was his first home run of the season. He rounded the bases weeping, and when he touched home saw that the opposing team's catcher, Travis D'Arnaud, was also crying.

Fernandez's childhood friend from Cuba, St. Louis Cardinals shortstop Aledmys Diaz, hit a grand slam Tuesday, his first in the major leagues, and pointed upward as if to acknowledge a greater power—Fernandez in this case. "It's amazing, you know," Diaz said. "I can't explain that. I'm very grateful."

Nationals left-handed pitcher Gio Gonzalez is a Miami native, of Cuban descent, who was also friends with Fernandez, and he, too, looked up to the sky for solace and strength. However, there was no dramatic triumph for Gonzalez when he pitched Wednesday. He was pulled in the fourth inning after throwing 100 pitches in a rain-shortened game in which he was credited with the loss.

On Thursday, Fernandez's pallbearers wore Marlins jerseys with his name and his number 16 and lowered his casket into the ground. ♦

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BPA WORLDWIDE

Hillingdon Street Blues

Maps are a mystery to me, and my worthlessness in navigating has been a family joke for two decades. Google Maps and turn-by-turn smartphone guidance were a revelation—they have saved me from embarrassment and being late at least once a week since 2007. I am utterly dependent on them.

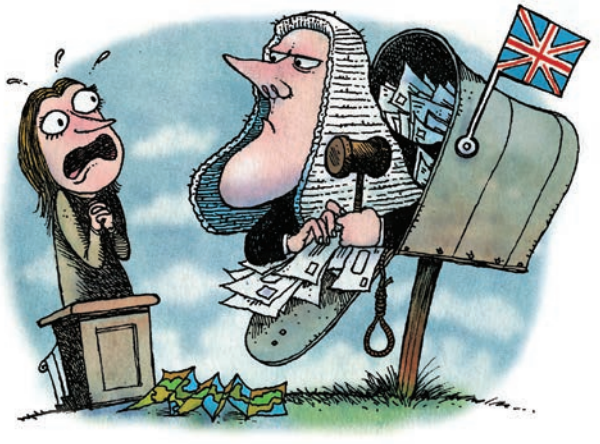
So on my honeymoon in Britain last April, it was just me, my new husband, a rented hatchback, and a data-roaming plan, trying to make it back to Heathrow. I was navigating when we missed the exit for the international terminal.

Why weren't we following the navigation system's 21st-century turn-by-turn directions, you ask? To break me of my slavish dependence on the lady voice from the phone, I've been using the phone satellite to map my location, and then, under the careful tutelage of my spouse, using the map to plot a course. This is supposed to help me with my situational awareness.

But as we were taking the wrong ramp, I grabbed for my crutch and got some real directions—on silent, however, because I was pretending that nothing was wrong. The man I just married, however, is an ace navigator with great situational awareness, so he caught on pretty quickly. (But he's also a gentleman, so he pretended too, for a while.)

After a couple of tricky maneuvers, the phone instructed us to take a left onto Longford Roundabout Access Road. It was clearly marked that only buses were allowed to make this particular turn, so it was obvious to everyone at this point that I had messed up. But the phone said to turn, so left we went, and everything was hunky-dory. We even had time for a last glass of champagne before the flight.

But, it turns out, British traffic enforcement is no joke. The authorities tracked us down to our apartment in Virginia and sent us a Penalty Charge Notice with a color picture from Camera Enforcement Officer CCTV421 of our rental car turning illegally, along with a fine of £130, or £195 if it was late, which it already was since the letter took a month to make the voyage to the colonies. Those were pre-Brexit pounds too, so they were not kidding around.



DAVID CLARK

I felt terrible. My husband got a huge traffic ticket because I still can't read a map. And it wasn't as if I could flirt my way out of this like a speeding ticket; no amount of eyelash flapping was going to make that picture disappear. But the nastygram did include a "parking appeals" email address where we miscreants could send excuses for our bad behavior: "We will consider exercising our discretion and may cancel the penalty charge notice if there are suitable mitigating circumstances (i.e., if we believe that there is a good enough reason)." Challenge accepted.

I couldn't know who or what is on the other end of that parking appeals email address—man or woman, old or young, cheerful or grumpy? The only thing I did know was that my audience was a traffic-enforcement officer who was sitting at a desk and not out chasing down speeders on a motorcycle. How does one charm a bored, faceless bureaucrat from 3,600 miles away?

First, I accepted the premise of their complaint. We were guilty. And nobody likes a liar.

Second, I threw myself on the mercy of the court. "We certainly made a mistake," I wrote, "and I'm terribly sorry about it. It was the last day of our honeymoon (he didn't marry me for my map-reading skills), and I'm hoping you'll take pity on us." Everyone likes feeling powerful, and I assume "traffic-enforcement officer" is as close to "overlord" as one can get in government work.

Third, I bargained, on the off chance that my reader was feeling charitable but not quite generous enough to waive the charge entirely. Since the notice arrived a month late after going through the rental-car company and then across the Atlantic, perhaps they would waive the late charge.

In case none of these appeals to our common humanity connected, I ended with an appeal to our universal human laziness. "In any case, please let us know the best way to pay; U.S. checks might not work well in the U.K., and cash won't make it through the mail." If they wanted the dough, they were going to have to figure out how to get it.

A week later, the gods among men at Parking Services of the London Borough of Hillingdon forgave us our sins, with the admonition that "should any further contraventions of this nature occur, the Penalty Charge Notice may be upheld." I don't think my husband could have been prouder if I had read the map properly in the first place.

Emily Schultheis MacLean

the weekly Standard

No Way Out But Up

JULIO CORTEZ / AP PHOTO

"No one has any other way left but—upward."
(Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, address at Harvard, June 8, 1978)

After this ghastly campaign, whose ghastliness reached new heights with the performance of the Republican nominee in the first presidential debate, conservatives will have no other way left but—upward. By November 8, the destruction, intellectual and perhaps political, will be too great for us simply to rebuild, renew, reconstitute, or restore. The time will have passed for *re*-doing anything. Emerging from the wreckage of Trump and Trumpism, it will be necessary to build anew. We will of course have to use materials already at hand, many of them fine materials. We will of course have to learn from the past—the American past and the conservative past. But we will not be able to go back. After 2016, we will need a fresh start.

It will not be the first time. William F. Buckley in 1955 drew, needless to say, on thinkers of the past and the lessons of history. But his conservative movement was not so much a rebirth of something old as a founding of something new. As Buckley wrote in the first issue of *National Review*,

> we offer, besides ourselves, a position that has not grown old under the weight of a gigantic, parasitic bureaucracy, a position untempered by the doctoral dissertations of a generation of Ph.D's in social architecture, unattenuated by a thousand vulgar promises to a thousand different pressure groups, uncorroded by a cynical contempt for human freedom.

So from the start, the American conservative movement prided itself on offering "a position that has not grown old."

In 1993, Irving Kristol remarked on the corruption over recent decades of "sector after sector of American life" by "political and social collectivism on the one hand, and moral anarchy on the other." Kristol continued: "We have, I do believe, reached a critical turning point in the history of the American democracy. . . . We are, I sometimes feel, starting from ground zero." When you start from ground zero, you face a task of construction more than reconstruction.

Ground zero. The phrase was much in use in a different context after the attacks of 9/11. We thought then that those attacks, and the response to them—at times a magnificent response—might presage a resurgence of the American spirit. In March 2002, Tod Lindberg wrote in these pages:

> There are no more yellow ribbons. For more than 20 years, in times of travail, the yellow ribbons have come

out. The Iranian hostage crisis of 1979-80 called forth a nationwide flowering of yellow ribbons. And at one time or another since then—can this really all have been wrought by Tony Orlando and Dawn singing "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree"?—the yellow ribbon has been pressed into service as a symbol of hope amid adversity, an expression of longing for the return of those who are not home. In accordance with past practice, the aftermath of the attack on the twin towers could surely have been an occasion for yellow ribbons: thousands lost and feared dead, the uncertainty of the families of the missing, the conclusion growing inevitable that even the bodies might never be recovered. And in fact, in the first day or two, one did see a few yellow ribbons, usually in a collage with a photograph of someone missing, held desperately by a loved one still in shock. But then, without comment, the yellow ribbons were gone. All the ribbons now are red, white, and blue.

The difference between a country full of yellow ribbons and a country full of red, white, and blue ribbons—and buttons, bumper stickers, lapel pins, scarves, neckties, billboards, and flags of all size and description—neatly captures the passing of one era and the birth of another, as well as the character of each. The yellow ribbon is the symbol of the victim—of the aggrieved individual, someone powerless at the hands of the powerful. The victim's opposite number is the self-satisfied individual, master of his own life and times. The United States of September 10 was a place peopled amply with both types. The private concerns of people, whether satisfied or unsatisfied, were at the forefront of daily life.

The red, white, and blue ribbons are the symbol of something different: a nation. Which is to say, Americans with a sense of themselves as a people, countrymen, united by something that is precisely not private. The red, white, and blue were a product of a sudden sense of solidarity, the felt need to express the view that an attack on one is an attack on all. It wasn't that nearly 3,000 individuals died in the twin towers. It was that they died in an attack on the United States. American solidarity wasn't born that day; it was revealed. After a long absence, Americans returned to the public square they had left for their private gardens, and to make sure everyone knew, they draped it in red, white, and blue.

But now the public square has returned to where it was before 9/11. In 2016, we are back in Tony Orlando's America. This campaign is a veritable festival of yellow ribbons. Or worse. It's a festival of grievance and complaint, of whining—and, to be fair, of a kind of yearning one sees among some Trump supporters, a yearning that isn't ignoble but which is utterly disconnected from the reality of who their candidate is and what he proposes to do.

So much for American exceptionalism. We're having a Third World presidential campaign this year. About 45 percent of the primary votes this year were cast either for a clueless socialist or an authoritarian demagogue. The likely next president is a dishonest insider who has turned the trust of public office into the sleaze of a shady business. It's the United States of Argentina. And it manifests this key characteristic of a failed democracy: a sullen and resentful population, looking to politicians and the government to assuage their problems, manifesting very little of "that honorable determination which animates every votary of freedom, to rest all our political experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government."

Self-government is nowhere to be seen in this election. It's the grievance-mongering of the right vs. the identity-pandering of the left, with those in the center wringing their hands about what others have wrought. Just eight years ago, Barack Obama appealed to hope and change. That seems like another era. Just eight years ago, John McCain spoke of "country first." That seems like another country.

And of course things will get worse if allowed simply to run their downhill course. There are many more steps down the moving staircase to true decadence. If a new conservatism does not emerge from the destruction around us, we will find ourselves riding the American experiment into the ground.

—William Kristol

Another Illegal Power Grab

Last week the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia heard arguments challenging the Environmental Protection Agency's effort to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from existing power plants. The Clean Power Plan, as it is called, is central to President Barack Obama's overall Climate Action Plan. West Virginia and Texas are leading the 27 states and state agencies now in opposition to the CPP regulations, and some 120 companies and organizations have filed in support of the coalition's complaint.

CPP is designed to bring about what the EPA calls an "aggressive transformation" of electricity generation throughout the country. It would do this by systematically "decarboniz[ing]" power generation and ushering in a new "clean energy" economy less reliant on carbon. CPP requires that, by 2030, power-plant carbon emissions be reduced by a third from what they were in 2005.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the plan would drive up electricity costs for businesses, consumers, and families, impose tens of billions of dollars in annual compliance costs, and reduce America's global competitiveness—without any significant reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions.

But whatever you might think of the rule as energy policy, the biggest problem with it is this: The rule is illegal, indeed unconstitutional.

Under the Constitution, Congress makes law, and the executive enforces it. Unfortunately, over the past 80 years Congress has delegated to executive agencies the power to regulate in many areas. But that is not a blank check to the executive: If Congress has not made a specific delegation, then regulations in that area created by the executive branch are not valid. And that is what has happened here.

As Chief Justice John Roberts said in his dissent in *City of Arlington* v. *FCC* (2013), "Agencies are creatures of Congress." He then quoted what the Court said in an earlier case, *Louisiana Public Service Commission* v. *FCC* (1986): "an agency literally has no power to act . . . unless and until Congress confers power upon it."

Congress has debated bills that would achieve carbon reductions, but it hasn't passed any. So the administration turned to Section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act of 1970, claiming it authorizes the EPA's new regulatory effort. Thus would an obscure, 300-word statutory tidbit enacted 46 years ago be used to justify 2,000 pages of new regulations applying to the nation's entire power grid. But the Congress that created Section 111(d) never intended or expected the provision to authorize a massive program regulating greenhouse gas emissions.

In last week's argument before the appeals court, Judge Brett Kavanaugh said the language of the statute is "very convoluted at best." And thus, it would seem, hardly the basis for a delegation of power.

The Clean Power Plan would take power from the states and the people—itself an action of dubious constitutionality. After all, the Tenth Amendment provides that "powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." And regulating a state's mix of electricity sources has been a core state function, not a federal one, from the days of Thomas Edison to our own.

Down through the years, courts have developed a doctrine known as "cooperative federalism," under which, to be held constitutional, federal rules must provide states with a meaningful opportunity to decline their implementation—something the Clean Power Plan does not do. Again, from the Chamber of Commerce: "States that decline to take legislative or regulatory action to ensure increased generation by EPA's preferred power sources face the threat of insufficient electricity to meet demand. The rule is thus an act of commandeering that leaves states no choice but to alter their laws and programs governing electricity generation and delivery to accord with federal policy."

NEWSCOM

As Chief Justice John Roberts said in his dissent in *City of Arlington* v. *FCC*, 'Agencies are creatures of Congress.' He then quoted an earlier case: 'an agency literally has no power to act . . . unless and until Congress confers power upon it.'

West Virginia v. *EPA* bears on the presidential race since the major actor in the case is President Obama. Writing in our pages three months ago, Christopher DeMuth explained how by turns under previous presidents, starting with FDR but at a faster pace under Obama, our government has assumed "a new form" with the federal executive branch more powerful than ever before and protections of limited government weakened. (See "Our Voracious Executive Branch," June 27, 2016.) The president and his agencies exercise power, with or without Congress, however they can in order to set policies on matters "previously decided by state and local governments and by private citizens, institutions, and markets." DeMuth's point: "The federal executive has become, in essence, a unitary national government of nearly unlimited jurisdiction."

Absorb that while considering what it might have been like during the first presidential debate if moderator Lester Holt had moved off the birther front for a moment and asked what might be done about our unitary national government of nearly unlimited jurisdiction. Neither Hillary Clinton nor Donald Trump would have been likely to criticize our new form of government, since on previous occasions both have stated their admiration for Obama's unilateral methods and have promised to follow his lead.

Only when the other two branches of government—Congress and the judiciary—screw up the courage to take on executive unilateralism will a rebalancing of powers be possible, a rebalancing essential if the federal government is to respect liberty and leave more issues to the states and private society. That, at any rate, is the right answer to the unasked debate question.

—Terry Eastland

Better Luck Next Time

Can Trump get his footing in the next debate?

BY FRED BARNES

When the first presidential debate in 1984 ended, I walked across the stage to shake Ronald Reagan's hand. I had been one of three media questioners. Reagan looked stricken. He was fully aware how poorly he had done. Walter Mondale had outperformed him.

"A lot of supporters tried to make me feel better afterward," Reagan wrote in his autobiography, *An American Life*. "But I knew I'd stumbled two or three times while millions of people were watching, and I was embarrassed."

After losing decisively to Hillary Clinton last week in the first presidential debate of 2016, Donald Trump was not so self-aware. He talked about meaningless Internet polls that showed him winning. He recounted the enthusiastic reaction of people he encountered.

Two days later, he was still pointing to the Internet polls, which are neither random nor scientific and aren't taken seriously by pollsters or politicians. "I think we're doing very well," he told Bill O'Reilly on Fox News. Even with millions in ads against him, he said, "I guess I'm leading."

Trump can recover from the first debate when he confronts Clinton on October 9 in the second of their three nationally televised debates. Losing the first debate isn't fatal to a candidate so long as he comes to grips with what went wrong and commits to taking a new approach.

Three candidates have done exactly that. Reagan was tight and anxious to show his knowledge of issues in the first debate, then relaxed in the second and triumphed. George W. Bush underestimated John Kerry, who gained six percentage points in their first clash, but didn't again and steadied his candidacy. Barack Obama kissed off the opening debate with Mitt Romney, but got tough the next time.

A Trump recovery won't be as easy. Reagan, Bush, and Obama had the advantage of being sitting presidents who were leading their challengers. Their leads shrank, but they bounced back with reassuring performances in the second debate.

For Trump, the success of his campaign rides on what he does to fix his debate style. He cannot afford another embarrassment. Larry Sabato of the University of Virginia suggested Trump might suffer because last week's debate was the first time he'd been "engaged in a one-on-one debate." Indeed, he did. Clinton had been in five such debates this year with Bernie Sanders and four with Obama in 2008. Her experience showed.

After a debate, I'm told, Trump likes to spin the outcome as a success, whether it was or not. When that wears off and gleams of self-awareness begin to break through, he moves on to repair his campaign. In the weeks before the debate, he had done this. It put him in a position to defeat Clinton.

Trump's instincts are not much help in retaking lost ground. If he again responds reflexively to every dig that Clinton takes at him, he'll lose more ground. He vowed to attack Clinton more vigorously than ever in the second debate. That probably won't help either.

Here's the key question: Does Trump know the difference between an issue that helps his campaign and one that doesn't? He's often inclined to give extra attention to things like a former Miss Universe. He told Fox's O'Reilly he didn't have "much" to say about the beauty queen, then talked at length about her.

But what about issues that voters, in poll after poll, say are of real concern to them—the economy, jobs, taxes, immigration, health care? Trump has resisted stressing them. If he doesn't talk them up in the next debate, it will shortly be too late.

Trump mentioned his economic plan briefly last week without explaining why it would generate private investment, growth, and jobs, and Clinton's plan won't. Her claim that economists think her proposal—more spending, higher taxes—will produce growth is evidence that some economists wear ideological blinders.

DAVE MALAN

Fred Barnes is an executive editor at The Weekly Standard.

Strong, sustainable economic growth is a subject with a powerful appeal today. Government simply cannot produce it, as we've learned during the Obama years. Only the private sector can. That's the way the economic world works.

President Kennedy learned this the hard way. He faced a recession when he took office in 1961. His economic advisers prescribed pumped-up spending as the remedy, but it failed to stimulate growth. In 1962, he changed course on the advice of his Republican Treasury secretary, Douglas Dillon, and proposed deep cuts in income tax rates.

The Kennedy cuts had two results. They touched off an economic boom in the mid-to-late 1960s. And they became the model for the Reagan tax cuts of 1981, which also led to a surge in economic growth.

Why Trump hasn't linked his tax plan to JFK's is a mystery. Larry Kudlow, who drafted Trump's plan along with Steve Moore, is the author of a new book on Kennedy's cuts, *JFK and the Reagan Revolution*. It would be an easy point for the candidate to make.

Trump seemed to think candidates in presidential debates are required to answer the moderator's questions. But a few words will do and candidates are free to turn to any issue of their choosing—immigration, for instance. Lester Holt, the first debate's moderator, never mentioned it, but Trump could have.

Immigration "has now disappeared from the news," says John Hinderaker of *Power Line*. Holt didn't raise it because "Democrats understand that most voters side with Trump." They agree on other issues Trump may need to inject into next week's debate, Hinderaker suggests, including the Iran deal, Clinton's mishandling of classified information, stagnant wages, rising crime, the war on cops, Obamacare, and the Libya fiasco.

Reagan had crammed for his first debate. He concluded he had been "overtrained." He decided to do less studying for the second debate. "It was a good thing I didn't," he wrote in his autobiography. He was relaxed, told a famous joke, and won.

"Your mind just isn't flexible enough if it's saturated with facts," Reagan wrote in his autobiography. But that wasn't Trump's problem. In the second debate, a few facts bolstering a few strong points would help. ♦

NEWSCOM

He's No Mitt

Where did the Trump stakes go?

BY NAOMI SCHAEFER RILEY

How did Donald Trump lose the Mormons? According to a recent Pew poll, only 48 percent of Mormons now describe themselves as Republicans, compared with 61 percent during the last election cycle. For decades, Mormons have been the most reliably Republican religious group in the country. What happened?

That was then: Trump endorsing Romney in 2012.

Evangelicals, after all, seem to have made their peace with Trump. In fact, according to the Pew Research Center, white evangelical Protestants "have become even more likely to identify with the Republican Party in recent years. Currently, about three-quarters of white evangelicals (76%) identify with the GOP or lean Republican." That's up 5 points since 2012.

Obviously one difference is that, this time around, Mitt Romney is not the GOP nominee. A Mormon, Romney inspired skepticism among some evangelicals. But there are other reasons that this year is different.

Writing for the Religion News Service, Jana Riess suggests that Mormons are becoming less reliably Republican because they are changing demographically and thus shifting to the left. "Mormons, as a people, are a little more likely to have a college degree than the national average. And people with a college degree, Pew finds, are more likely to affiliate as Democrats (53 percent) than as Republicans (41 percent)." Riess also notes that Mormons are disproportionately young, and young people tend to vote for Democrats.

Perhaps. But there is reason to believe that Mormons aren't becoming less conservative: They simply can't pull the lever for Trump. This was first evident during the Utah Republican caucus, where Trump came in third behind Ted Cruz and John Kasich. Donald Trump's proposed ban on Muslims entering the country riled members of the church, the leadership of which took the rare step of responding, reiterating its position on the importance of religious freedom.

Whatever their similarities on moral and political issues, Mormons and evangelicals see themselves differently in the American landscape. "To a Mormon who thinks of himself as member of a religious minority,

Naomi Schaefer Riley is the author of The New Trail of Tears: How Washington Is Destroying American Indians.

Trump's language about Muslims" is a real problem, according to David Campbell, coauthor of *Seeking the Promised Land: Mormons and American Politics*.

Trump's position on immigration is also to blame. Mormons have joined with the Catholic church, among others, to back immigration reform. Utah even passed a guest-worker program a few years ago. While the political leanings of most Mormons might be anti-immigration, the church's position seems to carry more weight. Indeed, Campbell says that the Mormon opposition to Trump is more evidence of something he and his colleagues saw in their research: "Mormons prioritize religion over politics. Evangelicals prioritize politics over religion."

The book's authors describe a series of studies in which Mormons were asked to describe their positions on issues like gambling, discrimination against LGBT people, and immigration after reading official statements by the church on these issues. Campbell says there was considerable movement on the topics, even among more conservative church members.

Then, finally, there is Donald Trump's personal life. Though both Mormons and evangelicals profess strong support for marriage and the traditional family as well as opposition to divorce and infidelity, evangelicals seem more willing to accept the personal foibles of Trump. Part of this may be simply environmental. States with considerable evangelical populations—what we think of as the Bible Belt—have rates of divorce that rival or top the rest of the country. Rates of divorce in areas with high concentrations of Mormons are much lower. For Mormons, Donald Trump's life still has the potential to shock.

Many social conservatives say they are willing to live with Trump's personal faults because they believe that Supreme Court picks are what really matter in this election. And they say there is reason to believe that Trump will nominate people who will take the right positions on issues like abortion. Campbell notes that abortion is not the issue among Mormons that it is among evangelicals. While you might hear it mentioned in a litany of issues Mormons care about, "it is not a litmus test."

Finally, it is worth noting that Gary Johnson, as former governor of New Mexico, is a known quantity to many Mormons, who are concentrated in the West. They may consider him a plausible alternative in an election where they don't care for either candidate. Indeed, the Mormons have a history of looking to third-party candidates. In 1992, Utah was one of only two states where Ross Perot came in second.

In an election where Trump's strategy seems to rest on getting an even higher share of the self-identified conservative and Republican voters than Romney or McCain received, it should worry Trump that this most reliable group might vote for a third party in large numbers—or just stay home.

Which isn't going to cause Trump any trouble in the most Mormon of states: Trump isn't at risk of losing Utah, where the current betting odds give him a 98 percent chance of winning. But next door, in Nevada, it's a dead heat. The four percent of Nevada's voters who are Mormon could well make the difference in who wins the state. And given that Nevada is one of the few states that could determine the outcome of the election, it's not inconceivable that Trump's Mormon problem could cost him the White House. ♦

The Prognostication Follies

The unbearable strangeness of 2016.

BY JAY COST

This election has made all the so-called political experts look like fools. Most of us thought that Trump would not enter the presidential race at all, that if he did he could not win the Republican nomination, and that if he nonetheless managed all that, he would still lose to Hillary Clinton in a wipeout. Yet here we are, just weeks to go, and Clinton's lead over the real estate mogul is extremely modest.

How could we have been so wrong? The answer one hears from Trump supporters is that this is a symptom of corruption. The experts are tools of the establishment and thus cannot appreciate how Trump speaks to and for the "real America." But this account is tendentious, and it overlooks the fact that conservative intellectuals have been some of the most pointed critics of the established order in American politics. Indeed, it is doubtful that Trump himself thought he would get this far. Stephanie Cegielski, a former strategist for the pro-Trump Make America Great Again super-PAC, claims to have been told by the candidate's advisers that "the goal was to get The Donald to poll in double digits and come in second in delegate count."

The better explanation is that accurate predictions require some correspondence between the past and the present, and this has been lacking in 2016. Put bluntly: This year is just so *strange* that prognosticators have been befuddled. Trump has taken advantage of widespread public frustration to exploit otherwise latent cleavages in American politics to create a new, unpredictable dynamic.

Wariness of the government is more

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pervasive now than in any cycle in recent memory—and this has surely fueled Trump's rise. He was able to run *against* the entire GOP during the primary, in part because Republican voters are so unhappy with their own party. All things being equal, nobody would expect conservatives to back a candidate who once considered himself more of a Democrat than a Republican, or who wouldn't rule out running as an independent. But all things *aren't* equal. Conservatives don't trust Republican politicians to behave like good Republicans anymore; meanwhile, Trump has, at the least, been frank about his past heresies and his ambitions. Better to go with the businessman who openly disagrees with you than the politician you suspect is just telling you what you want to hear.

Trust is essential to stability in republican government. If voters do not believe politicians are being square with them, the bonds connecting the people to their government degrade, citizens feel disempowered and become liable to adopting extreme remedies. This is one reason Trump won the nomination.

As for the general election, the Trump-Clinton battle has opened a previously dormant factional division in the United States: education. Nonwhite voters will assuredly break heavily to Clinton, regardless of education status. But the divide among white voters seems to strongly correlate with the highest level of education attained.

Republicans have done well in recent cycles with whites lacking college degrees, but Trump appears set to do *much* better. This helps account for why he has polling leads in Iowa, Ohio, and even Maine's Second Congressional District. On the other hand, Trump is lagging behind Mitt Romney's margin among college-educated whites, which explains why Pennsylvania looks to remain Democratic, Virginia appears out of Trump's grasp, and North Carolina is still a toss-up. Under the "normal" rules of politics, we would expect Iowa, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia to move in concert, but with this new educational divide among white voters, there is a surprising divergence.

The educational divide is not reducible to matters of style, either. For generations, policymakers have systematically encouraged Americans to go to college and enter the professional, "white-collar" workforce. This has changed the demography of the nation at least as much as the influx of immigrants and the securing of voting rights for African Americans. The result of these forces is a profoundly diverse electorate. In 1948 almost all of the country looked like the average Trump voter. But no longer. Yet, while the preponderance of the white working class has slowly disappeared, this cohort remains an electoral force to be reckoned with.

Trump is a candidate who speaks to their particular grievances. His protectionist views on trade are a signal that, in his view, making America great again means returning the manufacturing worker to his old pride of place. To those with a college degree, this is hardly appealing, but for those whose families did not transition from blue to white collar, it sounds like common sense.

Realignments such as this are hard to grasp fully while they are happening. Usually, we have to wait until the dust settles to see what actually occurred. The particulars of this new educational fault line also create a unique problem for political analysts, who sample almost entirely from the educated class. It is hard for them to *intuit* the appeal of Trump, so it has been easy to be surprised by him, again and again. ♦

All Quiet(ed) on the Eastern Front

Making a mess by making nice with China.

BY ARTHUR WALDRON

"Great power competition" has just become a phrase that the Pentagon is forbidden to use when speaking of the People's Republic of China and the United States. The order was conveyed in the last few weeks by the White House in a classified document the contents of which were disclosed to the *Navy Times* but not, apparently, to the *New York Times*.

The administration thought the word *competition* "inaccurately frames the U.S. and China as on a collision course," according to the *Navy Times*'s sources. We may conjecture that the Obama administration also believed this would be understood as a gesture of good will, which might reciprocally elicit better behavior from the Chinese, as they saw how sincere we were about peace.

If these were their hopes, they were almost instantly dashed when China, on September 25, flew an air armada of unprecedented size and lethality through the small Miyako gap in the Japanese island chain that extends south of Okinawa. For the first time fighter jets crossed, along with tankers, bombers, and other military aircraft. Obviously not talking about an emerging threat does not somehow make it diminish.

The American gesture and Chinese response have far greater significance than this obvious fact: They make crystal clear the fundamental cultural differences that plague all American attempts of this sort.

We are all, as it were, Emersonians. We believe other cultures will understand our gestures as we mean them: Our hand proffered for a handshake, our attempt to walk a mile in their moccasins, our gestures of restraint will signal desire for peace and understanding, even friendship. That is the message we are trying to send.

Chinese J-10 fighter jets in an airshow in Guangdong Province, November 11, 2014

How do the Chinese receive it? Not at all as intended but as the opposite. *We have successfully intimidated Washington to the point she won't mention us. They are weak, irresolute, and, when it comes to it, craven. We can deal with them and drive them out of Asia.*

"Compromise" is a scarce concept in Chinese theories of conflict. Rather the phrase they use is *ni si wo huo*—"you die, I live." That is not "win-win." It is—and we must face this—a template that turns our good will, deeply embedded in a culture of trust, into a show of weakness.

China is now pushing massive territorial claims as we and our allies, in effect, try to change their culture so that it will be receptive to our coping methods. China possesses the largest military in the world, with technology increasingly close to our own and far greater numbers of weapons. They are asserting a claim to some million-and-a-half square miles of sea to the east—claims already found illegal by the Permanent Court of Arbitration under a treaty that China has signed.

The White House reaction? Tell the military specialists, including the four-star admiral commanding the Pacific, to shut up. This is like someone with a persistent painful cough who decides the answer is to avoid doctors. "Maybe it will just go away." Instead of keeping mum, we should be deterring, in a very big way—and indeed should have started doing so in 1995, when China grabbed her first small piece of territory from the Philippines, "Mischief Reef." Not surprisingly, the wisdom at the time was "Wait and see. Do nothing." Now the conflict, which potentially ranges from Japan and Korea to Indonesia and India, is perhaps beyond deterrence. China's full national faith and credit are invested in it.

This is no time to tell, for example, Admiral Harry Harris, commander of the Pacific fleet, to keep his profound concerns and strategic counsel to himself. As the fellow with the cough should go to the doctor, so the president should listen to our top military and civilian experts, not mute them.

A deep split exists between the military officers, who every day see provocative Chinese operations against us and our allies, and our civilian officials, who are divided. Henry Kissinger told Zhou Enlai early in the 1970s negotiations, "We believe a strong China is not expansionist because this is your tradition." Maybe this was the diplomat's version of "the wish is father to the thought." But it is absolutely clear today that Kissinger was wrong about China's tradition and intent.

In our government today, two streams of thought exist. One, which follows Kissinger, clings to the misconception of a militarily restrained China. For them, the present illegal one-and-a-half-million-square-mile territorial grab—accompanied by new bases, new runways, rocket emplacements, and so forth—is not the problem. For these analysts, the real danger is that the

JOHANNES EISELE / AFP / GETTY

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United States and its allies will overreact and ruin any chance of friendship with China—that mirage that is always dancing on the horizon. The fantasy of an amiable relationship between the United States and the world's largest, most enduring, and cruel dictatorship is difficult to banish.

Others understand. Aggression and illegal annexations of territory must be stopped, as early as possible. The two factions cannot agree. This president has chosen—like those before him—to kick the can a little further down the road. Of course at some point the expanding Chinese are likely to kill people—Japanese, Filipinos, Americans: The list is long, which would transform the situation overnight. Will the Pentagon speech code then be lifted? Kick that can far enough, and you will have to abandon our allies and a Pacific role that goes back more than a century.

Suppose for the sake of argument we do just that: We tell Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan (which has 1,000 missiles aimed at it, or one for every 20,000 Taiwanese), "We're out of this, you are on your own."

Will the problem disappear as those countries accept China's demands? Not if they act as they always have in the past: fiercely defending themselves against external threats. Centuries ago, the Mongols, of all conquerors, thought the Koreans excessively passionate in their bloody resistance. The Japanese have never been pushovers. Without the United States to back them, China's neighbors will still resist, creating the potential for a ghastly war. For now, they want peace, and they are talking to China. They are not, however, caving to China's demands.

Could they fight without the United States? Of course. Anything we can make, Japan can make too. Furthermore, Japan does not need to steal technology. They already have their own. They can easily supply the weapons needed, weapons we intentionally deny. Japan got no F-22s, our best fighter jet. So they are building their own. How good will it be? Very good. Japan's submarines are the stealthiest in the world. We cannot even build equivalents, as theirs are nonnuclear. They could, however, sink a Chinese fleet—as they have American fleets in exercises where a laser hit is counted as deadly.

Even without the United States, then, the neighbors China threatens have their own not-yet-fully-realized capacity to block Beijing. China should have gotten out of this whole mess by accepting the court finding and relinquishing its territorial overreach. For internal reasons we do not understand, it did not.

It is clear, however, that sometime before 2009, Beijing made the highly consequential assessment that it no longer needed the United States to offset the former Soviet Union, that too much American influence led to ideas like democracy, and so China made a fateful reversal. Beijing is now the flagship of the diminishing dictator fleet—an international outlier. Their leaders repudiate the United States, even aiming racist insults at our president and our admiral, born to a Japanese mother.

This is playing with fire. Japan has long slumbered, enjoying unthreatening and beneficial relations with China. Now China has poked her enough to wake her up. That was a mistake. One that may rebound humiliatingly against proud Beijing.

So what are we Americans doing about this grave danger? Forbidding the mention of it. But does Beijing understand what we are trying to do? Absolutely not and for deep cultural reasons. Wars are serious business, however. This is no way to avert what may become a catastrophe. ♦

Raptors on the Mountain

Eagle-eyed for eagled skies.

BY GEOFFREY NORMAN

Putney, Vt.

We were at 1,600 feet, surrounded by a sky that held scattered clouds but no danger of rain, with the Connecticut River Valley spread out below us like a mottled green quilt. It was fairly cool—in the high 50s—and there was a wind from the southwest gusting to 15 mph or so. Less than perfect conditions, then, for counting raptors as they passed on their fall migration south.

"Maybe it will warm up," a man named Jim who had hiked ahead of us said. "We'll get some thermals, then."

Hawks like to ride thermals and we were here as observers and volunteers for the annual Putney Mountain Hawk Watch. The word "hawks" is used in the general sense. We have come to see birds of prey, raptors. We might very well see eagles. Seven had been seen passing this spot three days earlier and over 50 so far this year.

We might also see falcons. Spotters are especially keen to see peregrines. More, perhaps, than any of the species people come here to view and count, the peregrine is what they have in mind when they use the phrase "bird of prey." The peregrine is an almost sublime killer. He is an avian predator, taking his victims on the wing in a swirl of feathers. In a dive, the peregrine can reach speeds of more than 200 mph. Like many of the birds people come here to view and to count, peregrines have made a comeback from the endangered list. They are

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even routinely found in Manhattan, nesting on the ledges and eaves of tall apartment buildings and feeding on plump urban pigeons, which are, for the peregrine, easy pickings.

Then there are the birds properly called hawks—sharp-shinned and broad-winged, among others. There are more of them, by far, than any other species. Some 6,000 had been spotted so far this season by people like us who come up carrying their binoculars to spend a day—or a few hours of it, anyway—identifying the birds and keeping the count.

It is strictly a volunteer operation that has been going on since 1974. People do it for the love—to view the birds and to be part of the recovery of many raptor species that appeared, at one time, to be on the way out. They were once killed indiscriminately by people who considered them wolves of the sky, and then there were the pesticides that the birds concentrated in their systems and that made their eggshells fatally weak and thin.

But the birds have rallied and now there are good counts here on Putney Mountain and at other places around the country where people go to watch them fly, to feel that primal thrill you get in the presence of something lethal.

There were four of us. Two young girls—one 10 and the other 7 years old—plus my wife and me. We had hiked up carrying binoculars and lunch in a backpack. We also carried two of those folding canvas chairs. No reason not to be comfortable.

I'd done this before, and it had seemed like a fine way to spend a day. There were people to talk to, birds to look for and to admire once you had spotted them, and a great restful view. But I wondered about the kids.

On a good day, as many as 2,000 raptors might be spotted from Putney Mountain. On the kind of day we had drawn, the number might fall short of 100. And how compelling would the sighting of a soaring bird be to a young person proficient in all the digital arts? Could the high, solitary profile of a bald eagle match the thrill-a-second stimulus of a video game?

Well, we would soon find out. Call it an experiment. How long can a modern young person survive when digitally deprived? And will the old atavistic impulses survive the Internet? Will *Homo digitus* thrill to the sight of a raptor on the wing?

Beats me, I thought.

There were a half-dozen people just off the trail in a clearing at the top of the mountain when we arrived. They had been here for a couple of hours and seen only three or four broadwings.

Above, a peregrine falcon; at left, a monarch enjoying a meal of milkweed

"And an osprey," one of them said. "That was pretty cool."

The osprey had also been on the endangered list and recovered even more dramatically than the peregrine. Not very many pass this way. But not long ago, none would have. Go where there is a lot of water, and you will see plenty of them with their formidable nests built in the high branches of big trees or, when there is nothing else, on the tops of power poles.

We set up our chairs where we wouldn't be crowding anyone and took out the binoculars and the books and charts we had brought along to help with identifications. We scanned the sky for a few minutes, looking high where the birds would be clearly silhouetted against the white clouds and then lower, where they would be harder to see against the trees, most of which were still green but showing the color that would be full and vibrant in a couple of weeks.

There was another group of spotters in a cleared area 30 or 40 yards away. They had set up an owl decoy. Hawks are antagonized by owls for some reason and will attack them. The decoy is good for bringing in sharp-shins and Cooper's hawks, another lethal avian predator.

We had been watching for 20 or 30 minutes when a Cooper's hawk made a pass at the owl decoy. It happened without warning and was over quickly. Still, it was some action, and the girls were impressed.

"That," said Amelia, the little one, "was really cool."

The people who had been there when we arrived soon left. The man who had come in ahead of us stayed, and we made small talk. He came here often during the migration and helped keep the official count.

We needed more sun to warm the air, he said again. Once we had some thermals, the birds would come. The birds follow this line of mountains using the rising warm air to gain altitude without using a lot of energy. Each wing-beat burns calories and the birds have a long way to go. Over 4,000 miles in the case of the broadwings.

The birds climb one thermal and then soar further down the valley, slowly losing altitude, until they find another thermal and climb again. They will go for several minutes, sometimes, without a single beat of their wings. Soaring in a way that makes you wish you could do the same.

While we waited for the thermals to develop we watched for the other famous migratory creature—the monarch. It has been hard times for this gaudy butterfly.

The decline of the monarch was once thought to be due to the logging, in Mexico, of oyamel fir trees. But that was only a partial explanation. A bigger problem for the monarch is the decline of milkweed.

The monarch lays its eggs on milkweed and the hideously ugly caterpillars eat almost nothing else. There must be sufficient milkweed along the

TOP: NEWSCOM

monarch's route north to sustain the four generations that mate and hatch along the way. But the milkweed is being remorselessly done in by farmers, highway crews, and people who just don't want it in their lawns.

We'd seen a few monarchs this year; our count was up to 24. We told the girls to keep their eyes peeled for more butterfly sightings.

"I thought we were here to watch for hawks," the older one said.

"We are."

The implicit question was . . . "Well, then, where are they?"

But it wasn't asked, and nobody seemed bored.

Boredom, in fact, never entered the picture. For the entire course of the afternoon, the girls' sharp young eyes scanned the sky, sometimes through binoculars and sometimes unaided. The older girl saw a broadwing before anyone. It was the fourth or fifth of this slow day.

A few vultures drifted by. We counted them, and I made a note, even though they are the furthest thing from raptors. It's hard to romanticize a carrion eater.

"You know how they find the dead things they eat?" my wife asked.

"How?" Brantley, the older girl, said.

"By smell."

"Really?" the younger one said.

"I didn't know birds have noses."

"Most don't."

"I would hate to be a turkey vulture," the little one said.

Which led to a discussion of just what kind of bird you would want to be, if you could be a bird.

My choice was to be a great, soaring seabird. The older girl said she would like to be a hummingbird.

"We see some of them come by here on their way south," a spotter who had just joined us said. "Not many."

Hummingbirds, monarchs, raptors . . . but not much action today.

Still, we stayed at it. Other spotters came and went. The count crept up slowly. A few more broadwings. The occasional sharp-shin. These were exciting but not thrilling in the way of Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Windhover," that

dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing . . .

Even so, nobody said anything about leaving and finding something to do that was *fun*. We stayed up there and kept looking at the sky and talking about raptors and other birds with the new arrivals.

We had stayed more than four hours and our count was barely at 20 when we began packing up. We simply had things to do, or we might have stayed longer, watching the empty sky and hoping for a hawk.

Then, the little one looked up from filling her backpack and said, "There's one."

A dozen pairs of binoculars went up in the direction where she was pointing.

"It looks like a peregrine," the older one said. She had a sheet of paper showing the silhouette of the various raptors, and she had been studying it. "See the pointy wings."

"That's what it is," one of the veteran spotters said. "Good eyes."

The great bird did what great birds do. It soared majestically against the vivid blue sky, riding the thermal so that it didn't need to waste energy beating its wings. It must have held its small space in the sky, rising with the heated air, for five minutes or so before dropping quickly and heading down the valley to find another thermal to climb.

"That," the older girl said, "was *so cool*."

And we were all a little sorry to leave.

Later on, I checked the count for that day and for the whole season. On the Internet, naturally. That was only the second peregrine spotting of the season and to repeat Brantley's insight, "How cool is that?"

Cooler, I think, than any video game, and I believe she and her sister would agree. ♦

Do Less Harm

The vapid opposition to vaping.

BY ELI LEHRER

Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) hates e-cigarettes. The devices, he says, are little more than an evil plot, "the new frontier in tobacco companies' quest to get kids addicted while they are young."

Brown argues the federal government should do just about everything it can to discourage anyone from taking up vaping, from regulating e-cigarette production to banning flavorings. That e-cigarettes are very likely safer than their combustible cigarette cousins—that using them doesn't involve inhaling the witches' brew of carcinogens contained in cigarette smoke and doesn't expose bystanders to this same exhaust—doesn't seem to disturb him. Nor does the fact that vaping may be a successful way for heavy smokers to wean themselves from a dangerous habit.

And his position is defensible: Even the most ardent advocates of e-cigarettes acknowledge they contain the same addictive nicotine as cigarettes. Since they've only been in use a few years, they may turn out to cause some yet unknown long-term harm. Applying the precautionary principle, Brown appears to think it's better to err in favor of total abstinence from nicotine rather than explore e-cigarettes' potential to replace smoking and thereby reduce harm.

What makes this a bit unusual

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coming from Brown is that the Ohio progressive is also the Senate's leading proponent of needle-exchange programs for injection drug users. In that area, he's a big proponent of the harm-reduction approach he disdains for tobacco. In February, he introduced a bill that would provide federal grants to give clean needles to heroin addicts, while offering new treatment options.

Like e-cigarettes, needle exchanges—vehemently opposed by most Republicans in Congress—do have benefits. A comprehensive 2004 World Health Organization review found "compelling evidence" that they prevent transmission of HIV and AIDS and the U.S. Institute of Medicine found them "highly cost-effective." Programs that pair them with social services and public injection rooms—the most studied of which are located in Vancouver, British Columbia—produce promising results. But there are legitimate questions raised about this approach, since it provides implicit public sanction for behavior that can result in death.

Brown's mixed case for harm reduction is hardly unique. The famously left-wing college town of Ithaca, N.Y., which is vying with San Francisco to open the first Vancouver-style injection center in the United States, was one of the first places to ban most public use of e-cigarettes. And conservatives, who often prove friendlier to the possibility of reduced-harm nicotine, are far more likely to raise objections to other forms of harm reduction. As governor of Indiana, Republican vice presidential nominee Mike Pence put the kibosh on harm-reducing needle-exchange programs while simultaneously cutting back funding for abstinence-only smoking cessation programs. (Needle-related disease transmission rose and Indiana's smoking rates remained above average.)

Although evidence for harm reduction as a public-health approach is pretty good, it's difficult to find anybody, on the left or right, who is consistent in advocating attempts to reduce harm. That's a shame. Wider implementation of harm-reduction approaches *and* honest discussion of their downsides both depend on creating a movement of people who take a consistent view in favor of harm reduction.

Much federal policy regarding harm reduction is incoherent. When passing a Medicare "doc fix" in 2015, Congress voted to provide $75 million for "abstinence-only" sex education in schools *and* another $75 million for the Personal Responsibility Education Program that emphasizes safer sex—harm reduction, in other words—in order to reduce the risk of disease and pregnancy. People exposed to programs

Vaping tech, above; right, Brown

sponsored by both streams of federal funding will get messages that aren't just mixed, but sometimes directly contrary. The bill passed, 92-8.

Other harm-reduction approaches remain far outside the political mainstream, despite evidence that they could work better than existing protocols. For example, the well-known Alcoholics Anonymous model—which suggests people with alcohol problems must never drink again and must surrender to a "higher power" to keep themselves sober—has nearly universal support as a "good thing." But the biggest ever meta-analysis on the program's effectiveness, conducted by the Cochrane Collaboration in 2006, suggests its success rate may be as low as 5 to 8 percent. Similar self-help programs that allow moderate drinking—Moderation Management being the best known—seem to do at least as well in helping people with drinking problems.

The Sinclair Method, a regimen that uses lifetime doses of the drugs naltrexone and nalmefene to reduce the desire to drink, but allows continued alcohol consumption by its adherents, may have a success rate in the neighborhood of 80 percent. No U.S. government agency appears to promote the Sinclair Method. Its most prominent advocate remains science fiction actress Claudia Christian, best known for the 1990s television series *Babylon 5*.

This isn't to say that all harm-reduction approaches are worth implementing or even exploring. Experiments with providing heroin and other opioid prescriptions to confirmed addicts in the United Kingdom during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s correlated with rising crime rates and higher rates of drug use across society. Even if they do benefit society as a whole, injection centers probably wouldn't be things many homes or businesses want nearby. One major study of the drugs used in the Sinclair Method, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, showed poor results. And even these criticisms set aside the objections some may have to condoning behavior that's clearly harmful and violates deep-seated moral precepts.

Indeed, the public-health messaging behind harm reduction is almost always going to be mixed. While needle-exchange programs exist in at least 35 states, nobody in the United States has actually legalized hard drugs. Harm-reduction approaches will rarely offer the type of moral clarity that many think is important in persuading people to change behavior.

Nonetheless, the idea of "abstinence only" appears ineffective with regard to many destructive behaviors, and much of the evidence on harm reduction appears quite promising. Moving forward with promising harm-reduction solutions—and critiquing them—would be far easier if a political movement on either end of the spectrum would actually embrace the concept consistently. ♦

TOP: EDGCLICK; INSET, NEWSCOM

A Marxist Manifesto

The birth certificate of the European Union.

BY JOSEPH LOCONTE

Ventotene, Italy

On this ragged and remote island in the Tyrrhenian Sea, when Europe was in the throes of the Second World War, a political prisoner dreamed of a continent unified and at peace.

Altiero Spinelli, who had joined the Italian Communist party as a young man in the 1920s, was arrested for his activities opposing Mussolini's fascist regime and sentenced to 16 years in prison. He was not idle. Writing on cigarette papers, Spinelli and a fellow inmate, Ernesto Rossi, produced a political treatise now considered the birth certificate of the European Union. Their "Ventotene Manifesto," smuggled out of prison in the summer of 1941, called for a European federation of democratic states, a political union designed to permanently tame aggressive nationalism.

Altiero Spinelli in 1950

"A free and united Europe is the necessary premise to the strengthening of modern civilization, which has been temporarily halted by the totalitarian era," they wrote. "The question which must be resolved first, failing which progress is no more than mere appearance, is the definitive abolition of the division of Europe into national, sovereign States."

The manifesto was widely circulated and soon a new social-political movement, the *Movimento Federalista Europeo*, was born. As leader of the MFE after the war, Spinelli played a decisive role in furthering European integration—as a writer, activist, and member of the European parliament. Always the radical in the room, Spinelli enjoyed a career that is a case study in political idealism rising from the ashes of war.

In the years after the First World War, the watchword was disillusionment. Italian society was in tatters. About 578,000 soldiers were dead, over 10 percent of those mobilized. Returning soldiers encountered a staggering degree of poverty, one of the highest inflation rates in Europe, and stark class differences. Although Italy had fought with the victorious Allies, the government failed to win territorial concessions at the Versailles peace conference. Critics assailed "the ruling class," which "humiliated and betrayed our soldiers" and "finally wasted and utterly destroyed our victory."

Benito Mussolini and his "Blackshirts" swept into Rome in October 1922, promising to restore Italy's ancient greatness and declaring the end of Europe's experiment in liberal democracy. "For the Fascist, everything is in the State," he proclaimed, "and nothing human or spiritual exists, much less has value, outside the State." Two years later, Spinelli joined the Communist movement to thwart this nationalist and totalitarian vision.

Many Italians, of course, voted with their feet: Hundreds of thousands, including my grandparents, arrived in the United States between the wars. My maternal grandfather, Giuseppe Aiello—coincidentally a native son of Ventotene—arrived in Brooklyn just months before Mussolini's rise to power. Michele Loconte, a veteran of the Great War, brought his family to New York City in the 1930s—and never looked back. For many Italians, the future seemed bound up with America's democratic example of prosperity, opportunity, and political freedom.

Though a lifelong Communist, Spinelli admired the American system with its checks and balances and "infinite productive resources." While among the ranks of the *confinati*—the antifascists imprisoned under Mussolini—he reportedly studied the federalist debates over the American Constitution. He would become a tireless advocate for "a United States of Europe."

The 1957 Treaty of Rome, creating the European Economic Community (EEC), was a major step in that direction. But Spinelli was unsatisfied: An adviser to federalist leaders such as Alcide De Gasperi, Paul-Henri Spaak, and Jean Monnet, he pushed hard for the creation of a parliamentary assembly, a European constitution, and a common economic policy. Nearly every proposal for European integration bore his fingerprints.

Two years before his death in 1986, Spinelli helped to write the treaty establishing a federal European Union, dubbed "the Spinelli plan," adopted overwhelmingly in the European parliament. Though member states rejected the agreement, it gained new life in the 1990s, inspiring the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which created a European economic and monetary union.

Seventy-five years later, Spinelli's belief that America's political union could be replicated across Europe—at the expense of national sovereignty—is crumbling. The institutions he helped to create, centered in Brussels, are struggling to cope with a debt crisis, moribund economic growth, and rising resentments over immigration. Britain's decision to leave the European Union may signal the beginning of a general unraveling.

Earlier this year, Italian president

JAEGER / AP

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Matteo Renzi warned that "Europe is in danger of collapsing." Last month, in a symbolic effort to "relaunch" the European project, Germany's Angela Merkel and France's François Hollande joined Renzi in Ventotene to pay homage at Spinelli's gravesite. Europe can enjoy a future of "unity and cohesion," Hollande said, but only if its leaders combat "dislocation, egotism, folding in on ourselves."

Living through the Second World War, many like Spinelli viewed nationalism as Europe's greatest enemy. "Men are no longer considered free citizens who can use the State in order to reach collective purposes," he complained bitterly in 1941. "They are, instead, servants of the State, which decides their goals." His idea of Europe as a tightly integrated political and economic community—a monolithic superstate—was intended as the remedy.

But Spinelli's political vision—grounded in Marxist materialism—failed to reckon with the deep attachments intrinsic to human societies: a shared sense of history, culture, language, and religion. Faith in a borderless, supranational Europe was destined to collide with the realities of the human condition.

Herein lies the paradox: For his entire political career, Spinelli denounced the impulse to regard the nation-state as "a divine entity." Yet to a growing number of Europeans, the administrators of the European project—aloof, autocratic, and lacking accountability—have demanded a similar obeisance. Perhaps it's time to look for more modest, earthbound alternatives. ♦

Greens Make Green

The business of environmentalism.

BY TOM NASSIF

In truth, farmers and environmentalists should be allies. The environmental and agricultural communities have more in common than conventional wisdom might suggest. Both desire to preserve our planet and its resources for future generations. I am not shy about saying farmers are the original environmentalists.

To a person, every farmer I have ever met is driven by an ethical obligation to protect the environment. They view themselves as stewards of the land. And for good reason: Nearly all want their children and grandchildren to carry on the tradition. Cousins Scott and Tom Deardorff II reflect the common theme of sustainability that connects the past to the present and future. Founded in 1937 by patriarch and great-grandfather W.H. Deardorff, Southern California-based Deardorff Family Farms has dedicated four generations to refining its environmental craft. For nearly eight decades, the Deardorff family has been driven by the relentless pursuit of improvement, pioneering many farming practices aimed at increasing productivity while reducing their reliance on natural resources.

Today, Scott and Tom have not only embraced but expanded the family legacy of stewardship. For example, they have invested heavily in the latest water-saving technologies, including drip irrigation and state-of-the-art weather stations and soil moisture monitors. The cousins have also curtailed the use of fertilizer and pesticides on their organic vegetable farms through innovative soil fertility programs and integrated pest management systems. And they recently completed construction on a cooling and packing facility that meets the highest green building standards in the country.

Multigenerational farms like theirs are the heart and soul of agriculture in the West and across the country. They are the very embodiment of sustainability. We should be so lucky as to entrust all our natural resources to the collective care of such thoughtful stewards.

If you can't bring yourself to buy the moral argument, at least consider renting the financial one. Farmers are business owners. They are motivated by sustainable profit. Their businesses are dependent on healthy soil and clean water, both of which lead to stronger yields and higher quality products. The math is quite simple: An environmentally healthy farm can deliver sustainable profits, while land that has been abused will one day cease to produce anything. Furthermore, inputs like fertilizer and pesticides are expensive; a business that doesn't minimize operating costs won't stay in business very long. Clean air, soil, and water are all outcomes supported by environmentalists. So why do so many continue to paint farmers as the enemy?

In his farewell address, President Eisenhower famously warned the nation against "unwarranted influence . . . by the military-industrial complex." Today we see the maturation of an environmental-industrial complex, defined by multimillion-dollar global enterprises closely integrated with academia and government regulators implementing environmental programs.

Like a storyline out of *Mad Men*, environmental activists have channeled their inner Don Drapers, fomenting fear of business and industry, and of human activity generally, in order to build a database of committed donors. It is an ingenious business model, used by corporate America since the early 1920s, when Gerard Lambert stigmatized halitosis to sell Listerine. Marketers have long understood that fear is a powerful motivating tool.

Every cause needs a bad guy, a threat that must be put down. For Listerine, it was bad breath. For too

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many environmental organizations, farmers—cast as the pillagers of Mother Earth—have served as compelling bogeymen (typically referred to as "corporate agriculture," "industrial agriculture," or the like) to alarm the 98 percent of Americans who aren't farmers.

We are all motivated to some degree by self-interest. Farmers are motivated by the love of farming and social good that comes from providing healthy food, and they are also motivated by the desire to succeed financially. Environmental activists working in big organizations aren't all that different. There is no doubt that most choose a career based on a commitment to environmental values and a desire to do good. And there is also no doubt that another motivation, and one that is entirely defensible, is the financial reward and career security that these organizations can provide.

Unfortunately, in the public debate, it is perfectly acceptable to point to farmers' financial motivations and equally unacceptable to acknowledge the financial motivations of environmental advocates. Those in private enterprise who are targeted by the policy and political initiatives of the environmental lobby ought to be more vocal about that.

If one can acknowledge the reality that the environmental lobby is motivated not only by the values of environmentalism, but also by the financial rewards of growing a motivated donor base, one might ask whether it would benefit these organizations to ever declare a problem solved. After all, while committed donors might feel good upon hearing such an announcement, they would also have one less reason to contribute.

Nowhere was this more in evidence than during the opposition waged against Senator Dianne Feinstein's compromise California drought legislation in 2014, which culminated in a joint-letter from multiple organizations slamming her bill.

Not one to seek the ire of environmentalists, the senator candidly responded—as quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*—that they "have never been helpful to me in producing good water policy." She went on to lament, "I have not had a single constructive view from environmentalists of how to provide water when there is no snowpack."

The practice of environmental protection and the business of environmentalism are two sides of a scale. Our nation's natural resources have benefited from much that has come from the former, but today the scale is weighted too much to the latter. It is the business side of environmentalism that produces the political targeting of agriculture.

It should stop. We share a common aim: to safeguard the planet for its people, animals, and plants. Imagine how much good could be accomplished if all farmers, regardless of size, whether conventional or organic, were accepted and embraced as partners for environmental protection. Now that is a narrative I know Don Draper could sell. ♦

Les Déplorables

The French right is discovering that there are more and more things you can't say

By Christopher Caldwell

A country is heading for trouble when its most popular writers worry that their words will land them in jail. France is that way now. Two years ago, TV commentator and journalist Éric Zemmour published *Le Suicide français*, an erudite, embittered, and nostalgic essay about the unraveling, starting in the 1970s, of the political system set up under the leadership of World War II hero Charles de Gaulle. (See "French Curtains," The Weekly Standard, December 8, 2014.) The book sold 500,000 copies. Since then, it seems, Zemmour has spent half his time collecting prizes and the other half defending himself in court.

In September, he was let off by a French tribunal for a 2014 remark he made on the radio station RTL. "The Normans, the Huns, the Arabs, the great invasions that followed the fall of Rome," Zemmour had said, "have their modern equivalents in the gangs of Chechens, Roma, Kosovars, Africans, and North Africans who mug, rob, and rape." The French court decided his words were not so extremist that Zemmour needed to be punished, but France's media authority, the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, issued a warning to RTL. Over the summer, Zemmour was fined by a Belgian court for making similar statements.

Such censorship, most often carried out in the name of racial harmony, is becoming a normal part of being an intellectual in France. Great philosophers (Alain Finkielkraut, member of the Académie française), great historians (Olivier Grenouilleau, Hélène Carrère d'Encausse), and great novelists (Michel Houellebecq) have all come under the thumb of the country's growing body of speech laws. It is perhaps not surprising that Zemmour's new book, a collection of columns released September 7 under the title *Un quinquennat pour rien* (roughly, *A Wasted Presidency*), should have turned into a street battle between the self-described French left, who control most of the country's old cultural institutions, and an increasing number of self-proclaimed rightists, who are coming to dominate the Internet.

Éric Zemmour, left, at the Criminal Court of Paris, June 24, 2015

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For most of his career, Zemmour has been a "rightist" only if you use extreme partisan shorthand. His gripe with post-de Gaulle France is that it surrendered its social democratic system to the global economy and has paid a heavy price in its standard of living. He notes in a recent column that, in the year 2000, 88 percent of French people were among the richest 20 percent of the world's population. Today, only 75 percent are. He blames France's malaise on its policies of uncontrolled immigration, particularly from Muslim countries, and its membership in the 28-member European Union. In narrowly approving the so-called Maastricht referendum of 1992, and thereby permitting a common currency and "ever-closer union" with their neighbors, French voters essentially disbanded their country, Zemmour thinks. Nothing will improve until France's politicians demand their country's sovereignty back. Zemmour's views are not so far from those of Donald Trump. In a recent column, he even attacked Hillary Clinton for describing half of Trump's voters—"racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, Islamophobic, you name it"—as a *panier de pitoyables*.

Zemmour's new book opens with a 50-page essay that places his preoccupations in a darker context. The battle

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over French self-rule has been lost, he believes. "Sovereignty is still a question, but it is no longer the central one. The question of identity has replaced it as a historical imperative." Something big has happened since Zemmour's last book. Hundreds of French people have been massacred on their country's streets in acts of Islamist bombing, shooting, and other violence—in the offices of the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in January 2015, in various Paris nightclubs and bars the following November, and along the Promenade des Anglais in Nice during this year's Bastille Day celebrations.

As Zemmour sees it, there are many answers to the question *What does it mean to be French?* But the word "Muslim" does not belong in any of them. Zemmour has thus taken a harder line than the National Front, a nationalistic, immigration-distrusting party that stands close to the lead in public opinion polls seven months from the country's next election. The party's boss Marine Le Pen has made clear that Islam can be part of the French Republic, so long as it is "secularized and enlightened"—a moderate sentiment to hold about religion, but a rather illogical one.

Zemmour sees no important difference between Islam and Islamism. Wearing the veil and machine-gunning café patrons are two means to the same end: taking possession of the undefended public space that is France. In the same way, there is a strong link "between delinquency and terrorism, between drug traffickers and jihadists." The movement of refugees and migrants across the Mediterranean over the past year, 70 percent of them young men, is an invasion. Zemmour has had enough of President François Hollande's rhapsodies about the compatibility of Islam and the modern West. "Islam is incompatible with secularism, incompatible with democracy, and incompatible with republican government," Zemmour writes. "Islam is incompatible with France."

The French, Zemmour reckons, are not only permitting the Islamization of their country—they are abetting and paying for it. Execute people in their music halls and they will light candles and carry signs reading "You can't make me hate." Zemmour believes the reason Muslims did not join the protests against gay marriage that brought into the street millions of French traditionalists of other faiths is this: "They could not help but rejoice, secretly or unconsciously, at such a striking sign of decadence in their oldest enemy." France has marked off heavily immigrant neighborhoods as "sensitive urban zones" (ZUS), which receive big infusions of taxpayer money. Many of these are priority education zones (ZES), a designation that makes residents there eligible for affirmative action and various subventions—though one anti-Islamist website jokes that the acronym should stand for *Zones sous l'Emprise du Prophète*: "Neighborhoods in the Prophet's Grip."

The book Zemmour has written is rough, tough stuff. That is, it analyzes massacres and rallies survivors using the same tone that the late Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci used in *The Rage and the Pride*, the tirade she dashed off in the days after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. There are other such books, even in France. In October, Philippe de Villiers, the aristocratic head of a traditionalist political party, will publish one called *Will the Churchbells Still Ring Tomorrow?*

But the hostility with which Zemmour's book has been received in France's mainstream press is a measure of how far the debate has shifted since 2001. Certainly the reaction to Fallaci's book was hostile but, given the episode that occasioned it, it was qualified. It was: "Yes, but . . ." The reaction to Zemmour has been all "but" and hardly any "yes." When Fallaci wrote, the war on terror had not yet ended in recrimination. The word "Islamophobia" had not yet come into vogue. Today, London mayor Sadiq Khan instructs us that terrorism is just "part and parcel of living in a big city"—rather like a pumpkin-spice latte, if more painful. Minneapolis mayor Betsy Hodges reacts to 10 stabbings, claimed by ISIS, in a shopping mall an hour away by preemptively scolding her constituents about "hate." And in France, a new book warns that many of the most influential ideas in politics and publishing, including Zemmour's, have been nurtured on a group of websites dubbed the *fachosphère*, from the French slang for fascist.

Those hostile to Zemmour's work have sought to bury it under accusations of racism. While Zemmour, who is of North African Jewish background, is fascinated by religious affiliation, race per se appears not to interest him in the slightest. One of the most controversial passages in the book, however, is a quotation from de Gaulle, who said in 1959:

> It is all well and good that there be French people who are yellow, black, and brown. That shows that France is open to all races and has a universal calling. But only if they remain a small minority. Otherwise, France would cease to be France. Because the fact is, we're a European people of the white race, of Greek and Latin culture, and of Christian religion.

Le Monde questioned whether the source of this quotation—*C'était de Gaulle*, a 1994 memoir by the general's loyal but gossipy aide Alain Peyrefitte—was to be trusted. In general, Peyrefitte's book has been considered *very* reliable on a number of topics, especially how early de Gaulle became convinced, despite what he may have said publicly, that France's colonial rule in Algeria had to end.

After Hollande was elected president in 2012, photos of

the celebration in the Place de la Bastille showed more Palestinian flags than French ones. There were more French flags, Hollande's defenders claimed, if you looked away from the column at the center of the square. Zemmour was still outraged. He criticized the Guyana-born justice minister Christiane Taubira for not singing the national anthem, the "Marseillaise," at a commemoration of the abolition of slavery. (Taubira replied that sometimes she preferred listening to the anthem rather than singing it, an act she compared to karaoke.) Zemmour sat out the great set-piece racial battle of last spring, when many conservatives questioned whether the Senegalese-French rapper Alpha Diallo, whose stage name is "Black M" and who had called France a "land of kaffirs" in one of his songs, was the right choice to perform last spring at the centennial commemoration of the Battle of Verdun. (The gig was cancelled. Diallo noted in the aftermath that his grandfather had been an army marksman in World War II.) But if certain public scandals over Zemmour involve race, it is less because he has that obsession than because it allows his adversaries to attack from behind a wall of comfortable clichés, with an arsenal of legal protections.

Zemmour operates at high speed. He publishes in quantity—book reviews, features, biographical profiles, in addition to his books. His writing is really graceful. His knowledge of French culture and politics, especially in the twentieth century, is extensive and deep. But we repeat and stress that he operates at high speed. Reading him calls to mind the late Christopher Hitchens's confession that he himself was "one who regards 'pamphleteer' as a title of honor." Zemmour, even when he is superb, can be sloppy with facts. Any American reader will see this. He thinks the island near the Statue of Liberty where immigrants were processed is Long Island. He thinks that those who have returned to Jesus (as in John 3:3) are called "Newborn Christians." So we should take it with a grain of salt when he writes, for instance, that

> the army high command knows that the day will come when it must retake these foreign territories that have been established on our own soil. The plan is already drawn up. It is called "Operation Brambles." It has been refined with the help of specialists from the Israeli army.

This is not to say there is anything particularly convincing about the efforts to refute Zemmour's more forceful points. The daily newspaper *Le Monde* has an American-style fact-checking feature that it calls "Les décodeurs." It recently devoted a page to the errors in Zemmour's past year of column-writing. There is no shortage of these. But what is striking about *Le Monde* is that the "errors" it highlights are just as often ideological differences as factual mistakes, and the paper is wholly unable to tell the difference. When Zemmour makes an illiberal remark about dialects, *Le Monde* scolds him for not using the definition of the word "dialect" promulgated in the European Union's Charter of Regional or Minority Languages. Then Zemmour writes that the CGT trade union "no longer represents anything." Not true, says *Le Monde*! It represented 30.63 percent of unionized workers in 2013, just ahead of the CFDT at 29.71 percent! On top of that, Zemmour, the knucklehead, is unable to tell a North African *djellaba* from a Saudi Arabian *qamis*. He can therefore have nothing of value to say about France. This kind of "fact-checking" is self-discrediting. It is a blow struck in the spirit of censorship and "official truth," trying to pass itself off as an exercise in free inquiry.

Supporters of François Hollande celebrate his election to the presidency in the Place de la Bastille in Paris, May 6, 2012.

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It gives a hint why the National Front has risen so rapidly in France over the past half-decade. And why newspapers and TV stations in all countries have failed to stop various populist candidates from rising in popular esteem. The arguments the media now want to join are ones that it long suppressed. Voters lost patience—and seem to be resolving those arguments themselves, without the media's help. The young conservative Geoffroy Didier of Nicolas Sarkozy's party, Les Républicains, was interviewed by the newsmagazine *Le Point* last spring. He had proposed a ban on wearing burkas and building mosques with minarets. In his view, it was too late to do anything else about immigration and Islam, and that was the fault of the entire political establishment. "The left is to blame for pretending it didn't see this coming," Didier explained. "The right is to blame for pretending it did." ♦

Good Luck With Your Predictions

The year the 'laws' of politics were repealed

By Noemie Emery

A lifetime ago—on June 14, 2015, for example—people who worked in politics and elections thought that they understood with a fair sense of certainty how elections and politics worked. Politics, sort of like physics, had immutable laws, rather like gravity. Demography seemed to be one of them. On the left, John Judis and Ruy Teixeira had written a book saying that the increase in numbers of darker-skinned citizens would over time tilt electoral power toward the Democrats, while on the right, Henry Olsen was honing his theory that the Republican party was and would be moved in perpetuity by the ideological struggles among social conservatives, secular conservatives, somewhat conservatives, and moderates who made up its four factions. But that was then. Donald Trump entered the Republican primary contest the next day, these definitions ceased to wield their old power, and the world as we knew it dissolved.

As for ideology, Trump's campaign tore through, broke up, and scrambled Olsen's "four faces," splitting each one into pro and con factions. As for ethnic bloc voting, Trump's tirades and his speech, plus his inherent appeal to racist white elements, did unite most of the nonwhites against him. But white voters themselves refused to behave as a bloc, and instead found themselves split down the middle, driven by his controversial person and programs into divergent and opposing parts. Region meant nothing, as people north and south, east and west showed the same divisions. Religion, which had been a critical factor since the culture wars had begun 40 years earlier, ceased to be a meaningful predictor, as Trump split the faithful into quarreling factions. What mattered—the one thing that *did* matter—was a college diploma, a symbol of import that stands at one moment for different and critical things: for social as well as financial security, for entree into the class from which leaders are chosen, for comfort and ease in the knowledge economy, and for having the wherewithal to withstand the domestic upheavals the collapse of the old social mores has brought.

Olsen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, has called this our first "European" election, as it resembles contests in Europe in which working-class parties oppose establishment forces. But it might also be called the Charles Murray election, after the American Enterprise Institute scholar whose 2012 book *Coming Apart* gave voice to his fear that in the past 50 years the United States has been separating into two countries, distinct and unequal, one containing those enriched by the emerging knowledge economy and the other those betrayed by it. The current disruption is proving his case.

This split in the country was a long time in coming, and its causes go back many years. Nonwhites in America have mostly seen their living standards improving, whites with degrees know the world is their oyster, but the white working class is the one group that has lived for some time with a strong sense of slippage, of life moving backward, and more and more out of control. It thinks (or is told) of a time in the past when factories boomed and cities and towns were built up around them, when men from abroad, or from the farms or the slums, could find jobs in them that would last them a lifetime, on which they bought homes and raised families, and later retired on adequate pensions that took care of the specter of want. For decades,

IMAGES: NEWSCOM

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Trump supporters wait during a campaign rally in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, July 28, 2016.

the economy grew by 3 percent a year or more, personal income rose steadily, and people got used to the upward trajectory. Then all of it came to a halt.

"The turning point was 1973, the year that hourly wages, which had steadily risen for thirty years, began to stagnate or even fall," Ross Douthat and Reihan Salam wrote in their 2008 book *Grand New Party*. "There was a recession, but the problem ran deeper. . . . Globalization began to hurt American manufacturing as jobs slipped away overseas, rising immigration rates following the 1964 reform, created a glut of low wage labor; and skill-biased technological change meant that the market for employment privileged education over hard work." From that time on, economic news in this country would focus on stories of plants shutting down and large corporations hiring outside of this country or moving their plants overseas. Automation let manufacturers do more with fewer people. When the recovery came in the '80s and '90s, it boosted the financial and technological sectors, but the manufacturing jobs never really came back. While the working class slipped, the Internet and computer technology created a new world of high-tech jobs and a new class of those adept in the information economy, which became bigger, more broadly based, and richer than any in history. "Real income for the bottom quartile of American families fell after 1970," Murray tells us in *Coming Apart*. "The poor didn't actually get poorer . . . but they didn't improve their position much, either. Real family income for families in the middle was flat. Just about all of the benefits of economic growth from 1970 to 2010 went to people in the upper half of the income distribution."

By 2008, Douthat and Salam would write that the working class of our day was "defined less by income or wealth than by education—by the lack of a college degree and the cultural capital associated with it." Those so deprived were "enduring a slow-burning crisis . . . of insecurity and immobility, not poverty," which was in some ways worse than material privation itself. And it had started to feel to the working class that the government was going out of its way to pursue policies that helped out those who already had money, while adding to the problems of those like themselves.

Many today still complain of the signing of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, by Bill Clinton with the help of congressional Republicans, which was opposed by the unions and brought new competition from Mexico. But nothing has had the impact of China's rise as a manufacturing power over the past generation. "Japan's import wave . . . challenged a limited group of advanced manufacturing

industries, largely autos, steel, and consumer electronics," wrote Bob Davis and Jon Hilsenrath in the *Wall Street Journal* in August. "China's low-cost imports swept the entire U.S., squeezing producers of electronics in San Jose, Calif., sporting goods in Orange County, Calif., jewelry in Providence, R.I., shoes in West Plains, Mo." In particular, furniture made in China took a bludgeon to the small town of Hickory, North Carolina, known until recently as the "Furniture Capital of the World," which once supplied jobs for thousand in the neighboring area. Rising imports drove plants out of business, erased thousands of jobs, drove unemployment from under 2 percent in 2000 to over 15 percent 10 years later, and cut manufacturing employment in surrounding Catawba County in half.

The reaction to this came quickly. "In the 2000s, congressional districts where competition from Chinese imports was rapidly increasing became more politically polarized," they reported, as "strident" candidates began to replace more moderate ones. In the Republican primaries in 2016, Trump carried 89 of the 100 counties most affected by competition from China, among them Catawba, where he won 44 percent of the ballots cast in a field of 12. Trump's promise of a giant "up yours" to the powers that be struck a giant-sized chord with the part of the populace that had good reason to feel itself victimized by its so-called public servants.

Class, which had never played the role in America's supposedly classless society that it did in European politics, seems now to be coming to the fore. For years, the Republican party has sought a way to gain the lasting allegiance of white, working-class voters who, since the old Democratic coalition began to implode in the late 1960s, have been restlessly moving back and forth between the two parties, going in big at times for the GOP, as with Richard M. Nixon and then Ronald Reagan, but moving back to the Democrats again during the eras of Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. The case for bringing them in was clear: It would lead to a solid majority status. But there was a flaw in the bargain that Trump seemed to offer: While he looked to have a lock on the blue-collar cohort, he could have been designed in a lab by a crack team of experts to drive educated white voters insane.

Never since 1952 (when polling began on this subject) have Republicans failed to carry this cohort, but Trump is now losing it, in numbers sufficient to cost him the race. In 2012, Mitt Romney beat Barack Obama by 14 points among college-educated white voters. Four years earlier, John McCain beat Obama by 4 points with these same voters, and George W. Bush beat Al Gore by 9 points in the knife-edge election of 2000. By contrast, Hillary Clinton has been leading Trump among white college graduates by spreads of between 9 and 25 points.

Never before have swings like this happened, but a lot of things are now happening that were never imagined before. Never before have we had such a large part of the country mired in depression while so many others are thriving. Never before has a nominee of one major party shocked and repelled so many people, while convincing others he is the one man who hears them and feels for them, and may be their last hope on earth. All the old metrics have gone out the window, and the only things that matter are the apprehensions and passions of three major groups: the nonwhites, who fear and hate Trump because of his attacks on Muslim and Mexican immigrants, and his backing by David Duke, white supremacists, and other members of the hate-based community; the college-grad whites, who hate him for the reasons above and fear his instability, ignorance, and fondness for tyrants; and the blue-collar whites, who have seen their living standards and chances of upward mobility decline.

The case for bringing white, working-class voters into the GOP was clear, but there was a flaw in the bargain that Trump seemed to offer: While he looked to have a lock on the blue-collar cohort, he could have been designed in a lab by a crack team of experts to drive educated white voters insane.

Owing to this, the way the critical swing states will swing this cycle may well rest on the size of each of these groups, and the way that the first and the second combine. Regardless of the ratio of Rs to Ds in the population, Clinton will fare poorly in Rust Belt states with declining economies and few younger voters, and better in states which do not. "Trump tends to do better in states with low shares of both college-educated whites and minorities," William Galston writes in the *Wall Street Journal*. "Ohio and Iowa meet both tests; despite below-average shares of college-educated voters, Pennsylvania, Florida and Nevada do not." Georgia and Arizona "have above-average shares of college-educated voters, which helps explain why Mrs. Clinton is surprisingly competitive in these traditionally red states." Trump's best showing in a traditional swing state has been in Iowa, which is 92 percent white, has a large percentage of noncollege graduates, and is one of the few states in which the party's political establishment has given the nominee its wholehearted support. By contrast, Virginia and Colorado, with their college graduates, high-tech

corridors, and nonwhite populations, moved fairly quickly into the Clinton camp. Florida is (and has been) dead-even, as its eclectic mixture of old and new industries, and nonwhites along with aging retirees from the Rust Belt, tend to cancel out one another.

In a state like Ohio, Trump's hopes lie in places like Youngstown, a blue-collar post-industrial city in the eastern part of the state, where Democrats outnumber Republicans by five or six to one in most primary seasons. But this year saw the number of ballots split 50-50 in the primaries, as about one-third of the Democrats crossed over to cast their ballots for Trump. "A strong majority of likely Ohio voters . . . are skeptical of trade deals" such as those signed by Bill Clinton, Bloomberg News reported September 14. "More than a third of poll participants . . . say either they or someone in their household has been unemployed because of layoffs or company closings during the past decade, or looked for work but been unable to find a job."

Trump backers at a rally in Council Bluffs, Iowa, September 28, 2016

Emphatically, this is not the usual battle between the establishment and movement conservatives that has gone on for 50 years, nor does it resemble the Tea Party mobilization, in response to Obama's expansion-of-government schemes. As the *Washington Post*'s Dan Balz wrote in March, "Trump and so-called Trumpism represent an amalgam of long-festering economic, cultural and racial dissatisfaction among a swath of left-out Americans who do not fit easily into the ideological pigeonholes of red and blue, right and left. . . . a broader manifestation of the uneven impact of globalization on a significant segment of the population, a rejection . . . [of those whom voters] see as having failed to listen to or respond to their plight." He quotes Henry Olsen as saying the party had asked for the trouble it got. It ignored the needs and complaints of its blue-collar voters to focus on things that its upper class wanted, such as budget-cutting in the form of entitlements, and tax cuts for the wealthy, which would lead to investments in business, which in theory would then lead to jobs. But the working class had come to rely on entitlements to help it cope with rough patches, and the jobs created with all of these tax cuts often weren't ones it could fill. The party—both of the parties, which explains Trump's pull on Democrats in states like Ohio—had created a huge market opening that Trump filled and that threatens both parties, Republicans with the loss of an election that seemed theirs for the taking only a year ago, and Democrats with the fear that Trump's appeal to some of "their" voters in key states in the Rust Belt could cost them a third White House term.

What might have happened differently if (a) more conventional leaders had expressed some concern for this working-class angst (or some knowledge of it) even a few years earlier; or (b) if the spokesman who had latched onto the cause were someone other than Trump? One of the reasons that this didn't occur is the critical fact that Murray addressed in *Coming Apart*, which is that the upper-middle and lower-middle classes have grown so far apart in all their experiences—they no longer live in the same neighborhoods, or go to the same schools, or even watch the same TV shows—that the first (which includes politicians, bureaucrats, and the journalists who report on them) literally had no idea what the second was suffering. Another was that the moment Trump burst on the scene, he set off a torrent of disgust and revulsion based not so much on what he was saying as on the kind of person he was.

The irony—and the tragedy—of this particular moment is that while his rise was fueled by a genuine problem, that problem and any discussion of what should be done with it was shoved off the stage by his outsized persona, by the devotion and violence he provoked from so many, the outsized approbation he received from so many nefarious elements, and the concern he aroused in so many millions that apart from his stance on the issues, he was an ignorant, undisciplined, and in many ways bad man, whose judgment on anything was not to be trusted.

It was the confluence of these unexpected, unforeseen, and unprecedented events—a crippling depression that hit an ignored part of the population and a reviled nominee of one of the two mainline parties—that created a storm that blew through and away all of the prior party alignments, setting them down in different formations and places. As Balz writes, old battles "pitted familiar wings against one another: moderates vs. conservatives; the business wing vs. the evangelical wing"; and many expected this situation to go on forever. It didn't.

What does this say about laws of politics? That political laws don't exist. That new coalitions grow up around unforeseen events and leaders and alter when they do. And nobody knows what comes next. ♦

NEWSCOM

Ronald Reagan, Dwight D. Eisenhower at Gettysburg (1966)

He Liked Ike

Unearthing the Eisenhower-Reagan connection. BY FRED BARNES

A footnote in a book about Ronald Reagan led Gene Kopelson to drop by the Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas, in the fall of 2012. Kopelson is a physician, not an academically trained historian. But he had begun research on Reagan's presidential run in 1968, a campaign to which historians have paid little attention and Reagan himself never counted as his first bid for the White House.

The author of the footnote was Kiron Skinner, a Reagan scholar at the Hoover Institution. It pointed to a connection between Reagan and former president Dwight D. Eisenhower during the 1960s when Reagan was running for governor of California and, later, having won the election, was considering a presidential race. Kopelson was intrigued. He lives in Seattle and spends half the year in medicine, half pursuing his interest in history. He had planned a trip east along I-70. It would take him to three places in Missouri—the Truman Library in Independence, the scene of Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, and Mark Twain's hometown in Hannibal—and to the Lincoln Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois.

Reagan's 1968 Dress Rehearsal
Ike, RFK, and Reagan's Emergence as a World Statesman
by Gene Kopelson
Figueroa, 905 pp., $55

Prompted by the footnote, Kopelson added an I-70 stop at the Eisenhower Museum, Library and Boyhood Home in Abilene. "I thought this would be a good thing to look at," he says. It was a history-making decision in the sense that Kopelson discovered the breadth of a little-known but historically significant episode in Reagan's path to the presidency.

When Dwight Eisenhower left the White House in 1961, he didn't divorce himself from politics. He worried about

BETTMANN ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES

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the future of the Republican party, and this led him to Reagan. From 1965 to 1968, he advised Reagan—and not just on foreign affairs and national security policy. His guidance also focused on the practical politics of running for office. Ike was the teacher, Reagan his pupil. They met in person four times, once at Ike's farm in Gettysburg and twice at the former president's winter home in Palm Desert, California. The fourth location is unknown—at least, Kopelson hasn't nailed it down. And they communicated by telephone and by mail.

Kopelson was amazed at what he found at the Eisenhower Library. "My gosh! What a treasure trove of new information," he says. "None of Reagan's advisers knew that Ike was there all along." There was so much compelling material about what Kopelson calls "the hidden mentor-protégé relationship" that it gets equal footing in his book with Reagan's actual (though secretive) 1968 campaign. A publisher advised Kopelson to separate the topics—Ike and 1968—into two books. But he said no, and it was a wise decision. Many of the themes of Reagan's speeches as an unannounced candidate for president in 1967-68 (he was governor of California at the time) grew out of lessons from Eisenhower. And these themes have proved to be indelible. Reagan emphasized the same ideas—such as the use of strongly worded language in dealing with adversaries—in the 1970s and '80s as well. Kopelson's account is copiously researched to the last small detail and an important addition to the library of Reagan studies.

Eisenhower took a special interest in Reagan: He thought his vice president, Richard Nixon, was the most qualified Republican to be president; but he feared that Nixon, after losing to John F. Kennedy in 1960, couldn't get elected in 1968. But Reagan could, thus Eisenhower's eagerness to help. Ike never saw Reagan as too conservative; quite the contrary. He watched Reagan's famous television speech ("A Time for Choosing") for Barry Goldwater in 1964 with an expert's eye. "Looking and listening to Reagan, a new Republican star in the making, Eisenhower liked what he saw and heard," Kopelson writes. He saw Reagan as "an important part" of rebuilding the GOP after the Goldwater loss.

When Kopelson requested Ike's papers with a Reagan link at the Eisenhower Library, he learned that a man named Freeman Gosden had contacted Eisenhower in July 1965. Gosden had been the voice of Amos on the old "Amos and Andy" radio show, and was a friend of Reagan and Eisenhower. He sought Ike's advice on Reagan's entry into elective politics. In responding to Gosden, Eisenhower made several points, and Gosden passed the letter on to Reagan.

First, he said that Reagan should declare himself a faithful Republican. Second, he should say that he had helped the party and its candidates in 1964. Third, Reagan should call for "common-sense solutions." (This became a Reagan slogan in 1966 when he ran, successfully, for California governor.) Fourth, Reagan should seek the support of *all* voters, including Democrats and independents. Fifth, if running for office, he should define his convictions and present them to voters "at every possible opportunity." And last, Ike urged Reagan to meet frequently with the press.

"Reagan would end up following Eisenhower's recommendations and advice almost to the letter," Kopelson writes. He disputes Douglas Brinkley's insistence that Franklin Roosevelt was Reagan's biggest influence. Rather, it was Reagan's "true role model, mentor and hero," Eisenhower. While still a Democrat, Reagan had backed Ike in 1952.

In a second letter, Gosden sent Eisenhower a set of polls on the California governor's race and asked, again, for advice. (By then, Reagan and Eisenhower had talked personally.) Ike answered Gosden in a letter urging Reagan to woo his primary opponent's supporters, promising to back their candidate, San Francisco mayor George Christopher, if he won the Republican nomination. This would create party unity, which Eisenhower felt was critical.

Ike decided, at some point, to "launch Reagan personally well beyond the governorship in Sacramento and potentially right into 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue," Kopelson writes. After their June 1966 meeting in Gettysburg—the summer before Reagan won the governorship—Eisenhower told reporters that "you can bet he will become a presidential possibility." Ike's endorsement "defused any accusations that Reagan was an extreme far right-wing candidate."

The Gettysburg session lasted two-and-a-half hours. "Eisenhower gave Reagan specific and detailed military strategic and tactical lessons," writes Kopelson. He said that Americans should always fight to win, deploy overwhelming force, and make threats. In Korea, he had threatened to use nuclear weapons; in Vietnam, Ike told Reagan that he had advised Lyndon Johnson to "mine Haiphong harbor." He favored bombing North Vietnam "hard" and the "hot pursuit of troops or aircraft into havens."

Subsequent Reagan comments "indicate that he learned a great deal from the general that day," Kopelson notes. In his 1968 presidential campaign, Reagan recommended pursuit of the Vietcong and North Vietnamese troops. He called for the bombing of dams in North Vietnam, as Ike had urged, and, again like Ike, he recommended that the Navy "practice amphibious invasion drills off the North Vietnamese coast so that both the civilian and military populations would worry about an imminent invasion from the sea."

Kopelson did the math on one point to substantiate that Eisenhower was Reagan's role model: President Reagan's direct quoting of Eisenhower's words, or praise for his programs, occurred at least 178 times, far outstripping Reagan's references to any other presidents "whom prior historians have said were role models." Case closed.

These Eisenhower revelations dwarf, in historical importance, what constitutes more than two-thirds of Kopelson's 931-page study: an account of the 1968 presidential campaign that Reagan and wife Nancy always denied ever happened. But it *did* happen—indeed, it struck fear in Richard

Nixon's heart that Reagan might steal the nomination at the GOP convention in Miami Beach, despite not having run in any primaries.

Kopelson isn't the first to cite Reagan's stealth effort that year. Thomas Reed, Reagan's chief campaign operative in 1968, wrote about it in his first-person narrative, *The Reagan Enigma 1964-1980* (2014), another worthwhile addition to the Reagan bookshelf. So why did Reagan insist he hadn't run in 1968? The answer "is basic human nature," Kopelson says. "Much of his campaign was hidden. And he lost." Nonetheless, Kopelson believes that Reagan's 1968 clandestine campaign was key to his winning the presidency 12 years later: "It was his true—and needed—dress rehearsal." And everything he learned about foreign affairs, much of it from Dwight D. Eisenhower, "would be stored away in his mind for future use." ♦

B&A

Departure Lounge

In the fictional world of Louis Begley.

BY WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

Jack Nicholson in 'About Schmidt' (2002)

The recent appearance of two generically related novels by Louis Begley justifies a look back at the career of this extraordinary writer. Or rather, his second career since his first was as partner in the New York corporate law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton.

His childhood was rather different, that of a young Jewish boy growing up in Poland during the Nazi occupation who managed to survive, emigrating to America with his parents after the war. Begley came to literary attention with his first novel, *Wartime Lies* (1991), to which some of his own early experience contributed. The book won a couple of literary prizes and launched Begley into a productive quarter-century of 12 novels, plus a history of the Dreyfus affair and a short biography of Franz Kafka.

In the dedication to the first of his two recent Jack Dana novels, *Killer, Come Hither* (2015), Begley refers to the book (and the subsequent Jack Dana published this past spring) as a "departure," so the obvious question is: departure from what? A back-cover synopsis of the sequel, *Kill and Be Killed* (2016), introduces its hero, "Jack Dana, the former Marine Corps officer turned novelist whose quest to avenge his murdered uncle takes a new, more dangerous turn." This is enough to suggest that the atmosphere of *Kill and Be Killed* is not reminiscent of Henry James or Virginia Woolf: We are in Thriller territory and are promised a novel full of action, violence, and a lively plot.

As for its protagonist, Jack Dana is certainly a candidate for superhero: a graduate of Yale with a fellowship to Balliol College, Oxford, and an invitation from the Society of Fellows at Harvard. But when 9/11 intervenes, he decides to join the Marine Corps, serving as an officer in Iraq and Afghanistan, even though he is critical of both wars. Wounded in Afghanistan, he recuperates at Walter Reed and begins there what will be his first novel. The major action of *Killer, Come Hither* is Jack's attempt to exact vengeance on the man who killed his beloved Uncle Harry.

In tone, style, and plot, we couldn't be further away from the book that began Begley's novel-writing life, *Wartime Lies*, a first-person narrative by a Polish boy named Maciek. The narrative is prefaced by an odd and fascinating three pages in italics as spoken by the writer who invented Maciek: He is a "bookish fellow," with "fifty or more winters on his back," and who now, having lived through the horror of his childhood, "avoids Holocaust books and dinner conversation about Poland in the Second World War." Instead, he focuses on the child who became the man he now is.

Wartime Lies is an unsparing novel that doesn't quite feel like a novel; there are few changes of tone in the narrative, as events grim and not so grim are relayed in a steady voice. For that reason, the book is hard to quote from, and testifies to the calmly severe manner in which Begley decided to

NEW LINE CINEMA

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treat his subject. There followed a pair of more conventional, though well-observed and entertaining, novels. Then, five years after *Wartime Lies*, Begley hit upon a character and milieu wholly American that would provide him with two further novels with the same protagonist: *About Schmidt* (1996), followed by *Schmidt Delivered* (2000) and *Schmidt Steps Back* (2012). This bracing triad of vividly humorous books is told throughout in a tone both sardonic and sensitive.

Albert Schmidt is a retired corporate lawyer in New York who negotiates early retirement and moves to Long Island with his wife, who then dies after a painful illness. Schmidt has plenty of money and a single child, a daughter, who plans to marry a man Schmidt helped promote in his law firm. Schmidt dislikes the young man, Jon Riker, who is unpleasant enough in conversation (he keeps referring to Schmidt as "Al") but is also Jewish, thereby opening Schmidt to the charge of antisemitism.

This is the interesting "given" of the novel, a man many of whose likes and dislikes we sympathize with but can't exonerate from antisemitism: His best friend, Gil Blackman, a Jew, also sees this trait in Schmidt. In a brief interview when the first Schmidt novel was published, Begley was asked whether he found it difficult to write about antisemitism, to which he replied that, no, he found it amusing. The interviewer didn't follow up on this, but it suggests that Begley, like his protagonist, doesn't mind being a bit perverse, at least ironic, in his response to take-it-or-leave-it questions. (Who knows, maybe Shakespeare found it amusing to write the scene in *King Lear* where Gloucester's eyes are extruded.)

About Schmidt was made into a highly successful and agreeable movie starring Jack Nicholson, but its success was achieved at the cost of making a travesty of the novel. (In the film, Schmidt, a Nebraska insurance actuary, heads west in his own bus, eventually ending up in a hot tub with a dominating female.) By contrast, in the novel Begley wrote, there is very little "action" since we are steadily confined within the hero's stream of thought, a confinement effected partly through the absence of quotation marks around speeches. Begley has compared such marks to little bugs. When his daughter accuses him

NEUMANN PICTURE ALLIANCE / DPA / AP IMAGES

Louis Begley (2003)

of antisemitism in relation to her husband-to-be, Schmidt considers the matter fully:

> It was pure rot to pick on him and claim he was an antisemite. There were some Jews he liked and others, including selected members of the Riker family, he didn't. Mostly he didn't notice them, one way or another. He certainly wished Jews in general and the state of Israel the best of luck. Right now, his hat went off to Rabin—maybe that wasn't the right metaphor—for being willing to get physically close to Arafat, an unshaved, probably ill-smelling loudmouth with bad teeth. It must be hard to tolerate being in the same room with him, never mind performing those Levantine embraces. Even when it came to Arabs his dislikes were individualized; they weren't racial prejudice. He had absolutely nothing against King Hussein.

This was amusing to write, I would guess, and amusing to read for its *aperçus*. To speak (as one reviewer did) of Albert Schmidt as a "flawed hero" or, in more homely terms, a "curmudgeon" ruins the pleasure. It's all a matter of tonal subtlety, as when Schmidt returns from a holiday, lights up a "moist, dark and rather sweet-tasting cigar," and reflects:

> It struck him as strange that so many of his contemporaries had decided to give up smoking, alcohol and coffee and, of course, cheese, eggs, and red meat as well. Had they information about the advantages, perhaps even pleasures, of longevity, of which he had remained ignorant? . . . Unless there was such a secret, it seemed reasonable to stick to his agreeable, life-shortening habits, perhaps even to acquire new ones.

Every so often, in the Schmidt novels, something terrible happens, such as his daughter's confinement in a mental clinic. Then, after her recovery and imminent marriage to a new man whom Schmidt likes, a dreadful car accident on the Long Island Expressway kills the couple. And there are the ups and down of Schmidt's erotic adventures with a young Puerto Rican waitress, then with a cultivated older woman, not without painful setbacks. Overall, however, there is a "positive," even sprightly, atmosphere to these books: The acerbic humor keeps coming, putting us in the presence of someone like us—except that he has behind him the stylistic energy of Louis Begley's sentences.

The aforementioned "departure" in Begley's two thrillers is partly a departure from social realism in favor of a more extreme and simplified presentation of character. The women Captain Dana engages with—the death of one of them spurs the action in *Kill and Be Killed*—are beautiful, intelligent, and sexy; the thugs, invariably from Bosnia and Serbia with names like Slobo and Jovan, are too bad to be true, as is the fountain of evil, a business tycoon named Abner Brown. Jack himself, along with his literary intelligence, has now produced three novels and is physically equipped in an altogether admirable way, with a command of knives, guns, and other suitably aggressive instruments.

In a Jack Dana novel, people don't just sit down and eat a hearty lunch or dinner: They have black-bean soup and cold poached salmon, with a glass of Riesling. Or a white gazpacho followed by shrimp quiche, cheese, and grapes for dessert and a bottle of Sancerre. Or Hunan tripe and sliced lamb in a hot scallion sauce. When Dana makes a drink, which is often, it's almost always a martini, "five-sixths gin straight out of the freezer, one-sixth vermouth freshly extracted from the fridge, and an almost transparent lemon peel." In this atmosphere, it is unlikely that the reader will be invited into what T. S. Eliot called "the third dimension"—the inside of characters' heads to be pondered and explored. Eliot used the term to describe what Shakespeare gives us that his contemporary Ben Jonson does not. But Jonson, like Begley, was not trying to get the third dimension. Instead, he presents us with (in Eliot's words) "a brutality, a lack of sentiment, a polished surface, a handling of large bold designs in brilliant colors."

This is not to say that we're denied access to Jack Dana's feelings, but there's relatively little attempt at subtle exploration of grief or complicated outrage at the bad guys. Ben Jonson's scabrous comedy eschewed the delicate; Louis Begley's thrillers, for all their violence, have the overall feel of comedy, if comedy on the dark side. You feel that the author of the Schmidt novels is still there, concocting a world in which the retired lawyer got transformed into a young superhero. At one moment, Jack Dana even demonstrates a response to great music, to Dido's "Lament" in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* ("When I am laid, am laid in earth"). Unlikely as it may seem, he finds himself in tears "for her and for the self-absorbed and heartless Aeneas and for every stupid slob who breaks the heart of someone he loves."

We may detect here the heart of Louis Begley informing the response of his protagonist, and there's something satisfying in this glimpse of the man behind the mask. ♦

B&A

Social Kapital

How to win a date with Karl Marx.

BY JONATHAN MARKS

Moira Weigel opens with the man she was seeing when she began her investigation into courtship: "For weeks he had been trying to break off our thing in order to commit to another, longer-standing thing with an ex-ex he had started to call his girlfriend again, and then changing his mind. He wanted to keep us both apprised of his thought process." Fans of *Sex and the City* will recognize this tone and milieu. We are in the knowing, hyper, neurotic, self-mocking New York celebrated by that old hit's protagonist, Carrie Bradshaw.

Weigel grew up in Brooklyn, and her book is very New York. There is the "girl on the train complaining to her friend about her one-night stand with a man who started playing Limp Bizkit on his laptop in the morning. Though the sex had been good, there was no way she was giving him her number." There is Weigel's friend who searches OkCupid for Alice Munro fans. "I like David Foster Wallace," he added. "But if you type David Foster Wallace into OkCupid, it's a s—tshow." There is the gym teacher at Weigel's elementary school who embodies the unintended consequences of our new frankness about sex. She administers sexual vocabulary quizzes to Weigel and her classmates. "'Boner?' the gym teacher would ask. 'Wet dream?' She had one lazy eye." Weigel humiliates herself by guessing that "oral sex" means "talking about sex, maybe using a tape recorder."

But Weigel, unlike Carrie Bradshaw, is a feminist Marxist. So behind the comedy is a nightmare. Marx described the alienated laborer who "in his work … does not affirm himself but denies himself." His work is "not the satisfaction of a need" but "merely a *means* to satisfy needs external to it." Dating, Weigel thinks, is like that: Women as daters are like the flight attendants studied by the sociologist Arlie Hochschild. They perform "emotional labor," fake warmth and jollity to set their customers at ease, and repress their actual feelings.

Labor of Love
The Invention of Dating
by Moira Weigel
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 304 pp., $26

Similarly, "self-help books" tell women interested in getting a man to "repress their emotions in order to avoid making their partners think that they expect something." Men must, above all, be set at ease. Weigel argues that repressing one's feelings and pretending not to care can lead to confusion about one's own desires and to incapacity for love: "The surest way to make it seem like you do not care is to actually not care."

Apparently, this very thing happened to Weigel. "I had no idea who I was. And as long as I kept impersonating all the women I thought I should be, I could not receive love, much less give it." I can't deny Weigel's story. But apart from that story, Weigel offers a history of courtship in America that ties her lot to the lot of American women altogether. And that account is so distorted by Weigel's Marxist feminist lens as to undermine Weigel's credibility.

Weigel follows Beth Bailey's excellent 1988 book, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, in beginning with the middle-class convention of "calling," still practiced early in the 20th century, in which unmarried men visited the homes of women they wished to court. Looking

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backstage, Weigel finds patriarchy cuing the players: Calling "made men into agents in pursuit. It made women the objects of desire." These objects of desire were found at home because the "Calling Class had a lot at stake in the idea that women cherished being confined at home, providing attention and affection to . . . men."

Much rides on this description of calling because when, with the rise of dating, courtship moves out of the home, Weigel thinks that the Calling Class's insistence on female passivity moves along with it. The "age of dating . . . held on to the idea that women were essentially passive." The accompanying suppression of female desire is at the root of Weigel's own troubles with desire.

But Bailey's treatment of calling (as Weigel occasionally acknowledges) is quite different. Calling, Bailey says, "was primarily a woman's activity, for women largely controlled social life." In the calling system, "[women] took the initiative" by issuing an invitation. It was "highly improper for the man to take the initiative." Only when, amidst the constraints and possibilities afforded by urban life, private calling makes way for public dating are men, on whose money dating relies and in whose sphere dating takes place, expected to take the initiative. That expectation, Bailey says, entails an "absolute reversal of roles."

Of course, the calling system was not women's liberation, nor did the women of early-20th-century America speak frankly about their desires. But Bailey's complex account of calling gives the lie to Weigel's simplistic one. It also undermines Weigel's account of the present: If calling did not make women passive, and was not primarily under the control of men, then Weigel and her contemporaries can't be struggling to shake off the dead hand of the Calling Class.

Patriarchy's partner in crime is capitalism. Consider Weigel's discussion of going steady, a way of dating that took off after the Second World War. Weigel ties the growing importance of going steady to the postwar economic boom and the "new culture of consumerism," even to "cyclical consumption. . . . You fell in love with purchases, spent time with them, and parted ways." Our relationships with our steadies, intense relationships with people we will eventually drop, is like our relationship to purchases.

GETTY IMAGES

Dinner date (1955)

To be sure, going steady, along with the related trend of early marriage, had something to do with a sense of insecurity that followed the war. But Weigel still sees young people going steady as parallel to families "afraid of being nuked [walling] their houses with consumer goods."

Bailey also discusses the postwar boom. However, she sees young steadies as not marketing victims but active initiators of a transition from prewar youth culture, which had put conspicuous consumption and popularity at its center, to a postwar culture more attentive to "security and human closeness."

For Weigel, in contrast, it's pretty nearly all commerce all the time, and that reductive tendency makes her a suspect guide to both past and present. Indeed, when called upon to discuss contemporary "hooking up," Weigel opines that no-strings-attached sexual intimacy spreads "the idea that working all the time and using others indifferently is desirable and glamorous" and that "hooking up teaches us the flexibility that the contemporary economy requires." Weigel has the rise of hooking up following the first tech boom and "sharing the ebullience" of the economy of that period. Apparently, hooking up entered college slang in the mid-1980s, but I doubt this observation would confound Weigel. Why not tie hooking up to the greed of the Reagan era?

See how easy this is?

Like some conservatives, for whom she has only ridicule and indignation, Weigel thinks the sexual revolution has left us lonely. The "Fun Fearless Feminism" of Helen Gurley Brown and *Cosmopolitan* sought not "actual companionship but *desirability*." Moreover, women have to (in Brown's words) "work like a son of a bitch" to be that combination of executive and porn star that modern women are supposed to aspire to be. As for the more radical revolutionaries, they focused "on what they wanted to destroy rather than what they wanted to build" and asked women to embrace a model of "free love" according to which it was imperative not to have "hang-ups"—that is, strong feelings—about sex. This "free love could start to look a lot like freedom from love." Even the sixties, Weigel thinks, were a marketing bonanza, and what we have been sold is loneliness. Emblematic of our predicament is Weigel's Los Angeles friend who uses the dating app Tinder "on the pot." That's all of us, "sitting alone, pants bunched around our ankles . . . creating free money for the tech industry."

Such a passage could have been written by Allan Bloom, who, in his *Closing of the American Mind*, depicted a young man who, through his Walkman, enjoys a "commercially prepackaged masturbational fantasy." But Bloom, in his last book, *Love and Friendship*, draws on a tradition extending from Plato to Shakespeare to Austen, to revivify our sense of love's possibilities. Weigel, in contrast, has only a Marxian recourse to love as free rather than alienated labor, the point of which is "to be changed by, and to witness change in, one another" and thereby to transform "the world." Weigel, who has dodged the running dogs of capital long enough to make a happy marriage, has come to "feel desire as a movement in me that [reaches] outward, yearning to act upon the world."

This love, which seems to culminate in a species of community organizing, certainly puts the "revolution" back in "sexual revolution." But in its emphasis on change—into what? for what?—Weigel's vision of love is no less abstract and remote from human need than the visions it disdains. ♦

B&A

Rich With Ideas

For the betterment of mankind, it's the thought that counts. **BY CHARLES WOLF JR.**

Bourgeois Equality
How Ideas, Not Capital or Institutions, Enriched the World
by Deirdre Nansen McCloskey
Chicago, 768 pp., $45

A casual glance at *Bourgeois Equality* could convey a mistaken impression that the book is for coffee-table display, for show rather than serious perusal. The volume is large (three pounds, 768 pages) and its dust jacket features a colorful painting by the 16th-century Flemish artist Joachim Beuckelaer—all familiar characteristics of coffee-table fare.

In fact, however, *Bourgeois Equality* is a serious work that encompasses two serious books within it: The title is a tongue-in-cheek counter to the profusion of current rhetoric about inequality. McCloskey advances, instead, the proposition that bourgeois commerce has often more effectively nurtured equality—think of start-ups, family businesses, mom-and-pop groceries, home-based ventures—than have repetitive exhortations about the evils of inequality.

The first book-within-a-book propounds the theory that ideas—not capital, institutions, innovation, R&D, tax policy, monetary policy, or regulatory policy—are the propelling force behind economic and societal growth. All of the enumerated elements are instruments, means, or mechanisms consequent to the fundamental enabling ideas that underlie them. The second "contained" book is aimed directly at Thomas Piketty's bestseller, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013).

Before assessing these component books—shortcomings as well as virtues—a word about their polymathic author. Deirdre McCloskey is an emerita professor of economics and economic history, as well as of communications and English, at the University of Illinois at Chicago. And her book spans a wide range of social science literature—quantitative and qualitative, economics and political science, history and sociology. The prose is laced with humor that eases the journey through innumerable sources, data, references, and citations. (*Bourgeois Equality* has 52 pages of tightly packed footnotes and 47 pages of cited sources.) Here is an example of the humor: "Laziness from being rich too early is a powerful equalizer. . . . [M]ost rich children don't bother to suffer through, say, a Ph.D. in economics." And here is another:

> The nastiness of the Great Recession of 2008 and its slow-growth aftermath in the rich countries was hailed on the far left as being (at long last) the actual last crisis of capitalism. [But] the Great Recession, nasty though it was, had a half dozen equally nasty cousins . . . since 1785.

The first, and larger, of the "contained" books seeks to explain what the author refers to as the Great Enrichment, a phenomenon and a period she describes as follows:

> The whole world's average income, for example, now approaches that of present-day Brazil, or of the United States in 1941. Since 1800, in other words, and especially since 1900, the goods

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and services available to the average human being, and the scope for a full human life, have startlingly expanded.

And what explains the phenomenon? McCloskey invokes ideas—more specifically, two sorts of ideas—as the underlying (or overarching?) motivating forces: first, ideas about specific "betterment" inventions, whether machines or methods, hardware or software, analog or digital; and second, ideas about the freedom of individuals ("commoners") to engage in business, commerce, and trade to test and ensure that the betterments are indeed better.

In McCloskey's view, this bourgeois idea is what makes the process work, and not brick-by-brick accumulation of capital, or development of banks and financial institutions, or universities, or labor unions, or fiscal or monetary policies, or other contrivances advocated in the literature. These are derivative consequences of the primary generative ideas.

Apart from the merits of McCloskey's argument, there is a neatly tautological aspect to it, what the late psychoanalyst Nathan Leites termed "self-sealers." No matter what a Nobel laureate, political leader, or journalist may adduce from the data or case studies as a competing explanation for the global Great Enrichment, McCloskey can claim that the *idea* of (or for) that causal mechanism precedes the mechanism.

Turning to the second related (but separate) "contained" book: Its central theme is rebutting Piketty's contention that inequality, here and in Europe, is severe and, inevitably, will become worse. McCloskey focuses on the difference between absolute poverty and poverty relative to the income of others.

For example, suppose in a country, and in a specified time period, the lower fifth of income recipients earn $1,000 while the top fifth garner $5,000. The ratio between the two is 0.2. Now suppose, at a later period, the bottom fifth take in $2,000 but the top fifth's take is $16,000. The ratio between the two has shrunk to one-eighth, or 0.125. So absolute poverty has decreased: The income of the poor has doubled. But relative to the income of the upper fifth, the lower fifth are poorer because the high earners' income has more than tripled. Relative poverty has increased and inequality has risen.

McCloskey doesn't applaud the inequality, but she celebrates the betterment of the poor. Indeed, her direct rebuttal of Piketty addresses what might be called Piketty's Theorem, the reductionist proposition that income inequality has increased and is bound to continue to do so because the rate of interest (r) exceeds, and will continue to exceed, the rate of income growth (g). The beneficiaries of the higher rate are mainly the holders of inherited wealth, the already-rich.

McCloskey's criticism of Piketty's Theorem is multifaceted and complicated. She points out that if the excess of (r) over (g) really predominated, we'd expect the resulting effect on inequality to be consistent and continuous. Instead, what the data show is that, during and preceding the 21st century, periods of greater and lesser income inequality have fluctuated, more or less irrespective of interest rates and growth rates. Moreover, in the period from 2008 through 2016, GDP growth in the United States was indeed slow but interest rates were held at their all-time lows due to the aggressive monetary policies pursued by the Federal Reserve. So, interest rates were even lower than GDP growth, but income inequality rose while interest rates remained at minimal levels—not something that's congruent with Piketty's algebra.

Conclusion: Piketty's Theorem just doesn't square with reality. ♦

B&A

Comic Relief

The poetical vision(s) of A. M. Juster.

BY JAMES MATTHEW WILSON

A. M. Juster is the pseudonym of a long-suffering Washington civil servant whose posts included a humorless tenure as commissioner of Social Security during two administrations. No wonder, then, that his secret life as a poet has the character of a release valve. Apart from his first short collection of poems—*The Secret Language of Women* (2002)—Juster has mostly published volumes of translations, including Horace's satires and St. Aldhelm's riddles (see "Mystery Play" by Joseph Bottum, August 22), and many short comic poems in little magazines—just the kind of work to provide an alternative to, and a relief from, the daily grind of federal bureaucracy.

This selection of his comic original poems and translations includes his "Letter to Auden," which serves almost as a mission statement for the volume.

James Matthew Wilson teaches at Villanova. His latest book is The Fortunes of Poetry.

Sleaze & Slander
New and Selected Comic Verse, 1995-2015
by A. M. Juster
Measure, 124 pp., $25

"Uh, Wystan?" it begins, "Please forgive my arrogance; / You know how most Americans impose." He proceeds to say he does not expect a reply—"Unless you can't resist some biting crack"—before confessing his own inadequacy compared with Auden's "bracing pace" and "style and verve." Although most contemporary poets

> *Denounce the Audenesque as obsolete*
> *Oppression by your dead-white-male elite,*

Juster counts himself among those "few eccentrics" who "still support" Auden, because he is one of "Those poets who can scan lines properly."

The young Auden had seen the rise of political ideologies in the 1930s as a sign that the British public had lost sense of being part of a community with

a life and a good held in common. It had become nearly impossible for one person to speak to another with a sense of a shared culture, language, and interest. He would later plead, "We must love one another or die." But before then, Auden tried to thicken the social bonds by encouraging the public to laugh at the same things. He edited *The Oxford Book of Light Verse* (1938) to help, and he partnered with Louis MacNeice to write the most hilarious book of poetic modernism, *Letters from Iceland* (1937). The heart of that book was Auden's own witty account of British life in rime royal, "Letter to Lord Byron." Juster's "Letter" is a brief pastiche of Auden's, very much in its spirit though expressly falling short of its ambitions.

Eli Lehrer's review in these pages ("Paths Not Taken," July 4) of Dana Gioia's *99 Poems* reminds us that most modern poets try to find a commonality with their readership through tragedy, the passions of pity and terror. Friedrich Nietzsche and W.B. Yeats claimed long ago that only in suffering do the walls of individuality collapse as we share in a single passion. Auden's efforts at comedy in the thirties stand out as eccentric in this regard. Is it laughter rather than tears that unites us? Can comic verse unite poets and readers better than the poetry of sorrow?

Juster is one of the most distinguished of a number of new formalist poets who have sought to revive the craft of meter and rhyme while also writing mostly light or comic poems. This accomplished, fluent, and witty selection invites us to ask: What do we as a people laugh at together? And what aspects of our humor do we share with the wits of centuries past?

Not that much, it might seem. Juster makes two references to Windows Vista, but his best humor is gently satirical in suggesting what divides one generation from another, as in the superb "A Plea to My Vegan Great-Grandchildren," which begins,

It is my hope you will agree
I lack responsibility
for disco, Vista and The View;
consider me a victim too.
I wasn't all that keen on war
or most oppression of the poor,
and please believe that I regret
your payments on our Chinese debt.

So much of the present is to be regretted, but how much more regrettable will be our enlightened, "genetically modified," re-paganized descendants, whose sensitivity to "microaggressions" will demonstrate their moral superiority:

for all my sins, I had the sense
to marry someone, I would guess,
who lessened your genetic mess
and made you brilliant, strong and kind—
and sensitive where I was blind—
so muster Wiccan charity
and please do not disparage me.

"Visions of the Serengeti" probes a similar divide when it recalls the old *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom*—whose decorous creatures never indulged in "sex and gore"—only to contrast it with contemporary documentaries on the Discovery Channel, where "jackals disembowel / the wildebeest." But perhaps all of us can laugh at some of Juster's "Proposed Clichés."

Love is like a hard-time sentence—
but better than cancer.
Ask not what your country can do,
for fear of the answer.
Beauty beheld is merely skin-deep;
infections are deeper.
The price of honesty can be steep;
candidates are cheaper.

Juster's selection of "Inside Jokes" and his excerpts from *The Billy Collins Experience* offer amusing comments on the insular, often self-possessed, quality of contemporary literary culture. He parodies Collins, the lonely comic lyricist, brilliantly—perhaps even a little too well.

For most readers, his selection of translations will be the highlight of the volume. Juster's colloquial ease with rhyme and the pentameter line is as sure when translating Horace's Latin as it is when he prays for salvation to Bill Gates. What he chooses to translate is intriguing. Two poems from medieval Welsh, "The Poem of the Prick" and "The Poem of the Pussy," are just what their titles suggest and reveal the origins of that strain of bawdy British humor that often makes me so embarrassed to teach Shakespeare to my undergraduates. The second of these poems declares its intention to correct the wayward "highmindedness" of poets. They spend all their lines praising a lady's face and breasts, meanwhile,

Bereft of praise, her middle part is spurned
Together with the spot where heirs are earned.

Juster's renderings of the ancient epigrammatist Martial constitute the weakest stretch of the volume. Martial's wit has savage implications but is on the whole "well-tempered," and in consequence, some of it does not translate well to an age used to being shocked by satire. That said, this one reminds me of one of Mark Twain's old aphorisms (though I would have reversed the order of the last two lines):

Callistratus praises everyone
no matter what they've done.
When no person ever comes up short,
what good is his report?

The volume ends with Juster's original epigrams. The most accomplished is "Elegy for a Horseshoe Crab," which compares us conservatives to that ancient and stubborn creature:

Untouched by any trendy stimulus,
our kind assesses change in clear, cold light
before once more deciding to hold tight.

"Gift Shop Blues," however, testifies to what the humor in these poems so often contemplates: how thin our culture has become, how lacking we are in a common language, comic or tragic.

Bright postcards on a rack
acknowledge what we lack.
The most we can express
about our great vacation
takes a few lines or less,
and needs some illustration.

A great people must share in a rich language and culture. It should be able to laugh together. We barely have such a thing now. A.M. Juster's former day job reminds us that we often seem united only in being ruled by a monolithic bureaucracy, but his work as a poet follows Auden in trying to draw us together in better ways, at once light and profound. ♦

B&A

Resolved to Play

Confronting the keyboard, and reality.

BY DAVID GUASPARI

I can't remember not being a mediocre piano player, though there must have been a time when I was worse. I wasn't born vamping through the easy movements of *Best Loved Classics* and burying their tricky parts in clouds of pedal. (Take that, *Moonlight Sonata*!) No, my kind of musician is made—by going to lessons but not practicing in-between.

With middle age came the resolve to do something about that, in the summer, when the hills are alive with the sound of music camps. I chose the Taubman Summer Institute, whose Basic Training sensibility speaks to someone always happy to defer gratification past the grave. Yes, there would be dedicated teachers, explanations of pianistic physiology and phenomenology—blah, blah, blah. What mattered was the chance to become a moral and aesthetic athlete, someone who *deserved* to play better.

Two weeks of twice-a-day lessons, plus systematic lectures on technique, would be the first small steps in the process of retraining—rebuilding my playing from scratch. I could then look forward to a long and patient follow-up, a road stretching virtuously to the horizon and beyond. Picture the young Liszt who, awed and shamed by Paganini's virtuosity, withdrew to retool; then adjust the focus until I come into view.

On my return from camp the upstairs neighbor had to endure scale fragments, one-octave scales, multi-octave scales, an album for 8-year-olds, and four pages of Mozart repeated endlessly in disjointed scraps. On these activities I put a *misterioso* spin, refusing to play when others were present and explaining with dark significance that it was because I was "retraining." I hoped someone might run with that and say, "Like Liszt!" But no one ever did.

There *was* a catch. I knew it from the start, as one knows, without at first quite believing it, that one is going to die. I would have to give up all the things I used to play. They were sanctuaries for bad habits, now being starved, that could metastasize if disturbed. At camp, we discussed how to take that sacrifice in stride: "The literature is so rich," someone said, that "you can't run out." And, "Besides, I never played those pieces all that well."

It felt as if I had agreed to ditch old friends in favor of more useful ones. They passed before my mind's eye as in the epilogue to a war movie—the roll-call of fallen comrades shown one last time in their joy and strength—or as a series of doomed, sentimentally recalled love affairs: pages of Chopin or Gershwin or Bach (or, full disclosure, the theme song from *Dr. Kildare*) reclined alluringly on the piano's music desk; exploratory fumbling with the most exciting bits; a brief triumph of the ideal over the real, the music imagined over the sounds actually produced.

Then things go downhill.

Unlike other boyhood aspirations, the hopes invested in that music have stayed fresh. The curtain was always going up. Going up, for example, on *Sounds of the Sixties*, centerpiece of a failed attempt in junior high school to become with-it. (To gauge its chances of success, picture a pubescent song-stylist belting out, to his own accompaniment, "Flamingo / Like a flame in the sky!") All that remains of that songbook is the cover with its art deco graphics—a background of spreading ripples, the roster of the 32 Outstanding Hits within.

Art music is packaged more chastely. Volumes from the Chopin Institute come in beige covers with dignified typography (if orange-on-beige can be dignified) and a blurry ceremonial seal. On my copies the prices are given in zlotys. All were bought from discount tables when, as a Polish friend likes to say, we were young and beautiful in Warsaw. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music publishes Bach and Beethoven in austere gray, accompanied by the magisterial (i.e., demoralizing) commentaries of Sir Donald Tovey, which make it plain that my interpretive opinions are among those that cannot be seriously entertained.

One of my oldest music artifacts is a disintegrating Chopin sampler patched with tape. The sight of it cues a painful montage from a friend's housewarming—lashings of alcohol; brief furious polonaising that screeches to a blank-minded halt; and postmortem commentary by the evening's hostess (at whose request I had tried to play): "That was a bit of a disaster, wasn't it?" Another flashback is triggered by a fading xerox copy of a four-handed arrangement of the *William Tell* Overture. The party, this time, at my house: my thesis adviser, sight-reading his part with panache, beating me to the finish line by a good half-second.

But it's when I looked at my copy of *Rhapsody in Blue*, begrimed at the corners I had grabbed hundreds of times to do speedy page turns, that I felt true grief. It was my signature tune—though, to be honest, I never played it all that well.

Retraining ought to close the book on those affairs. And I was committed, I thought. I wanted to deserve what deserving would forbid me to have. So, goodbye, *Rhapsody in Blue*, "I Got Rhythm," *Lady, Be Good*. Goodbye to the A-flat Major Ballade. Goodbye, "Take Five" and "Raggy Waltz." Goodbye to half of Bach's Two-Part Inventions, *Kinderszenen*, the *Visions Fugitives*, the *Pathétique Sonata*. And good night, *Moonlight*. ♦

David Guaspari is a writer in Ithaca, N.Y.

"The security aspect of cyber is very, very tough."
—Donald Trump, September 26, 2016