

**THE
BIG BANG THEORY
OF CAPITALISM**
P.J. O'ROURKE

the weekly

Standard

JULY 3 / JULY 10, 2017

\$5.99



Summer
Reading

Contents

July 3 / July 10, 2017 • Volume 22, Number 41



2



10



31



38

- 2 The Scrapbook *Nightmarish steak, Joe Scarborough's songs, & more*
- 5 Casual *David Skinner's neighborhood*
- 6 Editorial *'Have You Read the Bill?'*

Articles

- 8 The Downside of the 'Peace Process' BY ELLIOTT ABRAMS
- 9 Disappointed Dems BY FRED BARNES
- 10 Loyal Opposition BY JAY COST
- 14 Taken for a Ride BY MARK HEMINGWAY
- 16 Craving Statehood BY ETHAN EPSTEIN
- 18 Put the Kids First BY NAOMI SCHAEFER RILEY

Feature

- 20 Make Progress Exciting Again BY P.J. O'ROURKE

Books & Arts

- 24 Curious George BY DOUGLAS BRADBURN
A bibliographical view of the Father of Our Country
- 26 Fear Is the Spur BY LAWRENCE KLEPP
The answer to the mystery of the master of suspense
- 27 Winston's Folly BY ANDREW ROBERTS
Lessons learned from the failure of Gallipoli
- 29 Still Life with Corn BY WINSTON GROOM
Few soft landings when imbibing the hard stuff
- 30 Palmer's Method BY GEOFFREY NORMAN
The loyalty of Arnie's Army explained
- 31 Empathetic Eye BY JAMES GARDNER
Take another look at the art of George W. Bush
- 33 The Big Trial BY JON L. BREEN
Courtroom as theater, with Southern accent
- 34 The Human Clock BY TEMMA EHRENFELD
Time marches on, but why so fast?
- 35 Out of the Shadow BY TEVI TROY
TR's (eldest) son was a hero in spite of himself
- 36 The Master's Voice BY JOHN CHECK
What we know of Bach, and may never comprehend
- 38 Patience Rewarded BY MICHAEL NELSON
How the Cubs finally put an end to the drought
- 40 Bohemian Rhapsody BY AMY HENDERSON
The woman who spoke the language of children
- 41 You Were There BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.
Lowell Thomas and the dawn of up-to-the-minute 'news'
- 42 Words and Music BY DANNY HEITMAN
A reintroduction to the poet of modern fiction
- 44 Parody BY THE OFF-CAMERA WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING

Oh, the Humanities!



When President Obama's chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities finally stepped down from his post in late May—four months after President Trump took office—he explained his reasoning to the *New York Times*. “I think it’s getting to be a time that’s appropriate for me to step aside,” William Adams said, “and let this transition go forward.”

It’s indeed appropriate for a political appointee to resign when a new president of the other party takes power—especially if the new president has vowed to eliminate funding for your agency, as Trump has with the NEH.

After four months, we assumed the transition was well underway from an Obama NEH to a Trump NEH. Of course, it’s an open question what the humanities will look like after they’ve been under the control of a president whose many film credits include *Playboy Video Centerfold: Playmate 2000*. You remember: That’s the one with the Bernaola twins.

Well, we’ve had our first glimpse of Trump’s NEH, and it looks a lot like Obama’s NEH. On June 15, National History Day, the endowment released its new list of the year’s NEH Scholars—middle-schoolers and high-schoolers whose history projects won the admiration of NEH experts.

Anyone familiar with Obama’s NEH, where political advocacy took

precedence over disinterested scholarship, could pick out the winning projects in his sleep. There’s “Labor Reform Fueled by Fire” and a tribute to Rachel Carson and her campaign against DDT, which “spark[ed] an era of environmental consciousness.” There’s a tribute to Bishop Oscar Romero and two tributes to *Tinker v. Des Moines*, one of the Warren Court’s most radical decisions in favor of “student rights.”

And—hey, look guys!—here comes “Margaret Sanger, Taking a Stand for Birth Control,” and multiple tributes to Mother Jones, the “community organizer” of the early decades of the last century, and another to the muckraker Nellie Bly.

It’s all very correct, very progressive, and reeking of the now-standard brainwashing of students by leftish history teachers—race, class ‘n’ gender politics tarted up as scholarship.

The question is, why doesn’t the list of winners bear the imprint of the Trump administration? There was plenty of time for Trump’s people to reverse course on the History Day awards.

You’ll find the same problem throughout the government: Trump hasn’t filled the upper positions at dozens of agencies and departments. His sole representative at the NEH is Jon Parrish Peede, the brother of a top aide to Vice President Mike

Pence. The acting chairman who replaced Adams is another Obama political appointee, Peggy Plympton, a former headhunter and a finance officer at Lehigh University.

Meanwhile, most of the other high-level positions remain occupied by Obama appointees. The ranks of career bureaucrats are filled with sympathetic liberal Democrats. No Trump administration official, including Peede, has attempted to clean house.

Though Trump promised to eliminate the NEH, his budgeteers probably understand that Congress will never, ever defund the endowment. Its budget is too small (“decimal dust,” as the green eyeshades call it), and the grants are funneled into too many congressional districts for anyone to mount a crusade against it.

Which makes a housecleaning all the more urgent. Under Obama, the endowment was one of the prime guarantors of political correctness on and off campus. A reasonable—and reasonably conservative—chairman is needed to root the endowment’s grant-making in a less politicized notion of what the humanities are. We strongly suspect Mother Jones has plenty of advocates without the NEH training more. ♦

Meat Depressed

Sizzling steaks, burgers on the grill, bratwurst with a dollop of spicy mustard—what’s not to like?



But to vegetarians, these dead-animal-flesh products can be truly frightening. Especially when they haunt the subconscious at night, a traumatic phenomenon called a “meatmare.” According to *Grist*, a webzine that obsesses over environmental justice, sustainability, clean energy, and the like, right-thinking people who wouldn’t dream of eating meat actually dream of eating meat.

Here’s how *Grist*’s Kate Yoder (or is it Stephen King?) describes her torment: “One night, it came to me in my dreams, dripping juice and melted cheddar, the crisp lettuce a mere afterthought. I held it in my hands and took a bite. Instant horror: I stared at the burger like it was an alien object as the realization that I’m a vegetarian stopped me cold.”

Yoder grills food studies professors, cultural anthropologists, and social psychologists to try to “shed light on what meatmares might tell us about social anxiety, guilt, and our culture’s preoccupation with meat.”

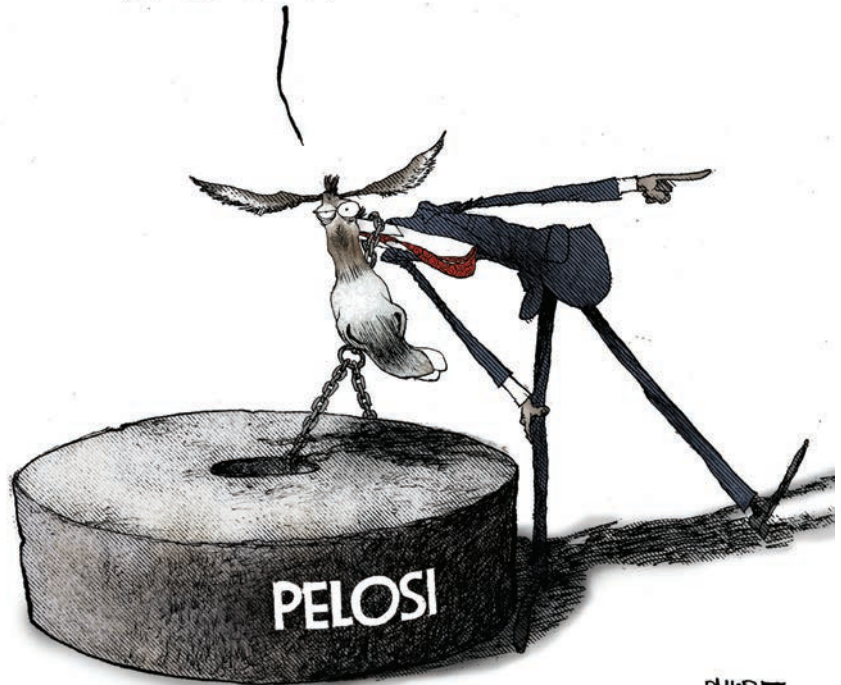
Harvard’s Steven Pinker suggested to *Grist* that a case of the meatmares could be a “dreamtime version” of an obsessive-compulsive affliction called “horrific temptations,” which, Pinker explains in his book, “The Stuff of Thought,” may have something to do with one’s basal ganglia being on the blink. Maybe. Or maybe the afflicted just want a hamburger.

The disorder is not as medium-rare as you might think: Yoder says she found other vegetarians who also suffer from what we might call the meat sweats. They wake “feeling guilty, appalled, and ashamed, occasionally even crying or screaming.”

The author finds that these tartare terrors “could have roots in a preoccupation with food as a moral choice.” You think? Here’s THE SCRAPBOOK’S advice: Eat what you like, but do try to cut the excess nagging-of-others out of your diet—scolding seems to come with a side of psychological baggage. Using food to strike a moralistic pose can come back to haunt you. ♦

TWS ART. TROPHY. BIGSTOCK

The GOP is WEIGHED
DOWN by TRUMP’S
UNPOPULARITY...



The MILLSTONE

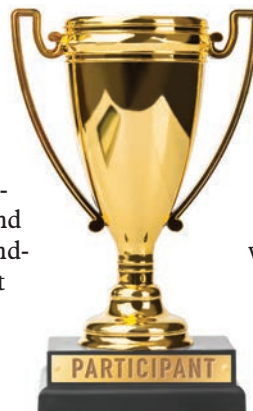
Showing-Up Ribbon

At Fort Jackson in South Carolina, the Army chief of staff, General Mark Milley, recently handed out for the first time certificates of graduation to recruits who completed basic training. Thankfully, they stopped short of giving recruits medals for learning to march and orienteering badges for finding the mess, but we’re not alone in wondering what kind of message the Army is sending here. Without diminishing the strenu-

ous effort involved, we note that it’s called “basic” training for a reason.

Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey did his best to defend the new policy, telling the *Army Times* the “Soldier’s Certificate” is a way to welcome “the new recruits into a community of soldiers for which they are lifetime members.”

Certainly, we sympathize with the efforts to build community and otherwise make the Army a more attractive career choice. But giving awards for the most commonplace of



military accomplishments smacks of lowering standards. The new basic training certificate reminds us of the Army's notorious decision to make berets—once worn only by elite troops—standard headgear for the rank and file.

The Army insists the new basic training certificate is legitimate. "As we earn this title, it's not just something that's given to anyone," Maj. George Coleman, director of education and training for the Soldier for Life program, told the *Army Times*. "This is not that participation medal you get after the marathon because you paid your \$65."

Perhaps. But we suspect if you have to say an award isn't a dreaded Participation Trophy, it probably is.

A poll on the *Army Times* website ran three-to-one against basic training graduation certificates. Those in that majority should get medals for common sense. ♦

Scarborough Fare

Joe Scarborough isn't just a onetime congressman turned cable-TV talker, nor even just a handsome face. No, he is a rock 'n' roller, a singer, a guitarist, and a (more than) prolific songwriter. He is—if the publicity hoo-ha



accompanying his new extended-play recording is to be believed—"this year's most surprising debut artist."

Don't scoff! There's ample precedent, not just for serious musicians with day gigs (modernist composer Charles Ives was an insurance executive) but even for television personalities with instrumental skills: John Tesh traded in *Entertainment Tonight* for a career tickling new-age pap out of the piano; Fox News correspondent Doug McKelway is a fine bluegrass banjo player; Walter Cronkite was an accomplished bassoonist. (Okay, that last bit was a joke—The Most Trusted Man in America actually played the saxophone.)

What little THE SCRAPBOOK has been able to hear of Scarborough and his band—via clips of various Upper West Side honkytonk gigs posted on YouTube—isn't particularly promising. Morning Joe's meandering vocals make Ringo Starr's singing sound like a model of pitch precision. But then again, that shouldn't be an impediment to modern pop success: We trust Joe's studio work will be amply Auto-Tuned.

No, what alarms us is this revelation in the press release: "Scarborough has spent the last year holed up in studios recording 50 of his 400 original songs." 400 songs! Some perspective: In a decade of concentrated artistic effort, the Beatles recorded a couple of hundred originals. Scarborough's already got himself 400, and he seems determined to inflict every last one of them on his fan(s): "I've got a hell of a lot of songs to get out there, so I'll be releasing them in waves with a EP every month for the next four years," Joe threatens. "I may take a quick rest after releasing my first 200 songs." *Whew.*

A politician who turned to TV journalism, and who is now turning to music, should Scarborough find success as a rocker, how long will it be before he decides to try acting? And Joe the actor would surely find that what he really wants to do is direct. After which, like so many in Hollywood, Scarborough may finally decide to dive into politics. ♦

the weekly
Standard

www.weeklystandard.com

Stephen F. Hayes, *Editor in Chief*
Richard Starr, *Editor*
Fred Barnes, Robert Messenger, *Executive Editors*
Eric Felten, *Managing Editor*
Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson, Lee Smith, *Senior Editors*
Peter J. Boyer, *National Correspondent*
Philip Terzian, *Literary Editor*
Kelly Jane Torrance, *Deputy Managing Editor*
Jay Cost, Mark Hemingway, Matt Labash, John McCormack, Tony Mecia, Michael Warren, *Senior Writers*
Jonathan V. Last, *Digital Editor*
Rachael Larimore, *Online Managing Editor*
Ethan Epstein, *Associate Editor*
Chris Deaton, Jim Swift, *Deputy Online Editors*
Hannah Yoest, *Assistant Literary Editor*
Priscilla M. Jensen, *Assistant Editor*
Andrew Egger, Jenna Liffhits, Alice B. Lloyd, *Reporters*
Grant Wishard, *Editorial Assistant*
Philip Chalk, *Design Director*
Barbara Kytte, *Design Assistant*
Contributing Editors
Claudia Anderson, Max Boot, Joseph Bottum, Tucker Carlson, Matthew Continetti, Terry Eastland, Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht, Michael Goldfarb, Daniel Halper, Mary Katharine Ham, Brit Hume, Thomas Joscelyn, Frederick W. Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Yuval Levin, Tod Lindberg, Micah Mattix, Victorino Matus, P.J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer
William Kristol, *Editor at Large*

MediaDC

Ryan McKibben, *Chairman*
Stephen R. Sparks, *President & Chief Operating Officer*
Jennifer Yingling, *Audience Development Officer*
Kathy Schaffhauser, *Chief Financial Officer*
David Lindsey, *Chief Digital Officer*
Alex Rosenwald, *Director, Public Relations & Branding*
Mark Walters, *Chief Revenue Officer*
Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Vice President, Advertising*
T. Barry Davis, *Senior Director, Advertising*
Jason Roberts, *Digital Director, Advertising*
Paul Plawin, *National Account Director*
Andrew Kaumeier, *Advertising Operations Manager*
Brooke McIngvale, *Manager, Marketing Services*
Advertising inquiries: 202-293-4900
Subscriptions: 1-800-274-7293

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of Clarity Media Group, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, first week in July, and third week in August) at 1152 15th St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 421203, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1203. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-274-7293. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders and changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 421203, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1203. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-866-597-4378 for subscription inquiries. American Express, Visa/MasterCard payments accepted. Cover price, \$5.99. Back issues, \$5.99 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1152 15th Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1152 15th St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005. Copyright 2017, Clarity Media Group. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a registered trademark of Clarity Media Group.



A Shooting in the Neighborhood

My wife looked at her phone and uttered an expletive. I didn't know why. Maybe we had failed to pay a bill or maybe Cynthia had forgotten to do something related to work. We're both high-strung, and I wished for the millionth time that stress wasn't so contagious, that it didn't pass so easily from her phone to her brain to her face to my brain to my face, back at her, and so on, that we were both a little more self-contained and impervious to the pain that flies at you from nowhere. For several years now, I have been reading Marcus Aurelius to help me be more of a Stoic and, if not entirely above pain, at least a little more capable of carrying on in spite of it.

Then Cynthia said one of the words that pass straight through my defenses, the name of our daughter, who had left a minute ago. Cynthia ran down the stairs, looking at her phone, uttering another expletive, and, with me following her into the living room, finally revealing what was going on.

There had been a shooting at Simpson Field, which is five or six blocks from our daughter's middle school. Details came out in a jumble. "Steve Scalise, he's somebody," Cynthia said. "Majority whip," I said. I have been receiving his email blasts for years. Scalise and the others were playing baseball. Who plays baseball this early on a weekday? I wondered.

Our daughter texted. She was fine. Her school was on lockdown.

Like anyone absorbing news of a calamity, I was going through the usual stages of shock and concern. But I was feeling anxious about what came next, the necessary but almost inhuman for-

getting that allows you to change the subject and go about your business.

On my ride to work, I biked past the crime scene, festooned with yellow tape. At work I passed a big television and realized it was something else to see a place you know so well on TV, crammed with police and emergency vehicles. Why yes, there's my favorite overpriced coffee shop and the CVS where I buy medicine for that foot thing I don't want to talk about.

And there was Simpson Field, previously known to me as a place to



FBI technicians search Simpson Field, June 14.

watch Little League games. The aluminum stands are hot and uncomfortable and you'll get a sunburn if you're not careful. No one ever gets thrown out stealing second and the inning comes to an automatic end after five runs are scored.

I moved to Alexandria from Capitol Hill 18 years ago and stayed, never that eager to live anywhere else.

We came first to the Del Ray neighborhood, where my friend Barry was waiting tables at the Evening Star Café, which had just opened on Mount Vernon Avenue. The menu was reasonably priced, with a pork chop and mashed potatoes for ten or

eleven bucks, one of the few restaurant meals I could afford at the time. The neighborhood was shifty, but Cynthia, then my fiancée, really liked it. As we plotted a course toward marriage, she rented an apartment across the street from the tennis courts at Simpson Field.

Cynthia took up tennis. I didn't, but would sometimes hit balls to her, so she could work on her backhand. I practiced basketball there, hoping to revive my long-neglected jump shot for *THE WEEKLY STANDARD* staffers' regular game.

We bought a tiny gingerbread house across Route 1, close enough to Simpson to see the blur of the lights above the field at night. Many times from my kitchen I could hear the sound of the announcer calling out the name of the batter-up. I joined the YMCA next door, then quit, then joined again, then quit again, finally figuring out that I liked regular exercise but that it had to be outdoors with no mirrors around.

Del Ray was where we hung out. Our rehearsal dinner took place upstairs at the Evening Star Café, where the owner Stephanie graciously broke up an escalating argument between two of my male relatives who seemed dangerously close to trading blows. I remember having drinks there, at a sidewalk table, with Barry the week after 9/11.

Not long ago I realized that in less than a year, Alexandria will have been my home longer than any other place I have lived. And it is the only home my children have known—my children, among whose blessings is that they have brought us close to so many families, neighbors, people I now just call friends. This is the part about being a Stoic that I find impossible: not being so attached to the people and places I love.

DAVID SKINNER

‘Have You Read the Bill?’

In the first two years of the Obama administration, “Read the bill!” was an effective anti-Obamacare rallying cry. Republican congressmen, as well as conservative and Tea Party activists, demanded that legislation weighing in at more than 2,000 pages and affecting one-sixth of the economy be carefully considered by Congress and openly debated before the American people. As the House prepared to vote on the final version of the bill in March 2010, Republican minority leader John Boehner belted out on the House floor: “Have you read the bill? . . . Hell no, you haven’t!”

As Senate Republicans prepare to rush to a vote on their own bill to partially repeal and replace Obamacare, they’ve come under criticism for doing exactly what they decried in 2009 and 2010: hurrying toward a vote on a bill that hasn’t been exposed to the light for long enough to allow an informed debate, a bill that most likely is not really understood by the people voting on it. It’s hard to say the criticism isn’t warranted.

True, claims that Republicans have been hiding a “secret health care bill” are exaggerated: There was no hidden bill floating around Congress. There was only an unfinished draft being written by aides to Senate leadership. But the ability of even the best staffers to think through all the consequences of policy-making in such a complex area is limited. Didn’t Republicans once claim to have read a bit of Friedrich Hayek?

And it’s also true that the GOP bill will be much shorter than Obamacare (the Senate discussion draft released June 22 was just 142 pages), so it will literally take less time to read. But “Read the bill!” was meant to be taken both literally and seriously: Legislators need not only to read it; they should at least come close to being able to understand, explain, debate, and justify it. And that is why it’s impossible to defend the Republican plan of voting on the bill days—not weeks—after the text is released to the Senate and the public.

Don’t take our word for it. Just listen to what a few Republican senators have had to say about the process. Mike Lee of Utah, one of the 13 senators who participated in the Senate GOP health care working group set up by leadership, said this last week: “Even though we thought we were going to be in charge of writing a bill within this working group, it’s not being written by us. It’s apparently being written by a small handful of staffers for members of the Republican leadership in the Senate. So if you’re frus-

trated by the lack of transparency in this process, I share your frustration. I share it wholeheartedly.”

As do many of his colleagues. “We used to complain like hell when the Democrats ran the Affordable Care Act—now we’re doing the same thing,” John McCain of Arizona told reporters.

“I just find it very hard to conceive that I’ll be able to gather all the information I need to justify a yes vote,” Wisconsin’s Ron Johnson told *Politico*.

“Pelosi said, ‘We’ve got to pass it to find out what’s in it.’ Well, we don’t want the Republicans to pass a bill like that,” Iowa’s Chuck Grassley told *THE WEEKLY STANDARD*. Asked how much time they should have to review the bill, Grassley said: “More than [Harry] Reid gave us.”

If Republicans don’t want to be subject to the charge of being less open and deliberative than Harry Reid in 2009, they should take weeks, not days, to read and debate the health care bill. Senate Democrats held hearings on different versions of their bill in the summer of 2009, but it wasn’t until after Thanksgiving break that a bill hit the Senate floor. On Saturday, December 19, Harry Reid unveiled the final product with a 383-page manager’s amendment, and the Senate passed that bill 60-39 just a few days later on the morning of December 24.

Obamacare was a bad bill passed under a bad process and has made for bad law. Insurers are abandoning the market in many states, and premiums have skyrocketed for individuals and families with nowhere else to turn. Because of both parliamentary rules and political calculations, Republicans are not fully repealing and replacing this bad law. But even a bill to partially repeal and replace Obamacare will significantly affect millions of Americans, and legislators ought to take their time and get it right. Republican legislators should remember this isn’t primarily about passing anything just to say they kept their promises, or clearing the decks to move on to something more attractive. They should remember they’ll be judged on the real world consequences of this legislation—and at this point, we think it’s fair to say, they have very little grasp of what those will be.

The honesty of some Senate Republicans about the lack of transparency surrounding their health care bill is refreshing. They should turn their commentary into action, and refuse to go along with a vote next week.

They should demand that they, and everyone else, have time to read and debate the bill.

—The Editors

The Harm in Trying

The downside of the Middle East ‘peace process.’

BY ELLIOTT ABRAMS

Among Israelis and Palestinians, there’s little optimism about renewed American efforts to negotiate a comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian peace deal. In Ramallah and Jerusalem, officials, journalists, and policy analysts have watched as industrious U.S. activity in the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations came to naught—and they expect the same outcome for the Trump administration.

There is a lot more optimism in the Trump White House, and of course it starts at the top. The president said this in a February press conference with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu:

I think a deal will be made. I know that every president would like to. Most of them have not started until late because they never thought it was possible. And it wasn’t possible because they didn’t do it.

But Bibi and I have known each other a long time—a smart man, great negotiator. And I think we’re going to make a deal. It might be a bigger and better deal than people in this room even understand.

In April, President Trump added, “There is no reason there’s not peace between Israel and the Palestinians—none whatsoever.” And in a May press conference with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas he made his most categorical statement: “We want to create peace between Israel and the Palestinians. We will get it done. . . .”

Elliott Abrams is a senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and author of Realism and Democracy: American Foreign Policy After the Arab Spring, which will be published in September.

It is something that I think is frankly, maybe, not as difficult as people have thought over the years.”

The attitude I’ve detected outside the Oval Office is more realistic about the chances of success. But arguments suggesting that there is little or no chance are met with a



Jared Kushner meets with Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, June 21, 2017.

standard reply: “Okay, but what’s the harm in trying?”

This is not a new idea; it was Bill Clinton’s. As he put it, “We always need to get caught trying—fewer people will die.” So the Trump administration wishes to get caught trying as well, and operates under the assumption Clinton made: that there is no harm in trying, and that indeed it saves lives.

But that conclusion is wrong, as round after round of terrorism should attest. To put it slightly differently, there is harm in failing—and it does not save lives. What’s the harm?

To begin with, it is always harmful for the United States to fail—and for a president to fail. Influence in the world is hard to measure, but when a president devotes himself—as Bill Clinton, especially, did in the Camp

David talks in 2000—to any project and fails to pull it off, his influence and that of the United States are diminished. Yes, he does get credit for trying, but there’s no benefit in failing. Opinions may differ as to why this happened: The United States misjudged Yasser Arafat, the White House prepared poorly, the timing was all wrong, the conditions were misunderstood. But getting an A for effort isn’t enough when other people’s security hangs in the balance.

Results matter. When the United States succeeds, as it did for example in the 1995 Dayton Accords on the Balkans or in the Camp David deal under Jimmy Carter, American prestige and influence grow. But that coin has two sides, and failure is never a good thing. With U.S. influence on the wane in recent years, devoting significant effort to a goal that is unlikely to be attained looks like a misplaced priority.

What’s more, the United States has been championing the “peace process” now for about 30 years, if we start with George H.W. Bush and the Madrid Conference of 1991. Palestinians and Israelis have seen negotiators come and go—or in many cases, never go, and instead just age and write memoirs. Round follows round, claims of progress and angry denunciations for blocking progress follow each other, and the “unsustainable occupation” continues. What this produces is cynicism about peace talks and about peace. On the Palestinian side many view the “peace process” as a formula for sustaining the occupation. Many Israelis see it as a shield protecting Palestinian malfeasance and worse: When they demand a stop to official Palestinian glorification of terrorism, they hear, “Don’t rock the boat now, negotiations may start.”

A further reason to be wary of another big peace effort is the opportunity cost. When each successive American administration works for a comprehensive peace deal, it tends to neglect the many opportunities to

ANADOLU AGENCY / GETTY

make less dramatic but still consequential real-world progress.

If the goal were instead to leave things better than we found them, every incremental bit of progress would be a victory. That was the “bottom-up” approach taken by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, who was fiercely dedicated to Palestinian independence but thought this required building the institutions of a viable state first. That meant concentrating on better financial controls and a reduction in corruption, better courts and police, and a more productive economy. Unfortunately, the incremental approach lacks drama and did not win the international support it deserved—including the Israeli and American support it deserved.

During the George W. Bush administration, those of us on the American side often demanded concessions from Israel to “set the tone for talks” or to “get things moving in the talks.” The steps often gave Abbas symbolic victories but they rarely contributed to state-building. For example, we were more concerned with getting Israel to release some Palestinian prisoners—who may have committed acts of violence—than we were about getting Israel to remove checkpoints or barriers that prevented Palestinian mobility in the West Bank and thereby made both normal life and economic activity harder. How returning convicted criminals to the streets contributed to building a Palestinian state was never explained.

A thought experiment: Suppose Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama had for 24 years focused not on “peace,” not on a comprehensive deal, but on progress—on making Palestinian life easier, on building institutions, on fostering economic growth and Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation. These latter goals were always part of U.S. policy, but were never the main goal; they always took second place. Netanyahu, for example, has removed many barriers and checkpoints in the West Bank in the last 10 years; could that have happened under his predecessors, years earlier, if it had been an American goal? Israel finally relented

and allowed 3G wireless access in the West Bank this year; could this have happened years earlier, with accompanying economic benefits, had it been a real U.S. goal? The Allenby Bridge to Jordan is set to be open round the clock on weekdays, starting this month; could that have been arranged a year ago, or 10 years ago, had the United States made it a priority?

So the pursuit of a comprehensive “final status agreement” is not without costs. The idea that there is “no harm in trying” is wrong. The search for a final peace deal is understandable, of course. It would presumably benefit both peoples, and it would benefit those who could claim the credit: There would be Nobel Peace Prizes, handshakes on the White House lawn, memoirs to sell, and speeches to

make. If that seems unduly cynical, it shouldn’t: It is possible to be dedicated to peace and also keenly aware of the personal benefits of achieving it.

Forget the cynicism and assume real idealism, which has I think characterized most American diplomats and American presidents confronting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Talleyrand’s old advice is nevertheless good counsel here: *surtout, pas trop de zèle* (above all, not too much zeal). Don’t pass up opportunities to make small gains, to get undramatic and almost invisible advances, to set in motion changes that will take a long time to bear fruit. The odds of getting a complete peace deal are very small. It would be quite enough to be able to say, in four or eight years, “You know, we really made things better.” ♦

Disappointed Dems

Trump-hatred doesn’t deliver the victory they were dreaming of. BY FRED BARNES

In April, Democrat Jon Ossoff got 48 percent of the vote in the special election to pick the new House member from Georgia’s Sixth Congressional District outside Atlanta. He came in first but was forced into a runoff with Republican Karen Handel, who got 20 percent to finish second. In the runoff, Ossoff got 48 percent again and lost.

How this happened is pretty simple. Ossoff needed to attract Republican voters to win. And there was a theory behind where he’d find them. Thousands of Republicans who loathe President Donald Trump would penalize their own party’s candidate and defect to Ossoff. Only they didn’t. Handel won with 52 percent.

That the so-called Trump penalty failed to emerge in Georgia was an embarrassment to the national media.

Fred Barnes is an executive editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

They’re obsessed with the idea. But Trump-hating Republicans declined to comply and abandon Handel because of her connection with Trump. The press was wrong again. Trump won last November and now this.

The district had appeared to be the perfect setting for Trump to take a hit. It’s the most highly educated Republican-held congressional district in the country, and wealthy to boot. It’s “more Bloomingdale’s than it is Walmart,” Harry Enten of the *FiveThirtyEight* website says.

Trump had defeated Hillary Clinton by 48.3 percent to 46.8 percent in the district. It was this unimpressive showing, plus Trump’s troubles in office, that led Democrats and journalists to suspect voters there were ready to ditch their tradition of voting Republican.

Ossoff, 30, initially ran as the anti-Trump champion. He called himself the “make Trump furious” candidate. That worked well in the primary,

especially since he was the lone Democrat with a legitimate campaign and plenty of money. The media were thrilled and treated him like a star.

But Ossoff hit a wall after the primary. A liberal endorsed by Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, Ossoff changed his tune in the runoff. He scuttled his emphasis on Trump, believing there was nothing to gain from it. And there probably wasn't.

Instead, he campaigned as a moderate. He talked about fiscal responsibility and cutting spending. He paid a price for this with the Democratic left. He was blamed for wimping out when an anti-Trump crusade supposedly would have won him a seat in Congress. Ossoff knew better.

So did Atlanta pollster Mark Rountree. Asked if Handel lost the votes of anti-Trump Republicans, he says, "Oh, no! Absolutely not. That is just silly." He says there was no evidence of it in his surveys. He polls for Atlanta TV station WSB.

Nancy Pelosi, the House Democratic leader, was a bigger factor in the election than Trump, Rountree told me. In the two months between the primary and runoff, Republicans ran TV ads linking Ossoff to Pelosi and "San Francisco values." National reporters covering the race ignored them, but they worked.

"Republicans feel more strongly that Nancy Pelosi is a threat to the country than Democrats feel about Trump," Rountree says.

Scott Reed, the political director at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, brought together national conservative and Republican forces to back Handel. Twenty-eight companies signed on to tell their employees of the importance of the election.

Rather than cost Handel votes, Reed says, Trump "helped turn out the base." He visited the district in April and raised \$1 million for Handel. He recorded robo-calls to voters. A few days before the vote, Vice President Mike Pence campaigned with Handel. Mitt Romney, who got 60.8 percent of the vote in 2012 and is still popular in the district, did turnout calls.

Trump also tweeted. At 5:49 A.M. on



Jon Ossoff conceding defeat, June 20

Election Day, he took a jab at Ossoff: "Democrat Jon Ossoff, who wants to raise your taxes to the highest level and is weak on crime and security, doesn't even live in the district."

Then at 6:09 A.M., he tweeted: "KAREN HANDEL FOR CONGRESS. She will fight for lower taxes, great healthcare, strong security—a hard worker who will never give up! VOTE TODAY."

So Trump wasn't hiding. Jeffrey Bell, the Republican strategist, theorizes Ossoff stopped attacking Trump when it appeared he was challenging

the president's legitimacy. That was an unpopular position.

There was another factor that kept even "reluctant Trump voters" on board with Handel. Her strategists localized the campaign, though partly around national issues. They made it a right-left contest with Trump not involved. It came down to who was "the better candidate offering the better agenda," says strategist Rob Simms, the executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), the campaign arm of House Republicans, in 2016.

That was the year the NRCC gained an edge over their Democratic counterparts. After reaching a commanding position (247 seats), it was feared Republicans would lose as many as 20 House seats last year. They lost just 6.

"If Democrat Jon Ossoff can win Georgia 6 over Republican Karen Handel, it could be a sign that Democrats can win over reluctant Trump voters nationwide next year," Enten wrote before last week's election. The sign never came. ♦

Loyal Opposition

Can we agree on how to disagree?

BY JAY COST

In the aftermath of the attempted assassination of Rep. Steve Scalise and fellow Republican lawmakers, there has understandably been a debate about the tenor of our political discourse. Is it too nasty? Does heated rhetoric incite violence? Do we all need to tone down the hyperbole?

This debate points to a very old, very thorny issue of republican government. Put aside the particulars of the man who shot Scalise, a Capitol Police officer in his security detail, and two bystanders. It has never been a settled question what is and is

not *loyal* opposition in our system of government. How do we oppose the current wielders of authority while affirming that their possession of that authority is legitimate?

The answer to this will differ according to the system of government. In a monarchy where the sovereign claims authority to rule from God, *any* criticism of the king or queen could be construed as seditious. And indeed, disobeying or even criticizing the European kings of the Middle Ages often ended in a particularly grisly death. But the United States threw off the shackles of kingly government nearly 250 years ago, and the question of dissent in a republic—where the

Jay Cost is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

NEWS.COM

people rule according to a written constitution—is a different matter. The people need to be free to debate, which suggests a wider latitude for rhetorical excess. But how much license does that give people to challenge the constitutional authority itself?

This tricky matter often manifests itself in subtle ways. Consider, for instance, the terms that the two sides have lately used to describe themselves when they are in the minority. The progressive left has taken to calling itself the “Resistance.” This is an inflammatory term, as most people will understand it as an allusion to the French Resistance of World War II, which was opposing the Nazi regime and its puppet government in Vichy. But consider, in turn, the term “Tea Party.” It should go without saying that the Nazis were several orders of magnitude worse than the royal governors of the 1770s. But there is an underlying suggestion in both terms that the times call for something beyond lawful protest. The Boston Tea Party, after all, was an act of vandalism meant to protest an immoral and illegitimate governing authority.

One could argue that *all* rhetoric of this sort is seditious. If the opposition party is supposed to remain loyal to the constitutional framework, which has duly conferred power on the majority party, it would seem that denying the majority’s legitimacy is tantamount to repudiating the Constitution itself.

A perusal of our history shows that our leaders have, at times, taken such a strict view. In 1793-94, “democratic societies” began springing up across the country, sympathetic to the cause of the French Revolution and often highly critical of the George Washington administration, in particular the policies of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton. Federalists thought these groups were a prelude to armed rebellion. President Washington complained of these “permanent” bodies as “pernicious to the peace of society,” even as he acknowledged “the right of the people to meet occasionally to petition for, or to remonstrate against”

public acts. The partisan press similarly vexed the Federalists during the John Adams administration, and the Sedition Act of 1798 endeavored to silence the publishers who dared criticize the government. In the earliest days of the republic, the line between legitimate and illegitimate opposition to the state was highly contested.

These challenges would rise again over the years, particularly during wartime. During the Civil War, the Lincoln administration suspended habeas corpus, and was not above shutting



Participants criticize GOP congressman Greg Walden at a town hall in Bend, Oregon, April 13.

down critical newspapers. The Woodrow Wilson administration clamped down hard on the rights of political dissenters during World War I, going so far as to throw some critics in jail. In both these cases, wars inspired fierce dissent from a minority, and the government in turn declared some forms of opposition to be illegal.

Over the course of our history, we have reached a broad consensus on what the government should and should not do with regard to dissent—and the verdict is generally accepted that these particular actions were a blot on the records of the presidents who undertook them. This is all to the good.

Still, we face a question of manners in our civic life. Granted that the state should not use its authority to regulate dissent, should the people themselves police certain kinds of opposition language?

There is no doubt a visceral inclination to do so after Scalise’s shooting, but this temptation should generally

be resisted. Instead, we should show forbearance towards political rhetoric, even if we find it noxious. Ultimately, a republic in which the people rule requires ample opportunity for debate. It is silly to expect this to happen in a high-toned fashion. The American electorate is not the Oxford Union. Far from it. History has shown that our debates are raucous and unruly, but they nevertheless can be constructive. For better or worse, it is how we converse with each other, and how we govern ourselves.

We would do well to remember the spirit of the First Amendment. The text forbids Congress from making any law abridging the rights of free speech, and it was motivated by skeptics of the new Constitution, who wanted to ensure that rules about discourse were not mandated by a distant, impersonal authority. Similarly, we should not want an impersonal sovereign like “society” to mandate what we can and cannot say.

Instead, we might look to the guidance of Thomas Jefferson. In his first inaugural address, Jefferson called for an end to the partisan vitriol of the preceding decade, but he simultaneously preached tolerance of opposing views. “We have called by different names brethren of the same principle,” he said, so we should be charitable towards one another. Nevertheless, we should not endeavor to censor those whose dissent is intemperate or extreme. “If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form,” he said, “let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.”

This is an ethos that should govern not only the state, but each and every one of us. We should be as tolerant as possible of political speech. A robust discourse is a necessary precondition for self-government. Some people are inevitably going to use the public space to indulge in dark, malicious rhetoric. This is regrettable, but it is hard to see how it can be otherwise in a free republic.

Taken for a Ride

Austin's Uber wars.

BY MARK HEMINGWAY

On May 29, Texas governor Greg Abbott signed a law creating a statewide regulatory framework governing ridesharing services. The impetus for the law was clear—overriding the city of Austin's onerous ordinances that prompted the sector's leaders, Uber and Lyft, to stop operating in the state capital last year.

In the few weeks since Uber and Lyft returned to Austin, the results speak for themselves. RideAustin, one of the more popular local ridesharing services that popped up when the big guns left, saw its ridership plummet 62 percent. "One element that we routinely hear, of course, is that we are more expensive than Uber/Lyft and this is the No. 1 criteria for many riders," RideAustin noted in a Facebook post. "As a result, we are now going to match Uber/Lyft mile/minute pricing." Another service, Fare, announced it was abandoning Austin altogether rather than try to compete.

Austin's attempt to ban and replace Uber and Lyft over the last year has been a comedy of errors testing the limits of democracy, cronyism, and the regulatory state. It should serve as a warning to other cities that think they can reengineer a market by replacing existing technologically advanced services with new companies driven by political and regulatory imperatives rather than costs.

Citing safety concerns, in December 2015, Austin's city council passed a law containing a number of restrictions on ridesharing services. The council began dictating where vehicles could pick up and drop off passengers, and required "trade dress" identifying vehicles as

participating in rideshare services, as well as extensive monthly reporting of ride data. But the biggest issue was background checks for drivers.

Uber and Lyft already require their drivers to undergo extensive background checks far beyond comparable service jobs. Austin, however, also



Uber welcomes drivers back in Austin, May 26.

wanted to fingerprint drivers. Uber and Lyft argued that fingerprint-based background checks didn't offer any additional assurances of safety. The city dug in and started a public-private partnership known as "Thumbs Up!" that aspired not just to validate rideshare drivers in Austin but become a universal background check across all apps in the sharing economy.

"The Thumbs Up! app scans your drivers license, has a device to take fingerprints and snaps a selfie. It takes less than 5 minutes. Then, it sends the information to the FBI," notes *Austin Inno*, a publication covering Austin's tech industry. Unsurprisingly, asking people to volunteer to have the FBI start a file on them did not prove a success.

So why the push to fingerprint drivers? An *Austin American-Statesman* editorial supportive of the regulations offers a clue: "Fingerprint-based background checks are required of Austin's taxi, limousine and even pedicab

drivers. . . . Aside from the public safety benefit, there needs to be a level playing field." It's no secret politically influential taxi cartels are having a hard time competing with Uber and Lyft. The taxi industry demands additional regulations to knock down the successful ridesharing services to the level at which it wants to compete.

Perhaps Austin's city council thought Uber and Lyft would relent, but Uber in particular does not have a history of allowing itself to be held hostage by politicians. The company has fought public battles over regulations and licensing in New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., among other cities. It has won nearly all of those battles; you do not want to go up against Uber when access to a new market is on the line.

In 2014, Uber started operating in Portland, Oregon—after the city declared it would be illegal. Earlier this year, the *New York Times* reported that Uber managed to avoid being shut down there by deploying a sophisticated program that identified transportation code enforcers and refused them rides.

The enforcers' apps deceived them by showing nonexistent cars nearby that never came to pick them up. Uber has allegedly used this program to "grayball" enforcement officers in cities around the world.

In the case of Austin, Uber didn't go so far as to continue operating illegally but it did go down fighting. The company collected 65,000 signatures to get an initiative on the ballot to overturn the ridesharing regulations. The measure, voted on last May in the city of 900,000, failed 48,673 to 38,539. Lots of people blame the loss in part on exceptionally confusing ballot language—the *Statesman* dedicated an entire column to explaining the measure to "readers who are befuddled by the wording."

It was hardly vindication for the city. Austin is arguably America's biggest tech center outside of Silicon Valley. Not having two of America's biggest startups operating there was something of an embarrassment.

Austin tried to rectify the problem by attracting other ridesharing

Mark Hemingway is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

ERIC GAY / AP

services, as well as encouraging new services specific to the city. By July of last year, there were at least seven ride-sharing services operating in compliance with Austin's regulations. This did little to fill the void left by Uber and Lyft. The new services were significantly more expensive. And almost immediately, there were problems. Black-market ridesharing exploded. People started coordinating rides directly on Facebook, with the help of Arcade City, a company developing a peer-to-peer ridesharing app. Uber and Lyft were deemed threats to the public safety because their background checks didn't involve fingerprints, but according to the city, encouraging total strangers to meet-up for rides was "legal as long as drivers do not charge beyond the federal reimbursement rate of \$0.54 per mile."

Another issue was the inferior technology of the city's second-tier ride-sharing services. Things were buggy from the beginning, but the failures became a national joke during the

city's annual South by Southwest conference this spring. SXSW, a combined music festival and technology conference, is a massive event—some 421,900 participated this year—and Austin's ridesharing services melted down from the increased demand. Fasten, one of Austin's larger ridesharing services, went down for several hours. Runaway surge-pricing meant the cost of short rides on other services routinely spiked to \$80 or more. Some of America's most influential tech voices spent the entire conference griping on social media about the failures.

Uber made headlines recently when its CEO stepped down, partly because of sexual harassment claims at the company. But the culture at Austin's ridesharing companies may not have been something to be proud of, either. One of the unique features of RideAustin was that riders could choose to donate an amount over and above their fare to charity. THE WEEKLY STANDARD obtained a copy of the resignation of RideAustin's

former spokesman, Joe Deshotel—the son of Texas Democratic state representative Joe Deshotel—alleging that RideAustin was strong-arming the charities it was working with.

"I am being asked to do something I firmly believe to be unethical," Deshotel wrote to RideAustin founder and CEO Andy Tryba. "The roundup money our customers give over and above there [sic] fare and designate to a specific charity is being held in trust by RideAustin for the use and benefit of the charity. I believe that your demand that I inform these charities that, unless they promote RideAustin, provide RideAustin a monthly report on how they promote RideAustin, give RideAustin \$500 for tee shirts and other requirements or they will not receive the money designated for them by riders is unethical."

RideAustin did not respond to requests for comment. Deshotel seems to have softened a bit since writing the letter. In a statement, he told THE WEEKLY STANDARD that RideAustin

Driving Another Decade of Energy Progress

THOMAS J. DONOHUE
PRESIDENT AND CEO
U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Over the last decade, America's energy landscape has changed dramatically. Our nation has gone from energy scarcity and heavy reliance on foreign—and sometimes hostile—sources for fuel to energy abundance and exporting American resources around the world. Ten years ago, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce launched the Institute for 21st Century Energy to help unify energy stakeholders and policymakers behind a strategy to make America's supply of fuel and power more accessible, affordable, and stable while protecting national security and the environment.

The Institute has had a seat at the table for every important debate on energy policy over the past decade. It has fought against misguided regulations, run effective policy campaigns, and mobilized our members at every level. It has worked on behalf of the entire industry, moving all forms of energy forward.

Most important, the Institute has helped empower America's private sector energy innovators. Together those innovators have driven an American energy revolution. The rise of fracking has allowed us to access hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of shale oil that was previously unreachable and has supported well over a million jobs. Other innovations have bolstered the production of renewable energies such as wind, solar, and nuclear power. Still others have changed how energy is transported and used.

The Institute has also provided support to government leaders as they have advanced major energy reforms this year. President Trump has declared the promotion of U.S. energy resources a strategic national objective, ordered a review of all energy regulations, and reversed multiple misguided Obama-era policies restricting energy development. These actions will unleash domestic production and support large-scale economic growth and job creation.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary,

the Chamber has relaunched our energy institute as the Global Energy Institute. As it enters its second decade, the Institute will mobilize the Chamber's national network of state and local partners to help advance energy in their communities. It will also strengthen our nation's ability to export resources and energy technologies around the globe. These advances will bolster prosperity, strengthen national security, and create a cleaner and more efficient future for the world.

America's energy renaissance has transformed our economy and our country and now it will change the world. Our nation's natural resources must continue to be converted not only into energy but into jobs, growth, and prosperity for millions of people here and across the globe. Through the Global Energy Institute, the Chamber looks forward to shaping energy policy to create a better and brighter future.



Learn more at
uschamber.com/abovethefold.

“helped raise over \$250,000 for charities in the first year,” adding, “RideAustin has also had a positive impact on the ridesharing industry, and since its launch, Uber is making major culture changes, and Lyft has added a Round Up and Donate feature.”

In the meantime, the anti-Uber and Lyft forces in Austin are spinning the state law superseding the city’s ridesharing regulations as a blow to

democracy. “We’re big believers that rules are best set by the local community as opposed to anyone above,” RideAustin’s Tryba told the *Statesman*. “It’s unfortunate that the state felt like they had to come in and override Austin voters.”

But the people in Austin are still voting—with their wallets. The results so far are a landslide in favor of cheaper rides and better service. ♦

Craving Statehood

The view from Guam.

BY ETHAN EPSTEIN

Hagåtña, Guam

Big news swept across this U.S. territory in late May: “Olive Garden to open restaurant on Guam,” read the bulletin in the *Pacific Daily News*, one of two daily newspapers to serve the Pacific island of 160,000. (And they say print is dead.) When it arrives—no opening date has been set, and the *News* breathlessly reported that the story is “developing”—the Orlando-based purveyor of salad and breadsticks will join other staples of suburban dining, like Tony Roma’s Steakhouse, Applebee’s, and California Pizza Kitchen, that have set up shop some 6,000 miles off the west coast of the continental United States.

Indeed, despite possessing numerous features typical of your average far-flung tropical paradise—white sand beaches, bathtub-temperature ocean water, coral reefs teeming with tropical fauna—Guam has already imported many of the more quotidian characteristics of “mainland” American life. The dominant aesthetic is 1970s strip mall. A quick drive across the island gets one bogged down in a mid-day traffic jam. So packed is the local Kmart—reputed to be the world’s busiest—that it takes 15 minutes



Liberation Day in Guam

of driving in circles to find a parking space. Perhaps owing to the large military presence on the island dating back some six decades (there are still strategically important Air Force and Navy bases here), the island also has an unhealthy predilection for Spam—it boasts the world’s highest per capita consumption of the stuff.

Yet for all the trappings of American life, Guam, like the other four inhabited U.S.-governed territories, lacks even a semblance of political representation back on the mainland. While Guamanians are U.S. citizens by birth,

they can’t vote in presidential elections and they have no congressional representation. (The island does send a nonvoting delegate to Washington.) Congress, moreover, can overturn any law that Guam implements.

At a mid-June meeting in his seaside office, Guam’s Republican governor Eddie Calvo tallied up the costs of his island’s neutered status. The Department of Labor’s crackdown on H-2B visas for foreign workers has supposedly hamstrung Guam’s economy by leading to a skilled-labor shortage—a point echoed by several business leaders here, who say they simply can’t find qualified construction workers. A 1920 law known colloquially as the Jones Act, meanwhile, mandates that all ships traveling between U.S. ports be American-operated, which means that the island can’t import goods from, say, the fairly close-by Philippines but must instead turn to faraway California, leading to increased costs. (All ships traveling to and from Guam stop in Hawaii, meaning they travel technically domestic routes, and are thus subject to the Jones Act’s decrees.)

Calvo attributes these problems directly to the political status issue. It’s not that the federal government is out to hurt Guam; it’s just that there is nobody in the nation’s capital to speak for his island. “As the sausage-making [in Washington] occurs, there are certain state interests that have to be dealt with,” he says. “The problem with this whole political equation is that Guam is not even in the sausage-making!”

Guam became a U.S. territory in 1898, at the conclusion of the Spanish-American War, some 230 years after it was first colonized by the Spanish. (As in the Philippines, the Spanish influence is still keenly felt; Cruz is the most common surname here.) During World War II, Guam was captured by the Japanese, whose 31-month occupation of the island was marked by unremitting brutality. July 21 marks the anniversary of the day that U.S. forces liberated Guam from the Japanese; the governor says it’s a bigger holiday here than July 4. So ferocious was the battle that finally vanquished the Japanese that only a handful of

U.S. NAVY / PHOTOGRAPHERS MATE 2ND CLASS MARK ALLEN LEONESIO

Ethan Epstein is an associate editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

prewar buildings remain standing.

Owing largely to the still-profound memories of World War II, Guamanians claim to be among America's most patriotic citizens. Which might be why a statehood movement is gaining ground; indeed, Governor Calvo personally backs the cause. He's pushing for a plebiscite on the island, which would offer its residents three options: independence, statehood, or so-called "free association," a kind of half-baked independence in which a smaller state remains dependent on a larger country for protection and economic assistance. (The U.S. already has such relationships with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau.) Others argue that Guam should simply join Hawaii or the Northern Marianas Islands (anchored by the largest island in the chain, Saipan), which are a couple hundred miles north. Governor Calvo, for his part, has pledged that despite his personal preference for statehood, he'll back whatever course of action his people select.

Statehood supporters may feel buoyed by a June 11 plebiscite in the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico: 97 percent of voters backed statehood, though a mere 23 percent of eligible voters turned out. (Even the normally supportive *New York Times* labeled the vote "flawed.") Puerto Rico's governor is also loudly backing the cause. It does appear to have some momentum: Democratic party chairman Tom Perez just revealed he supports Puerto Rican statehood, telling *Politico* that Puerto Ricans should have the "same rights" as Americans on the mainland.

Perez's argument for equality of rights is certainly the most credible: If the people of the U.S. territories are subject to U.S. laws, pay U.S. payroll taxes, and can serve in the U.S. armed forces, why shouldn't they enjoy the benefits of citizenship, especially voting rights? But the parochial supporters of statehood for, say, *only* Guam or *only* Puerto Rico—there are a lot of them, and they tend to favor statehood for this or that territory for more partisan reasons (it's generally assumed Puerto Rico would be Democratic,

Guam Republican)—should keep in mind that this slope could get slippery fast. And so, if Guam becomes a state, it probably won't be long before

our union welcomes the new states of Puerto Rico, the Northern Marianas, American Samoa—and the District of Columbia. ♦

Put the Kids First

A welcome victory against the Indian Child Welfare Act. BY NAOMI SCHAEFER RILEY

Maybe the welfare of Indian kids should come before the interests of tribal governments. That seems to be the conclusion of the Arizona Supreme Court last week, which allowed a child born to a member of the Gila River Indian Community in 2014 to be adopted by non-native parents.

The child (known in court documents as "A.D.") tested positive for amphetamines and opiates at birth, and was removed from the mother by the Arizona Department of Child Services at 5 days. When the baby was about a month old, the tribe tried to intervene in deciding where to place the child. Under a 1978 federal law, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), tribal governments have a say over where children with the slightest trace of Indian blood are placed if there's any dispute over custody.

In practice, this has meant that if parents voluntarily put such a child up for adoption, tribal governments can block the child's placement with a non-Indian family—even if that child has never set foot on a reservation; even if the biological mother thinks a non-Indian family might provide a better home; even if the Indian family has no particular connection to Indian culture or heritage; and even if a non-Indian family off the reservation promises that they will expose the child to Indian culture.

Naomi Schaefer Riley, a senior fellow at the Independent Women's Forum, is the author of The New Trail of Tears: How Washington Is Destroying American Indians.

The Gila River leaders first offered up various people within the tribe to foster A.D. But all eight of the candidates fell through: Six did not pass background checks and two decided against fostering. It was then a non-native couple, Sarah and Jeremy H., took in the child. The tribe did agree that it was appropriate to sever the biological parent's rights. But when the foster parents attempted to adopt A.D. in 2015, the tribe moved to block them.

Lawyers for the Goldwater Institute argued that once the parental rights are severed the ICWA does not apply. The Arizona Supreme Court agreed. While this clarification about the reach of the ICWA was important—it has put tribes on notice that they don't have unlimited powers to intervene in such cases—it does not address what many have argued is the fundamentally unconstitutional nature of the ICWA.

The court left some important questions open, such as why taking race into account in adoption cases is illegal for every group in the United States except Native Americans. And why is anyone determining custody of a child based on anything other than the best interests of that child? Why does a tribe's quest to ensure its demographic and cultural future matter when the welfare of a minor is at stake? And perhaps most importantly, are American Indian children really receiving equal protection under the law?

But the facts of this case do shine an important light on some pragmatic concerns with the ICWA. While there

are many Indian children who are in need of foster parents and adoptive ones, they are often coming from communities that don't have stable homes to spare.

The rate of child abuse among Native Americans is twice as high as the national average. And the situation is worse on reservations. For example, an estimated one out of every four girls and one out of every six boys in Indian country is molested before the age of 18. Much of this abuse has been concentrated in particular communities, such as Spirit Lake in North Dakota, which, according to a 2012 report in the *New York Times*, had the highest percentage of sex offenders of any area in the country.

While the original intent of the ICWA was to stop what was perceived as the too-frequent removal of Indian children from their communities, the truth today is more complicated. There is no evidence that children are being taken away without sufficient cause. And many of these kids lack options within their communities.

Mark Fiddler, a member of the Turtle Mountain band of Chippewa Indians, worked as a public defender



In a case similar to that of A.D., Summer Page of Santa Clarita, Calif., weeps after her 6-year-old foster daughter Lexi, 1.5 percent Choctaw, was taken away in March 2016 to live with distant Indian relatives in Utah.

in Minnesota for many years. He used to think the most important thing was for Indian kids to be with Indian parents. But then he realized it was much more important for them to be in safe and stable homes, regardless of the race of the parents.

"If you talk to residents of reservations," says Fiddler, "you realize this has been going on for generations." On the "macro-level," he notes, "you have this narrative about disproportionate placement rates"—that is, the idea that Indian children are being

removed from their homes at a higher rate than children of other races. But then, says Fiddler, "there is the micro-level of reality with parents." He says that there's a "cycle of dysfunctional parenting that is passed from generation to generation."

Which may be why there was no one available in the Gila River Indian community to take baby A.D. and why it is so important to ensure that federal law does not stand in the way of qualified and loving families of any race welcoming children in need.

The Goldwater Institute is involved in a number of cases challenging the constitutionality of the ICWA. Next month it will file cert in one such case before the U.S. Supreme Court. The details are different, but at their heart they are about the same thing. As Timothy Sandefur, vice president for litigation at the institute, says, "If you have the right blood cells in your veins, then ICWA applies a separate and substandard set of rules that makes it harder to protect you from abuse and neglect, and harder to find you an adoptive home." These kids don't need any more obstacles than they already have. ♦

THE WEEKLY STANDARD 2017 European Charter Cruise

SEPTEMBER 2-10

Join us for this luxury 8-night private charter cruise—with accommodations for just 212 guests!—departing Dublin, Ireland, with stops in France, Spain, and Portugal.



Book Now at WeeklyStandardCruise.com • 888-471-3882

Make Progress Exciting Again

The Big Bang theory of capitalism

By P.J. O'ROURKE

French Guiana

Arianespace is the French company that fires off huge rocket ships blasting great big things so far up into the sky that they don't come down again. Or, to put it in bland corporate language, Arianespace is the world's leading commercial satellite launch provider.

And the corporation provided me with an excellent satellite launch. I was invited by my friend Aaron Lewis, Arianespace's director of media and government relations and former staffer for congressman Dana Rohrabacher, longtime chair of the House space and aeronautics subcommittee.

Aaron and I—and about 70 engineers, scientists, and executives involved with the rocket and its payload—flew to the Centre Spatial Guyanais, the European spaceport in French Guiana.

At 10 P.M. we went to an elevated viewing platform five kilometers from the launchpad, deep in a cinematically perfect jungle complete with strange bird calls and thick hanging vines. Of course this is *French* jungle. “*Me Tarzan. Tòì jolì femme de serveuse avec le plat de hors d'oeuvres de foie gras et caviar.*”

In the distance, brightly spotlighted and towering over the triple canopy rainforest was the massive Ariane 5 launch vehicle. The Ariane 5 is a “full stack,” as rocketeers say. It has a main stage, upper stage, and payload capsule standing nearly 180 feet high, as tall as a 20-story building. This is flanked by a pair of 102-foot solid fuel boosters. The whole thing weighs 1,720,000 pounds (in case you were thinking of getting an Ariane 5 for use around the house).

The countdown began, *naturellement* in French, *dix . . . neuf . . . huit . . . sept . . . six . . . cinq . . . quatre . . .*

An earth-bound cumulus cloud enveloped the launchpad. Huge hoses were spraying the rocket engines to dampen the convulsive vibration of lift-off and protect the

payload contents from the “spacequake” of almost three million pounds of rocket thrust.

And then . . .

I'll bet I was the only person on the viewing platform thinking about Adam Smith.

Here, with the Ariane 5, was progress incarnate. Progress is impossible without the three elemental human activities identified by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*: pursuit of self-interest, division of labor, and trade. Therefore progress cannot be made except through the exercise of market freedoms.

The market freedoms may be exercised imperfectly, like my own exercise program. But the triathlon of capitalism must be run, swum, and cycled in some way, shape, or form. Otherwise progress comes to a halt. Venezuela. Cuba. North Korea. Q.E.D.

Arianespace pursues self-interest. It may have gotten its startup funding with French government and European Space Agency money, but it's no NASA. Arianespace was always intended to make money, and it does. More than half of the commercial satellites in orbit today were put there by Arianespace's rockets.

Those rockets—the light-payload Vega, the medium-payload Soyuz (a hot-rod version of the Russian launch vehicle), and the heavy-payload Ariane 5—are division of labor perfectly exemplified. An individual could not build a rocket like these, no matter what his wealth or how much time he was allotted.

He'd have to be three Pythagoreans of a mathematician and a hundred kinds of engineer, a physicist-on-wheels faster than those of Stephen Hawking, the sort of computer whiz who'd make Bill Gates call tech support, an electrician, a metallurgist, a welder, a bomb disposal squad (that being what a rocket at blast-off is really doing), and own a very long ladder and be able to count down from ten to one (in French).

As for trade, the launch was a business deal putting two privately owned communications satellites in orbit, one from the American company ViaSat and one from its European competitor Eutelsat. The deal was made by

P.J. O'Rourke is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Arianespace in cooperation with its principal rocket-building contractor Airbus and Airbus's rival Boeing, which manufactured Viasat's satellite. The invisible hand of the marketplace doesn't get much more unseen than what I was looking at.

Progress is made in an amazing fashion. But the Smithian principles behind progress seem to be, currently, unfashionable.

Pursuit of self-interest is tweeted away in the White House.

Division of labor remains an undifferentiated muddle in Congress. There are 500-some "key" presidential appointments that need Senate confirmation. As of June 21, 43 appointees had been confirmed.

And opposition to freedom of trade is hot in the Oval Office and the House of Representatives and bothered in the Senate.

Democrats are no better. They're pursuing self-interest by running off the lemming cliff of leftism, failing to divvy up labor while they all do the same thing—shriek at Trump—and showing furious opposition to market liberties. Charles Murray was chased off the campus of Middlebury College when he attempted to engage in some free trade in ideas.

Progress itself is out of vogue. The food Luddites urge us to eat the locally sourced, organic, pesticide-lacking, GMO-free diet of our ancestors, who had average lifespans of well over 30 years.

Modern transport is rejected in favor of the primitive bicycle. Mature adults wearing Lycra cycling shorts are as barbaric in appearance as naked early Britons painted with woad.

Medical advances are renounced as the public consults the witch doctors of health care insurance instead of the M.D.s of health care treatment.

A regression to naïve child-like thinking marks the concern with "animal rights." Animals will have rights when animals have responsibilities. I'll quit shooting birds when birds feel obliged to clean the hood of my car that they've soiled. And not "exploiting" animals means letting animals exploit us, as snacks perhaps—the kind the saber-toothed tigers of yore enjoyed.

Due to reactionary hysteria about the invention that did the most to advance civilization—the gun—I'd be severely restricted in my ability to defend myself against a

saber-toothed tiger trying to eat me. As it is, in some state and local jurisdictions, gun use is already so limited by law that I'd have to hunt deer by reasoning with them or using kung fu.

And "alternative" sources of energy mean a reversion to the kind of wind power that allowed Ferdinand Magellan to sail around the world in a mere three years. While solar power rebuffs every progressive human accomplishment since *Homo erectus* discovered how to make fire 600,000 years ago.

The very word "progressive" has been stolen by the savage pagan horde of speech thieves who previously made away with "liberal," "climate," "privilege," "gender," "inclusion," "safe space," and the "trigger warning" I was going to give the saber-toothed tiger.

I blame this lack of progress—or this lack of interest in making any progress—on progress having become boring.

Of course progress wasn't boring for me at the moment, with the Ariane 5 about to lift off. But I was in an exceptional situation.

Looking around at the unexceptional situations of modern daily life, progress appears to be tedious indeed.

With what excitement and anticipation did people once say, "There's a machine for that."

With what apathy and indifference do people now say, "There's an app for that."

Imagine a person from even 15 years ago being told that what the future holds is humanity looking at its phone all day.

Here are our contemporary great leaps forward:

The Internet so filled with cinders and slag that searching for information there is as much fun as sifting through the ashes of the Great Library of Alexandria.

GPS giving us directions in the manner of a New Hampshire Yankee farmer leaning on a fence rail and chewing a blade of hay. "Go on down to where old Maude Frick used to live and then turn right at the place where the barn burned down in 1958."

Uber. If *Taxi Driver* gets remade it won't star Robert De Niro and Jodie Foster, it will star Elizabeth Warren in a driverless car.

Driverless cars. What's next, eaterless meals?



An Ariane 5 launch from French Guiana

We have the means to *binge-watch* TV, which, speaking of eaterless meals, is as delightful as our having the means to binge-eat kale.

While wearing *earbuds*. They're a sort of reverse hearing aid that block out anything worth listening to. The millennial generation's motto is "Huh?"

You can hear millennials proclaim their slogan in the proliferation of *artisanal coffee shops* (although what I really need is a bar) that have replaced brick-and-mortar retail establishments because of *Amazon*.

Amazon has transformed shopping from a pleasurable excursion and happy social interaction into something more like going into the outhouse with a Sears catalogue to browse and use as Charmin.

Amazon also takes all the sharp, eye-for-a-bargain intelligence out of shopping. But that's okay because we don't need real intelligence. We have *artificial intelligence*—everywhere.

My toaster has a brain. What a way to kick off a gloomy Monday morning—being outsmarted by a toaster.

Then I go to work in an *office cubicle* rather than an office. Instead of hanging out at the water cooler gossiping, flirting with co-workers, and making sports bets, I'm overwhelmed by *big data* flooding my *personal communication devices*.

And I go home, exhausted, to a *smart house*. It was bad enough when the house contained nothing more than kids who were getting smart with me; now they've got the thermostat, the burglar alarm, and the toaster on their side.

Here's a statistic: In a recent survey the Pew Research Center found that 43 percent of American millennials have a positive opinion of socialism. Only 14 percent of Americans over 65 harbor such a view. But if the progress we've seen lately is what passes for progress, who can blame the kids?

I can remember when progress was exciting. My whole family would drive out to the airport just to see jet planes take off and land. I'd get up at 6 A.M. on weekends to watch the test pattern on our new TV, followed by the farm report and *Mass for Shut-Ins*. Skyscrapers had observation decks on their top floors, not Russian billionaires. The introduction of next year's new car models was practically a national holiday. H-bombs made for glorious mushroom clouds and fun fallout shelters in which to play "post office" with the neighborhood girls. Sputnik produced an excitement so strong that it led to bizarre behavior. Fourth-grade boys applied

IN THE LAST CENTURY, IRON AND STEEL MADE NATIONS STRONG.



themselves to multiplication tables and long division—so besotted were we with the wonders of science. And men landed on the moon. I was a hippie in 1969 and had spent most of the past two years in outer space. But I was riveted by the Apollo 11 news coverage nonetheless.

Even prosaic aspects of progress were exciting. The glass door on the electric dryer put on a good show for a boy used to struggling to keep wet bedsheets out of the dog doo and grass clippings as he hung them on the backyard clothesline. It was all good, including the pain progress brings. A polio shot was a small price to pay for getting an infantile paralysis-panicked mom to finally let me go to the municipal swimming pool and sip from a public drinking fountain.

If we want to avoid a future full of socialists, progressives, Birkenstock-wearing women in pink pussyhats, black-clad men in Guy Fawkes masks, gender-neutral shouters of Resistance!, vegans, PETA members, Middlebury College alums, and other pests who will be starving and begging in what used to be a marketplace but has become an “Occupied” camp . . .

If we want to avoid all that, we must make progress exciting again. We need a “Big Bang theory” of capitalism.

And that was what I was getting, not in theory but in fact, from Ariane 5. *Trois . . . deux . . . un . . .*

And there was light, “The light of the world,” or as close as mortals can do to radiate it. Vast luminosity reflected from the low cloud cover over French Guiana and night was made day.

I could have read print so small that it would have made for a *Moby-Dick* pocket edition.

The Ariane seemed still for a moment, like a mother phoenix brooding over her nest of fire. Then the 2,935,000 pounds of thrust took hold. The jungle was perfectly silent for 4.1 seconds, the time it took the sound waves to reach us.

When they did it was like nothing I’ve ever listened to before. The uproar was not so much loud as deep, a swelling, a surging, a rolling more felt than heard. Sound waves *are* waves. It was a pounding surf of a noise.

The Ariane streaked toward orbit atop an arch of brazen fire supporting the firmament.

But, as Melville said in *Moby-Dick*, “There is no steady unretracing progress in this life.” And we wouldn’t call the time we live in the Age of Irony if it lacked the ironic. The progress produced by the communication satellites atop the Ariane 5 is broadband WiFi connections for luxury cruise ships. ♦

IN THIS CENTURY, IT WILL BE QUADRILLIONS OF COMPUTATIONS PER SECOND.

We design and build more of the world's most powerful supercomputers than any other company in the world.

So we're proud to be an important part of America's national security advantage.



The HPE SGI 8600:
The world's most advanced supercomputer.

A National Asset In Supercomputing


**Hewlett Packard
Enterprise**



George Washington's study at Mount Vernon

Curious George

A bibliographical view of the Father of Our Country. BY DOUGLAS BRADBURN

John Adams, in his bitter old age, complained that George Washington was too much worshiped by the American people. Washington's talents were at best superficial, Adams growled, and that the great man was "illiterate, unlearned, unread" was a fact Adams considered as "past dispute." Historians have given too much credence to the musings of John Adams generally, and in these characterizations we find an old man—American's first one-term president—indulging in his worst petty jealousies. Adams could have worked wonders with a Twitter account.

Thomas Jefferson also opined on

Douglas Bradburn is founding director of the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon.

George Washington
A Life in Books
by Kevin J. Hayes
Oxford, 408 pp., \$34.95

the scholastic achievements of George Washington and noted that Washington read "little." He did assert that Washington possessed a powerful mind, but it was not quite first rate. George Washington, Jefferson concluded, "was not so acute as" Sir Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon, or John Locke—a pretty lofty standard. So where does Washington fit? Somewhere between illiterate and Sir Isaac Newton.

Historians have typically been rather cool on Washington's reading and learning, echoing Adams and Jefferson. Some have even argued that his best

letters were written by someone else—Broadway's Alexander Hamilton comes to mind—and compared with the constellation of geniuses present at the founding, Washington is sometimes seen as but a dim star, even though he looked great on horseback. The great historian James Flexner argued that the "indispensable" George Washington was the ultimate man of action, but "only a sporadic reader."

In this new work, Kevin J. Hayes shatters the myth of an ignorant, unread Washington and does something even more difficult: Hayes not only has tracked down new discoveries in one of the most studied American lives, but he reveals a much more human portrait of the great man than most biographies have been able to reveal. Hayes makes George Washington even more real, and more significant. Instead of

COURTESY OF MOUNT VERNON LADIES' ASSOCIATION

a dull boy, we find Washington to be a curious, intense, and practical reader, a brilliant writer of letters, a visionary advocate for a broad liberal and useful education, a great patron of arts, literature, and history, and one of the smartest men who ever held the presidency. George the Magnificent.

It is true that Washington did not have a formal education of the type expected of a gentleman of his era. Adams and Jefferson both went to college, Harvard and William and Mary respectively. (Washington would later receive an honorary doctorate from Harvard and serve as chancellor of William and Mary.) To gain admittance to either school in the 18th century, one needed to be able to read Latin. Once there, the young scholars embarked upon a rigorous study of classical literature in the original Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, they learned rhetoric, logic, divinity, physics, and metaphysics, as well as algebra and astronomy. To become lawyers, both Jefferson and Adams then read law extensively under the guidance of a master attorney until they were ready to pass the bar.

Washington, for his part, didn't have these opportunities. His two elder half-brothers had been educated in England, but after the death of his father in 1743 when young George was 11 years old, such an expensive elite education was out of the question. He would have tutors of various competency, but for the most part, he would be on his own. George Washington, like Benjamin Franklin, was self-taught.

At age 17, he was a professional surveyor; at 22, an age when Jefferson and Adams were reading law, Washington was the colonel of a Virginia regiment, fighting in the French and Indian War. As Hayes emphasizes, at that age George Washington had already written a book—a short journal describing his harrowing mission to the Ohio Country in the middle of the winter of 1753-54, when he was sent by the governor of Virginia in Williamsburg to explain politely to the French Army near Lake Erie that they were trespassing on Virginia's land. Filled with Indians, bear-hunting, diplomatic intrigue, a flight across a frozen river, intrepid

pioneers, and an impossible and unforgiving wilderness—think *The Revenant* with a happy ending—the small book was widely read in England and serialized across the American colonies. The adventures of Major Washington helped precipitate a diplomatic crisis and made George famous on both sides of the Atlantic. He was an 18th-century reality star.

As a reader, Washington consumed all he could—in English. He bought and borrowed books of all kinds: travel and adventure stories (not unlike the one he wrote), geog-



Portrait by Gilbert Stuart

raphies and atlases, his father's copy of Shakespeare's plays, encyclopedias and dictionaries, picturesque novels, treatises on military science, histories both ancient and modern, politics, agriculture, and law. And he would regularly devour the most recent available newspapers. As a young man on the make, he would spend hours in the fine library of his patron and neighbor, Col. William Fairfax, and discover to his surprise (long after the old man had died) that he had forgotten to return William Leybourn's *Complete Surveyor*.

Washington was particularly fond of the new magazines that became available in the Anglo-American world in the 1730s and '40s. These works, like the *Gentleman's Magazine*, collected news and literature, scientific reports, histories, metaphysics and philosophy, political satire, clever anecdotes, short stories and poetry, and were a sort of compendium of miscellaneous infor-

mation—the broad sweep of human learning. As a young man Washington showed a particular interest in poetry, even trying his hand at love poetry in a stumbling attempt to unlock the mysteries of an unknown young woman's heart.

But nothing eclipsed his early interest in mathematics. Here Washington showed exceptional talent; in fact, one gets the sense that he had an easy gift combined with the profound appreciation of the logical beauty of a good proof. In his copy of Archibald Patoun's *Complete Treatise of Practical Navigation* Washington corrected a mistaken example of how to calculate the declination of the sun—crucial to discovering one's location on the globe. In his spare time while president of the United States, he designed a unique 16-sided threshing barn and calculated the exact number of bricks needed in construction. Mathematics had a practical purpose for Washington: It was useful for his surveying profession and essential for his agricultural and military pursuits; but he pursued the study for his own pleasure. At 18, he purchased Guillaume François Antoine de L'Hôpital's *Analytick Treatise of Conick Sections*, a work of advanced geometry, something which had little practical purpose other than to satisfy his eager, hungry, and curious mind.

John Adams, for his part, was terrible at math.

George Washington read his books gently. Rarely would he mark up the margins, but he would correct typos wherever he saw them, or thought he saw them, as he did incorrectly in his copy of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. For agricultural books with immediate practical purpose for his plantation, sometimes Washington kept copious notes in little books that he could carry with him into the field. And in almanacs he often kept his daily diary, a record of people he dined with and detailed observations of the weather. He was a systematic farmer through and through.

When he realized that he had not read certain books that his peers considered essential, like the novels *Gil Blas* and *Don Quixote*, he purchased them and quickly began referencing

them in his own correspondence. In one delicious case, in James Monroe's published defense of his behavior as American minister to France, Washington made extensive, sarcastic, and biting notes, ridiculing Monroe's pretensions to authority, clarity, honesty, and competence. His running critique of Monroe would have played well at a White House Correspondents' Dinner.

During the Revolutionary War he had a special bookcase designed, complete with green baize lining to protect a large collection of military books that accompanied him throughout the war—from Valley Forge, to West Point, to Yorktown. As mentor of the inexperienced officer corps of the Continental Army, he recommended reading specific titles to the unsure and unsteady. He had long practiced what he preached: During the French and Indian War, when he was in charge of the frontier defenses, he traveled with Caesar's *Commentaries* and Quintus Curtius's *History of the Wars of Alexander the Great*. Washington's example made an impression: One Hessian officer was astonished during the war that "every wretched knapsack" of a captured American officer was "filled up with military books."

At the end of the war Washington's fame and consequence would put him in a position of patronage. The first histories of the American Revolution, as Hayes shows, depended upon Washington's papers and his support. It was myth-making from the start, and with Washington's support for painters, sculptors, poets, historians, and authors, the United States began to make its own mark on the republic of arts and letters.

One advantage of Washington's self-directed education and lifelong curiosity was reflected in his willingness to change his mind or reject received opinion for new ideas. Hayes reveals this aspect of Washington's mind by exploring the ultimately profound shift in his ideas about slavery. Born into a slave society and an owner of people his entire life, Washington collected anti-slavery pamphlets and tracts, and gradually came to shift his own perspective. By the time he became

president he was privately asserting his desire to end his commitment to enslaved labor, a problem he never solved until his death. He would use his last will and testament to provide a pathway for freedom for the slaves he owned outright, providing for the education of the young and pensions

for the elderly. And he wrote his will without the aid of lawyers.

Kevin J. Hayes's study will reward the reader with a newfound respect for our first president and imparts a renewed sense of the sustained curiosity of truly great leaders. It is a book even John Adams might have enjoyed. ♦

BCA

Fear Is the Spur

The answer to the mystery of the master of suspense.

BY LAWRENCE KLEPP

The French director François Truffaut, who conducted a famous series of interviews with Alfred Hitchcock in 1962, said afterward that he had found him to be a "neurotic" and "fearful" and "deeply vulnerable" man, but this was precisely what had made him an "artist of anxiety."

Hitchcock kept both the anxiety and the artist hidden. He developed a public persona that went well with his ample form and uniform dark suits—a phlegmatic, understated manner; a droll, deadpan wit. He spoke in carefully enunciated words delivered in a low monotone, like a high priest or a funeral director. But beneath the imperturbable surface was a man as jittery as a cat, or a Kafka—another artist of anxiety whose recurrent theme was an innocent man accused of some enigmatic crime. As Peter Ackroyd remarks at the beginning of this brisk, discerning critical biography:

fear fell upon him in early life . . . something already marked him out as a shuddering, shivering human being, afraid of judgment and punishment. . . . The fears and obsessions of his childhood remained with him until the end of his life.

Born in 1899, the son of a fishmonger, the future fearmonger was a plump, homely, shy child growing up amid the

Alfred Hitchcock
A Brief Life
by Peter Ackroyd
Doubleday, 288 pp., \$26.95

teeming street life and rough Cockney vitality of Limehouse, an industrial district beside the Thames in London's East End. He had no playmates.

But his childhood coincided with the infancy of movies, and he took refuge in the new picture palaces springing up in London. Books were another refuge, and Poe was his favorite author. He was already drawn to the macabre: He would take a bus down to the Old Bailey, where he liked to watch murder trials. He began to control his fears by projecting them into stories. One advantage of fear is that it spurs imagination, either for purposes of escape or for precise, intense, suspenseful anticipation of what is feared. Hitchcock's movies would offer both.

His family background was mostly Irish and Roman Catholic, and he was sent to a strict Jesuit school that often meted out physical punishments: "I was terrified of the police, of the Jesuit fathers, of physical punishment, of a lot of things," he recalled. "This is the root of my work." By 1921 he had made his way into a film studio through graphic design work, and he directed his first movie (*The Pleasure*

Lawrence Klepp is a writer in New York.

Garden) in 1925, the year he married his film editor, Alma Reville, who became an indispensable collaborator. His early silent pictures, after some filming in Berlin, absorbed the shadowy atmospherics of German Expressionism, which stayed with him.

The theme Ackroyd identifies in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934), which Hitchcock regarded as the real beginning of his career, became the theme of almost all his movies: “Ordinary people, living in a familiar setting, are suddenly plunged into a ‘chaos world’ where no one is safe.” For Hitchcock, no ordinary person, the world was *always* a chaos world: Ackroyd recognizes that this became a Conradian vision of life reflected in all his films—a sense that civilized order, like the orderly life of an individual, is poised over an abyss we are always just a misstep (or case of mistaken identity) away from slipping into.

In his own life and work, Hitchcock trod carefully. He was known for his meticulous preparation. So there is something to Ackroyd’s observation that he “arranged his life as if it were a military campaign.” But he was less like a general than a spy—ever watchful, ever oblique and secretive, preferring to get what he wanted by stealth, not by issuing orders. He smuggled the art into his movies while pretending to have no interest in it: “I really hate the word *artistic*,” he once said. He had no theories, and he didn’t talk about the deep meaning of his films. (“It’s only a movie,” he liked to say.) Yet his life was as devoted to his art as that of any starving artist in a garret. It’s just that he didn’t want to starve. He left England in 1938 to work with the producer David O. Selznick, partly because of the technical resources that Hollywood offered, but also because of the money it offered.

Living in comfortable houses, eating and drinking copiously were ways of staving off Hitchcock’s anxieties, but he was simultaneously staving off meddling studio executives and censors, defending his bold choices of theme and image. Images were always what he began with and cared most about; plots were woven around them and didn’t have to make sense. He

knew his gift was for fantasy, not reality.

He said that the difference between his English and American phases was instinct and spontaneity versus calculation. Despite a brilliantly amusing fantasia like *North by Northwest* (which owed much to his flawless British masterpiece *The 39 Steps*) and the dry humor, including his own trademark cameos, worked into other films, he lost some of his comic finesse in Hollywood. There he became the “master of suspense,” a brand name for creepiness and horror. But his best American movies, such as *Notorious* and *Rear Window*, have their impact in their unsettling ambiguities and complicities; and in some of them, especially *Shadow of a Doubt*, *Strangers on a Train*, *Vertigo*, and *Psycho*, he played variations on the theme of the double—twinned opposites, mirror images, two guises of the same person—which he first encountered in Poe. All this gives his greatest films, and even lesser ones like *The Wrong Man* and *I Confess*, their charged, uncanny psychological atmosphere. He went wrong only when he (or his screenwriters) tried to make the psychology too explicit (as in *Spellbound*, the end of *Psycho*, and the end of *Marnie*).

Luckily, Ackroyd doesn’t try to spell out Hitchcock’s own psychology,

but there are enough ambiguities and dualities there for a Hitchcock movie. The orderly protocol and gentlemanly demeanor, the tact and tutelage that made lifelong friends out of many of his actors—and a penchant for gross practical jokes, an urge to embarrass young actresses with suggestive quips, and prying, proprietary obsessions with some of his female stars (Ingrid Bergman, Grace Kelly, Vera Miles, and, especially, Tippi Hedren). You can see an element of resentment, or even vengeance, there—perhaps payback for his lifelong sense of being out of it, an uncomely misfit. Still, in general, scaring the living daylights out of people in theaters sufficed.

At less than half the length, Ackroyd’s book can’t offer the depth of analysis or the density of beguiling detail found in Donald Spoto’s classic, *The Dark Side of Genius* (1983). But it always respects and never distorts its subject. It convinces us that Hitchcock, who made over 50 films before his death in 1980, 8 or 10 of them masterpieces, had the requisite number of inner demons to be a genius—and that despite them he was, as geniuses go, endearingly unpretentious, humorous, and civilized. ♦

BCA

Winston’s Folly

Lessons learned from the failure of Gallipoli.

BY ANDREW ROBERTS

‘In my opinion,” wrote Admiral Lord Charles Beresford to Leo Maxse, the editor of the British conservative magazine *National Review*, in April 1915, “Churchill is a serious danger to the State. After Antwerp, and now the Dardanelles, the Government really ought to get rid of him.” Six months later, and after much more blood had been shed

Andrew Roberts is the author, most recently, of Napoleon the Great.

Churchill and the Dardanelles

by Christopher M. Bell
Oxford, 464 pp., \$34.95

in the disastrous Dardanelles campaign, Herbert Asquith’s government did, indeed, get rid of Winston Churchill, in what was easily the worst moment of Churchill’s extraordinarily long career.

Nothing, even in the Second World War, affected Churchill so personally

and profoundly badly as the Dardanelles—also known as the Gallipoli—disaster, which would have destroyed many a lesser man. Yet, instead, the catastrophe inserted much of the steel into the mettle of the man who, a quarter of a century later, was to lead Britain in the crises of 1940-41, was by then older and (largely because of the Dardanelles) wiser.

Beresford's reference to the Antwerp expedition was to an adventure of Churchill's in October 1914 when, in his capacity as first lord of the Admiralty (political chief of the Royal Navy), Churchill crossed the channel to take personal control of the defense of Antwerp as the German Army bore down on the strategically vital Belgian inland port. According to anti-Churchillians, Antwerp was a disaster that led to the internment of thousands of men of the Royal Naval Division; according to pro-Churchillians, it was the crucial five days in early October in which Antwerp held out that saved the channel ports further down the coast, such as Boulogne and Calais, from falling into German hands.

Either way, the controversial first lord was unrepentant and unbowed when, in January 1915, the Russian government—then in an existential struggle with the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman (Turkish) empires—asked Britain and France for help in diverting Turkish attention in the northeastern Mediterranean. Churchill hit upon a plan that has been lauded as inspired but also denounced as deranged, which was to attempt to force a British and French fleet through the narrow straits of the Dardanelles that divide Europe from Asia, which could then train its guns on the Hagia Sofia and the Sultan's Topkapi Palace in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) and thereby force Turkey out of the war, possibly bringing Bulgaria onto the Allied side and opening up the opportunity for military campaigns against Austria-Hungary in the Balkans.

In fact, however, the fleet failed to make it past the Turkish minefields, artillery, and mortar and battery fire from the forts on either side of the

straits, where, on March 18, 1915, three warships were sunk and a further three badly damaged. An amphibious assault on the Gallipoli peninsula then failed to make much headway five weeks later, in April, and was supported enormously over the following eight months. The fact that Beresford was writing to Maxse even before the land assault had taken place was a sign of the animus of the Conservatives against the Liberal minister Churchill, which went back over a decade after Churchill had changed parties in the House of Commons.



Winston Churchill (1915)

There are myths aplenty about Winston Churchill and the Dardanelles, both contemporary ones about his supposedly overruling all his Admiralty advisers and political colleagues, but also others that dogged him throughout his career, to the extent that hecklers would shout “What about the Dardanelles?!” at him for years afterwards. Equally, there are those who have claimed that Churchill virtually did no wrong throughout the entire debacle and, instead, lay all the blame on others, such as the secretary of state, Lord Kitchener, or the first sea lord, Lord Fisher, or the naval commanders Admirals Carden and Robuck, or the military commander General Sir Ian Hamilton.

The blame-shifting, name-calling,

and finger-pointing were not stilled by an exhaustive Dardanelles Commission inquiry and its 1919 report, but should now finally come to an end a century later with the publication of this well-researched, very well-written, but above all judiciously objective book by the distinguished naval historian Christopher M. Bell, professor of history at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia and author of the acclaimed *Churchill and Sea Power* (2012).

Astonishingly for so well-combed a controversy, there is a great deal here that is new. This is the first account to examine the press campaign against Churchill and uncover details of the behind-the-scenes plotting against him while he was first lord of the Admiralty. It is also the best and fullest account of Lord Fisher's scheming to undermine both the campaign and Churchill himself. There are no comparable studies that look at how Churchill attempted to shape perceptions of the campaign and rehabilitate his reputation afterwards; and few specifically on how the Dardanelles disaster—which ultimately led to over 300,000 Allied casualties—influenced his strategic thinking in World War II. Bell concludes that Churchill's opposition to opening up an early Second Front in 1942-43 were *not* particularly influenced by his experiences of 1915.

Bell is good in his dissection of the Dardanelles Commission and proves conclusively how much of the testimony given in evidence, especially by the admirals, cannot be trusted. Too many anti-Churchill writers have used this material without allowance for its obvious biases and what Bell shows was widespread collusion. Furthermore, much of the testimony that might have helped Churchill was ignored or buried, which would have proved that there was no strong or united opposition from the Admiralty when the scheme was first considered.

Bell also concentrates on the efforts that Churchill went to in putting together his own case for the Dardanelles, especially in later revisions to the second volume of his book *The World Crisis*. It was a compelling and persuasive case that Churchill convinced himself

HULTON ARCHIVE / GETTY IMAGES

was entirely true, but Bell exposes how it involved manipulating and ignoring a lot of inconvenient evidence, and calls it a combination of “truths, half-truths and dubious assertions.” Churchill attempted to spread the blame, not least onto those who certainly did deserve much more of it, such as Asquith and Kitchener. “It is not for me with my record and special point of view to pronounce a final conclusion,” Churchill wrote, describing it merely as “a contribution to history.” Yet, in *The World Crisis*, he essentially claimed that the Ottoman forts had almost run out of ammunition, the minefields were not a continuing threat, Russia was not collapsing but Turkey was—and his plan might have saved hundreds of thousands (perhaps millions) of lives if he had not been let down by vacillating, cowardly colleagues. By the mid-1920s,

the public had become receptive to a narrative about how the slaughter on the Western Front might have been avoided.

This excellent book cuts through a century of pro- and anti-Churchill writing to reach remarkably balanced conclusions. Bell shows where the myths of both sides came from and why they are both problematic; and he concludes that there is no simple verdict on the expedition, except insofar as virtually nobody on the Allied side came out of the campaign looking good. Nonetheless, Winston Churchill did learn valuable lessons from those few mistakes he admitted to, but also from others he publicly couldn’t bring himself to admit, and as a result was far better prepared as a war leader when he—fortunately for all of us—got another chance in 1940. ♦



Still Life with Corn

Few soft landings when imbibing the hard stuff.

BY WINSTON GROOM

Moonshine always reminds me of the time the great P.J. O’Rourke got hold of a jug of the stuff in college and it caused him to be struck blind. It seems that O’Rourke and some of his buddies in Ohio went down into Kentucky looking for moonshine to bring back for a party that night. He drank from the jug—amount unknown—and by the time he awoke next morning all he could see was *white!* He spent several terrifying moments until, at last, he realized he was on his hands and knees with his head hanging in somebody’s toilet.

With that warning ringing in your ears, Dear Reader—come, let’s investigate this 10,000-year-old phenomenon

Winston Groom is the author of 22 books, including Forrest Gump (1986) and his latest novel, El Paso.

Moonshine
A Global History
by Kevin R. Kosar
Reaktion, 176 pp., \$19.95

known as moonshine. Contrary to popular legend, “moonshine” does not take its name from dark Appalachian mountain hollows and a sinister time of night when the moon shines bright but from (we are told), of all things, Shakespeare’s *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), in which the term is meant to denote a “pleasant radiance.” By the 1780s, English magazines were speaking of an alcoholic concoction at “a house of call for smugglers where one is sure of meeting always with genuine Moonshine.”

The author of this informative study tells us, right up front, “People do not drink Moonshine to grow taller,

stronger, or smarter. They drink it to get drunk. Fast”—which is not surprising, since moonshine can contain at least *twice* the alcohol content of store-bought booze. Science says that the distilling of alcohol has been in vogue since the days of Aristotle, who, in 350 B.C., described in detail the operations of a condensing still used to make liquor. Modern moonshine as a commercial product was born when, in the 1400s, governments from Scotland to China made illegal the production of spirits sold without subjecting them to taxes—which became the formal definition of moonshine.

Moonshine has been a feature of American life since before the revolution and almost started another one when, in 1791, citizens of western Pennsylvania and elsewhere were provoked to violence by the imposition of a whiskey tax sponsored by Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton. For three years these home distillers raised hell and refused to pay, beating, shooting, stabbing, and tarring-and-feathering tax collectors trying to enforce it. At length, President Washington, at the head of an 13,000-man army, put down what became known as the Whiskey Rebellion—at which point the distillers simply hid their stills in the woods and became moonshiners.

Pure moonshine is as clear as spring water, and odorless. People are sorely put when trying to describe its taste—everything from gasoline, to rubbing alcohol, to lighter fluid—one has even said “hot tide water.” The problem with moonshine—even if you can get past the taste and the effects—is that if you get the wrong kind it can kill you, make you blind, or produce various permanent neurological afflictions. That is because in the distilling process, a substance called methanol is produced. This is also known as “wood alcohol” and is strong poison that once ingested causes the body’s cells to produce deadly formaldehyde. In a proper distillation, the methanol will be bled off, leaving only ethyl alcohol, or ethanol—the good stuff (yes, the same thing they’re putting in your gas tank) for you to drink.

Some moonshiners are simply too greedy, lazy, stupid, or sadistic to get

rid of the methanol, and should you somehow lay your hands on a tainted jar or jug, pleasant surprises will not overtake you. It is impossible to test by the naked eye, nose, tongue, etc. Thousands of people die each year from methanol poisoning—according to this account, some 18,000 people in Indonesia alone, and the *Moscow Times* is credited with saying that 40,000 Russians perish from it annually. The good news is that most moonshiners crave return customers, and so are more meticulous in their craft.

Moonshine reached its apogee here during Prohibition, when Al Capone and other moonshining gangsters ran amok in American cities. Even the Great Gatsby himself was in the moonshine racket. Since repeal of the Volstead Act in 1933, however, American moonshiners have mostly receded into the back hollows of the southeastern mountain regions as staple caricatures for movies and TV.

Over time, however, with the compounded rise in liquor taxes—levies on a legal \$13 bottle of whiskey in a state like Alabama, for example, raise the cost to \$21.50—illegal spirits have made a comeback. A moonshiner can retail a quart product with twice the alcoholic content for about three to five dollars, a significant discount, especially to people who count their pennies. Criminal gangs have moved into the enterprise and can produce thousands of liters of moonshine weekly, some sold in containers with labels that are just as counterfeit as the liquor, seeking to fool buyers into thinking it's the real thing. This has led to mass poisonings: During one week in 2015 a hundred people died in the city of Mumbai from consuming toxic spirits.

The growing cry to raise, yet again, the federal excise taxes on alcohol would no doubt be a boon for moonshiners. Today we even have “legal” moonshine (an utter oxymoron) sold on liquor store shelves as a novelty drink—unaged whiskey distilled under government regulations (and taxes) with such labels as Mosby's Spirit or Old Iron Pants, and other such foolishness. As the author of this succinct little chronicle insists, “If nobody demanded it, it would not exist.” ♦

BCA

Palmer's Method

The loyalty of Arnie's Army explained.

BY GEOFFREY NORMAN

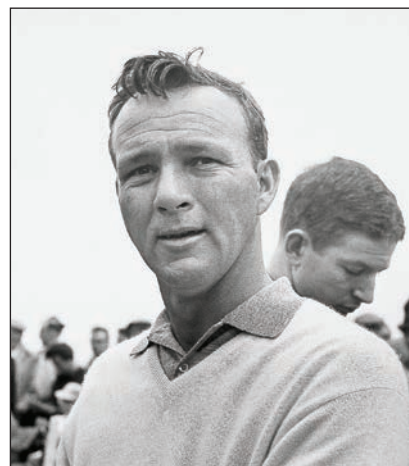
He was, by any strict measure, not the best ever to play his game. That would be Jack Nicklaus or, maybe, Tiger Woods. Perhaps Ben Hogan. Or Bobby Jones. But you could certainly make the argument that Arnold Palmer was the greatest ever for the game. And it isn't even close. No other golfer has ever been so widely known or well loved. None has done more to bring fans—and money—into golf, nor paid it back so handsomely. This is the case made by Tom Callahan in *Arnie*.

The book is, mercifully, not a conventional, detailed biography of Arnold Palmer. It is, rather, a narrative that strings together anecdotes and vignettes that are “about” both Palmer the man and the game that he played. It is a book, then, about golf in the Age of Palmer. So there are a lot of good stories about other golfers, most of whom were (like Gary Player) both rivals and friends. Palmer was liked, almost universally, by the people he competed with—the conspicuous exception being Ben Hogan, who was, arguably, the best in the game when Palmer came on the scene. Hogan was also Palmer's antithesis in personality: proud, aloof, arrogant to the point of rudeness. He was to golf what Ted Williams was to baseball, and he seemed to resent Palmer and would go out of his way to let him know that he held his game in contempt.

At a dinner with several other players, Palmer was in the middle of saying something about the golf swing when Hogan interrupted: “What do

Geoffrey Norman, a writer in Vermont, is a frequent contributor to
THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Arnie
The Life of Arnold Palmer
by Tom Callahan
Harper, 352 pp., \$27.99



Arnold Palmer (1961)

you know about the goddamned golf swing,” he said, “with that swing you've got?” The Palmer swing was, admittedly, no thing of beauty. It was quick and almost violent and, in the follow-through, he seemed almost to be hanging on for dear life. But Palmer used it to take over the world of golf and to expand it beyond its traditional, country club borders.

It helped that he was the son of a groundskeeper and teaching pro at a club in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. As a boy, he was allowed to play the course only in the early morning before the members arrived, or late in the evening, after they had gone home. He would eventually buy the course, which was apt: He'd come from the working class and now he had taken over the game. There was something authentic and purely American about his rise,

REX FEATURES/AP

and people who had never played golf or had any interest in the game began to follow it because of Arnold Palmer, whose name Ben Hogan could not bring himself to speak.

Some of this was timing: Palmer came along at the moment when the marriage between television and sports was on the way to being sanctified. And like John F. Kennedy, who was ascending in politics, he was perfect for television. The medium suited him and it, in turn, fed off both his personality and style of play. That style was aggressive—not a word one attached to the game of golf in those days. It was never Palmer's style to lay up on an approach or to lag a putt, and his legion of fans—known as Arnie's Army—loved him for it.

And hated the man who came along and became his rival, and then left him behind. The foot soldiers in Arnie's Army would call out to Jack Nicklaus—who might charitably have been described, in those days, as burly—"Hey, fat guts, hit it over here!" Palmer was the other thing. He was generous to Nicklaus when he was coming up, and later when Nicklaus began to dominate, there was friction—how could there not have been?—but in time they became friends. It was a relationship, Callahan writes, founded on "mutual jealousy. Grace came easily to Palmer; golf came easily to Nicklaus."

Palmer's skills at golf made him a friend of presidents. Also millions of both dollars and fans. He was the face of the game long after he won his great charge at Cherry Hills in 1960, coming from seven shots down and tied for 15th to win the U.S. Open in the last round. Or when he arrived at the turn on the last round of the U.S. Open in 1966, leading by seven strokes. Somehow he lost all seven of those strokes in eight holes and had to par the last to force a playoff the next day with Billy Casper—which he lost with a kind of epic inevitability. He brought drama to golf and would always "go for it," like the Roy McAvoy character in *Tin Cup*.

That was the golfer Palmer, and his on-course career would have made a nice book. What made Palmer into Arnie was the man and the man makes Callahan's book a delightful read.

There are many stories of his generosity and exuberance for people—not just friends or fans—and among the best that Callahan tells here is one about a letter Palmer received from a couple of troops in Vietnam. They amused themselves, they wrote, by practicing sand shots out of a "bunker" in an environment where that word had some sinister meanings. Palmer answered:

Dear Wally and Jeff,

Was great hearing from you both. ... I send my sincere wishes for your return to Chicago safely and soon.

Palmer added that the men could expect to receive two Arnold Palmer sand wedges from the company that

manufactured his signature clubs. And he closed his letter with the hope that "you won't be hitting too many shots out of bounds. Take care of yourselves and I'll look forward to seeing you in Chicago sometime." When they were both safely home, one of the two went to a tournament where Palmer was playing: "I walked up to him and told him, 'I'm one of the guys you sent sand wedges in Vietnam.' He said, 'Are you Jeff or Wally?' Can you believe it? He remembered our names."

It is a good story in a good book about a good guy who did a lot of good things, and also played a real good game of golf. ♦

BCA

Empathetic Eye

Take another look at the art of George W. Bush.

BY JAMES GARDNER



George W. Bush has been painting for several years now, but has only recently become an artist. His first paintings, mostly of world leaders, were remarkably well received, even by an art establishment that had hardly been friendly to his administration. And yet, although those early paintings were earnest and well-intentioned, they were

Portraits of Courage
A Commander in Chief's Tribute to America's Warriors
by George W. Bush
Crown, 192 pp., \$35

clearly the work of an amateur who, if he hadn't been president, would not have received or deserved much attention.

But the works included in this new book are another matter. Mr. Bush has learned an astonishing amount in the

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

COURTESY OF PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

intervening years—during which he has studied under three distinguished teachers—and the latest results require no special pleading. The transformation is subtle: Bush works in the same Neo-Expressionist idiom as before, but he now does so with vastly greater skill. That, in itself, is a striking development in a 70-year-old man who, into his sixties, exhibited an indifference to art that verged on hostility.

“When George and I married,” Laura Bush writes in the foreword, “if someone had told me that he would become President, I would have thought, ‘Well, maybe.’ . . . But if someone said, ‘One day you will be writing a foreword for a book that includes George’s paintings,’ I would have said, ‘No way.’” Such is the wondrous improbability of his belated artistic flowering.

Portraits of Courage reproduces 66 full-color images of individual members of the armed forces, as well as a four-panel group portrait of 35 additional soldiers. Each of the paintings is accompanied by a short text in which the former president explains how he came to know the sitter. Most of these men and women, depicted as disembodied heads, have suffered some physical or psychological hardship in the course of their military service, and the proceeds from the book will go to the George W. Bush Institute’s Military Service Initiative, which was set up to help veterans of post-9/11 conflicts.

In a typical entry, Bush writes thus of the broadly smiling Master Sergeant Israel Del Toro Jr.:

When I visited Brooke Army Medical Center on New Year’s Day 2006, “DT” was in a medically induced coma. His Humvee had been hit by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan the month before, severely burning 80 percent of his body. His fingers and nose were pretty much gone, and the military physicians had given him a 15 percent chance of surviving.

Some of the images in this volume continue to betray those elements of amateurism that were more pronounced in Bush’s earlier works: He learned to paint before he learned to draw, and



Sergeant Michael Joseph Leonard Politowicz, USMC

his ability to depict the full human figure, especially in motion, is still underdeveloped. But such weaknesses come as no surprise. Far more interesting is the fact that many of these works break through to real power and insight. Their technique, as I have suggested, is largely a response, perhaps indirectly, to such German Expressionist portraitists as Max Beckmann, Oskar Kokoschka, and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. And so the forehead of Sergeant First Class Jeremy Henderson is rendered in bright orange while his graying temples are green. Sergeant Daniel Caràra is a composite of purples, browns, and golds.

But in general, the former president, like Lucian Freud, is restrained in the degree of formal and chromatic distortion that he allows himself. As with all of these forebears, Bush uses thick strokes and (I believe) a palette knife to produce a lively likeness that is hardly photographic, even though he chooses to paint from photographs rather than from live sitters. But even without seeking a photographic likeness, these paintings have the unassailable ring of truth. At their best, they powerfully communicate the living, breathing essence of the man or woman in question.

According to many who have met

George W. Bush—and this seems likely even to those of us who know him only by way of television—one of his most potent gifts as a politician is his interpersonal skills, his empathy, and his ability to connect to each person he encounters. It is this quality, perfectly transmitted through his art, that animates and imparts to it a rare power. Bush has an uncanny knack for painting eyes, which often challenge more inveterate portraitists. This skill seems to bring viewers into direct communion with the subjects of his paintings. Almost by definition, given the injuries that first brought these men and women to the president’s attention, their eyes betray some pain. Sometimes it is clear and present, at other times residual but still importunate in memory.

From a purely formal point of view, on the evidence of, say, the latest Whitney Biennial, the thickly

impasted, Neo-Expressionist style in which Bush works is the preferred idiom of those artists—hardly in the majority—who still choose to paint in the first place. But there are essential differences. Artists like Celeste Dupuy-Spencer, Henry Taylor, and Aliza Nisenbaum prefer to erect, through paint, a wall of ironic disengagement from their subjects. The paint textures, which I find generally less interesting than Bush’s, seem (perhaps by design) to be lifeless and flat. In Bush’s best portraits, by contrast, the paint itself, no less than what it depicts, hits home.

That being the case, I offer this (only partially mischievous) suggestion to the Whitney’s curators for their next biennial exhibition: Given that they seem to thrive on controversy, they would come a cropper if they included a few of the latest works of the former president. In no way do these fall below the general level of quality of the works in the latest exhibition, and stylistically, they are largely compatible with the paintings on view. Let me put it another way, and here is a sentence I never thought I’d live to read, let alone write: If anyone can save the Whitney Biennial exhibition from irrelevance, that man may very well be George W. Bush. ♦

COURTESY OF PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

The Big Trial

Courtroom as theater, with Southern accent.

BY JON L. BREEN

With its adversarial structure and set procedural rules, the trial can be a perfect dramatic vehicle, offering the strategy and suspense of a sports event alongside the seriousness of life and death. The Big Trial subgenre of American fiction dates back at least as far as James Fenimore Cooper's *The Ways of the Hour* (1850), about a murder prosecution and very similar in structure to later courtroom and detective novels. Though contemporary readers may find its societal viewpoints disturbing, it's at least readable as a curiosity.

Twentieth-century Big Trial highlights are numerous: Journalist Frances Noyes Hart's *The Bellamy Trial* (1927), set almost entirely in the courtroom, drew on her experience covering the Hall-Mills murder case; Meyer Levin's *Compulsion* (1956), a fictionalization of the Leopold-Loeb case, and Robert Traver's *Anatomy of a Murder* (1958) were major bestsellers that preceded a plethora of trial books in subsequent decades. Scott Turow's *Presumed Innocent* (1987) and John Grisham's *A Time to Kill* (1989) gave new energy to the vogue for legal thrillers.

The most recent candidate for the Big Trial hall of fame arrives by a circuitous route. When a horrendous traffic accident almost ended his life in 2011, novelist Greg Iles had already published three books about lawyer Penn Cage, a former prosecutor in Houston who returned to his hometown of Natchez, Mississippi, and was elected mayor. In common with many contemporary series characters, widower Penn

Jon L. Breen is the author, most recently, of The Threat of Nostalgia and Other Stories.

Mississippi Blood

by Greg Iles
Morrow, 705 pp., \$28.99

and his precocious preteen daughter have dealt with one personal tragedy after another, beginning with the early death of Penn's wife. Iles's ambitious post-recovery project, a trilogy beginning with *Natchez Burning* (2014), has several themes and concerns. One is the New South's need to come to terms with the Old, and another is surely a reflection of his own survival: the human resilience of many of the characters to achieve amazing feats when other characters (and readers) have given them up as virtually dead.

The main action is set in 2005, with flashbacks to the 1960s. Penn's father, Dr. Tom Cage, a dedicated physician beloved by local citizens both white and black, is about to be charged with the murder—whether euthanasia, assisted suicide, or something with a more sinister motive—of his African-American former nurse Viola Turner, who had left town years before under threat from the Double Eagles, a deadly offshoot of the Ku Klux Klan. Suffering from terminal cancer, she has now secretly returned to Natchez, where she has been treated by Dr. Tom.

Though the reader has reason to expect the case to be tried (or at least resolved short of court) in the first volume's nearly 800 pages, it doesn't happen. Enough else is going on—focused on the murderous activities of the Double Eagles, including an early plot to assassinate Robert Kennedy, and, late in the novel, an extraordinarily powerful series of action sequences—that the lack of a definitive answer to whodunit

is excusable, even for those of us who usually resent anything resembling a cliffhanger in a novel. The case is still pending in *Natchez Burning's* equally hefty sequel *The Bone Tree* (2015). Iles is not given to writing short books: The third of the trilogy, the comparatively compact 705-page *Mississippi Blood*, finally delivers what the trial buff has been waiting for. More than a third of the book is spent in court, and the case is covered thoroughly from opening statement by the prosecutor to closing arguments from both sides, with many plot twists and dramatic confrontations along the way.

The makeup of the trial court illustrates how much things have changed in the Deep South. Though the defendant is white, the judge and both advocates, district attorney Shadrach Johnson and aged defender Quentin Avery, are black. The jury makeup is seven blacks to five whites. Whether because of the peculiarities of Mississippi law or the odd choices of the advocates, many aspects of the trial are surprising: There is no required discovery unless the defense requests it—and they don't; the jury is not sent out during the cross-talk of advocates and judge; and both sides get away with presenting evidence that is arguably inadmissible.

The great defender Avery, who made his name as a civil rights lawyer before making the bulk of his money in corporate law, works from a wheelchair after losing both legs to diabetes and has other health problems. His client is no better off, suffering angina attacks. As the trial gets underway, Avery's decisions make the Cage family and its supporters wonder if he is up to the job. He does not invoke "the rule" that would prohibit witnesses from attending others' testimony. He makes no objection to the prosecutor's emphasis on race in his opening statement. He makes no request for a change of venue. He makes no objection to a reference to the defendant's involvement in an earlier murder. He gives no opening statement. He stipulates to the admissibility of a disturbing videotape of the victim's death. He doesn't cross-examine the coroner on the autopsy results. He doesn't object

to possible hearsay or leading questions—and essentially appears to be doing nothing at all.

He has told Penn he will be taking an unconventional approach to the defense, but as one lawyer-friend notes, “Like driving thirty miles per hour is an unconventional way to win the Daytona 500.” The Cage family wants the old advocate off the case, but Penn points out that only Dr. Tom, who hired Avery, can fire him. Fortunately, the defender has some surprises to spring, but the outcome remains in doubt throughout.

The characters here are all harboring secrets, whether their own or those of others; and by the end, all will be made clear. Having read the first two volumes is not essential to the reader’s pleasure or understanding. Iles fills in all the necessary backstory.

Despite the high page counts, Greg Iles can’t be called a long-winded writer. Far from being padded, the novels are packed with incident, with new plot points and character insights on nearly every page. The intricacy of

plot, large and well-differentiated cast, vivid background detail, and relentless pace justify the length. Who brought on the death of Viola Turner is uncertain until near the end of the third volume, and though the final revelation may surprise, clues were already there in the first book. In some respects, Iles is an old-school detective-story writer, including bizarre murder methods made believable in context.

There are a few things to gripe about in *Mississippi Blood*: Soldier-turned-writer Serenity Butler seems too much of a superhero, and her romance with Penn is unconvincing and tiresome; the evil Snake Knox is a one-note villain, less interesting than he was in *Natchez Burning*; shifts in viewpoint from first to third person are occasionally intrusive; and the action finale, well managed as it is, struck me as anticlimactic. But these are minor complaints. *Mississippi Blood* is a significant contribution to legal and mystery fiction, and the whole trilogy to the literature of the South. ♦

be synced. We have organs for each of our senses, but no one time-sensor. Our organs and cells contain clocks of their own, and our conscious sense of time, which arises from more than one area of the brain, must be coordinated by a “suprachiasmatic nucleus.”

As Burdick puts it, on a flight from Paris, “When my suprachiasmatic nucleus lands in New York, my liver may still be on Nova Scotia time and my pancreas may be somewhere over Iceland.” On long flights he advises timing your meals as if you’d already arrived at the destination city, to get your digestive organs ready. Your liver tends to set its clock to regular meal-times. So if you need help getting up in the morning, you might be strict about eating breakfast, as your liver will help wake you. (On the other hand, nighttime binge-eating is the high, straight road to obesity.)

The origins of all those body time-sensors may lie in the scum on the surface of a pond. Every algal cell in that scum is a kind of clock responding to morning, noon, and night. Like algae, underneath the social clock, our bodies respond to the solar day.

One summer, Burdick joined a field station in the Arctic, at the edge of Toolik Lake on Alaska’s North Slope, where the sun doesn’t set from mid-May to mid-August. Under constant light, the biologists at Toolik slept and worked when they pleased, fanning “out across the landscape at all hours to gather, measure, synthesize, compare and converse.” A 6:30 A.M. breakfast became the social focal point, followed by bed for many. Others barely slept for weeks, putting themselves at risk of psychosis.

In darkness, we also drift away from the solar day. Burdick tells the touching and horrific tale of a scientist, Michel Siffre, who twice isolated himself underground for months (wired to a research team up above) to measure how his body responded to the absence of external time cues. Siffre kept his own calendar, based on when he woke up. On his 37th day underground, he thought he was on Day 30. Unglued from the solar day, his temperature and sleep cycle, normally in sync, separated. He began sleeping for



The Human Clock

Time marches on, but why so fast?

BY TEMMA EHRENFELD

Once upon a time, it didn’t matter if a clock tower in Spoleto kept time slightly differently than a tower in Assisi and far differently than one in Rome. In *Why Time Flies* we read about the experts in Greenwich who run data from 80 labs around the world into an algorithm that favors the more accurate clocks. The process of arriving at “Coordinated Universal Time” takes five days: “The world clock exists only on paper and only in retrospect; . . . it is a newsletter called *Circular T*,” Alan Burdick tells us. The newsletter comes monthly, and people

Temma Ehrenfeld is a writer in New York.

Why Time Flies

A Mostly Scientific Investigation

by Alan Burdick

Simon & Schuster, 320 pp., \$28

running clocks around the world tweak them to get closer in the next month. There is no perfect timekeeper.

Burdick takes his time elegantly explaining its mysteries as a human phenomenon, blending philosophy, history, psychology, and candid introspection. The time he cares about is a “property of the mind,” a bodily function and a social agreement.

Even within our bodies, clocks must

15-hour stretches while his temperature cycle maintained a 26-hour beat.

When he emerged, he reported that his entire stay underground felt like one continuous present, with no clear memories to establish sequence.

Here the reader will learn about everyday inaccuracy in our perceptions. Take duration: In lab tests, a larger or moving dot seems to last longer on a screen than one that is small or still. As Burdick notes, our brains bend time to enhance our sense of power. If you believe that pressing a button causes a beep, you'll think the beep came sooner than it actually did. Our brains make up simultaneity so we can make sense of our world. Burdick gives the example of glancing at an American flag spread out on a lawn: Our neurons register red light before green and both before blue. But we don't see a smear of red, green, then blue—because our brains “recalibrate the visual streams and intermittently set the time to zero,” Burdick explains, quoting a scientist who thinks that we do the reset when we're blinking:

The blink says “I name this ‘now’” and your actions and perceptions that follow shortly thereafter reorganize themselves around the declaration: *This is now. This is now. This is now.*

Time, at once a property of the mind and a tether to other people, regularly gets us in trouble. Burdick doesn't delve into personality and its relationship to time, though he often confesses to anxiety. As I read his thoughtful account, I kept noticing how many of our issues might be understood as a gap or disorder of clocks. One person is chronically late; another always feels rushed or impatient.

Alone or together, we celebrate when we lose awareness of time, when the tether doesn't pull. Time flies, or a peaceful afternoon feels rich and long. If we are with others, we say we are “in sync”—which is not, or not only, a metaphor. Matching your experience of time to another person's is a hallmark of courtesy or intimacy, deliberate when we slow our pace to

walk alongside our grandmothers and more instinctive when we match body language or the pace of emotional response and revelation.

Peace with time. Isn't that a fair definition of happiness? We casually talk about hating time as a tether—yet that tether is also a source of our greatest satisfactions. We get a rush of competence meeting a deadline. Musicians coordinate with the conductor's wand. We celebrate holidays. The trains are beautiful when they arrive and leave on time.

Time, as physicists debate it, runs at different speeds, is distorted by matter, and, according to Einstein, is not an arrow pointing in one direction. Burdick doesn't give us any reason to believe in the fantasy of time machines. He also doesn't explore

mysticism, the extended experience of timelessness. But in showing how our sense of time is human (and culture-bound) he offers a kind of freedom. We learn that children can't accurately distinguish “before” from “after” until the age of 4 or so. The Pirahã, in Brazil, rarely refer to time at all.

Aging doesn't have to be regarded as a slipping-away. The answer to “why time flies” is that it probably doesn't. We lament, “Where does the time go?” and believe that time feels faster as we age, yet we answer questionnaires in ways that suggest that, in fact, our sense of time doesn't change much from decade to decade. If time is an ocean, we are the fish, complaining as we swim. ♦

BCA

Out of the Shadow

TR's (eldest) son was a hero in spite of himself.

BY TEVI TROY

In the 1962 D-Day ensemble *The Longest Day*, an aging Henry Fonda plays the small but important role of General Ted Roosevelt Jr. General Roosevelt, three decades older than the troops he is leading, hides his cane in order to persuade his superiors to allow his participation in the invasion, then uses the cane as he exhorts troops forward under withering fire on Utah Beach.

Roosevelt died a month after D-Day, age 56, not of any injuries but of a heart attack. And unless you have seen the movie, it's unlikely you know much about him. He seems to be a somewhat forgotten figure in American history, an oversight Tim Brady is trying to correct in this new biography.

Tevi Troy, presidential historian and former White House aide, is the author, most recently, of Shall We Wake the President? Two Centuries of Disaster Management from the Oval Office.

His Father's Son

The Life of General Ted Roosevelt Jr.

by Tim Brady

Berkley, 352 pp., \$27

Brady recognizes that Ted Jr., living in the shadow of a famous father, never managed to fully emerge from that large shadow. In fact, as Brady puts it, Ted worshiped his father but “was not an obvious heir to his father's legacy.” He was small and bespectacled and long felt the pressure of living up to the exploits of the former president who shared his name. As a child, Ted was dressed in the peculiar manner that fin de siècle well-to-do parents imposed on their children—complete with curls, shorts, and effeminate hats—but the look did not suit him. As Brady puts it, in photographs from the time, accompanied by the ubiquitous book, Ted “looks for all the world

like a precocious Talmudic scholar.”

He grew up, went to Harvard, like his father, then served valiantly in World War I. He also badly injured his knee, which contributed to the need for the cane he would later wield at Normandy. Everyone had high expectations of him, but he could not seem to measure up. In fact, his distant cousin Franklin consistently outshined him, securing positions that Ted unsuccessfully sought (governor of New York) and also aspired to (president of the United States).

Part of this was due to FDR’s superior political talent, but Ted was also knocked off course politically by the Teapot Dome scandal. As assistant secretary of the Navy—the same position TR and FDR held on their paths to the top—Ted signed off on the oil leases at the heart of the controversy. While cleared of wrongdoing, the scandal also meant an effective end to his quest for elective office. A few years later, Ted was serving as governor-general of the Philippines when Franklin became president. When asked by a reporter to describe his relationship to his more famous relative, Ted replied wryly, “Fifth cousin about to be removed.”

While he may not have lived up to expectations, or to his father’s legacy, Ted did manage to have an interesting life. In addition to his work in the Philippines, he also served as governor-general of Puerto Rico. But the Democratic FDR’s long reign shut the door to appointed office: Once FDR was sworn in, Ted would never live again under another president. And in what was effectively political exile, Ted enjoyed life in New York, working as an editor at Doubleday—his Knickerbocker Club pal Nelson Doubleday got him the job—and hanging out with Manhattan’s literary and cultural elites. As Brady puts it, “Widely read, an international traveler with a broad circle of friends and connections everywhere, Ted fit well into the literary world of New York.”

The famous authors he worked with included Pearl S. Buck and H.G. Wells. He also made an aborted effort to get Justice Louis Brandeis to write his autobiography. (The plan failed, though: As his friend Felix Frankfurter

told him, “Of one thing I am sure and that is that nothing is farther from his mind than the writing of an autobiography.”) Ted even hung out with the gang from the legendary Algonquin Round Table. Fortunately, as the fifth-cousin-about-to-be-removed crack showed, he had the wit for it.

He was also co-captain of an annual baseball game that included famous stars from multiple fields. The 1938 team that Ted headed, for example, included Robert Ripley, Grantland Rice, Jack Dempsey, Richard Rodgers, Rube Goldberg, even Babe Ruth. The opposing team featured Jimmy Doolittle, Westbrook Pegler, Gene Tunney, David Sarnoff, William J. Donovan, and Heywood Broun. Ripley could have put teams with that much star power as a feature in his *Believe It or Not!* series.

Ted appears to have loved the comfortable upper-class life of New York; but in the end, duty called, and he returned to military service. Just as in World War I, he was once again a war hero. He participated in more

amphibious assaults in World War II than any other American general. His jeep had the words “Rough Rider” on it, in homage to his father, and his men loved him. He was awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for his efforts on D-Day, given posthumously to his wife Eleanor (yes, she was named Eleanor as well). In describing Ted’s heroics, Secretary of War Henry Stimson read from the medal presentation:

Although the enemy had the beach under constant direct fire, Brigadier General Roosevelt moved from one locality to another, rallying men around him, directed and personally led them against the enemy. . . . He thus contributed substantially to the successful establishment of the beachhead in France.

He never became president, or even governor of New York. He never outshined his famous father, and his cousin surpassed him on the ladder of success. But Ted Roosevelt was a true American hero who deserves the epithet that Brady has given him with this book: It was a life well lived. ♦



The Master’s Voice

What we know of Bach, and may never comprehend.

BY JOHN CHECK

Supreme arbiter and lawgiver of music, a master comparable in greatness of stature with Aristotle in philosophy and Leonardo da Vinci in art.

No overstatement whatsoever attaches to this, the opening of the entry for Johann Sebastian Bach in *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*. So vast and stunning is his achievement that Beethoven believed him misnamed: Playing on the German word *Bach* (brook), he said that the composer should,

John Check teaches music theory at the University of Central Missouri.

Bach

A Musical Biography
by Peter Williams
Cambridge, 718 pp., \$49.99

instead, be called *Meer* (ocean).

Bach: A Musical Biography is Peter Williams’s third work about the life of Bach. It is his longest and his last: He died just months before its publication. Like the earlier two biographies, this one is organized around the composer’s obituary, written together by son Carl Philipp Emanuel and former student Johann Friedrich Agricola. Williams’s working plan throughout entails quoting excerpts from the obituary, then

fleshing them out in considerable detail.

Born in 1685 in Eisenach, Bach came from a distinguished line of church musicians. His parents having died before his tenth birthday—his father possibly of diabetes—he went to live with an older brother, who taught him keyboard. While young, Bach engaged in a range of musical activities, including singing (he possessed a fine voice), tuning keyboard instruments (an endless task), and copying music (which Williams maintains was “crucial” to his development). Even in early attempts at composition, he was, as a teenager, “endeavoring to imitate the music of his Thuringian elders.” And not those elders only: Young Bach absorbed, and strove to incorporate for his own use, the distinctive musical styles of Italy and France. The acquisitiveness of his musical mind defies comprehension.

Bach was a master of counterpoint, a term referring to the relationship between two or more lines of music. Crucial to this relationship is a balance of dependence and independence. Contrapuntal dependence comes about when two lines—say a violin and a cello—move in lockstep, with the highs and lows in one instrument matched more or less exactly by those of the other. Independence, on the other hand, results when the violin pursues its own course—with its own rhythms, its own highs and lows—against a cello line pursuing a very different course, with a rhythm and contour all its own. Bach’s balance of these opposing forces is unparalleled, and this is why his counterpoint continues to be studied closely in leading conservatories, schools, and departments of music around the world.

Another hallmark of Bach’s work is economy of means. Seldom in a piece of his does a musical idea or motive appear only once. Much more often it is used repeatedly: It may appear upside down or in reverse; it may be passed imitatively from one instrument, or part, to another; its rhythms may be drawn out (a device called augmentation) or accelerated (diminution). A musical idea for Bach may appear in any of these ways or, just as often, in some combination thereof. For a relatively simple example of his thriftiness, consider the close of

the Fugue in B-flat Major from the first book of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. The idea in the melody six bars from the end returns four bars from the end in the bass; at the same time, the idea in the bass reappears in the melody. These two parts, melody and bass, pivot effortlessly around a middle part that remains essentially unchanged. Such thrift, such economy, however, is no mere end in itself: Rather, it is used to foster compositional unity.



Johann Sebastian Bach
by Elias Gottlob Haussmann (1746)

Bach was single-minded in his dedication to the craft of musical composition, believing (as a devout Lutheran) that he owed it to God to make a good return on his gifts. As Williams explains:

Seriousness of purpose was a natural product of the kind of piety with which a Lutheran child was inculcated: the grateful reverence that could lead Bach in both youth and maturity to write J.J. (*Jesu juva*, “Jesus help”) on a manuscript. This he would do on any sort of music: on various “secular” cantatas in Leipzig, on an early church cantata (No. 71), on a manuscript of harpsichord concertos for the concert-room 30 years later, and later still on a set of chorale-preludes. When in the autograph manuscripts of the set of concertos and the set of chorales the first work of each is inscribed J.J., there is no reason to think it an empty incantation.

Behind his unceasing effort was a powerful combination of humility and devotion.

Williams is quite good in portraying the prosaic conditions of Bach’s everyday life. We learn, for example, of his search for positions of greater prestige with commensurately higher salaries. (Why this search came to an end once he reached Leipzig, the city where he spent his last 27 years, has never fully been answered.) We read of his nearly lifelong work as an inspector of organs at nearby churches. (The going expectation was that an inspection be followed by a recital.) He encountered difficulties throughout his career with his employers, especially when they saw fit to promote a musician of whom he disapproved. (He objected in these cases that his musical authority was being compromised.) In one of his few surviving letters, Bach complained to an old friend about the high cost of living in Leipzig, a town that between 1700 and 1750 underwent a 60 percent increase in population. Sometimes, when he played for a parish wedding, he would receive part of his fee in wine.

The most provocative stretch here deals with an extended criticism of Bach’s work leveled by the music journalist Johann Adolph Scheibe. Writing in 1737, Scheibe claimed that Bach’s music “[discards] nature” in favor of “a turgid and confused manner.” Worse, it contains “too much art” and thereby “[obscures] beauty.” Its intricate contrapuntal writing bears the evidence of “heavy labor.” Bach’s defense was mounted—“rather longwindedly,” according to Williams—by J.A. Birnbaum, a professor of rhetoric at Leipzig University. Birnbaum countered that Scheibe’s charges were “indiscriminate,” that Bach’s counterpoint is far from confused, and that nature can never be compromised by too much art. Williams notes that “a few more replies and counter-replies” followed, but one can assume, in keeping with critical arguments then as now, that few minds were changed. And certainly not Bach’s.

Without explicitly taking Scheibe's side, Williams holds that certain particulars of his criticism "were not very well answered." He writes, "Though finding fault with Bach's music rather goes against the grain of the last two and a half centuries, a rounded picture of it emerges only from taking into account its less appealing moments." Citing two works composed at virtually the same time—just months, in fact, after the publication of Scheibe's criticism, a coronation anthem by Handel ("My heart is inditing") and a cantata by Bach (BWV 198)—Williams writes that "one can see what Scheibe meant and how he would feel his opinion of the two composers to be totally justified." Bach's general "tendency towards the abstract, the transcendental and the economical" forbids, or makes exceedingly rare, moments of "compensating whimsy or charm."

Exactly. There is an openness—a sense of space, an absence of clutter, a lightness or agreeableness—in the best of Handel's music that simply isn't found in Bach's. And the clinching point is this: Not a single work of Bach's is more beloved than Handel's *Messiah*—and this is owing to that oratorio's undeniable, ineffable charm.

The reigning tone of *Bach* is cautiously authoritative. In one place, Williams warns against "projecting Enlightenment sensibilities and assumptions back to an earlier time," something that present-day readers are prone to do, especially when it comes to music. In another place, he impugns a "superficial reading" of a complex matter—the deference shown by Bach in his dedications to members of the nobility—put forward by Edward Said, a "politically committed" writer. Elsewhere, asserting that the effect on the composer of the early death of his parents is a "big unknown," Williams adds, with devastating efficiency, "except perhaps to Freudians." Repeatedly, one reads of "questions to which there will never be an answer," learns that "virtually nothing is known" about this or that pertinent detail, is told that there "must be gaps in the record" here, is urged not to make "fanciful conjec-

tures" there. The best Bach scholars, to their credit, are nothing if not a scrupulously careful breed. Peter Williams was one of their number.

Bach's influence is so vast that it is impossible to conceive of the music of Beethoven, Brahms, and others without him. Interesting, then, how a percipient critic, writing more than 125 years before his birth, foretold a figure of his magnitude. Gioseffo Zarlino, the greatest music theorist of the 16th century, wrote at the close of his third book of the *Harmonic Institutions* (1558) that he looked forward to a day when music

would be "so well established and perfect" that composers would see no reason for deviating from the examples of the best masters:

I say this because I do not see that it is now in such a perfect state as may come. This I cannot describe but can imagine. It may come when music is embraced by some noble spirit whose goal will not be the mechanical one of gain but honor and immortal glory.

Zarlino's prophecy would be fulfilled in the noble spirit, and immortal work, of Johann Sebastian Bach. ♦



Patience Rewarded

How the Cubs finally put an end to the drought.

BY MICHAEL NELSON

Years ago the popular sociologist Vance Packard told me that he hated to have one of his books paired with another in a review. "All a review like that ever says is, 'This book is better than that one,'" he complained, "and you can't use a quote like that in an ad."

So here goes. *The Cubs Way*, Tom Verducci's new book about the Chicago Cubs' astonishing ascent from chronic losers to world champions, is the best baseball book in at least a decade: thoughtful, interesting, literate, deeply reported, and entirely persuasive. And it's better—way better—than David Kaplan's new book on the same subject. Kaplan hosts the Cubs' pregame and postgame shows on Comcast Sportsnet, which means that he's gotten used to the sort of aching anodyne platitudes that players, managers, and front-office personnel confine themselves to in

Michael Nelson, Fulmer professor of political science at Rhodes College, is the author of Resilient America: Electing Nixon in 1968, Channeling Dissent, and Dividing Government.

The Plan
Epstein, Maddon, and the Audacious Blueprint for a Cubs Dynasty
by David Kaplan
Triumph Books, 304 pp., \$24.95

The Cubs Way
The Zen of Building the Best Team in Baseball and Breaking the Curse
by Tom Verducci
Crown, 384 pp., \$28

broadcast interviews. The bland, cliché-ridden interview is the game-day genre in which sports figures are trained and of which they are masters, and it's fine as far as it goes.

The problem is that books are a different genre, and simply dumping dozens of vapid and lengthy quotations from notebook to page doesn't cut it. It's bad enough to hear (but much worse to read) second baseman Ben Zobrist saying that "we just need to play our game and we need to keep it simple," first baseman Anthony Rizzo declaring that "we're living the dream," or ex-Cub pitcher Kerry Wood announcing, "It's epic. It's amazing"—and so on.

When Kaplan leaves off the quotation marks and offers his own take on things, matters seldom improve. For example, he reports that “Pilates, weight training, a strict diet combined with multiple hours a day of stretching, and a mental approach that is hyper focused have all contributed to making [Jake] Arrieta one of the toughest pitchers to get a hit off.”

Compare that unilluminating generality to *Sports Illustrated* writer Tom Verducci’s account of what Arrieta actually does on days when he is pitching. Five hours before he takes the mound, Arrieta stretches for 40 minutes, rides a stationary bike for 20 minutes, finds a quiet place to watch video and meditate for two hours, spends 20 minutes on a Pilates reformer, works with stretch bands in the weight room, puts on his uniform, lowers his heart rate by listening to mellow electronic music, begins his on-field warm-up with a few sprints, yoga poses, and pushups, and only then starts throwing with tosses that range from 40 to 250 feet before he bears down on the bullpen mound.

After reading Kaplan, all I knew was that Arrieta does a bunch of stuff; after reading Verducci, I understand what it means to be a starting pitcher on game day.

Tom Verducci’s reporting is more than granular; it’s also analytic. Cubs president Theo Epstein tends to get lumped in with all the other brainy “numbers-crunching wizards” who have flooded into baseball since Michael Lewis published *Moneyball* (2003). Verducci liberates him from the stereotype. What Epstein knew that the other stats guys did not was that he could no longer “fish in uncrowded waters for undervalued players” as he had with the Boston Red Sox before every other baseball executive learned to play the sabermetrics game.

He realized that in the new era, the “one edge” he and soulmate Jed Hoyer, the Cubs’ general manager, “could exploit was found in a very old-school resource: people.” To build a team—not just a collection of individual stars—Epstein fleshed out the data by emphasizing the unquantifiable quality of character. In other words, he sought players



The Chicago Cubs celebrate their 2016 World Series win over the Cleveland Indians.

who would rack up impressive OPSs—the sum of a hitter’s on-base and slugging percentages—and also “care about winning, care about each other.” And while everybody else was drafting pitchers, Epstein focused on position players who, because they’re out there every day, can do more for a team both on the field and in the locker room than the typically more self-possessed, once-every-five-days moundsmen.

In 2011, taking over a Cubs franchise whose last World Series victory occurred while Florence Nightingale, Mark Twain, and the Ottoman Empire were still around, and that had just lost 91 games, Epstein resolved to build the Cubs on a foundation of four yet-to-be-found “impact” players who could hold down the top or middle of the batting order.

Signing big-name free agents and paying them huge salaries based on their past success was not the route he wanted to take, although he made exceptions for starting pitcher Jon Lester and closer Aroldis Chapman. Instead, Epstein resolved to find future stars of good character when they were young and wait the necessary three-to-five years it would take for them to develop in the minor leagues. Rizzo (a cancer survivor) was the first; third baseman Kris Bryant, outfielder Kyle Schwarber, and shortstop Addison Russell followed. Epstein acquired his first

star pitcher in a different way, as the result of an in-house “change of scenery” survey of the league that enabled him to see that moving from the inhospitable Baltimore Orioles to the Cubs might be all it took to unleash the high-strung Arrieta’s talent.

Waiting for these players to develop while the Cubs were losing a combined 289 games during Epstein’s first three seasons was the most disciplined act of all, made possible by a supportive new owner, Tom Ricketts, who was as patient with Epstein as Epstein was with his young prospects. In 2016, a year after signing the winning Tampa Bay Rays manager Joe Maddon, all the parts came together: The Cubs won 103 regular season games (8 more than any other major league team), swept through the San Francisco Giants and Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League playoffs, and defeated the Cleveland Indians in the seven-game World Series.

The Cubs World Series lineup, at times, included six players who were 24 years old and younger, all of them talented enough to play at the game’s highest level and poised enough not to panic or turn on each other when the team fell behind the Indians by three games to one. Epstein’s patience in building the team gave it a root system that should enable the Cubs to thrive for years to come. ♦

Bohemian Rhapsody

The woman who spoke the language of children.

BY AMY HENDERSON

The prolific children's book author Margaret Wise Brown (1910-1952) began her most famous work, *Goodnight Moon*, by describing how *In the great green room / There was a telephone / And a red balloon*. This 1947 classic has sold 27 million copies and, along with such other bestsellers as *The Runaway Bunny* (1942), established Brown as the leading children's author of her generation. But Brown's own life was far from warm and fuzzy, and this new biography portrays her as a complicated creative soul.

Endowed with head-turning glamour and an unquenchable spirit for adventure, Brown was an obsessive writer, often jotting ideas on scraps of paper. She told her stories in a voice a child would want to hear, although she always claimed that children as a group didn't interest her. But as biographer Amy Gary explains, Brown's vivacious veneer masked a perpetual need for love and approval. While her professional life resulted in constant publication and widespread recognition, her emotional life perpetually ricocheted between ecstasy and desperation.

In the Great Green Room came about because of a fable-worthy coincidence. Gary had been the editor of publishing at Lucasfilm, and head of publishing at Pixar; in 1990, she was co-editor of a small publishing company and working with Margaret Wise Brown's sister Roberta to reprint some of Brown's "largely out-of-print and mostly forgotten books." Almost nonchalantly, she asked Roberta if her sister, who had died suddenly, had left any unpublished or unfinished works.

Amy Henderson is historian emerita of the National Portrait Gallery.

In the Great Green Room

The Brilliant and Bold Life of Margaret Wise Brown

by Amy Gary

Flatiron Books, 304 pp., \$26.99



Margaret Wise Brown (ca. 1945)

Roberta said that her sister was working on a collection of poetry when she died, and that all those papers were stuffed in a trunk in the attic of her barn. Eventually, Gary got access to the trunk and was stunned to discover not only the unfinished book of poetry but hundreds of songs, music scores, and stories. She explains that she has spent the majority of her career since working in these papers, cataloguing them, reading Brown's diaries and letters, studying her contracts, and discovering how closely she worked with the artists who illustrated her books. Amidst all the intensity, creativity, and turmoil she uncovered, Gary's major discovery was that Margaret Wise Brown knew "how to live with awe."

Although Leonard S. Marcus wrote a well-received biography of Brown in 1992, the enormous new stash of material justifies this new study. Both biographers were surprised at the gorgeous dynamo who wrote about kittens and mittens and bunnies. Brown came from

a wealthy family that seems to have ignored her; after boarding school, she attended Hollins College in Virginia. Her favorite sport became beagling, a pastime that requires hunters to chase big bunnies (hares) over hill and dale on foot. After graduation from Hollins she lived in Greenwich Village and adopted a carefree life hosting parties for the Birdbrain Club, a group modeled after the Algonquin Round Table.

Brown's first job was at Bank Street publishing, and this is where she began to create stories for children and work closely with illustrators. At the same time, she launched into a manic love life that encompassed failed relationships with both men and women. Most notable was her difficult affair in the 1940s with Michael Strange (Blanche Oelrichs), a socialite who was John Barrymore's former wife.

In addition to her work at Bank Street, Brown wrote for Golden Books, Harper, and Walt Disney, where she edited fables that featured animals as main characters. As Gary writes, "What Margaret was completely incapable of writing was anything of interest for adults"—which was what she increasingly yearned to do. She wanted to write things with "literary merit" but "when she put her pencil to paper to write something for adults, another children's story, poem, or song poured out. She couldn't stop them even when she tried."

One night, she had a detailed dream about saying good night to the things in her childhood room while a giant moon loomed outside her window. *Goodnight Moon* would be her biggest success, but the postwar years were altogether a highpoint in her career. For the publishing world, the baby boom launched a golden age of picture books for children, and Brown began to think more broadly about what was possible in book design. She created pop-ups, shaped books, and luminous dyes that glowed in the dark—novelties that publishers were eager to market.

Her dramatic personal life continued apace, and Gary documents Brown's continuing and obsessive attraction for Michael Strange.

After Strange died in 1950, Brown rebounded by falling in love with James Tillman “Pebble” Rockefeller, but before they could marry, she had appendicitis and died of an embolism. She was 42.

Amy Gary’s biography is written in an easy-flowing style and is certainly well-researched. But a major

failing is that she rarely uses Margaret Wise Brown’s own words: Surely the myriad letters, diaries, and works that she has catalogued contain rich expressions that chronicle this writer’s life firsthand. How much more enchanting the story would have been if drawn from Margaret Wise Brown’s own creative wellspring. ♦

and, in particular, the early 1940s.” Thomas brought to his craft a resonant voice and a gift for clear exposition. His breakthrough in audio-visual presentation came after the war’s end, in a dramatic “magic lantern” show that drew thousands in 1919 London, New York, and other cities. Though it originally headlined Allenby’s exploits, the once obscure Lawrence was an enormous hit, and the program was retitled *With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia*.

Thomas and his era were well met. They developed together the first phase of radio news broadcasting, whose dominance was prolonged by the postponement of television manufacture by war priorities in World War II. Apart from voice and diction, it was Thomas’s lifelong wanderlust that was his trump card; and it is well captured—“caricatured” may be the more precise term—by the bumptious figure of Bentley in *Lawrence of Arabia*.

Thomas’s corporate sponsor on NBC radio was Sun Oil. He was paid directly by the sponsoring company, a journalistic practice that would now be deemed irregular and (according to this biography) exposed him to occasional commercial pressures. The author notes one instance when Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed his “Four Freedoms” and conservative critics such as Sen. Robert Taft and novelist Ayn Rand complained. In a letter of June 8, 1943, Thomas received a “caution” from his primary contact at Sun Oil, suggesting that he omit further mention of the Four Freedoms. That caution was reinforced by a “friendly” letter from J. Howard Pew, president of Sun Oil, congratulating Thomas on the popularity of his broadcasts but advising that Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms be recast in terms of free-enterprise doctrine.

Thomas also narrated the pioneering Movietone newsreels, a medium whose oratorical voice and noisy nationalism would today ring strange in the age of television, the ultimate cool medium.

But to return to the association that first won him fame, it is, perhaps, a question of who “created” whom—whether Lowell Thomas created Lawrence of



You Were There

Lowell Thomas and the dawn of up-to-the-minute ‘news.’ BY EDWIN M. YODER JR.

In my time at Jesus College, Oxford (1956-58), I must have passed Eric Kennington’s evocative bust of T.E. Lawrence scores of times. It stood in the college lodge, on Turl Street, and portrayed a famous alumnus who had led an early life as an archaeologist before he became a British officer and legendary leader of the World War I “Arab revolt” against Turkish rule.

What I knew only dimly was that a much-traveled American journalist named Lowell Thomas—who had briefly taught elocution at Princeton—was often credited with the creation of the Lawrence legend, a legend sensationally magnified a generation later by David Lean’s magnificent film. As viewers of that vivid movie know, Lawrence assumed the leadership of the Arabs under King Feisal. He affected Bedouin costume, becoming an accomplished desert fighter.

Lowell Thomas, for his part, appears in the movie under a pseudonym as a sassy, cynical reporter named Bentley who appears on the scene after General Sir Edmund Allenby’s conquest of Damascus, and follows the Arab host on its primary errand: blowing up railroad tracks

Edwin M. Yoder Jr. is the author, most recently, of Vacancy: A Judicial Misadventure.

The Voice of America
Lowell Thomas and the Invention of 20th-Century Journalism
by Mitchell Stephens
St. Martin’s, 336 pp., \$26.99



Lowell Thomas in the Middle East (1918)

and slaughtering Turkish soldiers. Its final scenes show a Lawrence a bit crazed by the experience.

“The case can be made,” writes Mitchell Stephens here, “that no individual before or since has dominated American journalism as did Lowell Thomas in the late 1930s

Arabia or Lawrence created Lowell Thomas, the showman and broadcaster. The two chapters about Lawrence of Arabia, though they take up only 33 pages, are certainly the most vivid and interesting and the author's notes indicate that this isn't his first treatment of Lawrence.

Undoubtedly, however, Thomas's desert rendezvous in November 1918 struck journalistic gold and established a professional trajectory that made him "the voice of America"—the voice of and for the middle class and its developing thirst for a form of news more quickly satisfied than by newspapers and magazines. Stephens's claims for Lowell Thomas are reinforced by his globetrotting and his determination to penetrate exotic lands—even Tibet, after the Communist takeover in China, to which he and his son trekked at the price (in Thomas's case) of broken bones, to interview the isolated 14-year-old Dalai Lama.

Thomas left broadcasting too early to rival the mega-television successes of Walter Cronkite, Chet Huntley and David Brinkley, Edward R. Murrow, and others. But his memory is not without its nostalgia. One who grew up in the classic age of radio—the era of the *University of Chicago Roundtable*, *Quiz Kids*, *Kraft Music Hall*, and *The Bell Telephone Hour*, and not least Arturo Toscanini's NBC Symphony, not to mention popular stars such as Jack Benny—cannot resist adding that Thomas's era was of an excellence no longer heard on commercial radio or television.

But was Lowell Thomas the "voice of America"? I must admit a failure of auditory memory. The later voices of Cronkite, Brinkley, Murrow, Eric Sevareid, and others echo in the memory. Even H.V. Kaltenborn—another oil-company-sponsored newscaster-commentator (and my father's *bête noire*)—retains his staccato echo. But the "voice of America" is fading out like a dim radio signal, at least for me. Perhaps Thomas's voice, midwestern in origins, was destined to become the standard timbre of all electronic communication—and is now lost among all the others. ♦



Words and Music

A reintroduction to the poet of modern fiction.

BY DANNY HEITMAN

In 1926, the British author Henry Green (1905-1973) published the first of nine novels that would gain him critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. His mother didn't quite know what to make of them. She loved to read, but didn't partake of much fiction, so wasn't sure how to assess her son's literary reputation. "Are Henry's books any good, dear?" was a question she frequently asked her grandson.

More than four decades after his death, the question lingers, its relevance renewed by New York Review Books' reissue of much of Green's work. Green's books haven't remained reliably in print, evidence of his limited popular appeal. But those who like Green's novels *really* like them, and his following, though small, has been distinguished. John Updike, not prone to jacket-blurb hyperbole, celebrated Green's novels with almost religious zeal.

For Green, to me, is so good a writer, such a revealer of what English prose fiction can do . . . that I can launch myself upon this piece of homage and introduction only by falling into some sort of imitation of that liberatingly ingenuous voice, that voice so full of other voices, its own interpolations amid the matchless dialogue twisted and tremulous with a precision that kept the softness of groping, of sensation, of living.

V.S. Pritchett, another literary observer who didn't dole out compliments easily, called Green the "most gifted prose stylist of his generation." He saw in Green's fiction the very qualities that readers see in Pritchett's criticism and short stories: "He was not in

Danny Heitman, columnist for the Advocate in Baton Rouge, is the author of A Summer of Birds: John James Audubon at Oakley House.

Loving

by Henry Green

New York Review Books, 224 pp., \$14

Back

by Henry Green

New York Review Books, 224 pp., \$14

the least sentimental: his eye was hard, his ear sharp," Pritchett noted. "Some very fine artists impose themselves, but Henry Green belonged to those who masochistically seek to let their characters speak through them." In a 1961 essay on Green, Eudora Welty was no less enthused:

The intelligence, the blazing gifts of imagery, dialogue, construction, and form, the power to feel both what can and what never can be said, give Henry Green's work an intensity greater, this reader believes, than that of any other writer of imaginative fiction today. . . . His remains the most interesting and vital imagination in English fiction in our time.

Although Welty excelled at closely observed assessments of fellow writers, her extended treatment of Green's novels fails to summarize what they are about or focus on a memorable character. Like many of Green's fans, she doesn't so much argue for Green's excellence as simply assert it. To truly know what all the fuss is about, we're pointed by necessity to the novels themselves, many of which NYRB, a patron saint of bright literary obscurities, has been bringing out in its typically elegant softcovers over several seasons. *Loving* and *Back*, among the first reissues, are a promising place to start, although newcomers to Green might find an even better introduction to his life and work in

Pack My Bag, a 1940 memoir that New Directions reissued several years ago. New Directions will reissue *Concluding*, Green's 1948 novel, in October.

Pack My Bag readers quickly learn that Henry Green was the pen name of Henry Yorke, who grew up within a family that, as his son Sebastian mentions in a charming introduction, "had aristocratic roots and, on the male side, a strong leaning towards classical scholarship." The family "lived in a large and imposing house in Gloucestershire, set in a 2500 acre estate beside the River Severn." Green wrote *Pack My Bag* at the start of World War II, its title wryly hinting at his strong suspicion that he would die in the war. During his youth in World War I, the family home had housed injured officers, an experience that gave Green a deep sense of life's fragility. He was fascinated by how prosaic routine and the prospect of tragedy could coexist—domesticity and disaster within shouting distance of each other, sometimes creating an eerie sense of exhilaration. That reality informs one of the loveliest passages in *Pack My Bag* when Green recalls his boyhood at a boarding school on the English coast, close enough to the fighting that "the hills round brought no louder than as seashells echo the blood pounding in one's ears noise of gunfire through our windows all the way from France so that we looked out and thought of death in the sound and this was sweeter to us than rollers tumbling on a beach." Later, remembering Sunday walks in the same area, he elaborates the thought.

Every lane so it now seems was sunk-en, tufts of grass and wild flowers overhung our walks and sometimes, coming over the hill, we had that view over all the county where it lay beneath in light haze like a king's pleasure preserved for idle hours; that was how we went within earshot of the guns, chattering and happy through loveliness.

This is Green's signature style, and probably one reason why other people of letters have liked him so much. His sentences sometimes unwind in long, gossamer strands of prepositions and subordinate clauses, as tenuous as a spider's web—beautiful at their best, yet stretched close to the breaking

point. For fellow writers who chafe against the limits of language, there's a special thrill in following Green across the page to see if his sentence will survive in one piece. Green was glum about more than the war when he was writing *Pack My Bag*: He had struggled to bring his novel *Party Going* into print, finally getting Hogarth Press, the small house run by Leonard and Virginia Woolf, to publish it. Green's novels can seem very much in Virginia Woolf's modernist school, if one means by modernist a story in which experience looks more like a collage of impressions than a coherent world.



Henry Green (ca. 1930)

In *Loving*, Green's sense of the tragic running parallel to the mundane is evident, too—a notion established in the opening sentences:

Once upon a day an old butler called Eldon lay dying in his room attended by the head housemaid, Miss Agatha Burch. From time to time the other servants separately or in chorus gave expression to proper sentiments and then went on with what they had been doing.

What follows is an upstairs/downstairs tale of aristocrats and their servants, although it is mostly about Raunce, who succeeds Eldon as the new butler, and his romance with a new hire, Edith. It ends as Raunce and Edith "were married and lived happily ever after," the once-upon-a-time opening of the novel coming full circle. In appropriating the language of fairy tales, Green suggests that *Loving* is

more artifice than actual, a sensibility that makes us wonder if anything in the story is really at stake.

Although many of Green's admirers point to the realism of his fiction, one often gets the sense that he's keeping his characters at arm's length, which can incline the reader to keep his distance as well. Green titled several of his novels with gerunds—*Living*, *Loving*, *Doting*, *Party Going*—which seemed to signal a desire to reduce experience to a clinical abstraction, like an avant-garde art installation.

In *Back* (1946), POW Charley Summers returns from war minus one of his legs and Rose, the love of his life. He meets another woman who looks like Rose, which occasions some thoughts on the duality of identity reminiscent of Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Sharer*. There are poetic descriptions throughout, often exploring Green's preoccupation with what Deborah Eisenberg, in introducing the novel's new edition, calls "the twining interdependence of life and death." An early sentence about a graveyard is 104 words. It's typical Green, unfolding like a prose poem that pushes grammatical convention to its limits:

For, climbing around and up these trees of mourning, was rose after rose, while, here and there, the spray overburdened by the mass of flower, a live wreath lay fallen on a wreath of stone, or on a box in marble colder than this day, or onto frosted paper blooms which, under glass, marked each bed of earth wherein the dear departed encouraged life above in the green grass, the cypresses and in those roses gay and bright which, as still as this dark afternoon, stared at whosoever looked, or hung their heads to droop, to grow stained, to die when their turn came.

The prose of a Green novel lingers more vividly than the characters within his stories, maybe because they can seem less like people than constructs—convenient hooks on which the author hangs his writerly art. Maybe that's why he's always been more popular with writers than readers. His craft evokes the cozy insularity of the literary workbench, a place of pleasant privacy where Henry Green, living every author's fantasy, felt liberated to write for himself, and no one else. ♦

“Neither Spicer nor deputy press secretary Sarah Sanders responded to queries about the changes to the briefings. Asked why the briefings are now routinely held off-camera, White House chief strategist Steve Bannon said in a text message ‘Sean got fatter,’ and did not respond to a follow-up.”

—the Atlantic, June 20, 2017

PARODY



OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2017

Press Gaggle by Press Secretary Sean Spicer
6/26/17
James S. Brady Press Briefing Room
1:45 P.M. EDT

MR. SPICER: Good afternoon. Before I take questions, let me clarify something my good friend Steve Bannon said last week. He made a comment you all misinterpreted as “Sean got fatter.” In truth, Mr. Bannon meant “phatter” spelled with a “ph.” Because I am, indeed, Plump, Hot, And Tasty.

Q: So it was or wasn’t a dig about your weight?

MR. SPICER: No, not at all. Now if we can hurry this up, I’ve got SoulCycle at 2:30. Thanks.

Q: Will there be more press conferences with cameras and audio?

MR. SPICER: No. We find that tends to distort the truth. Plus this allows all of us to dress more casually. For instance, today I’m wearing sweatpants with an elastic band. I can’t begin to describe how comfortable it is. Tomorrow I might don a muumuu because of this heatwave—and no one will ever see it. You should try it, Glenn!

Q: I just might—thanks, Sean. Is it true you are interviewing candidates for your job?

MR. SPICER: That sounds delicious right about now.

Q: Excuse me?

MR. SPICER: Oh, sorry, I thought you said “candied dates.” I haven’t eaten since last night. I had cottage cheese and peaches, which isn’t the most filling.

Q: But about your job. You’re staying?

MR. SPICER: Yes, I will continue working for this White House in any capacity the president sees fit. Speaking of fit, I just need a moment to check my Fitbit tracker. And I see I am well short of that 10,000th step. Let me just take a few more steps here...and, 100!

Q: I’m sorry, Sean. But why would Steve Bannon say you got fatter?

MR. SPICER: I told you it was a misunderstanding! What the [EXPLETIVE] is wrong with you? And why does anyone care what Steve [EXPLETIVE] Bannon thinks, that fat